



# HINEI MAH TOV

HOW GOOD IS IT TO BE TOGETHER

JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM OF TEMPLE B'NAI ABRAHAM

2018-2019/5779



February 2018

Dear JLP Families,

Welcome to a new year at the Jewish Learning Program at Temple B'nai Abraham. We are a very blessed community. We are a vibrant and joyful center of Jewish life and learning. The laughter and kehillah (community) of our children is perhaps our brightest and most precious jewel.



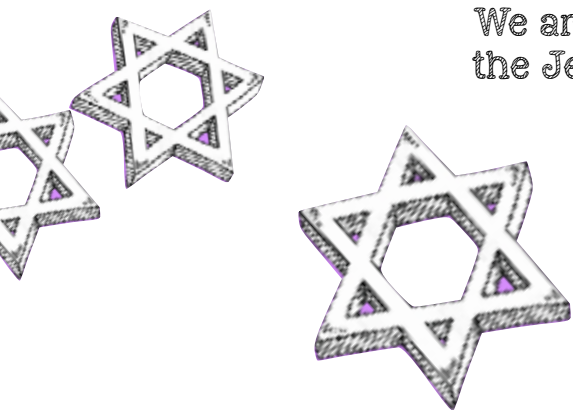
The theme for this coming year is **"HINEI MAH TOV: HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE TOGETHER!"** It is through your families and the wonderful children that you share with us each week, that joy, laughter and learning come together here at TBA. At the JLP, while we busy ourselves with readying the children to take their place among the Jewish people as B'nai Mitzvah, but we have a much larger and more imperative goal; making them life long committed and knowledgeable Jewish people. We strive to help them see the world through a Jewish lens. We explore ways they can help right the world, and create a Jewish home that brings hope and love to others. Through the rituals, stories and values of our people, we aim to connect them to a precious legacy that they will carry with them always.

The JLP is a partnership. Your family is as important to us as your children. Be a part of our Jewish home! Feel the energy of being together in a community that values every child and family. Your children will immediately understand the importance of Jewish life while watching you participate.

As the year begins, please know, the doors of our program are open to your questions and concerns. We care deeply about the educational, emotional and spiritual well being of your children. Feel free to reach out to us to make this a meaningful experience for you and your child.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year of growing the Jewish people even greater!

Morah Melissa  
Melissa Gettinger Weiner  
Director of Jewish Learning



# Our Philosophy

The Jewish Learning Program of Temple B'nai Abraham is dedicated to working jointly with our families to teach all children the skills, knowledge, and values they will need to be life-long learners and committed Jewish adults. We respond to the child's intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs. Our program is designed to give our students:

- 1) A sound foundation of knowledge about Jewish history, literature, customs, ceremonies, and prayers
- 2) Opportunities to explore the spiritual, intellectual, and affective aspects of religion and tradition, and "Hands-on" experiences of Jewish life and learning.

Our educational program works to foster deep knowledge of and sense of responsibility toward Judaism and a commitment and connection to Jewish life, community and Israel.

## To Teach Our Students to:

1. Strive to create a balance of Talmud Torah, Avodah, and Gemillut Chassadim (Jewish learning, Jewish living, and Jewish caring)
2. Decode Hebrew and gain contextual understanding of Torah and Prayer
3. Habituate understanding and practice of Tikkun Olam (acts of social justice)
4. Develop positive, celebratory experiences, and memories with Judaism
5. Learn and practice the values, rituals, and prayers of Judaism
6. Delve into the stories and history of the Jewish people
7. Approach Jewish living as active, joyous participants
8. Be responsible and caring members of our congregation, k'lal yisrael, the Jewish people, and the broader community in which we live.

## To Nurture Jews who:

1. Are strengthened in their Jewish identity and connect themselves to the Jewish people by word and deed.
2. Celebrate Shabbat and the festivals and observe the Jewish ceremonies marking the significant occasions in their lives.
3. Foster a love of Eretz Yisrael and bridge the connection between Diaspora Judaism and the Jewish homeland.
4. Recognize the holiness of their own person and the person of others; their own family and the family of others; their own community and the community of others.
5. Support and participate in the life of the synagogue and local Jewish Community.
6. Understand Jewish learning as a lifelong process.

We seek to provide a safe and sacred space for our children and their families to discover the joys, the values, the knowledge, and the tools of Jewish life and living.



# Kindergarten, First & Second Grade

## GAN, ALEPH, BET

# RISHONIM:BEGINNINGS

Mondays or Tuesdays, 4-5:30 pm or 4-6:00 pm

### GAN KINDERGARTEN

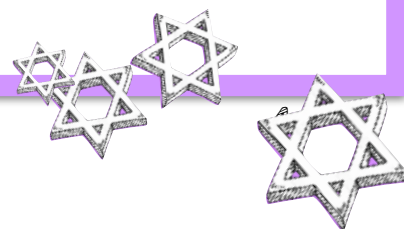
This early introduction to Jewish topics exposes our children to the message and meaning behind important Jewish concepts. The class covers the celebration of Jewish holidays, with an emphasis on the symbols and blessings that help us welcome Shabbat on Friday night. They learn to recognize our connection to and the importance of the Torah: A Special Book, they explore the very first stories of the Bible (Creation, Noah, & the Tower of Babel). The class also begins an exploration of personal faith and spirituality using a storybook "Godtalk" curriculum designed to help students begin a dialogue about faith and belief. The introduction of the Hebrew aleph-bet begins as well as learning beginning modern Hebrew phrases. The children experience music, art, Jewish Makerspace, dance and Israel in creative and experiential ways.

### ALEPH FIRST GRADE

In first grade, our children continue the exploration of Jewish holidays. More emphasis is placed on learning the rituals and blessings associated with each holiday. Students learn about the first Jewish family and other major Jewish personalities from Bereshit (Genesis). Students will have a basic introduction to the Land of Israel, as the homeland of the Jewish people (past and present). A re-introduction to the basic Hebrew alphabet and phonetics is presented through readiness activities. An exploration of basic Jewish values also begins in this grade. The class also continues the exploration of personal faith and spirituality using a storybook and a "Godtalk" curriculum designed to help students dialogue about faith and belief. The children experience music, art, Jewish Makerspace, dance and Israel in creative and experiential ways.

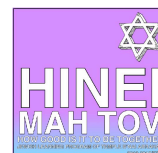
### BET SECOND GRADE

In Jewish Heroes! You can be one too! Students review the heroes of the Bible and their special stories, including: Moses, Joseph, Deborah, David, Solomon, and Elijah. Students use the journal, "The Giving Book" to explore tzedakah, gemilut hasadim, and other Jewish middot (values). The students explore how and why Jews are compelled to fix broken in our world. Using games, and readiness activities, students begin Hebrew letters and phonetic exploration of the language. A favorite unit is Old Turtle, which gives the children the opportunity to consider God, faith and connection to spirituality. They even make a turtle mailbox! The children experience music, art, Jewish Makerspace, dance and Israel in creative and experiential ways.





# Third, Fourth, Fifth & Sixth GIMEL, DALET, HEY, VAV SHORESHIM:ROOTS



Mondays or Tuesdays, 4-5:30 pm or 4-6:00 pm

Our elementary students spend their year in two primary ways. The first is our Shoreshim, or roots days. These days are meant to build strong knowledge about, and connections to, Judaism, while building community and friendships. Each week, students experiences core, grade level curriculum through hands-on, tactile and creative settings.

3/א

In Third Grade, you can expect your child to cover: Genesis & Me: Understanding My Jewish Family, modern Israel, Holy days and Holidays, the Synagogue and Siddur, Tzedakah: Reaching Out and Reaching Up, Who Knows God? and Middot: Jewish Values for Young people. Students participate in Consecration and a Siddur Presentation.

4/ד

In Fourth Grade, students trace the steps of Moses while considering Jewish leadership values. They explore the value of freeing the captive, and ensuring the rights of all people to worship their own God. They continue their Godtalk discussions from earlier grades, by beginning to develop their own faith narrative. Holidays take on a new and rich meaning, moving from the basics into a more They learn about the Mezuzah, tallit and tefillin and other important Jewish objects and their meaning. Additionally, they “Walk the Bible” with Bruce Feiler in search of biblical Israel in a modern world. They also explore the meaning of Jewish names and a special study of their own.

5/ה

In Fifth Grade, students gain new insight into Holidays and begin to consider which parts of each celebration have resonance today. They participate in a virtual twinning with a fifth grade, in Israel, looking at their Jewish world, community and identity. Additionally they explore issues of Diaspora. They explore various historical time periods, culminating with the “burying” of their own time capsule. Additionally, they have a gentle introduction to the Holocaust using Hana's Suitcase. The children lead the TBA Yom Hashoa, Holocaust Remembrance service.

6/ו

Sixth grade begins to prepare the children for their B'nai Mitzvah journey. Their studies are built on mitzvot. From the mitzvot associated with each holiday, to a study of Maimonides, to a look at how they can make a difference in the world, they cover it all. They explore Israel and its joys and complications. Additionally, they will get a sneak peak and study session about their upcoming Torah portion.

All

All grades experience music, art, Jewish Makerspace, dance, modern Hebrew, prayer skills and Israel in creative and experiential ways. Specialists bring a variety of movement and hands-on activities each session.



# Third, Fourth, Fifth & Sixth GIMEL, DALET, HEY, VAV MERCZ IVRIT: HEBREW



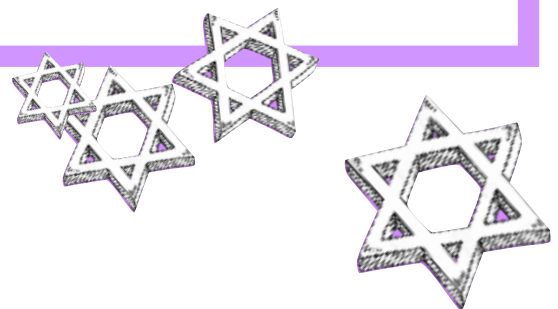
Hebrew links us with more than 3,000 years of identity as a distinct people. Even after we dispersed throughout the world without our own land or government, our use of Hebrew as the language of Torah and prayer united all Jews as one people. We teach Hebrew to continue this link - - across time and space - - in worship and study.

With that in mind, the JLP at TBA is excited to continue setting trends in Hebrew education. After many years of studying trends and growth in our students, the Board of Education and the Professional Staff determined that our children learn Hebrew best in small, individualized learning groups. Mercz Ivrit grouping will meet once a week for 45 minutes. Classes will be limited to 5-6 students.

These small groupings are designed to teach the children in third grade to decode and read Hebrew and lead them towards preparation towards B'nai Mitzvah. Older grades will learn to decode the necessary B'nai Mitzvah prayers, including the chanting skills necessary for B'nai Mitzvah.

We are proud that this program supports our belief that all children reach developmental skills at their own pace. Small groupings allow each child significant attention which will guide not only their Hebrew success, but also their emotional well-being. Our overall goal for each of our children is success with maximum and compassionate support! Group times are scheduled during registration.

**JUNIOR CONGREGATION:** "More than Israel has kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept Israel." Ahad Ha-Am, Hebrew Essayist. Eight Shabbat morning the JLP hosts a Junior Congregation designed to reinforce the skills learned in Mercz Ivrit. The Board of Ed requires each student to attend 8 services a year at TBA. These can be Junior Congregation, or regular Shabbat services as well as Holy Day Services (with the exception of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur).



# Third, Fourth, Fifth & Sixth SPECIAL SERVICES

“Rabbi Eliezer says: Let other people’s dignity be as precious to you as your own”.

Pirkei Avot 2:15

The special services program of The Temple B’nai Abraham JLP, is a warm, nurturing Jewish learning environment dedicated to children with learning and physical differences in grades K-6, with consideration given to the Bar and Bat Mitzvah process. Each child is encouraged to maximize his or her learning potential and is instilled with a lifelong love of Judaism. The children learn about Jewish holidays, Israel, and the Hebrew language in a fun and creative atmosphere. Some children benefit from a self-contained classroom, while others are partially or completely mainstreamed with support. Their needs are varied, but we are committed to engage every child and help them to live a meaningful Jewish life. Programming specifically designed to benefit your child will be developed with your participation and using your child’s IEP to facilitate and build on successful secular experiences. Flexibility is built into the program to allow for changing needs and abilities. Our professionals carefully and lovingly work with each child to his or her ability. If you feel your child might benefit from special services, please do not hesitate to contact the Director, Melissa Weiner at 973-994-3950 or [mweiner@tbanj.org](mailto:mweiner@tbanj.org).

## Third, Fourth, Fifth & Sixth MORE FUN: YOTER KEF

### RISHON

Each school year will have a special visitor, a youth emissary from Israel. The Rishon will be spending many quality hours engaging our students in topics about Israel. Every grade will have a chance to meet with the Rishon monthly, and some grades will reap the benefits of weekly visits. The Rishon serves as a living bridge to Eretz Yisrael.

Club TBA  
(2 times a month)  
Mondays & Tuesdays,  
after JLP

The formal educational program of our JLP is supplemented by students’ involvement in Club TBA, a Junior Youth Group, for 3rd through 6th graders. The programs are an enjoyable social way for kids to have fun while socializing, eating and participating in games and activities with their JLP friends.

Color Wars and Special  
Events

The JLP staff prides itself in wonderful experiential educational opportunities. Whether a Pesach Escape Room, or Tu B’Shevat Worm Races, to yearly color wars, we strive to make Judaic learning accessible and fun. Hey we’ve even capitalized on Mannequin challenges and fidget fascinations!

# Seventh Grade

## ZAYIN

# MECHINAH: TRANSITIONS

Mondays, 4-5:30 pm or Tuesdays, 5:45-7:15 pm

As students approach the teenage years, our focus switches to both academic knowledge and community building. Incorporating dinner or snack, learning and informal experiences, the Mechinah class strikes a balance between formal learning and choice based learning. Students participate two main core classes through out the year: Facing History in Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior which explores issues of identity, genocide, propaganda, convenient hatreds and more through the lens of 1931-1945. Later in the year, with the help of our Israeli Rishon, students are exposed to Israel through both a historical and critical lens. Additionally, we share with them the beauty that is the modern state of Israel. Every few weeks, students participate in these core classes. This is coupled with a "Camp" day. Students are invited to wear their Camp t-shirt and participate in a day or night dedicated to "camp" and Jewish heritage. Typical schedules will include: Ahrochat Erev (dinner or snack), Limmud (Learning), Tefillot (Prayer) and Special Chugim (Electives) and of course s'mores. Individual B'nai Mitzvah Hebrew tutoring and support is available to all students.

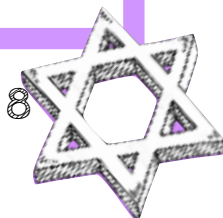
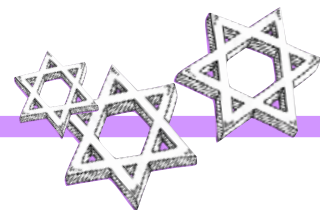
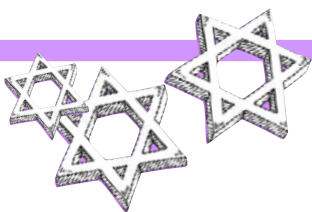
### Mechinah Class Individual Student Volunteer Requirements

Fifteen (15) total volunteer hours are required for each Mechinah Class student as follows:

- 5 synagogue volunteer hours
- 5 community volunteer hours
- 3 additional hours of student's choice either synagogue or community
- 2 hours working at the Purim Carnival OR

Students may complete an approved mitzvah project with direct consult with the JLP staff

Volunteer Voucher forms are available on our website, [www.tbanj.org](http://www.tbanj.org). The forms are completed by the Mechinah Class student and signed by the volunteer site's adult supervisor. Students return completed forms to their homeroom teacher. A Mitzvah Opportunities list will be regularly updated with suggested volunteer opportunities.





# Teen Programs 8th-12th grade HAMAKOM: THE PLACE

## MAKOM 8th-10th grade

Makom is an opportunity for students in 8-12th grade to commit to a more formal continuation of their Jewish learning. Makom offers a Pre-Confirmation experience that helps teens begin to think about their role within the larger Jewish community but also within the context of the secular world. Students will be asked to think critically about political and ethical implications of decisions we make collectively and individually. Class is taught by Rabbi Dantowitz and is intended for teens in grades 8-9th grade. Confirmation, is the culmination of formal learning at Temple B'nai Abraham. Rooted in textual study, Rabbi Kulwin helps our young adults cement their connection to Jewish rituals and tradition, while helping them to ascertain the kind of Jewish life they would like to lead.

## TTO: TEEN TIKKUN OLAM 8th-12th grade

The Teen Tikkun Olam Group is run by students in the TBA High School program. Meetings are twice a month, once during the week and once on the weekend to design, implement, and coordinate community action events. Students beginning in eighth grade can contribute in meaningful and spiritual community mitzvah projects such as the Thanksgiving Midday Run, Habitat for Humanity, Car Wash For Cancer Funding, and more. Past training has also included a mini Teen Leadership Institute that trained our students in leadership and philanthropy.

## MADRICHIM 8th-12th grade

Teens in 8th through 12th grade are welcome to work study or volunteer in the Jewish Learning Program as assistant teachers as well as classroom shadows. Please contact the Director of Jewish Learning Melissa Weiner for further information or to get an application. 973-994-3950

## BBYO: B'NAI BRITH YOUTH 9th-12th grade

AZA: AZA's unique programming for young men includes social programming with B'nai Brith Girls and other AZA chapters paralleled by any other youth groups.

BBG: BBG offers young women in the community the opportunity to enjoy social, athletic, community service and Judaic programming. embrace tradition and



# PARENTS ARE TEACHERS TOO HORIM, MORIM

Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan stated that “...to educate a child without educating the parent, like heating a room with the window open.”

## Parent Education Days TBD

The Religious Education Program firmly believes that Jewish Learning is a life-long endeavor. With that in mind, we are pleased invite our parents on a regular basis to participate in special days with their children. At least one day a year, each grade level has a PACT (Parent and Children Together) program. Please check the school calendar to reserve these special days.

## Class Services TBD

Each year, every grade level participates in at least one grade level Shabbat program to help our students acclimate to the experience of participating in and leading a service. The prayers covered in class will be presented in a joyful and meaningful way from the bima. Please check the school calendar to reserve these special days.

## Congregational Learning

Many adults are also looking for an opportunity to enrich their Jewish learning, and perhaps gain a refresher that might help them as they guide their children on this wonderful Jewish journey. Throughout the year, classes are taught by our clergy, educators, wonderful guest teachers and scholars, all who are eager to share their passion for Judaism. We are also delighted to welcome community members to attend our classes, and are proud to offer classes all year round. You can join us once or many times—the choice is yours and we encourage you to let the year 5778 be rich with learning. Some offerings include: Parashat HaShavuah, Book Groups, Lunch and Learn, and Sisterhood Rosh Hodesh. For more information, please consult the TBA Congregational Learning link on the tbanj.org website.





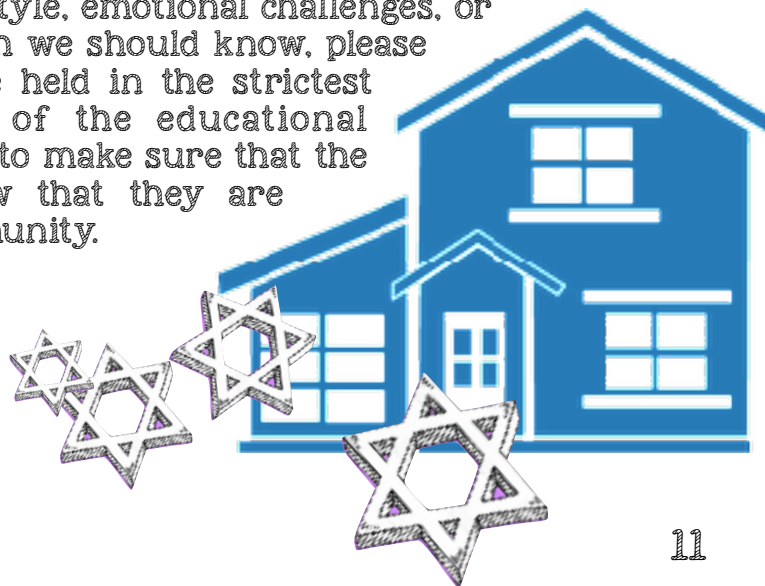
# HOME & HERE

## BRIT: A SPECIAL COVENANT

Pirkei Avot instructs all Jews to “get a teacher.” A child’s first teacher is his or her parent. Judaism begins in the home. At TBA, we regard our relationship to parents as an essential partnership capable of encouraging our children to succeed, and develop a positive relationship to Jewish values, rituals, and community. Throughout the year, classes will have Parent Participation Days and School Events. We encourage your full participation in these cherished moments of learning. Our doors and classrooms are always open to you, please just contact your child to let them know you will be coming. Here are additional practices you can assume to make our educational program even more successful:

- + Encourage a positive attitude towards religious education.
  - + Stress the need for regular attendance.
- + PRACTICE HEBREW AT LEAST 5 MINUTES A DAY!
  - + Help with special projects.
  - + Make sure your child is on time and prepared.
- + Encourage your child to work to the best of his/her ability.
  - + Become familiar with our school and curriculum.
- + Share in Jewish experiences with your children on a regular basis at home, in the synagogue and in the community.
- + Don't be a stranger! We are committed to ongoing dialogue with parents.
  - + Please become an active partner in your child's Jewish education.

In addition, please know that our doors and ears are always open. We pride ourselves in being a compassionate and warm community. The clergy, staff, and teachers want to be made aware of how best to help your child. If your child has an IEP, a special learning style, emotional challenges, or difficult life circumstances of which we should know, please reach out. The information will be held in the strictest confidence. In addition to each of the educational components of our school, we want to make sure that the children (and their families) know that they are valued and supported by their community.





# This and That: Policies and Procedures

## Zeh v'Zeh



### Third Grade and New Student Orientation

This year Orientation will be held before the program commences in September.

### Bar/Bat Mitzvah Requirements

In order to become a B'nai Mitzvah at Temple B'nai Abraham, students must be in good academic and attendance standing. Excessive absences, late and early dismissals may necessitate private tutoring at the parents' expense. Approximately six months before the student becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and all Temple and JLP requirements and are being met, the student will begin preparation with the Cantor or the Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor. The Cantor or Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor will contact you to begin lessons.

### Birthday Celebrations

It is a Temple B'nai Abraham tradition for our students to celebrate their birthdays with Rabbi Kulwin and the Congregation during Friday evening services. When children attending this special service are celebrating their birthday, they are invited up to the Bimah to receive a special birthday blessing and gift. For complete information including all dates of Birthday Shabbat celebrations, visit [www.tbanj.org](http://www.tbanj.org) to view the monthly calendar. You may also contact the JLP Director to make sure your child gets special recognition!

### Class Placement

Placement of students is based upon promoting the best learning environment for all students and fostering the growth of congregational and communal bonds. While we strive to place each child with at least one special friend based on mutual request, the responsibility rests with the JLP administration to determine the best placement for your child. There is a two-week waiting period in the Fall before any class changes will be made.

### Communication

E-mail is our main form of communication with you. Please keep us updated as to all of your current e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

### Early Dismissal

Should an occasion arise for which you need to pick up your child early, for safety reasons, adults only (no siblings) need to come into the JLP office, sign the Early Dismissal book, and wait for the classroom teacher to be contacted to send the child to the office. Make-up work and/or private tutoring at the parents' expense will be necessary if an excess of school work is missed.

# This and That: Policies and Procedures

## Zeh v'Zeh



### Emergency Closing

In the event that the Livingston Township Public Schools close, dismiss early, or cancel after school activities, the JLP will be closed. All families will be notified of closures via email. Postings will be made on our Facebook as well as the synagogue website ([tbanj.org](http://tbanj.org)). If you are in doubt, call the school office (973) 994-3950 ext: 295. The JLP voice mail message will indicate the latest information regarding school closings.

### Progress Evaluations

Reviews of Judaic classroom achievements are issued at the beginning of January and at the closing of the year. Your child's Mercaz Ivrit teacher will issue a mid-year evaluations for your child.

### Transfer Policy for New Gimel - Mechinah Students

Prospective students will have their Hebrew reading ability evaluated before placed in a Hebrew class. If the student's Hebrew reading is at grade level, he or she will be placed in the appropriate age and grade level class. If the student is not reading at grade level, Temple B'nai Abraham will do its best to quickly help a child catch up to be at grade level. To that end, a parent may secure private tutoring to assist in the transition.

### Tutoring Policy

All students are expected to practice their Hebrew at home. The staff of our program will work with each child to achieve proficiency during our program. If a student still has difficulty in achieving the Hebrew reading goals, a tutor from the Temple B'nai Abraham teaching staff may be recommended for private tutoring at the parent's expense. The goals for students needing private tutoring are determined by the child's classroom teacher in conjunction with the JLP Director and the family.

### Tzedakah

We encourage our students to perform the mitzvah of helping those who are less fortunate by bringing in tzedakah money. The students choose which charities to support each year through various presentations.

### Website

In addition to viewing the calendar and upcoming events, visit this site [www.tbanj.org](http://www.tbanj.org) to practice prayers, study what you missed in the event of an absence, and communicate with our school. You can also like us on Facebook at [https:// www.facebook.com/tbanjjewishlearningprogram](https://www.facebook.com/tbanjjewishlearningprogram).

# Jewish Learning Program

Temple B'nai Abraham  
300 East Northfield Road  
Livingston, NJ 07039

[www.tbanj.org](http://www.tbanj.org)

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