



## VTS Parent Handbook

### I – Introduction

Dear VTS Parents:

A Jewish education is one of the greatest gifts you will give your child. From Judaism they will gain faith to sustain them in times of trouble and they will find a community in which to celebrate life successes and gain comfort and support in times of need. Judaism will add depth and meaning to their lives and root their actions in values.

The Viterbi Torah School at Congregation Beth El can help you give this wonderful gift to your child. Our goals are to provide an environment in which students build close relationships with talented teachers, who act as mentors and role models, and to fill classroom time with exciting discussions, creative projects and engaging activities.

The core of our Judaic curriculum is built around the three principles of Jewish life – Torah, *Avodah* (prayer) and *G'milut Hasadim* (deeds of loving kindness). Torah is the central text of Judaism, a place to learn about our ancestors and guide our actions. Prayer is the heart of Jewish life, making up the rhythms and cycles of daily, weekly, holiday and life cycle observance. *G'milut Hasadim* is the actualization of Jewish values, the way we interact with the world and leave it a better place.

Our Hebrew program not only prepares students for *B'nai Mitzvah*, but it is also the foundation for a lifetime of Jewish practice. Students learn to connect with prayers and seek meaning in Jewish practice. Students pray regularly in services that allow them both to have spiritual experiences and to practice their Hebrew fluency.

The success of our program is not complete without dedicated parents. You are a role model to your children about how Jewish life is lived. Your participation in school activities and your feedback on your children's experience here help us to continually refine our program. Together we can build Jewish education one mind at a time.

Open communication is the cornerstone to the Religious School's strength. I look forward to getting to know your family and to working with you throughout the upcoming school year.

B'Shalom

Rabbi Avi Libman & Jessie Blank Birnbaum

8660 Gilman Drive La Jolla, CA 92037

P 858.452.1734 F 858.452.5578

W [www.congregationbethel.org](http://www.congregationbethel.org)

E [shalom@congregationbethel.org](mailto:shalom@congregationbethel.org)

## II – Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Viterbi Torah School to develop responsible and knowledgeable young men and women with positive Jewish identities who actively participate in Jewish life in the community, synagogue and home.

Committed to excellence in Conservative Judaic study, ritual and responsibility, the Viterbi Torah School incorporates traditional and innovative educational experiences reaching beyond the classroom to involve the entire family.

## III - Vision Statement

VTS is a *Beit T'fillah*, a house of prayer and worship; a *Beit Midrash*, a house of education and study, and a *Beit Knesset*, a house of assembly and community. We pursue these three interconnected identities in a caring and accessible way, encouraging a diverse membership to develop their spiritual lives, their connection to our people and their support of the State of Israel, within the traditions, perspectives, values and morals of Judaism.

## IV – Year Calendar

A copy of the yearly & monthly calendar is available on the Beth El website & in the Torah School office.

## V – Curriculum

A copy of the curriculum is available on the Beth El website & in the Torah School office.

## VI – Policies & Procedures

In order to maintain the quality of our school program, Congregation Beth El has established standards for achievement and behavior in all grades. We regard these policies seriously, yet we understand that unusual circumstances sometimes rise that necessitates flexible responses from us. We are here to help your family participate fully in our program and will try to accommodate your special needs whenever possible. Please understand that our program relies on your cooperation and compliance.

### 1. School Hours:

- a. Thursday: Grades 2-7 meet from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- b. Sunday:  
Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade meet from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

c. Saturday:

Grade 7 only meets from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

d. Additional programs may be scheduled throughout the year to enhance our program & build community.

2. School Holidays & Vacations:

a. Congregation Beth El bases its calendar in conjunction with area public schools. Jewish Holidays are observed as well. As you schedule your family vacations, please consult your school calendar to ensure your child will not miss class sessions.

3. Drop Off & Pick Up

**All students must be signed in at drop off and signed out at pick up.**

To ensure the safety and well being of all our students we ask that you follow the following procedures:

**Drop Off:**

Parking is available in the lower parking lot and we ask that you accompany your children to their classrooms. Students who arrive between 3:45 and 3:55 PM on Thursdays go directly to the Torah School office where they can purchase a healthy snack, do homework, play games or just schmooze under the supervision of our Staff.

**Pick Up:**

Parents may wait outside the classroom until the teacher dismisses children and then escort children safely back to the parking lot. **Remember to sign your child out. A child will only be released to a custodial parent or a person designated on the school registration form, unless written notification is received by the school office.**

**Early Pick Up:**

Please do your best not to interrupt a class. If you need to pick up your child early, a *Madrich* will be more than happy to sign out your child. Make sure to look in the back of the room for any handouts or flyers.

**Late Pick Up:**

If you are going to be late to pick up your child, please call the school office at 858 452 1773 and let us know. Upon arrival please come to the Torah School office to pick up your child.

**Visitors:**

Visitors are always welcome in our classrooms. However, we do ask that all visitors report to the Torah School office before entering a classroom.

There will be no eating permitted during class time except as designated by the teacher.

**Snacks:**

Thursday: Snacks will be sold in the Youth Lounge between 3:45 PM – 3:55 PM and 4:40 PM – 4:50 PM. Snacks may be eaten before class and during recess. Please help us by reminding your children not to eat during class time.

Sunday: Bagels and a drink will be given to those students who are pre-registered from 10:30 AM – 10:40 AM. If you choose not to register for bagels, please send a snack with your child for their break.

**Attendance:**

Regular participation is the key to the success of your child's education; please make sure that your child attends class. If there are particular circumstances, please feel to contact Rabbi Avi Libman at 858 452 1734 x228 or Jessie Blank-Birnbaum at extension 224.

**Emergencies:**

In the event of an emergency we will contact the emergency contact number on your registration form. **Please make sure that phone number is updated and accurate.**

The Torah School can be reached 30 minutes before class begins (Thursday 3:30 PM and Sunday at 8:30 AM) at 858 452 1773.

**Registration & Fees:**

Students enrolled in our school will automatically receive next year's registration forms, toward the end of the school year. Please fill them out and return them to the Torah School office as soon as possible.

Forms are available online at <http://www.congregationbethel.org/school.html> or at the synagogue and school office.