

Beth El Preschool

Parent Handbook 2021-2022

Beth El Preschool
8215 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

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From Our Directors

Dear Families,

Welcome to Beth El Preschool (BEPS)! We are thrilled that you chose our program for your child. As we begin a new school year, it is a good time to reflect upon all the exciting learning that occurs at BEPS. Each day provides your child with opportunities for exploration, investigation and personal growth, in an environment that nurtures his or her Jewish identity and helps lay the foundations for lifelong learning, academic success and social/emotional strength. The BEPS program is designed to support all areas of your child's growth and development, allowing them to reach their fullest potential. Our outstanding staff guides children in their learning to help them get a good start toward reaching that potential.

Your active participation in our cooperative preschool is critical to our success. We welcome the opportunity to work closely with you and share in the joy of your child's growth. The preschool years are filled with wonder and excitement and we are thrilled to experience this incredible time with you.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide important information pertinent to our policies and procedures. We hope it is helpful throughout the year and that you will refer to it often when you have questions. Please also feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

We look forward to getting to know all of our BEPS families!

Warm regards,

Ali Lackey and Lauren Hirt
Interim Co-Directors

Beth El Preschool Staff

Interim Co-Directors

Lauren Hirt Ali Lackey
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Office Administrator

Lynn Pikovsky
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Child Development Specialist

Annie Orgad
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Curriculum & New Staff Support

Karen Berman
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PRE-K

Kokusim: Ashley Corpuel & Laura Gopstein - Room 205
Rimonim: Debbie Olchyk & Patti Chandler - Room 209

THREES

Agasim: Alli Camps & Michelle Gips - Room 203
Petel: Kathi Whitman & Marisol Garduno - Room 208
Tutim: Nancy Wilke & Linda Tebeka - Room 202

TWOS

Bananot: Cindy Singman & Debra Diewald - Room 104
Limnim: Bonnie Lessans & Jennifer Nordheimer - Room 105
Tapuchim: Debbie Glick & Gaby Montenegro - Room 102

TRANSITIONAL TWOS

Kiwi: Suzanne Schonfeld & Fern Bensignor - Room 106

FLOATERS

Susan Azdham Lauren Mezrahi
Denise Brujis Alyson Small
Adam Kupfer Lindsay Cahme

Flexible Thinking: Annie Orgad

Movement: Brittany Ross

Music & Musical Movement: Karen Berman

STEM: Bonnie Minoff (2s & 3s) and Patti Chandler (Pre-K)

Parsha Lady & Storyteller: Lisa Arber

School Philosophy

Beth El Preschool (BEPS) was founded in 1956 as a parent cooperative preschool and is approved by the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE). As a cooperative preschool, parents play an integral role in our community. Our parents are involved in many aspects of our school, serving in leadership positions on our Parent Board, in various roles on parent committees, and as assistants in the classrooms. Parents and teachers work together to guide and support children in their learning. We believe that there is no substitute for meaningful parent involvement in the early school years. We understand the importance of a strong school-home partnership, and we foster it daily at BEPS.

At BEPS, play is at the heart of learning. Young children learn the most important things, not by being told, but by constructing knowledge for themselves. They learn by doing, touching, experimenting, choosing, talking and negotiating. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world in which we live. At our school, we support play, the important work of each child. Our exceptional teachers listen to and guide children, and provide a safe place for children to question, test and refine their ideas. Children are encouraged to become independent and confident learners. Critical thinking and problem solving skills are fostered through a wide variety of experiences with literature, math, music, movement, science, art and Jewish culture. Children learn at their own pace through active involvement with materials, with peers, and with adults.

Our comprehensive Judaic and secular curriculum nurtures all aspects of a child's growth – physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual. Jewish learning and Jewish values are the foundation of our school. Our integrated curriculum helps to foster a strong and vibrant Jewish identity and a connection to Israel and the Jewish people. Our clergy is actively involved in our school, providing guidance to the staff and parents and visiting periodically in the classrooms with the children. Our preschoolers benefit in many ways from this unique partnership between teachers, parents and clergy. We welcome your active participation and look forward to playing, working and growing together!

Curriculum

The BEPS curriculum recognizes and celebrates the individuality of each child. Preschool age children vary greatly in their development and maturation rates. Our program is designed to be an exciting “hands-on” learning experience, with activities geared toward meeting the varied needs of each child. Our developmentally appropriate program takes into account everything we know about how young children develop and learn, and matches it to the content and experiences offered throughout the school day.

At BEPS all children are exposed to experiences and activities rooted in language arts, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), music, art and Judaics (holidays, rituals, Bible stories, Hebrew and Israel). Fine and gross motor skill building are incorporated into daily experiences, as is the fostering of social-emotional skills through interactions with peers, teachers and other adults.

At BEPS, we recognize and value children as individuals, with their many strengths, different temperaments, and varied interests and personalities. We understand their changing capabilities and view children in the context of their family, community, past experiences and current circumstances. Teachers and parents demonstrate respect by allowing children to think for themselves, make decisions, work toward their own solutions and communicate their ideas. As Jewish early childhood professionals, our experienced teachers partner with parents to provide the best possible Judaic and secular program for our children.

The goals of our curriculum are as follows:

- Foster positive self-esteem in each child.
- Provide a safe, warm atmosphere, free from pressure and tension.
- Provide a well-rounded program in which each child can grow socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically and spiritually.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop positive social relationships.
- Provide an enriching environment that fosters creativity, problem-solving and independence.
- Create an environment in which each child’s individuality is respected.
- Create an environment in which positive Jewish experiences occur daily.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful parent involvement within the school.

Positive Discipline Philosophy

The goal of positive discipline is to shape and change behavior. At BEPS, we strive to do this with love, gentleness and lots of encouragement. We view discipline as a system of guidelines or a framework within which children can operate safely. Our positive discipline approach is a process of assisting children to understand and use constructive behaviors. Our goal is to teach appropriate forms of behavior, not to punish the child for inappropriate behavior. To accomplish this goal, we use the following techniques on a daily basis:

Prevention: The right combination of materials and equipment, time and space, and a healthy emotional climate works wonders in creating an environment that keeps conflict at a minimum and is conducive to a child's healthy development.

Positive Redirection: This important technique is used frequently in our school. We redirect unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative.

Modeling: Adult-modeled appropriate behavior and communication are provided to help children develop responsibility for their actions.

Limit setting: We have a few clear, simple rules that vary according to the age of the children. We emphasize what children can do in a caring, positive way and encourage the child's efforts when s/he complies.

Problem Solving: We appeal to the preschooler's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences. We also ask questions to encourage problem solving. Teachers help children identify their needs and feelings, alternatives and choices.

Managing Behavior: If a child has a physical or emotional outburst, we provide comfort and privacy. This allows the child time to regain composure and ensures the safety of other children. We may briefly separate the child from the group to allow him/her a "cool-down time". Cool-down time is not punishment. It is a quiet, neutral break: a cooling-off period for the child to retain self-control. With help from a caring teacher, the child is encouraged to return to the group as soon as s/he is ready to participate.

As teachers and parents, we must remember that we are role models. If we are patient, encouraging, helpful and kind, the children will learn to be the same.

Daily Operations

School Hours

School begins daily at 9:15 am. The preschool doors will open at 9:10 am.

Co-oper arrival time is 9:00 am. Please be prompt so that classroom set-up can be completed before children arrive. We know mornings are hectic, so please plan ahead to make sure you and your child are in the classroom by 9:00 am. Your child's teachers are counting on your timeliness and assistance!

School morning dismissal is 12:00 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your child at the classroom door.

Co-oper dismissal is 12:15 pm. Please plan to stay until 12:15 pm to assist your child's teachers with the transition to Lunch Bunch.

Lunch Bunch dismissal is 1:00 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your child at the classroom door.

Enrichment dismissal is 2:15 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your child at the assigned Enrichment classroom door.

What to Bring

Each day children should bring a backpack, water bottle and lunch (if they are staying for lunch) each day. Tote bags will be used to bring home projects and school announcements every Friday and should be returned to school empty each Monday.

Please label lunch boxes and all outerwear with your child's name. An extra set of clothing, diapers and wipes (if applicable) should be kept at school in a plastic "zipper" bag. Check throughout the year to make sure that these clothes still fit and are seasonally appropriate. If they are worn home, please launder and return them to school as soon as possible.

We play outside every day, weather permitting. Please send outdoor wear appropriate to the season, including hats and gloves. Boots are necessary in the cold winter months.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

We understand that drop-off may be a challenging time for some children. We also understand that each day can bring its own new transition challenges. At BEPS we will have plenty of staff to support your child as they transition into school each day, at the start of the school year and beyond.

Our current arrival and dismissal plans are greatly impacted by the pandemic. We ask that you follow all protocols in order to help keep our preschool community safe. Please note that our procedures may change as the pandemic changes.

Daily Questionnaire: Prior to arriving at school, parents must fill out a daily Health Screening Questionnaire via the Remini app. You will be asked to answer several screening questions and to log your child's temperature.

- The questionnaire should be filled out by 9:00am each school day.
- Your child will NOT be allowed to enter the preschool if their questionnaire has not been filled out that morning.
- If you arrive at school and the questionnaire has not yet been filled out we will ask you to fill it out prior to entering the preschool.

Dropping Off Your Child: Parents or caregivers will park and walk children to their respective drop-off locations. We will not be taking children out of the car as we did this past year. We will also not be running a carpool drop-off line, at least not at the beginning of the school year.

- Children in the 2s and 3s classes will be dropped off at their classrooms. Depending on instructions from your child's teachers, either walk your child straight to the classroom door or hang up your child's belongings and then walk your child to the classroom door. We ask that adults do not linger in the hallways.
- Children in the PreK classes will be dropped off at the front gate to the playground. Please walk your child to the gate where a teacher will be waiting. Please do not linger near the playground.
- All children ages 2 and older, as well as all adults must be masked during drop-off.
- Any adult entering the preschool during drop-off must be vaccinated.

Picking Up Your Child: Parents or caregivers will park and walk into the building at pick-up time. We will dismiss from inside the preschool wing.

- For 12:00pm Morning pick-up: Please wait in the hallway outside your child's classroom until the teacher brings your child out to you.
- For 1:00pm Lunch Bunch pick-up: Please wait in the hallway outside your child's classroom until the teacher brings your child out to you.
- For 2:15pm Enrichment pick-up: Please wait in the hallway outside your child's assigned Enrichment classroom (room numbers will be posted during the first week of Enrichment in October). Please wait for the teacher to bring your child out to you.
- Please exit the building quickly after picking up your child. Do not linger in the hallways or in the building.

- The Preschool doors will open no more than five minutes prior to pick-up time.
- All children ages 2 and older, as well as all adults must be masked during pick-up.
- Any adult entering the preschool during pick-up must be vaccinated.
- If your child will be going home with someone who is not listed on their authorized pick-up list please send a note to your child's teacher by clipping it to their backpack that morning. Clips and name tags will be provided for your child's bag.
- If your child's pick-up plans change once your child has been dropped off, please **DO NOT** email, text or call your child's teacher. Please email Lynn in the preschool office at lpikovsky@bethelmc.org with any changes to your child's pick-up plans.

Optional Programs

Lunch Bunch

This program is designed to encourage healthy eating and the development of social skills. It is fun to eat lunch with friends! Each child brings a dairy or pareve, nut-free lunch from home and enjoys lunch with classmates in his/her morning classroom. Lunch Bunch is offered Monday through Friday from 12:00pm to 1:00pm for children in the 2s, 3s and 4s classes. Registration takes place prior to the beginning of each semester (August for the Fall, December/January for the Spring). Any child may attend on a drop-in basis and will be charged a daily fee. Parents are encouraged to notify the BEPS office at least 24 hours in advance if you would like your child to drop-in to Lunch Bunch.

Enrichment

This extended afternoon program is offered Monday through Thursday and focuses on particular areas of learning. Children in the 3s and 4s programs are eligible to participate for the full school year. Children in the 2s classes may sign up for Enrichment Session 2, which starts toward the end of January. Hours are 1:00-2:15 pm. The Enrichment program includes Lunch Bunch. Enrichment classes may include offerings like games and sports; cooking; science; art; music; movement; tools; drama; storytelling and karate. Registration takes place prior to the beginning of each semester (August for the Fall, December/January for the Spring).

Admissions & Class Placement Information

Classes and Eligibility

Classes are offered for children ages 20 months through five years of age (through the Pre-K year). Age qualifications vary by class. Please speak with the BEPS Directors regarding any questions about our programs and policies.

There are two adults in the classroom: one teacher and one assistant teacher. On some occasions there will be 3 adults in the classroom when a co-op parent is present.

Any child, regardless of gender, race, color, religion or national origin, is eligible for enrollment in BEPS. However, BEPS retains the right at any time during the school year to revoke a student's right to attend if BEPS determines that the student's conduct or behavior is interfering with BEPS' ability to provide an appropriate learning experience to the student or the other members of the student's class. BEPS will consult with the parents before making any such decision, but parents understand and agree that the final decision will rest with BEPS. Once the decision is made by BEPS, the decision is final.

Application Procedure

The Director and the Admissions Committee set the date that applications for the following school year are due. A non-refundable application-processing fee must accompany each application. Every family is required to pay an application fee for each child.

Priority Order for Admissions

1. Currently enrolled students who are synagogue members.
2. Currently enrolled students who are not synagogue members.
3. Siblings of currently and formerly enrolled students who are synagogue members.
4. Children of current synagogue members (as of the date of application).
5. Siblings of currently enrolled students who are not synagogue members.
6. Children on the waiting list from the previous year.
7. Grandchildren of synagogue members.
8. Children and grandchildren of Beth El staff members.
9. Other applicants are based on a first-come, first-served basis.

Only applications received by the announced due date are considered and slated according to the order stated above; provided, however, ultimate determination of acceptance may be made at the discretion of the Director. After the announced due date, applications will be considered on a rolling admissions basis according to class space availability.

Class Placement

Great care is taken to determine the best placement for each child and the group as a whole. The Director works with support staff to determine the best placement for each child.

There are many criteria that the Director uses to determine the most appropriate placement for a child. These include, but are not limited to:

- Birth date (chronological age)
- Developmental maturity
- Learning style
- Gender
- Temperament
- Social-emotional maturity
- School friendships
- Special needs
- Space limitations
- Total group configuration
- Teacher's personality and style of teaching

BEPS does not require a child to be toilet-trained for placement in any class.

Tuition, Fees, and Reimbursement Procedures

The BEPS Director, in consultation with the Parent Board, determines the tuition and other fees each year. To ensure a spot, a non-refundable deposit is due at the time a signed Enrollment Agreement is returned. In order to simplify tuition payment and reduce collection problems, we offer several methods of payment. Debit Authorization forms are due at the beginning of June. These include:

- Monthly payment by electronic debit. Payments will be debited from your account on or about the 15th day of August, September, October, November, December, January, February and March.
- Bi-annual payment by electronic debit on or about August 15th and December 15th.
- Payment of the entire tuition, by electronic debit or by one check, on or about August 15th.

If financial circumstances prevent families from staying up-to-date on tuition payments, arrangements must be made with the BEPS office for a specific payment plan. If a payment plan is issued and the recipient is either not currently in compliance with these requirements or fails to remain in compliance with these requirements, the Enrollment Agreement will be voided.

For families entering BEPS after the start of the school year, tuition and fees will be prorated accordingly.

Covid Fee

This year all families will be charged a one time fee to support the rise in cleaning and safety costs due to Covid-19.

Change in Membership Status

When families join the Congregation Beth El after the start of tuition payments, they are entitled to have their tuition payments adjusted accordingly. The membership has to be in effect as of the first of the month to get the discount for that month.

A family who enrolls their child(ren) in BEPS as a Congregation Beth El member must continue to be a member in-good-standing with Congregation Beth El through the end of the school year for which the child(ren) is being enrolled. If a family resigns their Congregation Beth El membership before the end of the school year, BEPS will assess the family's non-member tuition rate as of the 1st of the month in which the resignation occurred.

Health & Safety Policies and Procedures

Your child's health and safety is extremely important to us. The following policies are in place to keep all members of our community healthy and safe. These policies will be added to our Parent Handbook.

Medical Forms

Each family must submit appropriate medical forms before their child may begin school. Each child must have a current Health Inventory Form completed by both the parent (Part I – Child's Health and Individual Needs Information) and a physician or health care professional (Part II – Medical Information). A "Record of Immunizations" must be completed (Part II) in order for the child to attend school. The Health Inventory Form must be completed annually, before the start of school, and is kept on file in the BEPS office. All medical forms are due by August 1.

Health Conditions and Allergy Alerts

It is essential that the school be kept informed of any health conditions that may require emergency action or care while at school. The child's physician must note these health findings on the child's Health Inventory Form. If a child has food allergies or sensitivities or is allergic to insects or other environmental allergens, it is important that BEPS has clear instructions from the physician and the parents as to how to care for the child should an emergency arise.

If a child is asthmatic or has an allergy to a specific food or substance, parents are required to have their child's health care professional complete an Allergy Action Plan as well as the Medication Administration Authorization Forms. Detailed instructions for emergency action must be specified on the form. A picture of the child must be provided and will be attached to the form. A copy of this form will be kept in the BEPS office and posted in the child's classroom. A list of all children in BEPS with allergies will be compiled and posted in each classroom. **If a child needs any medication due to an allergy (i.e. Epi-pen or Benadryl), parents should supply the school with two (2) medications.** One medication will be securely stored in the BEPS office, one in the child's classroom/emergency tote bag. If an allergy emergency occurs, BEPS will follow the directions listed on the Allergy Action Plan/Medication Administration Authorization Form. Please be sure to keep BEPS up-to-date regarding your child's allergies and health condition.

Allergy Policy and Classroom Management

The following allergy policy has been adopted to promote the health and safety of all BEPS children.

1. Protecting children with food allergies:
 - a. BEPS has an "Allergy List" sign posted in every classroom. This sign includes all children at BEPS with allergies and has their photo and allergies listed.
 - b. Each child's medication will be stored in two locations (when possible): the classroom/teacher's emergency class bag and the BEPS office.

2. Communication about the child with the allergy:
 - a. Parents should confer with the office administrator and their child's teacher before school starts to discuss any food allergies.
 - b. The Director or teacher will notify the other families in the class that there is a child with food allergies and what the specifics are, with permission from the child's parent.
 - c. The parents of the child will provide a written list of what foods their child cannot eat for the teacher and the classroom. This list is a part of the Allergy Action Plan.
 - d. Parents may review the school's snacks and approve snacks that his/her child may eat.

3. Classroom management:
 - a. Cleanliness
 - i. The teacher/assistant is responsible for the day-to-day disbursement of the snack for the child with the allergy.
 - ii. The teacher is responsible for keeping the classroom clean and the children's hands clean.
 - iii. All children will clean their hands before and after snack and before and after lunch.
 - iv. Teachers will make every effort to seat children separately at lunch if there are allergy concerns.
 - v. BEPS policy is that we do not share foods. We minimize the risk, but cannot control all foods that are brought into the school.
 - b. Snack
 - i. The parents of the child with the allergy may provide a back-up snack for the classroom.
 - ii. If the child is allergic to the snack the school is providing, the teacher is responsible for providing the child with the allergy with a back-up snack and ensuring that the child does not come into contact with the allergen to the best of their ability.
 - iii. In some cases, we try to find certain foods that don't contain the allergen and use this for the snack in the classroom.
 - iv. We try to find foods that everyone can eat. In certain cases, however, it depends on how many allergies a child has. The child with an allergy may eat a snack that is different than the snack that the rest of the class is eating, if necessary.
 - c. School-wide events or celebrations
 - i. BEPS sometimes provides food and treats at holiday celebrations and events. We will do our best to communicate to the families that have children with allergies the foods that we will be providing and if any of those foods contain certain allergens or are made on equipment that contains the allergen. Parents may always ask what is being served and we will be happy to share that information.
 - ii. *All BEPS events at Beth El will honor the school's kashrut and nut-free policies.*
 - iii. *All BEPS events outside of Beth El will be dairy or pareve.*

Medication

If a child requires medication, the parent and physician must complete a Medication Administration Authorization Form (sent to families in May and available in the BEPS office). Prescription medications must be in an original container, labeled by the pharmacy or physician, with the child's name and expiration date. Staff members are not allowed to administer any prescription or non-prescription drug without this form. The child may receive medication only according to the written instructions of the physician. A physician must approve the medication and dosage for the child to receive. In such cases, medication should be brought to the preschool office, not to the child's classroom.

TB Test for Co-oping Adults

All adults who visit the school must have signed evidence of a negative TB test on file. Adults will not be permitted to co-op in the classroom without documentation of this test. BEPS only requires parents to be tested for TB upon the family's entry to the school, however this year we required all parents to participate due to updating our records. The results of the TB test do not expire. If a family has more than one child who matriculates at BEPS, the parent does not need to be re-tested as long as the family's enrollment in the school is continuous. If a family has multiple children who matriculate at the school, but because of the children's ages, the family has a break in enrollment, the parent(s) needs to be re-tested before the next child matriculates at the school.

Immunizations

All children enrolled at BEPS must have up to date immunizations or they will not be admitted to care. Please follow the immunization guidelines set forth by the Maryland Department of Health - [MDH Immunization Requirements](#). **Please send all HEALTH FORMS and IMMUNIZATION RECORDS to the office administrator if you have not already done so.**

Flu Shots

All BEPS students and staff members must get a flu shot by November 1. *If your child has a birthday in November or December and you would like to wait until their Wellness Visit, please let the office administrator know so she can make a note of it.*

Sick Policy

It is BEPS policy that a child/staff member must be fever free (without the use of fever reducing medication), as well as vomit-, and diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning to school. In addition, a child who has tested positive for strep must be on antibiotics for a full 24 hours before returning. Defer to your pediatrician's recommendation regarding your child's return to school. **If your child gets sent home sick from school, they may not return the following day.**

Keeping our school a healthy place requires your cooperation, understanding and compliance with our health standards. We are not equipped to care for children who are not well, nor do we have extra staff to stay for long periods of time with children who are not well enough to participate in regular school activities. In an effort to safeguard the health of your child and all of our preschoolers, we ask that you

please keep your children at home if they are not well enough to participate in regular classroom activities.

BEPS will not permit a child who has any of the illnesses or symptoms of illnesses specified below to attend school unless medical diagnosis from a physician in writing indicates that the child poses no serious health risk to himself or other children. Such illnesses or symptoms of illnesses shall include, but not be limited to:

- Fever of 100.4 or more;
- diarrhea;
- thick, colored nasal discharge;
- yellow eyes or jaundiced skin;
- infected, untreated skin patches; weeping and/or bleeding skin lesions;
- stiff neck; swollen joints;
- skin rashes (with the exception of diaper rash and chronic, but not infectious, skin conditions lasting more than one day);
- severe pain or discomfort;
- vomiting;
- sore throat or severe coughing;
- pink or red eyes with discharge;
- difficult or rapid breathing;
- visibly enlarged lymph nodes;
- lice.

Please note that your child must be fever and vomit free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducing medication before returning to school.

If your child has been exposed to or becomes ill with a communicable disease it is imperative that you inform the BEPS office as soon as possible. Examples of communicable diseases include coronavirus, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, impetigo, fifth disease and strep throat. Failure to report exposure or a confirmed case, may result in termination from the program.

It is also important that you let us know if your child has head lice. An email or letter will be distributed to families in the school informing them of the situation in order to avoid a lice epidemic.

Illness at School

If a child becomes ill or displays any of the symptoms listed above during school hours, the child will be removed from the class and a staff member will wait with them until a parent/guardian arrives. In event this happens the following procedure will take place:

- **The parent/guardian will be notified immediately and asked to pick up the child within 30 minutes of notification.**
- Please keep emergency phone numbers current in order for the school to reach you in an emergency. At least 2 emergency contacts are required (other than parents). Please be sure that

your emergency contacts know that they may be called in an emergency and are available, if needed, to pick up your child when contacted by the school.

- The school will contact the Department of Health for further guidance if needed and follow their recommendations.

Injuries at School

If your child is injured at school and the injury is not a serious one, you will receive a written “Incident Report” in your child’s tote bag. This “Incident Report” will provide information on what the injury was, how it occurred and what type of care was administered. If your child should become seriously injured at school (e.g., injury to the head, any injury resulting in vomiting, dizziness, suspected broken bone) the parent will be called and notified of the situation. If any injury is identified as potentially life threatening (e.g., results in loss of consciousness, trouble breathing, profuse bleeding), 911 will be called immediately.

Vision and Hearing Screening

BEPS offers vision and hearing screening at school for all three-, four-, and five-year-old children. There is a nominal charge for this optional screening. Payment is made directly to the Hearing and Vision Screening Service. Parents will be notified, in advance, of the dates of the screening and may choose to have their children participate.

BEPS Biting Policy & Communication

When a child bites, his/her parents are informed personally and privately the same day the biting occurred. We also inform the parents of the child who was bitten. When we experience ongoing biting in a classroom, we develop a written plan with specific strategies, techniques and timelines to work on the problem. The plan is developed with input from the Director, the Developmental Support Coordinator, teacher and parents. We may also consult with an educational specialist (psychologist, occupational therapist or speech and language pathologist).

Biting is always documented on our incident form. The form is completed and signed by the Director, the teacher and the parent of the child who bit.

We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen at BEPS but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so that it will end as quickly as possible. We will support your children whether they bit or are bitten. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

BEPS recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when young children are in class together. Biting is more common with 2-year-olds but can also occur in 3- and 4-year-old classrooms.

We are always upset when children are bitten in our program and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for children to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems.

Some of the reasons children bite are due to:

- Exploration – Children explore using all their senses, including their mouths.
- Imitation – Children may have seen other children bite.
- Developing Understanding of Autonomy – Children are experimenting with asserting themselves as independent beings.
- Attention – Some children want and need more attention and nothing gets our attention faster than biting.
- Maturation of the Central Nervous System – Some children lack the ability to control the muscles that hold and let go.
- Sensory Integration Problems – Some children find ordinary movements frightening.
- Frustration
- Lack of language skills
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Excitement
- Reaction to a physical act that is happening to them.

Our program does not focus on punishment for biting but on effective techniques that address the specific reasons for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten.
- Help the child who bit learn other behavior.
- Work with the child who bit and examine our program to stop the biting.

Our teachers express strong disapproval for biting. They work hard to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. The teachers and Director try to analyze the cause of biting in order to develop a plan that will be effective in eliminating the biting. Specific strategies and techniques are implemented in the classroom to address the situation.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water.

COVID-19 Health Policies

We understand that the practices listed below can be an inconvenience, but they are necessary to minimize the spread of Covid-19. We know that Covid-19 is transmittable even when mild or no symptoms are present. Therefore, we ask that you take even the slightest sign of illness seriously out of an abundance of caution.

If your child is sick please:

- 1) Keep your child home.
- 2) Email the teachers and copy BEPSCOVID@gmail.com.
- 3) Follow the guidance in the [Tree Chart 1](#).
- 4) If testing is required, email results to BEPSCOVID@gmail.com.

The [Tree Chart](#) should help you make decisions regarding what to do if they have any Covid-19 symptoms.

Mask Wearing

- **Children:** All children 2 and older will be required to wear masks indoors at all times, unless eating or drinking. Masks are optional outside. Teachers will develop a system for their class that ensures all masks are put into an appropriate location when they are not in use.
 - **Special Circumstances:**
 - Children in Mazel Tots will not be required to wear masks, as they are not 2 years old and masks are not recommended for children under 2.
 - Children in Transitional 2s will begin wearing masks after Winter Break, as most of them will be 2 at that point in the year.
 - Parents must provide **several labeled clean masks**. If a child soils all of their masks, BEPS will provide a disposable mask for the child to wear and notify the parent that more masks are needed.
 - Children will not wear masks while eating. During this time, children will maintain proper distancing, when possible.
- **Staff:** All BEPS teachers and staff will wear masks indoors, unless eating or drinking. Masks are optional outside.
- **Parents/Caregivers:** Masks must be worn at all times in the building (drop off, pick up, co-oping or dropping things off in the main office). Masks are optional outside.
- Currently (January 2022) surgical grade, KN95 or N95 masks are required per synagogue policy for all adults entering the building.

Daily Health Screening

Before arriving at school, all staff members and parents (on behalf of their child) are required to complete a daily health screening via the Remini App. These questions will determine if the individual

is eligible to attend school. All co-ops will be asked to fill out a health screening questionnaire and sign into the preschool office prior to going to the classrooms.

Handwashing

Staff members and children will wash hands as per MSDE guidelines for hand washing; posters with visual cues will be posted in all school bathrooms and at all classroom sinks. Teachers will closely monitor children's hand washing.

Handwashing and/or the use of hand sanitizer or wipes will take place:

- When entering the classroom;
- Before and after snack;
- Before the playground;
- After using the bathroom;
- After changing a diaper (staff) or having their diaper changed (child);
- After returning from the playground or any auxiliary space;
- After blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Social Distancing

Children and staff will social distance to the best of their ability during the school day. Markers have been placed in the classrooms to provide visual reminders to students. Children will be distanced during snack and lunch time, as well as during Circle Time on the carpet.

Classroom and Building Cleaning

- Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of every school day by our maintenance staff, following [CDC/EPA guidelines for cleaning & disinfecting](#).
- Teachers will wipe down surfaces in the classroom during the school day.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected daily and routinely. These include light switches, door handles, handrails and all dispensers (i.e. paper towel, soap)

Bathroom Cleaning

Toilet and faucet handles and high touch bathroom surfaces will be cleaned periodically throughout the day. All bathrooms will be sanitized at the end of every school day.

Cohorting

Throughout the school day, students will primarily remain with their classes while indoors. Classes are permitted to join together on the playground and for special activities in the social halls. As of February 2022, enrichments will be cohorted by age. We will not be cohorting as defined by the CDC.

Surveillance Testing

All children and staff must follow the weekly testing protocols. Testing takes place weekly on-site, however students may test off-site. Test results must be submitted to BEPSCovid@gmail.com.

Torah Carriers: In order to ensure everyone's safety, all parents attending will need to take a rapid antigen test the morning of their child's Torah Carrier day and submit the results to

BEPSCovid@gmail.com no later than 10:00 am. If you do not have access to a rapid antigen test, you may arrive 15 minutes early and take one in our office.

Birthdays: In order to ensure everyone's safety, all parents attending will need to take a rapid antigen test the morning of their child's birthday celebration and submit the results to BEPSCovid@gmail.com no later than 9:00 am. If you do not have access to a rapid antigen test, you may arrive 15 minutes early and take one in our office.

Please note that the rule continues to be that only parents are permitted to attend Torah Carrier and Birthday celebrations. No grandparents or older siblings permitted.

Co-op/Volunteering

All parents and caregivers participating in co-oping or in Mazel Tots/Transitional Twos classes must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and the flu. All participants must provide proof of vaccination prior to October 1st in order to enter the classrooms. Additionally, all co-operators must provide a negative PCR test within 72 hours prior to their co-op date. Test results should be emailed to BEPSCOVID@gmail.com.

BEPS Response to Exposure and Positive Cases of Covid-19

If there is a positive case among household members (those who live with you), we continue to encourage masking and as much isolation from the COVID-positive individual as feasible. Students, faculty, and staff who are close contacts of a positive family member have to remain out of school for 5 days. They may return to school on Day 6 as long as they are asymptomatic, fever-free without the use of a fever reducer, and have a PCR COVID-19 test taken on Day 5 that is negative and sent to BEPSCovid@gmail.com.

If a child or staff member at BEPS comes into direct close contact, defined by the CDC as those who were less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis of Covid-19) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period of time, BEPS will follow [Tree Chart 2](#). **If a staff member or child tests positive for Covid-19, the close contacts will be notified and a school-wide email will be sent out.**

Travel & High Risk Event Policy*

As a member of our community, we are asking that you follow the BEPS Community Contract and pay close attention to CDC guidance and local travel policies. If you have any questions regarding events and travel plans, please feel free to reach out. If your child is out of school and misses weekly testing due to travel, please make sure they have a PCR test before they return to school. Please email BEPSCovid@gmail.com.

*Each holiday break, we will revisit this policy and make adjustments if we are at a high level of transmission or the Beth El Covid Task Force feels that it is appropriate to make changes.

Ventilation and Air Flow

The ventilation and air flow system is high quality and meets all standards, however as an extra precautionary measure, each classroom will have an Air Purifier with true HEPA, PlasmaWave and AOC Carbon Filter.

Community Contract

Our community contract ensures that we all do our part to keep our community safe and healthy. Please click here for our community contact.

Other Important Policies

School Closures

This policy has been updated this year: We will follow the lead of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) on the first day of a weather related closure. On subsequent days that MCPS

remains closed, BEPS will run a virtual program.

- If MCPS has a two-hour delayed opening, we will open at 10:15am. Pick-up times will remain the same.
- If MCPS closes early we will close at 1:00 pm.

Celebrating Birthdays

At BEPS we love celebrating birthdays! Our teachers ensure each child feels honored on his/her special day through a variety of BEPS birthday traditions including: birthday crowns, raising your child in a birthday chair, “showering” your child with birthday wishes and of course singing “Happy Birthday” in English and Hebrew. Specific traditions may vary by classroom. To alleviate concerns surrounding kashrut, allergies and nutrition, no outside food may be brought into school as part of the classroom celebration. Children will receive their regularly scheduled snack. Parents are usually scheduled to co-op on or near their child’s birthday.

Holidays

BEPS follows the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) calendar, with a few exceptions, as well as Congregation Beth El’s closures for Jewish holidays. At the beginning of the school year, each family will receive a calendar listing school holidays, events, and vacations. Important dates will be listed in emails from the Director, The BEPS Newsletter and on the BEPS website.

Please note: We do not celebrate Halloween or Valentine’s Day at BEPS.

Shabbat

The BEPS is part of our Conservative Congregation; BEPS activities must be respectful of Shabbat. Any BEPS event must be Shabbat-friendly.

Dress and Personal Items

Co-oping parents and children are expected to come to school dressed for active participation throughout the school day. We encourage active play at school, both inside the classroom and outside on the playground. Please help your child “dress for success” by selecting comfortable, washable clothing for your child to wear in school. Elastic waistbands are best for pants. Sensible shoes are a must. All children want to feel comfortable and free to climb and run, to paint and build, and to exercise their muscles and their imaginations.

Field Trips

Three and four year old classes occasionally take field trips, which greatly enrich our curriculum. Parents are needed to transport and accompany the children. Children may only attend field trips if they have a signed parent consent form on file with the teacher for each specific trip.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

BEPS is committed to providing the best possible and most appropriate learning environment for all children. Occasionally, there are factors in a student’s appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of

child abuse or neglect. Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees report suspected abuse or neglect to the protective services unit of the Montgomery County Department of Social Services, (301) 217-4417, in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. In addition, any suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported simultaneously to the Director of BEPS. A written report must follow the oral report within 48 hours.

Right of Privacy

Parents, legal guardians or other persons designated by parents have the right to review a child's records and authorize the release of such records to other schools or agencies. Teachers and administrators have access to all children's records but may not release these records without written permission from parents or guardians. The school retains children's files for five years after the child's departure from BEPS.

Security

Your child's security and safety is our top priority. The following security measures are in place at BEPS to ensure the safety of all children, staff and adults in the synagogue.

- Security Guard – A trained Security Guard is stationed in the front hallway during school hours. They monitor entry into the synagogue and the BEPS wing. They may stop you to ask questions if he does not recognize you or your guest. The Security Guard monitors the children when they are outside on the playground as well as keeping them safe when they are inside their classrooms. We also have an armed Montgomery County Police officer on site whenever the children are in the building.
- Locked Doors to BEPS Wing – Doors leading to the BEPS Wing are locked at all times other than at drop-off and pickup times. The BEPS administration or Security Guard opens doors each morning and at release times. Only BEPS Staff has access to the Preschool Wing through their fingerprints and/or fob.
- Parents Access to the Building – When the main doors to the building are locked (except for drop off and pick up times), parents have access to the building through fingerprints or fobs. Scanners are located by the main doors of the synagogue. You may register your fingerprints or receive the fobs from the Security Guard or the main office of the synagogue. Parents only have access to enter the building during school hours. There is also a doorbell to ring to gain access to the building. Parents' fingerprints/fobs do not unlock the Preschool Wing doors.
- Authorized Pick Up List – Your child(ren) are only released to those people on your Authorized Pick Up List that you are asked to submit on your Child Profile Form. If there are changes or somebody is not on your list, please email or call the Preschool office with the information. We will not release a child to any adult unless they are on your list or we are notified.

Parents and children should enter and exit the synagogue through the main doors only. This will enable our security guard to become familiar with and monitor who is with the children when they leave the building. This is very important to ensure the security of all of our children.

The BEPS staff has been fully educated in emergency responsiveness training and there are emergency protocols in place.

We encourage all parents and staff to be alert to people in the synagogue, both inside and outside the building. If you notice anything suspicious or have a question or concern, please notify the Preschool office or Security Guard.

Communication Policies

We know that parents/caregivers being unable to enter the building will limit face to face communication between parent/guardian and the teachers. We will do our best to communicate with you effectively and often.

Teachers, parents and administrators will be able to communicate through a variety of channels including the following:

- A weekly update will be sent to parents by the teacher.
- If a parent would like to speak with a teacher on the phone, the teacher will coordinate to set up a time for a phone conversation.
- The administrative team is available to speak to parents on the phone or via email during school hours.
- During the separation process, administrators will send pictures and updates to parents on an as needed basis.
- Teachers will upload pictures and newsletters via the Remini App on a weekly basis. Each class will send out information regarding this.
- Weekly Newsletters will be sent out that will include Parent Board Updates, upcoming events and school wide announcements.

Communication of Child's Progress & Parent Teacher Conferences

Formal parent-teacher conferences are held twice per year (November/December and May). School is closed on conference days and babysitting is provided. Conferences provide an opportunity for teachers to share important observations and information about your child's progress and experiences in school. It also provides an opportunity for parents to touch base and inquire about any concerns they may have about their child.

In addition, teachers are available to talk with parents about their child's development and to answer questions anytime throughout the year. You can schedule an appointment with your child's teacher by communicating directly via email. Teachers may be able to meet with you in-person, via Zoom or on the phone.

Open Door Policy

If a parent has a concern regarding an issue in the classroom, they should first raise the matter with the child's teacher. If the concern is not resolved, the parent should next speak with the Director.

A concern about overall school policy or curriculum should be brought to the Director. A concern about programs planned by Parent Board committees should be brought to the Parent Board Chair.

It is requested that parents make appointments for such conversations to ensure enough time and attention can be focused on the situation.

Food Policies

Kashrut Policy

Congregation Beth El is strictly kosher. All foods brought into the building to be provided to others must be kosher according to the standards of the Conservative Movement. All individual lunches must be dairy or pareve.

- No meat, poultry, or shellfish may be brought into BEPS.
- Permitted food must be dairy or pareve. Pareve means those foods that contain neither dairy nor meat. Examples of pareve foods include tuna, salmon, eggs, pasta, beans, fruits, and vegetables.
- Home-baked or cooked foods are not allowed, except in individual lunches.
- All food provided by the school for children will be certified kosher, including food at school-sponsored events and a daily snack for the class. For children who have allergies, arrangements can be made for those families to provide an alternative kosher snack for their child.

At BEPS-sponsored events for parents, the following kashrut policies apply:

- If the event takes place at Beth El, all food must be certified kosher.
- If the event takes place outside of Congregation Beth El, BEPS will provide only dairy and pareve food. If BEPS is not providing food, there must be a vegetarian option for parents in attendance.

Water Bottles

All children will be asked to bring their own labeled water bottle to school. Classroom teachers will determine the plan that best works for their classroom. If a parent forgets to send in a water bottle with their child, the child will be given water in a plastic disposable cup. Communal water fountains have been turned off.

Lunch

If your child attends Lunch Bunch, all food must be dairy or pareve and nut free. Lunches may not contain any meat or meat products. Please read additional information about Lunch Bunch in the “Optional Programs” section.

Reminder to Everyone: BEPS is a peanut- and tree-nut free school. We also follow the laws of kashrut. Please do not send anything in your child’s lunch that contains any kind of nut or any type of meat. Thank you for remembering these important policies.

Some lunch suggestions include: yogurt, cheese and crackers, tuna sandwich, egg salad sandwich, pasta, macaroni and cheese, cottage cheese and fruit, cream cheese and jelly sandwich, sunbutter and jelly sandwich, falafel, fruit, vegetables, chips, pretzels, etc.

Snacks

The school provides a daily snack. Kashrut is observed. All snack items are either dairy or pareve. We do not serve or eat meat products at school. All snacks are nut-free. To the best of our ability, snacks are also egg-free. We are extremely careful with regard to food allergies; we are happy to work with parents to provide safe options for their child during snack time. A kosher egg free challah and kosher grape juice are served for Shabbat snack each week.

Parents whose children have food allergies, sensitivities, or are on special diets, may provide an alternative snack if you prefer. These snacks will be kept in your child(dren)'s classroom.

Peanut & Tree Nut Policy

BEPS is a peanut- and tree nut-free school. This means that we do not allow any foods with peanuts or tree nuts to be served or eaten in the school. Tree nuts include almonds, black walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, filberts, hazelnuts, hickory nuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios and walnuts. We do not serve snacks to children that contain peanuts or tree nuts in school or at any school-sponsored event. We do not allow nuts in any of our classroom cooking projects or Enrichment classes.

Please make sure that any food sent to school for lunch is peanut-free and tree nut-free. If you send granola bars or other foods that contain or appear to contain peanuts or tree nuts, your child's teachers will put the item back in your child's lunch box with a note. If you send soynut butter or sunflower seed butter sandwiches, please enclose a note so it's clear the sandwich does not contain peanut butter or another type of nut butter. We appreciate your strict adherence to this policy.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is a key component to the daily operation and success of our co-op school. By joining BEPS, parents are required to participate in all aspects of our school, including co-oping in the classroom (unless you select the “Non Co-op Option”) and serving on the Parent Board or being a member of a committee.

The Directors and the Parent Board work closely to ensure that BEPS maintains the highest standards in early childhood education and continues to offer a variety of enriching programs that support our community, both during and outside of the school day. The Directors and the staff are responsible for the daily administration of BEPS, implementing the educational program, and ensuring each child has the opportunity to reach his/her potential in a safe and nurturing environment. An Office Administrator supports the Directors in the BEPS Office. The Directors are active members of the Parent Board and serve as a liaison between the Parent Board and staff. Parents employed by BEPS may not hold a Parent Board position.

Parent Board

The Parent Board is composed of the following parent officers (see Appendix for specific responsibilities) along with the BEPS Directors:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Governance
- Beth El Liaison
- Admissions Chair
- Events Chair(s)
- Communications Chair
- Tzedakah Chair(s)
- Teacher Appreciation Chair(s)

Board meetings are typically held on the second Tuesday of each month. Parents are invited to attend Board meetings, however, only board members can vote. If you would like to present a specific issue at a meeting, please contact the Chair one week prior to the scheduled meeting to be included on the agenda. Parents are also invited to participate in our Listening Post, a 15-minute block of time at the beginning of each Board meeting set aside to hear directly from BEPS community members.

The Executive Committee is composed of the Directors, Chair, Vice Chair, Governance, Secretary, Treasurer and Beth El Liaison. The Executive Committee may act during emergencies and at those times when an immediate decision is or school is not in session.

Parent Board Stipend

The Parent Board Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer are entitled to tuition scholarships as determined by the Parent Board.

Parent Meetings and Parent Education

A few general parent meetings are held each year, including a New Parent Meeting, Co-op Training, and Back-to-School Night. A parent information meeting is also held annually regarding Beth El Summer Time, the preschool's summer camp program.

Committees

Every family in BEPS, excluding Board members, must sign up for a committee. If you have two or more children at BEPS you must sign up for two committees or chair an event (Classroom Parent falls under the category of chairing an event). BEPS relies on parents to organize and staff events. The Chair and Vice Chair make committee assignments over the summer, based on parent preferences. Board members will notify parents of their committee assignments via email in late August.

BEPS Parent Committees include (but are not limited to): Admissions, Events (includes Holidays and Fundraising/Social events), Tzedakah, and Teacher Appreciation.

Fundraising events are held throughout the year to raise money for our school. BEPS depends on the money raised through these events to support our valuable program "extras" such as, the Parsha Lady, weekly music, art and science classes, our Education Specialist, in-house and outside field trips, and the many other programs that make BEPS such an exciting and unique preschool. The school may also initiate major fundraising efforts for targeted purposes, over and above our usual fundraising projects. We count on the support of our families to make these efforts a success.

BEPS celebrates many Jewish holidays, facilitates tzedakah projects, and hosts teacher appreciation activities throughout the year. Parent helpers are often needed to shop, set up and participate in these celebrations. Your participation helps to make these events successful for the children and families at BEPS.

Classroom Participation (Co-oping)

Parents take an active role in classroom participation. All parents and caregivers participating in co-oping will have to get a TB test and present their vaccination card for Covid-19 and proof of the flu vaccination, once it is available. Co-operators are also required to produce a negative PCR Covid-19 test within 72 hours of the co-op day.

The primary responsibility of a co-oping parent is to function as the teacher's aide, helping to ensure the success of the day's program. This includes, but is not limited to, arriving promptly at 9:00 am, helping the children with their jackets and outerwear, setting up easels and other classroom equipment, engaging with children during various activities, setting up snacks, and distributing notices to go home. Teachers and assistant teachers also help with these important tasks.

Co-operators help maintain a safe setting for our children by carefully monitoring the playground, accompanying children anywhere they go on school premises, putting away adult materials which may injure children and watching for unauthorized visitors in the building. It is expected that co-opping parents will clean up throughout the morning and enlist the children's help as much as possible. Parents are expected to remain in the classroom until all children not attending Lunch Bunch have been dismissed (approximately 12:15 pm) and should check with the teacher before leaving. Parents' conduct in the classroom should be in keeping with the philosophy of the school and is under the direction of the teacher. Talking on cell phones, texting and/or emailing while working in the classroom and on the playground is not allowed.

Co-operators may not bring their other children to BEPS on days they are co-opping. BEPS does not provide babysitting. Please arrange for care for younger or older children when you are scheduled to co-op.

Please note that while the following details about co-opping are not applicable to the 2021-2022 school year, they do provide valuable information about previous school years.

Co-op: The Co-op option is offered to the 2, 3 and 4 day classes. Co-op families are assigned a maximum of 12 co-op dates over the course of the school year with a maximum of 6 per semester.

Full Co-op: The Full Co-op option is only offered to the five-day classes. Full co-op families are assigned a maximum of 24 co-op dates over the course of the school year with a maximum of 12 per semester.

Limited Co-op: The Limited Co-op option is only offered to the five-day classes. Limited co-op families are assigned a maximum of 12 co-op dates over the course of the school year with a maximum of 6 per semester.

Non Co-op: There is a limit of 25% non co-op slots in each class. A specific class may exceed the 25% non co-op limit if the non co-op percent of the total school does not exceed 25%. Children currently enrolled in the school are given priority for the next year's class over new applicants, not to exceed the 25% non co-op limit. Non co-op parents must accept all other duties and obligations to the school as full and limited co-op parents.

A parent should not be assigned to co-op more than once in a given calendar week. The class representatives create co-op schedules two times per year, based on information from parents in the class. In the event that a class is under-enrolled, it is the responsibility of the entire school (and not merely the parents in the under-enrolled class) to make certain that the class is adequately covered. In such a case, the Board will decide, in consultation with the parents in the class, how to cover the class, i.e., through assignments of extra co-opping days for all parents or additional charges for extra aide time. Floaters (teachers or assistant teachers who are not assigned to a classroom on a given day) also help fill in when a class is not adequately covered.

Bathroom Policy

At BEPS, your child's safety is our number one concern. Although it is not always possible, staff will attempt to take multiple children to the bathroom at a time. If it is not possible, the doors to the bathroom will be propped open.

Only staff who have been finger-printed (FBI and CSIS) shall be allowed to change diapers for one of our students (unless it is the child's parent). During diaper changing, it is very possible for one adult to be in the bathroom with one child.

The following Code of Conduct for Co-Oping Parents has been adopted to promote the health and safety of all BEPS children:

1. Parent co-ops should count the children they are taking to the bathroom before they leave the classroom, when they get to the bathroom, when they leave the bathroom and when they return to the classroom.
2. If another group is in the bathroom, parents should wait outside with their children until that class leaves the bathroom. While waiting, it's helpful to sing with the children or play a simple game, such as "Simon Says."
3. Once in the bathroom, ask the child if he/she needs help with clothing. If yes, assist with unzipping, unbuttoning, etc.
4. Close the stall door for privacy.
5. If the child asks for help wiping him/herself, coach the child through it. Do not wipe the child but assist him/her with words. If there is a problem, please get a teacher, teacher assistant or the Director to assist.
6. Remind the child to flush the toilet.
7. If the child needs help with clothing after toileting, assist as needed.
8. Make sure the child washes his/her hands properly, soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
9. For younger children, if diaper changing is required, it will be done by a teacher, assistant teacher or floater. Parents are not to change diapers.

Other Important Co-op Policies

Be sure to arrange childcare for younger or older children when you are scheduled to co-op. BEPS does not provide babysitting and siblings are not permitted to attend on your co-op day.

Please be mindful of BEPS food policies. Do not bring any type of meat or nut product into the school.

Your full attention during co-oping is expected and appreciated, whether you are in the classroom, on the playground or walking through the hallways. Please do your very best to keep your focus on the children and teachers; cell phones should only be used when necessary.

Volunteer Grievance Policy

Any BEPS parent volunteer who believes he or she has been treated unfairly or is dissatisfied with his or her involvement with BEPS is encouraged to take the following steps (starting with number one), which

constitute BEPS' problem resolution process:

Step #1: Discuss the situation directly with the party involved in an effort to resolve the issue. (i.e., a co-op parent should first speak directly to a teacher/assistant teacher) If a resolution cannot be reached verbally, the BEPS parent volunteer shall proceed to the next step.

Step #2: Put his or her complaint in writing via email, memo or letter and present to the identified party who in turn must respond within five business days. If a resolution cannot be reached through written communication between the involved parties, the BEPS parent volunteer shall proceed to the next step.

Step #3: Promptly present the written material (both the complaint and the relevant party's response) to the BEPS Director and/or Parent Board Chair, as appropriate, preferably within five business days of receiving the written response. The parent volunteer is required to notify the relevant party of such action. The Director and/or Parent Board Chair will respond to both parties within five business days of receiving the complaint. If the Director or Chair can't reach a resolution or if the complaint involves the Director or Chair, the BEPS parent volunteer should proceed to the next step.

All concerned parties should expect a written response from the Chair within 10 business days of receiving the complaint. The decision of the Parent Board will be final.

There will be no retaliation of any kind against the parent for making a complaint under this problem resolution procedure. This policy does not apply to conduct constituting harassment, as defined by law; such conduct is to be reported per the process described in the Beth El Employee Handbook.

edited October 2021