

ACADEMIES AT GERRARD BERMAN DAY SCHOOL
SOLOMON SCHECHTER OF NORTH JERSEY



Early Childhood Handbook

2016-2017

5776-5777

Head of School:

Mr. Robert Smolen

Early Childhood Director:

Mrs. Susan Scher

Academies Coordinator:

Mrs. Sheila Barbach

Assistant Principal

Rabbi Yaakov Traiger

Mission Statement:

GERRARD BERMAN DAY SCHOOL

SOLOMON SCHECHTER OF NORTH JERSEY

Academies at GBDS features a strong academic program and an egalitarian, supportive environment. We pair a strong Jewish identity with an innovative curriculum. Our students undertake a journey of self-exploration, guided by warm and passionate educators. They graduate with a love of learning, a deep connection to Israel, and the building blocks for extraordinary futures: knowledge, creativity, leadership, Hebrew fluency, analytical skills, confidence, humility, philanthropy and community.

SCHOOL ROUTINES

HOURS

Nursery 2:	2, 3, or 5 days	9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Nursery 3:	2, 3, or 5 days	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
	OR	
	2, 3, or 5 days	9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Pre-Kindergarten:	Monday through Friday	9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Kindergarten:	Monday through Friday	8:25 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

BEFORE- AND AFTER-CARE

Available for an additional charge upon request. Please inquire in the school office. The times for this service are as follows:

Before-Care

Nursery and Pre-K	7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. -	Monday through Friday
Kindergarten	7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. -	Monday through Friday

After-Care

Nursery	1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. -	Monday through Friday
Nursery 3	2:00 pm-6:00 p.m. -	Monday through Friday
Pre-K & Kindergarten:	3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. -	Monday through Friday

Please Note: On early dismissal days, After-Care will start at the end of the school day and run until 4:00 pm.

Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm or 4:00 pm on short Fridays and early dismissal days.

ARRIVAL

For Nursery & Pre-K:

- The school day begins at 9:00 a.m. Please do not drop off your children at their classrooms before 9:00 a.m. Children should be walked to the classroom entrance where the teacher will be ready to receive them.
- Parents or caregivers who bring their children to school before 9:00 a.m. for before school care are asked to accompany them to room 103. There is a charge of \$7.50/day (plus 3% if paid by credit card) for students who are brought into before care with out a yearly before-care contract. We ask that parents do not stay in the child care room with their children.
- Parents may park in any of the parking lot spaces surrounding the school building. Please note that cars parked in the rear parking lot must be removed no later than 9:20 a.m.

Kindergarten:

Cars will pull in through the first gate (closest to the bowling alley) between **8:15 a.m. and 8:25 a.m.** at which time students will proceed to their classroom. Parents are requested to drop students off at the door under the canopy and to move on and leave through the second gate. Buses will drop off the children behind the school. There is a staff person responsible to see that the children enter the building in a safe and orderly manner. Class begins at **8:25 a.m. promptly**. Any student arriving after 8:25 a.m. is considered late, and parents must stop at to the office to sign in and obtain a late pass.

DISMISSAL

General

- Parental requests for early dismissal should be limited to unusual or emergency situations. **Standard appointments with dentists and doctors should be made after school hours as much as possible.** If a child must be picked up early, please come into the school office and we will let him/her know that you have arrived. A note or email as to the time of your arrival is mandatory so teachers are prepared for the early dismissal. No child will be permitted to leave the class until a parent has arrived in the building. **Parents are not to go to classrooms to request dismissal of students.** Parents must sign the child out in school office.
- For your child's safety, any children left in school 15 minutes after dismissal will automatically be placed in aftercare. You will be billed \$7.00 (plus 3 % if paying by credit card) per child per hour or any part thereof.
- If you change your dismissal routine in any way, the school office must be notified. If you, as the parent, desire at any time to have your child travel home with a friend, it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements. **A written notice or email** of the change must be submitted to the school office. **NO changes will be accepted after 12:00 noon, except for an emergency. No changes will be accepted verbally from students.**
- If your child goes home on the bus for a play date, a note must be given to the school office accompanied by \$5.00 in cash or check. Buses supplied by New York do not accept extra passengers. Please make sure extra passengers are allowed before sending your child to school with money and a note asking that they go home with a fellow student.

Nursery:

- Please pick up your children from their classroom. In order that the day runs as smoothly as possible, we ask that you be prompt. If you are going to be detained, please notify the school office as early as possible.
- Dismissal begins when your child's teacher opens the door. For the safety of your children we ask that you wait outside until the door is opened. Your child will have to be checked out by a teacher before you leave with him or her.

For Pre-K & Kindergarten:

- Buses will be positioned in the front of the building, while cars are expected to form three (3) lines in back of the building. Students will be dismissed all at once to parents in cars that are lined up between the two gates, then the next round of cars will be ushered in. **For everyone's safety, remain in your car and turn off your car ignition.** Follow the directions of the dismissal teacher before departing. Cars will be released in groups. Please do not move your car until waved on by the dismissal staff member.

- Parents are not to enter the school during 3:30 pm dismissal to pick up their children. If you need to leave promptly with your child, please park in the front of the building and sign your child out prior to 3:15. We will call your child out of the classroom at that time.

TRANSPORTATION

Carpools

During the first week of school, we will assist any parents wishing to arrange carpooling. At this time class lists will be available with the necessary information to help with this. Please inform the school office in writing of your carpool arrangement. No child will be released to someone other than a parent unless the office has been notified of this in writing. At the beginning of the school year, you will be asked to fill out a form with the names of persons authorized to pick up your child. In the case of separated parents, a custody agreement must be on file in the school office. Please keep all of this information current with the school.

Bus

Busing may be provided by individual towns for students who are 5 years old and in Kindergarten. A town's decision is made year to year based on bidding for transportation by the district. Information regarding pick up and drop off times and bus stops will be communicated by the student's public school district and will not be available until late summer.

SHORT FRIDAYS

Short Fridays do not affect our Nursery 2. However, the rest of the school will be dismissed at 1:30 p.m. After -Care on Short Fridays will end at 4:00 p.m. Aftercare from 1:00-1:30 pm is available for \$50.00 for short Fridays only.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If conditions warrant, we will cancel, delay, or close school early. We follow the recommendations of our neighboring Public Schools when making this decision. We will initiate our One-Call system for parents for cancellations and for delayed openings.

EXTREME EMERGENCY CLOSING

The following procedures, which were developed in cooperation with the Oakland Police Department, are put in place to respond in the unlikely event that there is a natural disaster, a threat made to the school, or any other situation where the immediate area must be evacuated.

- Staff will be alerted to the fact that there will be an emergency evacuation of the building by a coded message over the intercom.
- Assisted by the Oakland Police, staff and students will exit in a quiet and orderly manner through the fire exits, proceed to Spruce Street, and continue on to a location determined by the Police to wait for pick-up.
- The school staff or One-Call will contact all parents to apprise them of the situation and inform them where and how to pick up their children.
- Parents will not be permitted to enter Spruce Street. The street must be kept clear for emergency vehicles.
- Parents will sign out their children with the classroom teacher. School staff will remain until all children have been picked up.

All schools in the area, and nationwide, have been asked to put such emergency procedures in place. Although the safety of our children and our school are not in question, it is imperative to be prepared, if possible, for the unexpected.

THE STUDENT AND SCHOOL

LUNCH AND SNACK






Students must bring a Kosher dairy or pareve snack, lunch, and a beverage from home each day (lunch can be ordered through the PTO). Glass containers for food or beverage are not permitted in school. Finger foods are especially appropriate. We strongly encourage you to send in a nutritious snack and lunch with your child. Please send all fruits (especially grapes) and vegetable peeled and sliced into small portions. Popcorn is not permitted in N2, N3, and Pre-K. If your child is **allergic** to any food, please inform the teacher in writing on the first day of school. Field Trips are an extension of school and, as such, ALL food brought from home must be Kosher dairy or pareve.

PEANUT and TREE NUT sensitive

No peanut butter, peanut products or tree nuts are allowed in our school. Please read labels carefully. Food labels that say: "Processed in a facility" or "Processed on a machine" (or similar wording) are OK to bring to school for personal consumption. Food labels that say, "May contain" (or similar wording) are NOT OK to bring to school.

KASHRUT

In line with its commitment to Conservative Judaism, the GBDS observes the mitzvah of Kashrut. **Only dairy and/or pareve lunches** may be brought from home. This includes all milk products, all vegetable products, and all fish except shellfish. Bread, cookies, and cakes must be made with pure vegetable shortening or butter. **NO MEAT IS ALLOWED IN THE SCHOOL EXCEPT FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED, PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED AND CAREFULLY SUPERVISED OCCASIONS.** Parents bringing food to school for purposes other than personal lunch **may not bring HOME-PREPARED FOODS.** This policy is made to ensure the Kashrut of all foods served in the school. **ALL BAKED GOODS MUST BE PURCHASED AT A KOSHER BAKERY AND NOT BAKED AT HOME.** Any prepared food product brought into the school must be labeled with one of the following Kashrut symbols:

	The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations
	The Organized Kashrus Laboratories
	Star-K Kosher Certification
	Star-D
	KOF-K Kosher Supervision

NUTRITION POLICY

In June of 2004, acting New Jersey Governor Codey announced that, by September 1, 2006, New Jersey school districts will be required to adopt a school nutrition policy and by September 1, 2007, districts will have to match their policies to the New Jersey Model School Nutrition Policy. Details of this policy can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/modelnutritionpolicy.htm>.

The following list of recommendations for healthy food choices for children at home and in school has been compiled by this committee and is in keeping with this Model School Nutrition Policy. At school, we will be working with our vendors and school faculty to ensure that the foods we offer to students meet the standards of this nutrition policy. We also strongly encourage families to limit food and drink sent to school to those choices on this list.

In general, it is recommended that we all avoid foods with hydrogenated oils and trans fats. If you read ingredient lists on the foods in your pantry, you will likely come across many items with hydrogenated oils. They are difficult but not impossible to avoid. Canola and olive oils are the healthiest oils with which to cook.

We would like to strongly discourage sending children to school with candy. This includes *Fruit Rollups*, *Fruit by the Foot*, and *Fruit Gushers*. If you occasionally wish to send a small piece of candy or a cookie as a treat after a healthy lunch, please send in a small amount only (i.e. 1 or 2 *Hershey's Kisses*, 1 or 2 small cookies).

When children's birthdays are being celebrated in school, please consider trying to find healthier alternatives to cakes and candies as a treat for the class. Additionally, please check with your child's teacher to see if there are any allergies in the class.

Suggested lunch Menu Ideas:

BEVERAGES

Water
Milk - low fat is recommended
100% fruit or vegetable juice

FRUIT

Apples
Pears
Mellon
Berries
Kiwi
Oranges
Bananas
Mango
Other whole fruit
Dried fruits
Applesauce
Fruit cup

VEGETABLES

Carrots
Celery
Pepper
Cucumber
Corn
Cherry tomatoes
String beans
Sugar snap peas
Snow peas
Edamame
Cauliflower
Broccoli

BREAD PRODUCTS

100% whole grain products are preferred
Whole grain cereal
Whole grain crackers
Pita crisps

Rice cakes
Whole wheat pretzels
Mini whole wheat bagels
Pasta - al dente is healthier!
Whole grain tortillas
Granola bars
Graham Crackers
Small portions of healthy cookies
Baked chips

FISH

Try to find wild fishes if available
Tuna
Salmon
Gefilte
Sushi

Lox
Other fish

SALADS

Fruit
Vegetable
Bean

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Cheeses - try low fat
Yogurt - low fat or with no added sugar
Consider making your own with plain yogurt and whole fruit
Cottage cheese
Low fat pudding
eggs

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are treated as a special day for your child. If you would like, you may send a special snack to school on this day to be served at snack time. **Packaged items must be marked with a kosher symbol and peanut free.** Please do not bring in home baked goods as we cannot serve them to the children. Please coordinate the day with the teacher in advance.

We also encourage our children to give a small gift to the classroom or its library in honor of their birthday. This custom encourages the idea of "Tzedakah" and of receiving pleasure from giving as well as receiving.

For birthday parties, we ask that parties not be held on Friday nights, Saturdays, on any Jewish holidays or on the eve of Jewish holidays. Food provided should be Kosher. Unless the party is limited to one or two special classroom friends, we ask that the entire class be invited to birthday parties to avoid hurt feelings. Please mail party invitations.

NAP & REST TIME

We encourage the Nursery 2, Nursery 3, and Pre-Kindergarten children who are with us all day to unwind and/or nap. Please share your child's typical nap schedule with the teacher.

CLOTHING

Please dress your children in clothing that is durable, comfortable and practical for early childhood activities. It is necessary to send in a complete change of clothes to be kept in the classroom in case of spills or accidents. **Please send in 2 complete changes of clothes, weather appropriate, on the first day. Every article must be labeled with the child's first and last names and placed in a clear bag.** If we send home soiled clothing, please send in another change the very next day.

On Fridays girls may wear dresses, skirts, or pants and boys to wear nice slacks and white collard shirts - not jeans.

On school trips and other special days to be announced, children need to wear GBDS shirts.

KIPPOT

All male students must, and female students may wear a kippah throughout the school day in grades K-8. Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten students are encouraged to do so. The kippah is worn in recognition of the "holiness of learning." We request that extra kippot be sent on the first day and kept in school. Please label the extra kippot with your child's name and send in with extra clips in a plastic bag. Students needing a kippot from the school's stock will be billed \$1.00 for each kippot (plus 3 % if paying by credit card.)

TOYS FROM HOME

Please encourage your children to leave their toys at home. This avoids missing, broken, or even loss of special items. However, if your child needs something from home, we will set it aside in his or her cubby until the end of the day or rest time.

TZEDAKAH

Throughout the year, your children will be learning the value of charity. Your children may be asked over the course of the year to bring in coins on a regular basis. The money will then be donated to a charity.

HEALTH POLICY

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Physical exams are required every year for all enrolled students in N2, N3, PK, K, grade 3, grade 6, and for all new incoming students. By State law all students must have the necessary immunizations or they will be excluded from class. The nurse will inform you if any are required.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The immunizations required are:

DPT - Ages 1-6: Four doses, with one dose administered on or after 4th birthday), or any five doses
Ages 7 & older: Three doses, including booster, administered at least 6 months from last in series.

HIB - (Haemophilus Influenza) - One dose on or after first Birthday

Polio - Three doses, with one on or after the 4th birthday, or four total doses

Measles - One dose on or after 1st Birthday 2nd dose before K

Rubella & Mumps - One dose of vaccine on or after 1st birthday.

Varicella (chicken pox) - One dose of the vaccine upon entrance to school for Nursery, Pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1 students. This must be given on or after 1st Birthday. If your child has had the chicken pox, the date of disease is acceptable instead of immunization.

The Hepatitis B vaccine series - Three doses required for entrance into Kindergarten and Grade 6. All new students in any grade who were born after January 1, 1996 are required to have three doses.

UNDER THE LAW, THE SCHOOL MAY BE FINED A VERY LARGE AMOUNT PER CHILD, PER DAY, FOR THOSE NOT IMMUNIZED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW.

SCREENINGS

Vision and hearing tests are administered annually to each child at the school by the school nurse.

FIRST AID

A registered nurse is on duty in the school for a portion of every day. Minor first aid will be given in the school and the parent will be notified as necessary.

In the event a student becomes ill in school, the nurse/office will call your home or the emergency numbers you provide. Please keep these up-to-date. We urge that parents provide the school with their cell phone numbers. These will only be used when the parents cannot be reached at home or at work. **In an emergency situation, your child will be taken to a nearby Hospital and you will be notified.**

MEDICATION

Medication can be dispensed only by the Nurse. Medication must be in original labeled pharmacy bottle, labeled with the name of the medication, and the child's name. This must be accompanied by a parental permission note specifying time, dosage and the last date the medication is to be administered, and also must be signed by the physician. Forms for this purpose are available from the school office or nurse. **NEVER SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD WITHOUT FIRST NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL.**

According to the State of New Jersey, it is a law that, in order to administer medication during school hours, whether it is a prescription or a non-prescription medication, a **written authorization with the doctor's signature** must accompany the medication. A note from the parent is also required.

NOTE: Tylenol, Advil or any other medication will not be given unless the school receives **written, signed** permission from the child's **physician and parent/guardian**. This permission must be updated every year. **No exceptions can be allowed.**

KEEPING CHILDREN HOME

Please be considerate of your child as well as the health and welfare of the class by not sending your child to school with a runny nose, cough or other signs of a cold or temperature (above 100 before medication). If anyone in the class has lice or a contagious illness, i.e. Chicken Pox, we will notify the parents in the class. We expect the same courtesy from our parents. If your child has strep, he/she must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before being allowed to return to school. If your child has fever, he/she must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has been hurt accidentally, or has been involved in any mishap, we will notify you immediately. If you have medicated your child with ANY MEDICATION before sending them to school, please notify the school nurse with the name and time of administration.

LICE

In the event it has been determined that a child has lice, the child will be excluded from school until he/she is treated. Re-admittance to the school must either be by the school nurse after he/she has checked the child, or with a note from the child's physician. Teachers, office personnel, and administrators will not assume this responsibility. The school maintains a "no nit" policy and the child must be free of nits before returning to school after treatment..

MEDICAL EMERGENCY SITUATIONS PROCEDURE

For the safety of your child, if an emergency room visit is required while you are away from home, the following information must be provided to the school office before your departure to ensure that your child receives the proper medical care:

- I. Telephone number at which you can be reached;
- II. The person that is watching your child, as s/he needs to accompany the child to the Emergency Room;
- III. Completed school emergency cards (to be submitted at the beginning of the school year);
- IV. A dated note or email with the following information:
 - A. dates of your absence;
 - B. name of person assuming full responsibility for your child in your absence;
 - C. explanation that this person has permission to make all decisions;
- V. Any allergies your child has, any medical prescriptions that may be needed, any medication your child is taking at that time, and your pediatrician's name and telephone number.

PARENT AND SCHOOL

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Parents are welcome at the Academies at Gerrard Berman Day School. Parents are encouraged to visit during classes, programs and many holiday celebrations. Classroom visits can take place only after the parent has called the school office and arranged for the visit in advance. Except for picking up and dropping off your child, **parents must always check in at the school office upon arrival and before proceeding to any classroom.** At this time the office will issue the parent a VISITOR'S PASS. For Safety and security please follow this procedure. This policy is in the best interest of your child's safety and helps ensure a positive learning environment.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

GBDS needs you and welcomes assistance with open arms! Volunteering in our school provides parents with an opportunity to meet other parents and to enrich the lives of our students and our school. Please call the Mr. Robert Smolen, head of school, Mrs. Susan Scher, Early Childhood Director, or the PTO representative to get involved.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Our active PTO is a vital link between the school and the parent. It is an organization through which you, as parents, can express your views and share mutual concerns involving your children. Your involvement is necessary to enrich our ongoing programs. Forms requesting information regarding parental participation and a list of social and fundraising events will be sent under separate cover and posted to our website.

ADJUNCT PERSONNEL

In addition to their regular classroom teachers, our students benefit from the expertise of specialists.

Music Specialist: Music classes meet weekly and include Judaic music, music appreciation, instrumental & choral music.

Physical Education: Ongoing physical education instruction geared towards students' motor development skills and introduction to various sports activities.

Librarian: Grade level-appropriate instruction of library and research skills and exposure to various styles of literature.

Learning Specialist: Observes children in classrooms on an as-needed basis. Advises teachers in methods of fostering intellectual/social development in students. Makes recommendations for creation of special programs for students with special needs.

Social Worker: Scheduled visits to provide observations, consultations and recommendations on an as needed basis.

Science Specialist: Coordinates and teaches science to all classes.

COMMUNICATION AND E-MAIL

Please check your e-mail regularly as most information will be sent to parents and staff via e-mail. Make sure that the office has your updated e-mail address.

Keshet

The school newsletter will be emailed home twice a month. It is the major line of communication with the parent body, and contains important notices concerning school activities and programs. Parents are urged to read the newsletter carefully and make note of upcoming events.

Web Site

Our school website, www.ssnj.org, contains useful information concerning the school, a photo diary of our school year, and a year-long calendar. Please check our website for calendar updates and related information. If you sign a release at the beginning of the school year, your child's picture may appear on the website.

LOST AND FOUND

Found items of clothing are kept in a box inside the rear entry door. To prevent losses, please mark/label your child's clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes and other property with his/her name. Items on the Lost and Found cart will be kept for several months, after which time they will be donated to an appropriate charity.

SCREENING FOR KINDERGARTEN

Children currently in our Pre Kindergarten class will undergo Kindergarten readiness screening in the spring to ensure proper placement for each child. A learning consultant will meet with each child in school.

PAYMENTS

Payment by check is preferred. A 3% convenience fee will be added to any payment put on a credit card. Please call Joan Sadow, ext. 231 with any payment questions.