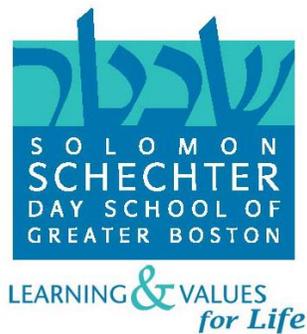


# Solomon Schechter Parent Handbook



2016-2017 (5777)

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## Introduction

### **Vision**

Our students will become self-confident, compassionate, practicing Jews and committed citizens who are prepared for the academic and social challenges of the modern world, and who are connected to the Jewish people and the land of Israel.

### **Mission**

To provide an outstanding education in English and Hebrew that:

- ❖ INSPIRES a love of learning
- ❖ CELEBRATES the creativity and achievements of our children, and
- ❖ NURTURES lives rooted in Jewish tradition and Torah.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information you share with us is considered privileged and private. We will not release any information to anyone outside of our staff without written consent from the parent(s). Parents and guardians may obtain copies of their child's records by submitting their request in writing to the Principal; such requests will be maintained within the child's records.

### **NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Solomon Schechter Day School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation or gender expression in the administration of its educational policies, admission, financial aid program, athletic and other school-administered programs.

## I. Academic Matters

### **ADVISORS/HAVUROT**

Each student in grades 6-8 has an advisor who supports his/her academic, social and emotional growth. The advisor serves as an academic link between the student and the other teachers both in communicating information and encouraging academic achievement and social development. The *havurah* advisor is the first point of contact, after the classroom teacher, to address any concerns.

### **AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM (GRADES K-8)**

Schechter has an extensive program of afterschool activities. Schechter's Afterschool Enrichment program gives children the opportunity to have fun as they take part in a variety of experiences, including arts, sports, science, music and academic enrichment. Classes meet on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Afterschool activities for older students include sports, art, band and (for eighth graders) the all-Hebrew musical.

An Extended Day program is available until 6:30 p.m. or (on Fridays) 45 minutes before *Shabbat*. Extended Day provides a warm and relaxing environment where children can participate in enriching activities such as arts and crafts, drama, cooking and gym, as well as supervised study hall. Detailed information about registering for enrichment activities is sent to parents and also can be obtained from the school office or from the website, [www.ssdsboston.org/program/afterschool/enrichment-experiences](http://www.ssdsboston.org/program/afterschool/enrichment-experiences).

### **ATHLETICS (GRADES K-8)**

Schechter believes strongly in the importance of working to develop the whole child. It is most important for our children to engage in physical activity, learn new skills and improve their teamwork. Parent volunteers organize Schechter Soccer for students in Preschool-3 on Sunday mornings. **Grades 6-8 Team Sports:** Schechter offers the following team sports: soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, lacrosse and cross country, depending on interest. For each sport, we have a varsity/interscholastic team and a JV/intramural team. Varsity athletes play a number of games against schools that are highly competitive. Teams are determined once everyone has had an opportunity to tryout. For JV teams, we ensure every student who is interested has the opportunity to play and to be part of the team. Our intention is to give JV/intramural team players the necessary instruction and experience to develop their skills. Members of the JV/intramural teams will not compete in as many outside games as the varsity teams. Team members must behave according to the principles of *derekh erez* (respect for others). They must show respect for teammates, coaches, opponents and visitors at all times. To be eligible to play, students must complete homework assignments and maintain a C+ average. Coaches communicate with the teachers to ensure these standards are maintained.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

The school takes seriously its responsibility to maximize students' academic and social growth and development.

**In Gan Shelanu**, each classroom has an assigned age range. Children are placed in a class that is most appropriate to the age they are as of September 1 of the current school year. If a child begins mid-year, he/she will be placed in a class based on the age that child was as of September 1 of the current school

## I. Academic Matters

year. If a child begins in June for the summer months, the child will be placed in the class that is most appropriate to his/her age on June 1. Depending on the child's age, he/she may or may not remain in said class. This will be determined by the child's age as of September 1.

At the beginning of each school year, children will have an opportunity to visit their new classroom. Each new child will be given the opportunity to ease into the program by gradually increasing the length of his/her day until he/she is able to attend a full day.

**For students in grades K-6**, at the end of the school year teachers and administrators spend time meeting to discuss and create heterogeneous sections that are balanced in terms of numbers and learning style. Our goal is to match each child with teachers and peers. To respect the integrity of this process, the school cannot accept requests for specific teachers or classmates. In the spring, campus principals give parents the opportunity to provide insights into their child as a learner.

**Students in grades 7 and 8** are placed in homogeneous groups for math and Hebrew language instruction. Seventh and eighth graders may elect to take either Spanish or ISS (Independent Study and Support), a course that supplements the regular program and focuses on study skills, organization and academic support.

### **CURRICULAR GOALS**

#### **GAN SHELANU**

The scaffolding curriculum in Gan Shelanu builds upon foundations learned from year to year. Each unit is planned to be developmentally appropriate in order to provide the building blocks necessary to challenge each child. Children engage in activities that provide them with multi-sensory experiences and those which foster growth in areas such as fine and gross motor skills, cognitive and social skills and emotional well-being. Children learn through play and exploration, spanning a variety of disciplines including science, math, literacy and the arts. The curriculum integrates General Studies and Judaic Studies.

Jewish education is a cornerstone of the curriculum and is rich in Judaic content. Children learn about their traditions by experiencing them through song, prayer and ritual, story-telling and hands-on exploration.

As Hebrew language is an important component in the curriculum, children participate in Hebrew immersion lessons daily and they hear Hebrew language throughout the day.

Jewish values are instilled into all learning including *derekh eretz* (respect for others), *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), *tzedakah* (social justice), *ba'al tashcit* (protecting the environment) and *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming guests).

Children at Gan Shelanu celebrate all *hagim* (holidays) and the children enjoy Havdallah and Shabbat weekly.

**Rest Time:** Please bring a rest mat for your child to rest on after lunch. Children who choose not to sleep or awaken early will be offered quiet activities (e.g., books, drawing, stringing beads, puzzles, etc.).

**Playground Time:** Gross motor activity including outdoor time is an essential part of our day. Please note that we will go outside daily providing that it is not raining or below 28 degrees Fahrenheit. As a rule, all children will go out with their class. On days we cannot go outside we will play in one of many indoor

## I. Academic Matters

open areas both at Gan Shelanu and at the Upper School. Our classroom ratios remain the same on the playground as the teachers are outside with the children observing their play and situating themselves strategically throughout the playground.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Kindergarten students spend their day in one classroom in which Judaic and general studies are integrated. They have a 40-minute Hebrew program each day in which only Hebrew is spoken. Art, music, physical education and library are taught by specialists.

#### **Goals for Kindergarten:**

- Develop students' sense of themselves as independent learners and friends within their individual class and the larger kindergarten group
- Develop emerging reading, writing and mathematical skills
- Develop a strong sense that they are members of a vibrant Jewish community through learning about the holidays, traditions, *tefillot*, Hebrew and Israel

### **GRADE 1**

First graders follow a model similar to Kindergarten in that each class has a homeroom teacher who oversees instruction throughout the day. They have a 75-80 minute Hebrew class Monday through Thursday; and 40 minutes on Friday. Specials include science, art, music, physical education and library.

#### **Goals for Grade 1:**

- Develop proficiency and focus in reading, writing, listening, and speaking will develop with the block of time allocated to Hebrew
- Their developmental needs will be supported by the "homeroom" model, providing them an environment that creates a sense of routine and stability
- Continue to be enriched in Judaic studies by units in which the language of learning is English and by integrating themes into Language Arts and Social Studies

### **GRADE 2**

Second grade students have one teacher for general studies and one for Judaic studies. Specials include science, math technology, art, music, physical education and library.

#### **Goals for Grade 2:**

- Encourage curiosity and eagerness to explore while developing academic skills
- Develop skills in English and Hebrew literacy, math and problem solving
- Develop independence in Jewish practice, such as leading *tefillot* and reciting *brachot*

### **GRADE 3**

Third graders are the Lower School leaders. Science classes expand to twice per week, and a specialist teaches a period of math in our math/technology center, in addition to art, music, physical education and library. Academic expectations increase.

#### **Goals for Grade 3:**

## I. Academic Matters

- Take increasing responsibility for their own learning and actions towards others
- Apply the skills developed in earlier grades to delve into more content-based learning
- Develop an understanding of the structure and content of the *Tanakh* and an appreciation of *Torah* as a source of laws, customs and values

### **INTERMEDIATE DIVISION — GRADES 4-5**

In fourth and fifth grades, teachers are sensitive to, and work hard at, effectuating a smooth transition to the Upper School.

#### **Goals for the Intermediate Division:**

- Encourage the curiosity and energy of pre-adolescents and help them develop their individual talents
- Develop strong study skills and the ability to learn independently in all curricular areas
- Apply prior learning and improve or refine skills in all curricular areas in preparation for advancing to the Middle Division and a departmentalized curriculum
- Continue to grow in knowledge and spirit in identifying with the Jewish people, culture and heritage while being challenged to grow in *mitzvot*

### **MIDDLE DIVISION — GRADES 6-8**

Students in the Middle Division develop leadership skills and greater autonomy as learners and school citizens.

#### **Goals for the Middle Division:**

- Develop students' knowledge base and skills in a creative manner using techniques that are innovative and engaging to young adolescents
- Deepen the understanding and critical thinking capabilities of students in all academic areas  
Continue the process of personal and social growth while building membership in a caring and respectful community
- Encourage the development of teamwork skills in both the academic and social realms
- Develop leadership capabilities through community service, student government, school service, *tefillot*, drama and sports
- Continue to grow in knowledge of Jewish traditions and our relationship with other people and faiths by exploring values, ethics and spirituality
- Encourage students to take on greater responsibility for the observance of *mitzvot* as they become *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*

Each *havurah* (group of 10-15 students who have the same advisor) meets regularly with its advisor each week. The *havurah* program helps to address the need of young adolescents to identify and belong to a group. The *havurah* encourages team building, self-awareness and the growth of social skills and relationships based on *derekh eretz*, courteous and respectful behavior. *Havurah* groups identify and complete tzedakah projects as a means to develop these values.

## I. Academic Matters

### **HOMEWORK (GRADES 1-8)**

Homework provides opportunity for reinforcement and practice of material taught in class and to prepare for upcoming class activities. Parents can best support their children by helping them to organize their materials and set aside time and an appropriate place for completing homework. If your child consistently needs parent assistance to complete homework or if homework becomes an unmanageable burden, please encourage your child to talk with his/her teachers. If the problem persists, please contact your child's teacher.

Parents occasionally raise concerns regarding the difficulty of some homework assignments in Hebrew and can be challenged to provide homework support if they are not Hebrew speakers. Hebrew teachers do not expect parents to assist their children with homework. If your child is experiencing difficulty, please let the teacher know.

Homework is a regular part of Schechter's routine. We offer guidelines about the amount of time a student should set aside for their work each day. Our teachers work to coordinate the timing of projects and long-term assignments that may require additional time. Parents should take note of the amount of time that students are taking to do their work. Should the time vary widely, or exceed the guideline on a regular basis, parents should reach out to the classroom teacher to discuss further.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Typical Homework</u>
1	15-30 minutes
2	30 minutes
3	45 minutes
4	45 minutes
5	60-90 minutes
6	90 minutes
7-8	up to 2 hours

### **FAMILY PROGRAMS**

Schechter's mission includes reaching beyond the classroom to involve home, family and community. The family, school and synagogue work together to instill a love of Judaism and *mitzvot* in our children and to create the foundation for lifelong Jewish learning and living. The family fills the Jewish heart by providing home ritual and social and ethnic Jewish experiences for the child. The school feeds the Jewish mind with formal instruction, while the synagogue cares for the Jewish soul through personal prayer and communal celebration.

Schechter aims to educate the entire family: to empower families to become partners with the school in order to transmit Jewish heritage and tradition to our children. The school and the Parent Association work together to create family community building opportunities that will bring Schechter families closer together and provide learning opportunities for parents. Families are encouraged and urged to be part of the school's family education program and to join together to learn and to celebrate in a Jewish context.

## I. Academic Matters

### **FIELD TRIPS (GRADES K-8)**

Field trips are planned throughout the year to extend and enhance our educational program. Parents will be notified by email before each trip about time and place and must complete a permission slip. Trips are chaperoned by teachers and utmost care is taken to ensure each child's safety. Parents are sometimes asked to chaperone.

Field trips are considered an extension of the classroom, and each student serves as a representative of the school. Students are expected to act with *derekh eretz* towards all individuals they encounter away from school.

### **MATH MEETS (GRADES 4-8)**

Students in grades 4-8 participate with students throughout the region and country in a series of written math problem-solving challenges called Math Meets. They include the Continental Math League, New England Math League and American Math Contest 8. Students complete the math problems at school. AMC-8 contests are sent out for scoring, other contests are scored by our math teachers according to contest rules. Math Meets give students a valuable learning experience and an opportunity to strengthen math skills and apply these skills to problem solving. The results of these meets show how our students' work compares to that of students at other schools, both regionally and nationally, and allows us to evaluate the success of our math program.

### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS**

Schechter welcomes a diverse student body with individual learning styles and strengths. We strive to foster a learning environment that is appropriate for a wide range of students. Our instructional specialists partner with classroom teachers and support service staff to provide an educational program that is challenging and accessible to a range of students. Enrichment opportunities are provided within a flexible curriculum, which allows children to capitalize on their strengths. Teachers modify class content, instructional methods and materials, and make the necessary accommodations so that all children can succeed and be challenged.

Each campus has a director of support services, general and Judaic studies support staff and a school counselor. Support occurs both in the classroom and on a pull-out basis. Support staff work collaboratively with classroom teachers to design, implement and evaluate modifications in instruction and assessment.

Success depends on a partnership between home and school. Parents are informed if their child is receiving support services on a regular basis either in or out of the classroom. The director of support services is available to assist parents and families by:

- answering questions about learning difficulties
- attending core evaluations at local public schools
- interpreting results of evaluations and testing
- relaying pertinent information concerning a child's learning style to classroom teachers and developing a learning profile
- determining and presenting classroom accommodations to classroom teachers
- coordinating additional services using school personnel, if available

## I. Academic Matters

- locating and coordinating services from outside providers

A school counselor is available at each campus to work with students and confer confidentially with parents, teachers, support directors and administrators to help children feel comfortable and successful in school. The school counselor may meet with a child to explore learning, behavior or friendship problems that the child has expressed or that parents or teachers have noted. When appropriate, a school counselor will communicate with parents and may suggest referrals for further evaluation or management. The school counselors work closely with teachers and administrators to help promote a positive, respectful atmosphere at school and to work with challenges that may arise.

Gan Shelanu staff is aware of and makes accommodations for children with special needs. When they feel that the child's needs are beyond the scope of what can be provided, the Early Childhood Department in town in which the child resides will be called and they will make a recommendation for a referral. In such a case, the parents will be notified first and asked to confer with the teachers to work out a plan. If a child already receives support through the town, early intervention or privately, we encourage parents to share the Individualized Education Plan with the Gan Shelanu staff so that they may provide. The Director will facilitate the acquisition of services as needed.

### **SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

Each campus has a library, staffed with a school librarian who works closely with classroom teachers and children in support of our literacy program and other academic areas. Our libraries offer a wide range of rich literature on general and Judaic subjects in English and Hebrew. At the Upper School, the library is used extensively by teachers and students for reading, research and independent study.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTS** (GRADES 5-7)

Students in grades 5 through 7 take a series of tests in the spring published by the Educational Records Bureau (ERB). Along with ongoing classroom assessment, these tests help us measure each student's progress and to identify his or her strengths and weaknesses. Standardized tests also play a valuable role in providing feedback to teachers about curriculum and instructional decisions. They allow us to compare Schechter students with students from a broad range of independent and public schools. ERB test results are mailed to families in June. Parents wishing to review their child's ERB results are welcome to make an appointment with the Upper School principal.

## II. Administrative Policies

### **ABSENCES**

Parents should inform teachers and administrators in advance of anticipated absences by writing a brief note. In the case of an unanticipated absence, please call the office by 9:00 a.m. that morning; otherwise, the school may call you to confirm that the child is at home.

For Gan Shelanu, please call Debbie at 617-796-5500; for the Lower School, please call Jamie or Rebecca at 617-964-7765; and for the Upper School, please call Mel or Judy at 617-928-9100.

Upper School students who are absent from classes may not attend social or athletic events at the school that same day. Requests for homework must be made by 9:00 a.m. Parents may leave a message at the absence/homework request line, 617-630-4550. Assignments are also posted on homeworkknow.com or on Haiku (grades 7 and 8). Homework cannot be faxed.

### **CALENDAR**

Each family is sent a school calendar listing the days in which school is in session and special events. We schedule approximately 171 days of school each year. There are no classes on major Jewish holidays and festivals including *Yom Tov Sheni Shel Galuyot* (the second days of *Sukkot*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot* and concluding days of *Sukkot* and *Pesach*). When school is in session on the eve of a holiday, primarily on *erev Rosh Hashanah*, *erev Yom Kippur* and *erev Sukkot*, classes are dismissed early to allow families time to prepare for the holiday or to travel. Please visit our website to view the Schechter Google Calendar(s)—and sync to your personal Google Calendar and or/or subscribe to the Schechter calendar in MS Outlook or iCal (Mac). Visit [www.ssdsboston.org](http://www.ssdsboston.org) and click “School Calendar” on the bottom, left-hand side.

### **CLASS VISITS**

The faculty and students are delighted to have you visit classes for special programs, holiday and birthday celebrations. Generally, classroom visits should be limited to 45 minutes or less.

To arrange a classroom visit, please contact the teacher at least 48 hours in advance. The teacher may invite you to join in an activity or just observe the class. Please remember the teacher must be focused on all students during these visits. If you wish to talk with the teachers, ask questions, make individual comments and learn about curriculum, objectives and techniques, please schedule another time to meet with the teachers.

We ask parents to wait until the end of the Jewish holidays in the fall to begin classroom visits. When visiting, please respect the privacy of individual students.

### **COMPUTER/INTERNET POLICY**

Technology at Schechter is used to enhance the educational program. Schechter provides students with access to the school’s computers and electronic communication system, which includes Internet access. Computers are used only for educational purposes, for classroom activities and for independent research. Use of the school’s computers and Internet access is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.

The school’s *Derekh Eretz* Code guides the use of computers and the Internet.

## II. Administrative Policies

### ***Take Responsibility for the Safety of Yourself and Others***

Students will not: post personal contact information about themselves or other people; agree to meet with someone they have met online; or use the school system to access material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them uncomfortable.

### ***Respect Each Other's and School Property***

Students will not: attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school system or to any other computer system through the school system or go beyond their authorized access; make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system performance or destroy data by uploading unauthorized files, spreading computer viruses or by any other means; use the school system to engage in commercial activities or in any illegal activity; or deface or dismantle computer hardware.

### ***Behave Honestly***

Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their accounts. Students will under no condition provide their passwords to another person. Students will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the school virus protection procedures if they download files.

### ***Use Respectful Language***

Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages and material posted on web pages. Students will not: use obscene, profane, racist, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language, even in their own personal files; post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption; or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

Students will not harass or bully another person. Harassment and/or bullying are persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a user is told by a person to stop sending messages, s/he must stop; s/he must not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

### ***Show Thoughtfulness, Consideration and Appreciation***

Students will not: repost a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message; or post private information about another person.

### ***Listen Respectfully To Others***

Students will use the system only for educational activities and respect the rights of copyright owners. Students will not: use the system for playing computer games; post chain letters or engage in spamming; plagiarize works that they find on the Internet; or upload any files onto the system unless authorized to do so.

## II. Administrative Policies

### **ELECTRONICS/CELL PHONES**

School is a place of learning. Electronic devices may not be used in the school buildings during school hours unless they are being used for educational purposes.

Student may use cell phones or electronics before school until Homeroom begins.

### **FINANCIAL AID & TUITION PROGRAMS**

Solomon Schechter Day School is committed to providing tuition assistance to help make a day school education affordable to all of its families. In response to the many varied circumstances of families, we offer an array of assistance programs including CJP Discover Day School, Discover Schechter, iCap Tuition, and Traditional Financial Aid. We recognize that applying for financial aid can sometimes be confusing. We are eager to speak with parents about our programs and guide them through the process, answering any questions that arise along the way.

Schechter is committed to partnering with families who are ready to make a meaningful contribution toward tuition in accordance with their means, and who provide required information in accordance with the financial aid calendar. We evaluate each financial aid application in a fair, consistent and confidential process, taking the time to understand the nuances and unique circumstances of each family. Please contact our Admission Office at 617-630-4608 if you have any questions or would like to learn more.

### **GAN SHELANU PROGRAM DISMISSAL**

In rare cases, dismissal from the program is necessary under the following circumstances:

- The program is not able to meet the needs of the child
- Parent and/or child are disruptive to the program

Parents will receive a notice in writing if dismissal is necessary; however, every effort will be made to accommodate all children.

### **GAN SHELANU ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment is done on a rolling basis with priority given to returning students and their siblings, Schechter families and Gan Shelanu and Schechter staff members. Priority enrollment opens 2-4 weeks prior to general enrollment. Once general enrollment begins, all applications are accepted on a first come, first served basis.

Children must be 18 months or older by September 1 of the year they will begin attending school.

If you or someone you know is interested in enrolling their child at Gan Shelanu, please contact Ellen Agulnick, Early Childhood Program Director, at 617-796-5000 or [ellen.agulnick@ssdsboston.org](mailto:ellen.agulnick@ssdsboston.org) to set up a personal tour of our school.

### **GIFT POLICY**

Gifts to teachers are neither necessary nor expected though a written thank you note is especially appreciated. It is always acceptable to make a donation to the Annual Campaign or to the school library in honor of a teacher. Parents may also make donations to the library/school in honor of a special event, such as a child's *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

## II. Administrative Policies

### **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

Students are responsible for their belongings. Clothes and personal possessions should be clearly labeled. Students should not bring expensive personal items to school. Each campus has a designated Lost and Found area. Items are displayed periodically; if not claimed by a certain date, they are given to charity.

### **TARDY ARRIVAL**

*Lower School:* Students arriving late (after 8:20 a.m.) must be signed in by an adult with the receptionist and obtain a pass to bring to their teacher.

*Upper School:* Students arriving to school late should bring a note signed by a parent. Students must sign in with the receptionist before going to class. Tardies are noted on the student's permanent record.

Academic success requires students to be in school. Repeated tardiness can seriously impact a child's learning and is disruptive to teachers and classmates. Parents will be contacted about repeated tardiness.

### **TELEPHONE**

Parents are requested not to have students called to the telephone during school hours. Urgent messages will be delivered promptly. Lower School students may use the office telephone under adult supervision when necessary. At the Upper School, a telephone is available at the front desk for student use for urgent purposes. Students must request permission to use the phone.

### **TUITION**

Tuition is set by the Board of Trustees in January for the next school year. Class activity fees vary by grade and are added to the tuition bill.

A non-refundable tuition deposit is due each year with the reenrollment contract for each child planning to return for the following year. The tuition deposit is deducted from the following year's tuition bill. If your family receives financial aid, the deposit is 10 percent of the prior year's tuition assessment.

If children are withdrawn after July 30, the family is liable for 100 percent of the full tuition and fees, as applicable. The deposit is not refundable.

In Gan Shelanu, once your application is accepted, you will receive a payment contract. Tuition is non-refundable.

### **UPDATING INFORMATION**

Please notify the registrar at [registrar@ssdsboston.org](mailto:registrar@ssdsboston.org) of any change of address, phone number, email address or other important information.

### **VACATIONS**

As an extended family vacation can significantly disrupt a child's school progress, we urge families to schedule trips to coincide with school vacations. If this is not possible, Upper School parents should be in touch with teachers to receive the work to be covered. Parents of Lower School students are expected to get make-up work or tutoring after returning from the trip rather than asking for work in advance. The students and parents are responsible for covering the missed work and for the costs of any tutoring needed in the weeks that follow.

### III. Behavior

In order to live, work and learn successfully, it is important for members of a community to abide by certain core values. We expect all members of our community to embrace the principles of decency, respect, modesty and service in all areas of their lives. Specifically, we encourage our students to honor their parents, teachers, family and friends; to show respect and care for the institutions of the community and the environment; and to be increasingly prepared to be of service to others and the larger society.

#### **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

Solomon Schechter Day School gratefully acknowledges the Park School for sharing its Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which has been adapted for our school.

##### ***I. Introduction***

At Solomon Schechter Day School, we expect that all members of our school community will treat each other with respect and kindness in accordance with our code of *derekh erez*.

It is the policy of our school to provide and maintain a learning environment that is free of bullying and any other verbal or physical misconduct that disrupts the learning environment or makes it unsafe.

The Schechter Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is published in accordance with the Massachusetts law (St. 2010.c92) against bullying and is an integral part of our efforts to promote learning and to prevent behavior that impedes the learning process. Our plan spells out Schechter's comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation.

It is important this plan be well understood by all members of the Schechter community. The head of school is responsible for the implementation and administration of the plan. Questions and concerns related to this plan may be referred to the head of school, the associate head of school for program and instruction or a campus principal.

##### ***II. Policy against Bullying, Cyber-Bullying and Retaliation***

Schechter will not tolerate any form of bullying or cyber-bullying nor will we tolerate retaliation against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited on school grounds and at all school-sponsored events, activities, functions and programs. Bullying and cyber-bullying are also prohibited at school bus stops, on school buses and through the use of technology.

In addition, bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for a targeted student; infringes on the rights of a targeted student at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

##### **Definitions under the Law:**

The following definitions are based on the Massachusetts law against bullying.

**Bullying** – Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to the targeted student's property;

### III. Behavior

- places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student;
- infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

**Cyber-bullying** – Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, fax machines and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet posting, whether on a webpage, on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, in a blog or other social media.

**Hostile Environment** – A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education.

**Retaliation** – Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**Legal Definitions and School Policy** – It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior may apply under Schechter policies so we may prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under the law. For example, although the law defines bullying as “repeated use” of certain expressions, acts and/or gestures, Schechter reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture if the school determines that it is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action or that the repetition of that expression, act or gesture might reasonably result in bullying as defined under the law.

#### ***III. Prevention of Bullying and Cyber-bullying***

From the earliest grades at Schechter, students learn that as members of our community, they have a right to be treated with respect and kindness. Our faculty and staff are clear in their expectations for student behavior. When necessary, parents are notified and asked to reinforce and support behavioral standards.

Our faculty, coaches and staff focus on peer relationships and empower students to take action if they feel targeted or if they witness other students engaging in bullying or other unacceptable behavior. The administration, faculty and staff recognize that it is essential that expectations for student conduct extend to corridors, lunch, recess, carpool and on the buses. Schechter strives to ensure that ample adult supervision is provided

on school premises including in the corridors, at arrival and dismissal, at lunch and recess and on school-provided transportation for school-sponsored events.

#### ***IV. Reports of Bullying, Cyber-bullying or Retaliation***

Any student who is the target of bullying or cyber-bullying or has witnessed an incident of bullying or cyber-bullying or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyber-bullying prohibited by this policy is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter orally or in writing to a campus principal or a division head or to any other faculty or staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking.

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Also, any student who is subject to retaliation in violation of this policy or who knows of another student who has been subject to retaliation is urged to report it as soon as possible.

A parent of a student who may be a target of bullying or cyber-bullying or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyber-bullying is strongly urged to promptly notify the campus principal. Furthermore, any parent who has himself or herself witnessed an event which may be bullying or cyber-bullying or has relevant information concerning such an incident is strongly urged to notify the campus principal. A parent should also report any incident of retaliation in violation of this policy to the campus principal or a division head.

Any member of the Schechter faculty or staff who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of bullying or cyber-bullying in violation of this policy or who becomes aware of retaliation against a student who reported information concerning a violation of this policy is required to report it immediately to the campus principal or a division head. There are no exceptions. A member of the faculty or staff may not make promises of confidentiality to a student or parent who informs him/her of an allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Faculty and staff may not make reports under this policy anonymously. The school also urges students and their parents not to make reports anonymously. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. Students and parents are encouraged to bear in mind the school takes its policy against retaliation seriously. Also, while the school cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the school releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation only on a legitimate need-to-know basis.

#### ***V. Responding to a Report of Bullying, Cyber-bullying or Retaliation***

##### **A. Preliminary Considerations**

When a complaint of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation is brought to the attention of the campus principal or division head, an assessment is made as to whether any initial steps need to be taken to protect the well-being of students and to prevent disruption of their learning environment while the investigation is being conducted. As appropriate, strategies such as increased supervision may be implemented to prevent further bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation during an investigation.

##### **B. Obligation to Notify Parents**

It is the policy of the school to notify the parents of any student who is an alleged target of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation and the parents of any student who may have been accused of engaging in such behavior promptly after a complaint has been made.

##### **C. Investigation**

The following is an outline of the procedure that is implemented once a complaint has been brought to the attention of the campus principal or a division head.

An impartial investigation of the complaint is conducted by the campus principal or a division head. That investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the person who made the complaint; with the student who was the target of the alleged bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation;

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with the person or persons against whom the complaint was made and with any students, faculty, staff or other persons who witnessed or who may otherwise have relevant information about the alleged incident. Depending on the circumstances, the campus principal or the division head conducting the investigation also may choose to consult with other faculty or staff.

#### **D. Resolution, Notification and Follow-up**

Following interviews and any other investigation, as the school deems appropriate, the campus principal or the division head will determine whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been substantiated. If it is determined that the policy set forth in this plan has been violated, the campus principal or the division head will determine what disciplinary and/or other remedial action is appropriate and how it will be implemented.

The goal of an investigation and any disciplinary or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation is to correct the situation to the extent it is reasonably possible. This includes steps that can be taken to prevent a repetition of the incident and to prevent the student or students targeted and others who participated in the investigation from being subject to retaliation.

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subject to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under Section 51A of the Massachusetts laws, law enforcement or another appropriate government agency may be notified.

Upon completion of the investigation, the campus principal or the division head who conducted the investigation will speak individually with the student or students who were the target of the alleged incident and the student or students against whom the complaint was made and their parents to report the results of the investigation and, where disciplinary or other corrective action is determined to be appropriate, to inform the parties of the steps that will be taken to correct the situation. The amount of information provided in these meetings may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student records.

Follow-up contact will be made with any student found to have been targeted in violation of this policy and his/her parents to inquire whether there have been any further incidents. Parents or students who are dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint or any subsequent actions taken may contact the head of school.

#### **VI. Conclusion**

This plan is intended (1) to prevent bullying and cyber-bullying among our students, (2) to encourage students and their parents to have confidence in the school's procedures and to come forward promptly whenever a student is subject to behavior that is prohibited by this or any other school policy; and (3) to implement appropriate discipline and other corrective measures when warranted.

#### **DEREKH ERETZ**

We define *derekh erez* as courteous, respectful behavior (Hebrew for *menschlichkeit*)—a way of being that enables all members of the school community to function together in an environment of mutual respect, trust and appreciation.

#### ***Respect for Others***

Our tradition's view that each person is created *b'tzelem elohim* (created in the image of God) helps us to recognize and value the inherent worth and uniqueness of every person. We expect all members of the

### III. Behavior

Schechter community—students, parents, faculty and administrators—to honor the *derekh erez* code in our interactions with each other including all students, teachers, staff members, guests and people we encounter when we travel outside our school. The code helps to provide us with a foundation to assure physical and emotional security for every child.

#### ***Respect for Property***

At school and when we travel, we want our physical environment to be as clean, safe, orderly and as pleasant as possible for everyone. The respect we show for each other is demonstrated by the concern we have for each other's belongings and our responsibility to others and the environment.

#### ***Respect for Tradition***

We show respect for our tradition by wearing ritual objects such as *kippot* at appropriate times and by our positive participation in *tefillot*, *Birkat Hamazon* and other rituals. We expect students to behave respectfully with regard to all personal and community ritual practices and ritual objects.

#### ***Respect for Learning***

We deeply respect learning and the learning process as we continue with our task of becoming knowledgeable and committed Jews and responsible citizens who are prepared for the future. We also strongly recognize the responsibility to create a safe learning environment for everybody. We expect students to show respect to teachers and classmates, to demonstrate support of their classmates and to be responsible for their own learning.

### **DEREKH ERETZ CODE**

(Note: The English translation provided is interpretive.)

1. Respect each other and accept individual differences.

איזהו מכובד? המכבד את הברייית.

2. Behave honestly.

מדבר שקר תרחק.

3. Be thoughtful, considerate and appreciative.

הוה מקבל את-כל-האדם בסבר פנים יפות.

4. Listen respectfully to others.

איזהו חכם? הלומד מכל אדם.

5. Take responsibility for the safety of yourself and others.

כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה.

6. Use respectful language.

מוות וחיים ביד-לשון.

7. Resolve differences in an appropriate way.

בקש שלום ורדפהו.

8. Make amends if you hurt others.

צריך לרצותו ולשאול ממנו שימחל לו.

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9. Respect each other's and school property.

יהי ממון חברך חביב עליך כשלך.

10. Share in each other's joys and support each other in times of need.

ואהבת לרעך כמוך.

#### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline is handled in a manner commensurate with our expectations of students described in the *Derekh Eretz* Code and Standards of Behavior, taking into account the age, developmental level and individual circumstances of the student(s) involved and the nature and seriousness of the infraction. The goals of discipline are to help students take responsibility for their actions, make appropriate reparations and participate in creating a plan for improving their behavior. We believe the existence of consequences for unacceptable behavior is an important part of the learning process.

Teachers or other staff members handle minor incidents and refer more significant infractions to the principal. At the Upper School, we help students take responsibility for their actions and participate in creating a plan for improving their behavior. Upper School parents will be notified if deemed necessary and we encourage them to use this opportunity to review behavioral expectations with their child. The school retains the right to use additional appropriate discipline measurements including restricted recess or breaks to help reinforce the need for respectful behavior.

Serious infractions will result in appropriately significant disciplinary measures. For example, any student who engages in physical fighting may be sent home immediately and may be suspended for the following school day. Lower School students may instead be kept out of class in the school office. Return to school on the subsequent day requires a parent's presence at a meeting with the associate head of school, principal or head of school. If deliberate damage is done to school property, students may be asked to pay for part of the repair costs or to participate in fixing or cleaning the property.

On a bus, the driver's job is to drive safely and efficiently, not to supervise the behavior of the students. The driver's only immediate sanction in the face of disruptive student behavior is to stop the bus until the children calm down. Drivers are instructed to report offenders to the principal who will investigate the report and take disciplinary action if necessary. At the discretion of the school, students who are disruptive may lose their riding privileges. Any damage to property while on the bus will result in an assessment for damages.

#### **In Gan Shelanu:**

In extreme cases, when inappropriate behavior continues, the following steps may be taken, in succession, as needed:

1. The child is removed from the activity in which he/she is participating and is redirected to choose another activity.
2. The parents are called to keep them informed of the child's situation.
3. The director or a teacher will take the child for a short walk outside the classroom. Please note that the child is taken from the classroom in a discreet and sensitive manner.
4. Parents are called in for a conference.

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5. Parents are asked to give written permission for a school counselor to observe the child in the classroom. A meeting with the counselor, teachers, parents and director will follow.
6. If there is no improvement, the school may ask that the child only attend school with an adult such as the parent until the behavior is manageable.
7. As a condition for continued enrollment, parents will be required to seek outside professional intervention to support their child's healthy development
8. Assuming the family and school are working together in good faith to help the child succeed and determine that Gan Shelanu is not the appropriate placement for a child, he or she may be asked to leave the school. Should this occur, our policy is to refund unused tuition that has been paid. Please note that if a parent unilaterally decides to remove the child from the school without any attempt at facilitating the child's success, tuition will not be refunded.
9. The Gan Shelanu staff frequently participates in professional development. This assists them in how to guide children's behavior through best practices, so that children learn to be problem solvers while expressing their feelings constructively.

#### **DRESS CODE**

In the same spirit of Jewish tradition and responsibility that underlies our *derekh erez* code for behavior, we ask every member of the Schechter community to dress for school in a manner that reflects modesty, cleanliness and neatness. Our dress policy also reflects safety and practical considerations.

Students who come to school with inappropriate clothing will be dealt with sensitively by their teachers, campus principals or other school staff. They will be given an opportunity to change clothes if alternative clothing is readily available, to call parents for alternative clothing or to accept a clean t-shirt, if that will solve the immediate problem. Sneakers or running shoes are required for all physical education classes.

In **Gan Shelanu**, children participate in a variety of fun activities, some of which may be messy. Please send your child to school in comfortable "play clothes".

- All children should have at least one complete change of clothes in their cubbies including pants, underwear, shirt and socks. Please check the box frequently and replenish as needed.
- Living in New England, we must be prepared for any type of weather. In the winter months, please make sure your child has a jacket, snow pants, boots, hat and mittens. We will go out every day the weather permits.

In grades K-3, younger students should wear comfortable clothing they can put on and remove independently. Students in grades K-1 are required (and students in grades 2-3 are encouraged) to have a change of clothing in their lockers for emergencies. Particularly during the winter, students will need to have extra dry pants and socks. Students should wear shoes with backs and should not wear flip flops, shoes with heels, "heelies" (sneakers with rollerblades) or shoes without a back strap. Sneakers or running shoes are required for physical education classes. In the winter students must wear jackets, boots, snow pants, mittens/gloves and hats to play in the outside in the snow or in very cold or wet conditions.

Students in the Intermediate Division (grades 4-5) are also encouraged to have a change of clothing in their lockers in case of a problem. They must wear boots when there is snow on the ground and must be dressed appropriately for cold and/or snowy weather or wet ground conditions. Children who are not

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dressed appropriately for the temperature or wet conditions may be kept in from recess or may only be allowed on the hardtop area at the discretion of responsible teachers or staff.

To help all students in grades 4-8 maintain a sense of personal modesty and to create a healthy learning environment, the following are not permitted: clothing shorter than three inches above the knee, torn clothing, overly tight clothing, inappropriate sayings or decorations on t-shirts, baseball hats, sleeveless tops, tops that expose the back or navel or with a low neckline, “heelies” (sneakers with wheels) and excessive jewelry or distracting ornaments.

We request that parents abide by a similar dress code when in the building.

In preparation for Shabbat, students often choose to dress nicely on Fridays.

#### **GAN SHELANU BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY**

At Gan Shelanu we guide children’s behavior so that they act in a way that is responsible, respectful, thoughtful and appropriate. Our staff is experienced in assisting children as they learn to develop self-control, and to express their feelings and needs verbally. This enables children to become confident and competent individuals, both socially and emotionally.

On occasion, a child is unable to be redirected and regulate his/her own behavior by using language and socially-appropriate means to resolve conflicts as modeled by teachers. This may include but is not limited to those times when a child may exhibit behaviors that are dangerous to him/her or others. We will facilitate the development of self-control in children by treating each child with dignity and respect.

We will employ a variety of strategies including:

- Setting clear, consistent, fair limits
- Valuing mistakes as learning opportunities
- Redirecting children to more appropriate behavior
- Listening to children discussing their feelings and frustrations
- Guiding children in solving their own conflicts
- Gently reminding children of rules and their rationale as needed
- Inappropriate behavior is defined as:
  - Any repeated act of aggression that puts another person at risk of being hurt such as biting, scratching, hitting, pushing or throwing objects.
  - Any repeated behavior that requires an inordinate amount of time by the teacher away from the classroom routine and the other students, such as fighting, destruction of classroom property or an inability to follow classroom rules and routines.
  - Biting is common behavior among young children which unfortunately happens in a school setting from time to time. We do our best to provide an environment where minimal biting occurs. Each situation is handled with sensitivity and discretion on a case by case basis. If your child is bitten or bites someone at school, a biting report will be completed and sent home in your child’s backpack. The parents of both the biter and the child bitten will be contacted; however, we do not disclose the names of the children involved to other families. An appropriate plan of action will be created to deal with any ongoing problems.

### III. Behavior

#### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

The school defines sexual harassment as behavior that is sexual in nature and can be described as harmful. Sexual harassment is perceived by the victim and covers a range of behaviors including but not limited to verbal sexual insults and name calling, gossip, jokes, intimidation by words or actions, offensive touching and pressure for sexual activity.

To provide an environment of mutual respect, tolerance and sensitivity, it is important every member of the community recognizes certain guidelines for appropriate behavior. Students in grades 6-8 are instructed as to what actions constitute sexual harassment. All students are expected to comply with appropriate standards of behavior to maintain an emotionally safe environment at Schechter. Behavior guidelines are set forth in the school's Sexual Harassment Policy, copies of which are available in the office.

Students, parents of students, employees, and anyone else who believes he or she, or a student he or she knows, is being subjected to discrimination, harassment or retaliation should immediately notify his or her supervisor, the Director of Finance and Operations or the Head of School. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of these individuals, he or she may ask another adult or a student friend to help the student to file a report with one of these individuals.

Once the report has been filed, the student will be asked to describe the situation in detail, and provide documentation as appropriate. The student will also be advised how to respond.

#### **STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR**

The following actions are considered to be serious infractions and are strictly prohibited. Students participating in such activities are subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension or expulsion:

- Endangering the safety of others in any way
- Inappropriate teasing, bullying, harassment (see policy on next page)
- Fighting, physically injuring or threatening physical harm to others
- Defiant behavior to adults
- Taking or defacing school property or the property of others
- Defacing or destruction of Jewish ritual objects
- Possession or use of weapons
- Possession or use of drugs or alcohol
- Inappropriate sexual activity
- Sexual harassment

While not all teasing rises to the level of being considered bullying or harassment, we expect students to refrain from commenting in a negative manner to or about others including comments about their physical appearance, family or personal preferences or academic performance. Self-justifications such as "I was only kidding," "He/she doesn't mind," or "Everybody says that" are never acceptable excuses for inappropriate comments made to or about others. We encourage students to demonstrate kindness, acceptance and a spirit of inclusiveness. If students feel they are being teased inappropriately or bullied/harassed, we ask them to report that to an adult in the school, so we can step in immediately.

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We expect students to refrain from *lashon ha'rah* (speaking ill of others).

Spreading *lashon ha'rah* in person, in writing, over the phone or through social media is considered to be bullying/harassment; students found to be doing so will be subject to discipline. We expect all adults to model this behavior as well.

We expect students to adhere to rules for appropriate dress.

Students are expected to approach an adult for assistance with resolving problems between students that they are unable to resolve on their own.

All school rules and expectations apply during the regular school day, Extended Day, Enrichment classes, field trips and overnight trips and on the bus.

Students are expected to arrive promptly at school, classes and other school activities and to observe all safety rules and specific instructions from faculty and staff.

Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate, safe and respectful behavior everywhere in the buildings, to walk (not run) in hallways and stairways and to act appropriately in bathrooms and at water fountains. They are also expected to use a volume of speech when in the building that is appropriate to their current activity and not disruptive to others.

At recess, physical education classes, *havurah* and any other opportunities for physical activity or use of equipment, students must follow safety rules and obey instructions from supervisors and are expected to be inclusive, share equipment and solve problems with appropriate words.

Students are responsible for behaving properly when on a bus and for refraining from any conduct that jeopardizes the safety of the bus and its occupants such as yelling, standing or moving around while the bus is in motion or getting into fights. We expect students to stay in line while waiting for the bus, to file onto the bus politely and to sit on the bus until it comes to a complete stop. Older students are expected to look out for younger ones.

On field trips and overnight trips, we expect students to follow all school rules and act with *derekh eretz* towards all individuals they encounter off the school grounds. Students should stay in assigned groups and remember that volunteer parents, tour guides and *madrichim* (counselors) have the same authority as teachers. Rules and discipline regarding behavior, dress, *kashrut*, *Shabbat*, other Jewish rituals and respect for property remain in effect on all trips away from school. We expect students to display appropriate and safe behavior on buses, planes and in airports.

## IV. Communication

### **ALERTNOW RAPID NOTIFICATION SERVICE**

The safety of the students, faculty and staff at Solomon Schechter is a top priority. For that reason, we have adopted the Saf-T-Net AlertNow Rapid Notification Service, which will allow us to send a message to all parents, faculty and staff on multiple contact numbers and emails within minutes after an emergency or incident has occurred at the school. Our goal is to give our parents peace of mind, knowing that if an emergency should happen, you will be informed immediately.

We will notify you via phone and email. The AlertNow service will only be used for emergency purposes and time-sensitive announcements, school closings due to inclement weather or changes to events and programs that require immediate notification. It will also be used to notify you in the unlikely event of an extreme emergency such as fire.

Be sure to say “hello” when you answer the phone, but do not keep saying “hello.” If you have such things as Telemarketer Zapper or Privacy Director on your telephone lines, you may not receive the call. You may also need to add the AlertNow email address to your email safe list, so the email will come through. The emails will be coming from [noreply@alernow.com](mailto:noreply@alernow.com).

The success of this system depends upon the school’s having accurate and up-to-date contact information for all families. Our file includes home, work and cell phone numbers, along with personal and work email addresses for all parents. If you need to modify any of your contact information during the year, please contact the registrar at [registrar@ssdsboston.org](mailto:registrar@ssdsboston.org) or 617-630-4515.

### **COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS**

A strong, positive home/school partnership lies at the heart of our school. We welcome parent input and questions and we are committed to responding in a sensitive and timely manner. Our goal is to keep you informed, and these are the ways in which we endeavor to achieve this:

- A weekly newsletter, *Shavuon*, emailed to parents on the first school day of each week, with a calendar of upcoming events and important school announcements
- A weekly *This Week at Schechter* e-publication highlighting stories from the past week and a d’var torah
- Letters from the president, head of school, associate heads of school and principals, either mailed to parents, emailed or attached to *Shavuon*
- *Hadashot Schechter* newsletter, published two times a year
- Handbook/Family Roster, distributed in October, listing names and addresses of all students and parents, as well as school policies and information
- Emails of important news, meeting reminders, etc.
- Photos, videos and stories on Schechter’s Facebook page
- Emails/newsletters from classroom teachers
- A password-protected blog to which parents can access (Gan Shelanu only)

## IV. Communication

### **COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS**

Parent/teacher communication is central to students' progress. We encourage you to stay in close communication with your child's teachers. All questions and concerns should start with your child's teachers and may be followed by contact with the campus principal. The Head of School is always happy to talk with parents after you have taken these steps. All teachers may be reached via email (firstname.lastname@ssdsboston.org) or by leaving a phone message with the school office. At Gan Shelanu, please email the classrooms by using [classname@ssdsboston.org](mailto:classname@ssdsboston.org)

When concerns or problems arise about an aspect of your child's experience at Schechter, please get in touch with the teacher. Please bear in mind, however, that teachers must be focused on students during the school day. We request that you not engage in short "check-ins" with your child's teacher at the beginning of or during the school day.

Teachers will return phone calls and emails as soon as possible. Some specialists are not at school daily and may take longer to respond than classroom teachers. Please respect teachers' privacy and do not telephone them at home.

### **REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS TO PARENTS**

#### ***Gan Shelanu***

Gan Shelanu staff constantly makes comprehensive observations on all children in our charge as we continually assure that all children are progressing developmentally as they should. All children are formally evaluated twice a year and conferences are offered in the spring. Being cognizant of the fact that issues may arise at any point in time, Gan Shelanu staff are committed to being proactive regarding these issues. If it is felt that a conference is necessary at any time throughout the year, the staff will initiate a conversation with you; likewise, if you feel a conference is warranted, you may also take the initiative to speak with the staff. Gan Shelanu is also committed to providing honest and open communication and strive to make themselves available to their families at all times and will do so for private consultations at your convenience; however, please respect that drop off time is not an appropriate time to speak to your teachers as their focus needs to be on assisting the children as they transition into their day. Please feel free to email or call the staff and they will respond as soon as possible.

#### ***Kindergarten-Grade 5***

Formal opportunities for learning about children's progress in grades K-5 include: parent-teacher conferences held in November and March/April and written reports posted online at the end of each trimester. We encourage parents and teachers to keep lines of communication open through regular, informal contact.

#### ***Grades 6-8***

Parents receive three report cards (in December, March and June), which include assessments based on specific rubrics, grade averages, considerations of *derekh erez* and anecdotal comments. Grade 6 students do not receive letter grades for the first marking period. Mid-term reports outline academic progress and classroom behavior for students in need of special support. Parents will be notified if their child is falling behind in homework preparation or receive low assessment scores. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November; optional meetings are available in the spring.

## IV. Communication

### **WEBSITE**

The school's website is [www.ssdsboston.org](http://www.ssdsboston.org). Please refer to it for information about school events both upcoming and past; Afterschool/Enrichment programming; news for prospective families; and more. This handbook is also online. For questions regarding the website or accessing the password protected parents-only section, please contact [registrar@ssdsboston.org](mailto:registrar@ssdsboston.org).

## V. Health and Safety

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We are committed to assuring the health and safety of all our children. Therefore, we carefully guide families to fulfill the school health requirements mandated by the State Department of Public Health. Our health policies also reflect current best practices in school nursing and the Jewish ideals that our school values and teaches.

We participate in the state's program for Enhanced School Health Services, which provides us with a close connection to the Newton Department of Public Health and with professional and material support for our nursing services.

### **CAR ACCIDENTS (ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL)**

In case of accidents on the way to school, please observe these guidelines:

If your car is involved in an accident, however minor, please park your car and bring your child (and any other students who might be with you) to the office to report the accident. Office personnel will page the school nurse so you can discuss the nature of the accident and measures to be taken to ensure all affected children are safe and are checked during the day if appropriate.

Please do this even if the children insist that they feel fine. Experience has taught us that even under these circumstances; a child might develop symptoms or become anxious because of the incident later in the day. It is therefore very important to communicate right away.

If there were other students in your car and you were involved in an accident, however minor, it is your responsibility to contact the parents of every involved child immediately. If there is a bus accident, parents will be contacted by the office personnel and the school nurse will be paged and informed about the accident. In all cases, the nurse will check any children involved as soon as possible and will contact parents.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Some of our students have significant, life-threatening food allergies that require the Schechter community to respond in ways that demonstrate the concept of *pikuakh nefesh*, the saving/preservation of life. The nurses are very careful to communicate significant food allergies to faculty and staff and to help arrange for necessary accommodations for every child to be safe and to have access to emergency medication if needed.

We encourage parents of children with significant food allergies to instruct their children to eat only food brought from home specifically for their personal consumption, including having a stash of non-perishable foods in a labeled box in the classroom and labeled freezer treats for special occasions. We also require submission of medical paperwork and emergency medications through the online back-to-school forms before the start of the school year.

We may ask parents in a particular Lower School class or grade to accommodate very allergic children by not sending in food for their own children's snack that may contain the allergens that are problematic to the very allergic children in the class environment; i.e. no peanut/nuts or sesame in classroom snacks. We

## V. Health and Safety

make every effort to accommodate the allergic children, classmates and parents in ways that will keep the allergic children safe yet minimize the disruption to others. We also offer a “nut table” for students who bring peanut butter, etc. for lunch.

The nurse’s office in the Upper School has separate nut free and gluten free microwaves available for student use.

We are generally able to accommodate very allergic children in the lunchroom by washing down the tables carefully before use and by strategically placing the allergic children away from children who are consuming the allergen-containing foods. We also supervise classmates who have eaten allergen-containing foods in washing their hands after eating to further protect the allergic children.

Since some students have significant, life-threatening allergies, we request that parents check in with teachers and/or administrators before bringing in any food intended for children other than your own (i.e., for a class, grade or school-wide celebration, including weekly classroom *Shabbat* celebrations). They will guide you as to what is safe.

We encourage food-allergic children not to eat food brought in for public consumption unless it has been specifically approved by their parents. However, whenever possible, we try to avoid having food brought in that contains any tree nuts, peanuts or their products since these pose a risk to many children. Care should be given to reading labels and to using reliable kosher bakeries that provide nut-free foods.

**GAN SHELANU:** Gan Shelanu staff is trained to deal with food allergies and the use of Epipens. In order to provide a safe environment for our students, we have developed a Policy on Life-Threatening Food Allergies. The effectiveness of the policy depends upon the Gan Shelanu staff and parents’ working together cooperatively.

### ***Snacks and Cooking in Gan Shelanu***

During the course of the regular school day, Gan Shelanu provides and serves a snack to the children in their classrooms. The staff works with the parents of children who have food allergies to ensure that the snack in their child’s classroom is safe for their child. Parents of allergic children are required to read all ingredients of foods that are served for snack and used in cooking or crafts. Parents of allergic children must sign off with their approval regarding snacks and ingredients used in cooking before the child begins school and before these foods are consumed and/or used in the classroom. Although these safety precautions are followed to the best of our ability, Gan Shelanu and its staff cannot guarantee the absence of allergens in the classrooms.

### ***Peanut and Nut Products in Gan Shelanu***

Increasing health risks from certain foods is the motivation for keeping the entire school space peanut and nut sensitive and asking parents to refrain from sending peanut and nut products in their children’s lunches. Families are provided with a list of restricted foods and teachers monitor lunches and enforce the policy to the best of their ability. However, it is always possible a product containing peanuts/nuts can enter the classroom; in this case, we place the allergic food back into the child’s lunch box and send it home with a gentle reminder about our policy. Please note that no other allergens will be banned from lunches.

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### ***Lunch in Gan Shelanu***

Gan Shelanu cannot guarantee the lunch area will be 100 percent peanut/nut free, i.e., we do not ban products that have been made in a facility that processes nuts or peanuts or may contain traces of nuts or peanuts. Allergic children can eat at a separate table away from any potentially harmful foods with other children whose lunches do not contain any risky allergens at the parents' request. Lunch staff will closely monitor the eating process of the children as well as the clean up and hand washing of all participants in the program to maintain as clean and risk free an environment as possible.

### **MEDICAL POLICY**

#### ***Health services***

Each campus is served by a registered nurse who works closely with children, their families, teachers, administration and staff. Schechter's registered nurses utilize a set of standing orders signed by the school physician to guide their practice. In their absence, designated school personnel respond to health concerns according to instructions from the school nurses. The school nurses are available to school personnel at both campuses via phone during school hours and at times when Extended Day and Afterschool activities are held at the school.

#### ***Health records/immunizations***

Massachusetts state law requires that immunization records, which reflect that your child has completed all state health requirements, and a report of a physical examination (within the past year) by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner be presented to the school prior to opening day for all new students to be admitted to class. Additional health and immunization information is required upon entering grades 4 and 7. The school nurses are happy to help guide parents through the process of providing required health information.

We also require parents to fill out and submit annual health history updates online before the start of each school year. This allows parents to update information about children's current health providers, insurance information, over the counter medication and permission to administer, current health status and medication information. Essential medical information is then communicated confidentially to pertinent school personnel to assure each child's safety.

For students entering Gan Shelanu, all children must be vaccinated with the following: Hib, varicella (chicken pox), Hepatitis B, in addition to other vaccines. All children must have a current lead test as well.

#### ***Health screenings***

The school nurses conduct the vision, hearing, postural and growth (height/weight/body mass index) screenings required by the state of Massachusetts for students in appropriate grades at both campuses. These screenings are not a diagnostic service, but rather indicate to us which children should be referred for further medical consultation. If your child does not pass a screening, you will be informed via email and we will ask you to have the medical consultant sign and return a form to us indicating you have followed-up.

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### ***Care for illness or injury***

Children are treated by the school nurse or designated school personnel with attention to our standing orders. If we ascertain your child is not well enough to remain in class, we will call you to request that you take your child home. If you or your emergency contacts cannot be reached, we will continue to care for your child in the nursing area until you are able to come to the school.

Parents are asked to notify the school if your child experienced symptoms of illness or injury and/or took medication for a problem before coming to school so we can care for him/her properly.

### ***Contagious conditions***

If your child develops a contagious illness or condition, please keep him/her at home and notify the school at once. If the condition is discovered at school, we will ask you to pick up your child immediately. The school will alert parents in your child's class, grade or campus as appropriate.

Children with diarrhea, vomiting, fever, heavy cold symptoms, conjunctivitis or a rash of unknown origin should be kept at home until the condition is properly diagnosed and treated. To return to school, the child must be free of fever for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin. If your child develops any of these conditions while at school, we will ask you to pick up your child immediately.

The State Department of Public Health issues guidelines and directives that we follow for public health threats such as the H1N1 influenza. Parents are asked to read and follow all instructions carefully to help protect the health of others in our school community.

### ***Emergency Contacts***

Each student must have emergency contacts (in addition to parents) *who can be easily reached* and who have agreed to take full responsibility for your child's care if you cannot be located. On days when your child's health is questionable, please be sure to let us know which parent(s) or other contacts will be available.

### ***Emergencies***

In the event of a medical emergency, Emergency Medical Services (911) will be contacted when appropriate and parents will be notified immediately. If you cannot be reached, your child's physician and emergency contacts will be notified. If transport is necessary, Emergency Medical Services will take your child to either Newton-Wellesley Hospital or Children's Hospital, accompanied by the school nurse, or in her absence, the principal or other administrative personnel.

### ***Dispensing medication***

Massachusetts law requires that all medications, both prescription and over the counter, be stored securely in the nurse's office and dispensed by the school nurse. On a field trip, a properly trained delegate may administer prescription medication with consent from the parent. Special arrangements can be made for a supervised program for self-administration with the school nurses (i.e. arrangements to carry and self-administer asthma inhalers).

If your child requires medication during school hours, state law requires the following guidelines be observed:

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- Medication must be brought to school by the parent in the original and correctly labeled container from the pharmacy/physician. (Pharmacists will provide a second labeled pharmacy container for school, if you ask). Put the medication bottle securely in a sealed, labeled envelope and enclose a signed instruction note.
- All medications must be turned in to the office when the student arrives at school.
- A parent or guardian must agree to consent for medication administration (available in the online back-to-school forms)
- A licensed prescriber (e.g. physician or nurse practitioner) must fill out and sign a Medication Order (available in the school office or can be downloaded from the school website), except in cases of short courses of prescribed medications (i.e. antibiotics) that are delivered in a labeled pharmacy container.

No more than a 30-day supply of medication should be brought to school. Emergency medications (i.e. asthma inhalers, allergy medications, Epipens) may be kept in the nurse's office for the duration of the school year as long as they meet the above requirements and the date is current.

Certain over the counter medications (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl) may be dispensed, with parental permission, by the school nurses following written protocols approved by the school physician. You can check off permission for any or all of these over the counter medications in the online forms.

### **GAN SHELANU**

In a preschool community, good health is an important issue. At this age, children are just beginning to develop immunities. To reduce exposure to colds, flu, conjunctivitis or other contagious diseases, we ask that parents weight all factors when determining if their child should attend. Children should remain at home during the initial and most contagious days of a cold. This concern is for their comfort and for the protection of the other children in the program. If your child has a fever, he/she may return after 24 hours of being fever free without medication.

Please keep your child home if:

- The child's illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff of the school.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the ability to care for other children.
- The child has the following: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, frequent or severe cough, persistent runny nose, skin infection, head lice, conjunctivitis, rash

If any of these symptoms are noted, your child will not be admitted for the day. If any of the symptoms become evidence during the day, you will be notified immediately. For the comfort and well-being of your child, you will be requested to pick him/her up as soon as possible, within 30 minutes. If unable to reach you, your emergency contacts will be called.

When children are ill during the night, unusually fatigued or upon wakening show signs of illness, they should be kept at home. In general, if children are not able to play outside, they are not well enough to

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come to school. We do not have provision for a child to remain indoors at outdoor playtime. Please be considerate of all concerned. Sick children must be kept at home.

### ***Gan Shelanu Medication Policy***

If your child requires prescription medication for allergies or antibiotics for an illness, you must provide the medication in its original packaging from the pharmacy with exact dosing instructions from your physician. You will also be asked to complete a medication consent form.

For non-prescription medication, we require a medication consent form that must be filled out and signed by your child's physician. Non-prescription topical ointments and lotions (e.g. sunscreen, etc.) require a note from parents.

Gan Shelanu will not administer Tylenol, Benedryl, Claritin, etc. It is not Gan Shelanu's practice to apply antibiotic ointment to cuts and lacerations. Treatment of cuts and lacerations involves washing the affected area with soap and water and covering with a sterile bandage.

### ***Toileting***

Toilet training is not a requirement for admission into our program. We will work with families to develop a plan that is consistent and encouraging for each child. Children who are not trained should bring disposable diapers and wipes to be kept in their cubbies. Children have easy access to bathroom facilities at all times while in school. We will assist your child in cleaning and dressing. All children wash hands with soap and water when they are finished.

### **PEDICULOSIS (LICE)**

Head lice is a communicable condition common among children all over the world. Lice are transmitted by direct contact with affected persons, their clothing, combs, brushes or other implements that touch the hair. Head lice cannot jump or fly. Although it is possible to develop head lice from contact with live lice or their eggs (nits) on hairs that have been shed from the head of an individual, direct head contact is much more likely to be the problem.

It is crucial for parents to check their children's heads carefully prior to the start of school since many outbreaks of lice in schools result from summer activities, especially summer camps. It is equally important for parents to continue to check their children's heads at least weekly throughout the year, and more often if you are informed that there is a current problem in your child's class and/or grade.

Parents and teachers should remind children that hats, *kippot*, combs, brushes, barrettes, scrunchies, etc., should not be shared. Children should also be instructed not to play with each other's hair, to avoid putting their heads directly on each other and to not pile coats together. Classroom teachers, specialists and Extended Day personnel have been instructed about how to minimize the possibility of head lice transmission in their respective areas including limiting use of pillows and dress-up clothes, avoiding placing coats/jackets in close proximity and appropriately using athletic gear in addition to reminding children about avoiding direct contact with each others' heads and hair.

When a student is found to have head lice, the school nurse will notify that child's class/grade without giving names, as appropriate, via email and will check the heads of children in the affected child's class (in the lower grades) as soon as possible. Past experience has taught us, however, that having parents check their own children carefully provides the best insurance for detecting and avoiding the problem.

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Schechter has a Modified No-Nit Policy, which is an administrative policy for control and prevention of head lice outbreaks based on current public health research and our successful past experiences:

- A student found to have head lice or nits (head lice eggs) during the course of a school day will generally be allowed to remain in school for the remainder of that school day except for the rare instances where the nurse determines that an early dismissal is advisable due to a very advanced, visible problem. This policy is based on extensive research that indicates by the time a case of head lice is detected, it has generally existed for a while; sending the child home early does not affect the possibility of spread to other children in any significant way. Sending affected children home early is also often unnecessarily disruptive and upsetting to the child and his/her parents.
- The child's parents will be informed of the problem and instructed by the nurse about appropriate treatment and lice and nit removal. Parents are encouraged to consult their pediatricians about specific recommended treatment. The school nurse will provide instruction in procedures for treating the affected individual, checking other family members, and treatment of personal articles and the home environment and will provide ongoing advice and support.
- The student may return to school after lice and nits have been removed from the hair to the best of the parents' abilities. The child will be re-examined in a discrete manner by the school nurse upon readmission to school.

Experience has taught us that we are capable of controlling significant outbreaks of head lice by following these guidelines, and we thank parents for their participation in avoiding the development of a community-wide problem.

### **Gan Shelanu Head Lice Policy**

If a child has been identified with head lice, the following protocol will be followed:

- If the problem is first noted at school, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child at their earliest convenience.
- Your child must be treated with a lice and nit removal process, preferably recommended by his/her physician. The school can also refer you to information and resources about the various recommended chemical and mechanical methods available.
- Lice and nits must be removed mechanically by combing them out with a special fine-tooth comb so that re-infestation of a treated child is less likely to occur and easier to detect.
- The heads of other family members should be carefully checked and all affected individuals treated appropriately. We can assist you with this task if necessary.
- Your child will be checked before re-entering class by the director or her designate and will be readmitted to school only when no live lice and no more than a very few stray residual nits are noted which would be removed. This "no nit policy" for returning to school helps to assure that parents of affected children are following best practices and helping to avoid spread of the infestation to other children and families. We strongly recommend that the following steps be taken in your home:
  - Articles that may have been exposed to head lice should be laundered so that the fabric is exposed to a high enough temperature to kill any possible lice or shed hair with attached viable nits. Use the highest hot settings to wash and dry bed

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linens and pillows, towels, clothing, outerwear and hats that were used or worn in the past few days. Dry cleaning clothing and bedding is also effective.

- Toys and personal articles can be thoroughly vacuumed. Alternatively they can, along with bedding and other fabrics that cannot be laundered with hot water or dry cleaned, be kept in a plastic bag for ten days.
- Soak combs and brushes in a disinfectant solution (1/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water) for at least 10 minutes.
- Vacuum carpets, upholstered furniture and beds.
- Do not use lice sprays in your home.

Once a child or teacher is diagnosed with head lice, the following measures will be taken in the school:

- The director or designate will check the heads of all members of the affected classroom for two weeks.
- Fabric toys and dress-up clothes will be removed from the classroom and rugs will be cleaned.
- Rest mats, blankets and sheets will be sent home for cleaning.
- All personal items stored in cubbies will be sent home for cleaning.

## Hebrew Glossary

<i>Aliyah</i>	Going up to say the blessings for a section of <i>Torah</i> or moving (going up) to Israel
<i>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</i>	Boy/girl who has reached the age of adulthood according to Jewish law
<i>Birkat HaMazon</i>	Blessing after the meal
<i>Bracha</i>	Blessing
<i>Derekh Eretz</i>	Appropriate way to act (literally, the way of the land)
<i>Hadashot</i>	News
<i>Havdallah</i>	Ceremony marking the end of <i>Shabbat</i>
<i>Humash</i>	The five books of <i>Torah</i> (from “ <i>hamesh</i> ” meaning five)
<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i>	Blessings welcoming in <i>Shabbat</i> on Friday night
<i>Kabbalat Siddur</i>	Ceremony for receiving a prayer book
<i>Kashrut</i>	Jewish dietary laws
<i>Kippah</i>	Head covering
<i>Melaveh Malkah</i>	To escort out the <i>Shabbat</i> queen with song and celebration
<i>Mesibat Humash</i>	Celebration marking the start of biblical study using original text
<i>Mitzvah</i>	Commandment or good deed
<i>Parashat HaShavuah</i>	Weekly <i>Torah</i> portion
<i>Rosh Hodesh</i>	Beginning of the Jewish month
<i>Shabbat</i>	Sabbath (from sundown on Friday until one hour after sundown on Saturday)
<i>Shavuon</i>	Weekly newsletter
<i>Shiur B’Nevi’im</i>	Lesson in Prophets
<i>Siddur</i>	Jewish prayer book
<i>Tallit</i>	Prayer shawl (plural: tallitot)
<i>Tanakh</i>	Hebrew Bible: <i>Torah</i> (Ta), <i>Nevi’im</i> – Prophets (Na), <i>K’tuvim</i> – Writings (Kh)
<i>Tefillin</i>	Phylacteries (prayer boxes)
<i>Tefillah</i>	Prayer (plural: <i>Tefillot</i> )
<i>Torah She’b’al Peh</i>	( <i>Toshba</i> ) Oral law; rabbinic teachings
<i>Tzedakah</i>	Jewish tradition of helping those in need (literally, righteousness)

## VIII. School Routines

### **BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

Becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is an important milestone event for Schechter students. As the student officially enters the adult community and takes on the responsibility of performing *mitzvot*, the adult community welcomes the child into the community and celebrates the child's accomplishments.

The accomplishments of our students on the *bimah* reflect the many years of effort that our students invest in honing *tefillah* skills and acquiring *Torah* literacy. Starting in fifth grade, students learn to chant from the *Torah* and take on *shali'ah tzibbur* (prayer leader) responsibilities.

In grade 7, the year when most of our students celebrate their *B'nai Mitzvah*, we ask the students to participate in a *mitzvah* curriculum. Students are encouraged to perform *mitzvot* from the three central areas of Jewish observance: *torah* (learning), *avodah* (worship) and *g'milut hasadim* (acts of kindness and service to others). Students study the prayers more deeply. They study *Tanakh* and develop their text-analytical skills. They mine the *Tanakh* to discover deeper *middot* (values) and *minhagim* (practices) taught by our tradition, and they wrestle with applying this learning to their own lives.

The school acts as a clearinghouse to alert families about potential conflicting *B'nai Mitzvah* dates. Please submit your B'nai Mitzvah date on our website; visit the Parent Homepage and navigate to the B'nai Mitzvah section on the left. Although it may not be possible to avoid all conflicts, we work with families to make sure each child will have Schechter peers with whom to celebrate. Parents are encouraged to communicate with each other in the case of overlapping dates. Teachers will help students reschedule assignments and tests to avoid additional stress immediately before/after the *simcha*.

Once a date has been finalized, the parents give the date to Judy Flad and the section of the Schechter website which contains all Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates is updated.

<http://www.ssdsboston.org/bnai-mitzvah-information>

An annual Grade 6 parent meeting discusses *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* preparations in detail. The sixth-grade PA representatives purchase a class gift for each student. Families donate money for these gifts which replace the need to give a gift at each student *simcha*.

A *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is a religious occasion and should be celebrated appropriately. Celebrating families are expected to arrange home hospitality near the synagogue for Schechter students who do not travel by car on *Shabbat*. The reception following the service should take place either in the synagogue or within walking distance. Laws of *kashrut* should be observed. We strongly request that all student parties be scheduled to begin after the conclusion of *Shabbat*. Consult a Jewish calendar, look in *Shavuon* or contact the school office for *Shabbat* ending times.

Schechter sends each student a gift.

Students are called to the *Torah* at school on the Thursday before their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Parents and grandparents are invited to attend. Schechter encourages this extended celebration as a way of forging a tight bond between the school, the synagogue and the family. It is customary for families to bring in a snack for the grade in honor of this event, to be enjoyed by students later in the morning. Because we want to promote healthy eating and some children have allergies, we ask that the snacks be nutritious and should not contain tree nuts or peanuts or their products (oils or butters).

Schechter teaches appropriate social skills and *derekh erez* expectations as children begin to participate in the social as well as religious aspects of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* celebration. In grades 6-7, *havurah*

## VII. Religious Policies

discussions address the expectations for responding to an invitation, participating in the service, behavior during the service and reception and appropriate dress.

Becoming a *bar/bat mitzvah* marks the transition to Jewish adulthood. **Attending *b'nei mitzvah* celebrations and services presents new social opportunities for middle school students in which they are called upon to behave like adults.** Some easily rise to the occasion; others struggle.

As our children become regular guests in synagogues and at parties, it is important for the adults in their lives to take a moment to review with them social conventions and expectations to prepare them to represent themselves, their families and their school in front of their peers' families and the community as a whole.

**We believe that when a consistent message is reinforced by adults at school and at home, our children are more likely to respond favorably.** Taking a moment to speak with them can be of great importance as they prepare for new experiences and can lead to conversations about how they are feeling about the accompanying social pressures. Here are some helpful talking points:

- 1. Synagogues are sacred spaces. They demand inside voices and a calm demeanor.**
- 2. Guests support the bar/bat mitzvah by remaining in the services and participating actively. Etiquette suggests that participants follow along in the siddur/humash. While there, try to pray; you may even find that you enjoy it!**
- 3. Respect Shabbat by leaving your cell phone and other technology at home.**
- 4. Respect your hosts by participating in the activities. It's okay to gather in a social hall or hallway; not in restrooms or empty sections of the building.**
- 5. Congratulate and thank your host and his/her parents. A firm handshake and eye contact go a long way to express your appreciation.**
- 6. If your teachers are present, say hi to them. They enjoy speaking with you outside of school.**
- 7. Remember that your behavior reflects upon you, your family and your school.**

**While members of the Schechter community are present at Schechter family celebrations, they are not school events. Ultimately, parents are responsible for the behavior of their children and we ask that you do your part to help our middle school students make good choices.**

Young teenagers make the best decisions about their behavior when they are in environments where adults serve as positive role models. Shabbat services are not designed for large groups of unsupervised kids, nor are they “drop-off” events. **We encourage you to attend services with your child to ensure that they meet our shared expectations.** An increased parent presence in synagogue will have a positive impact on the choices our kids make.

## VII. Religious Policies

### **GRADE LEVEL EVENTS**

Schechter has developed a series of milestone events and special grade level events to mark the growth of our students, particularly in regard to their religious development.

Gan Shelanu	Hanukkah Shabbat Portfolio Breakfast Pre-K Moving On Ceremony
Kindergarten	Shabbat Program; Family <i>Shavuot</i> milestone
Grade 1	<i>Kabbalat Siddur</i> milestone: receiving a prayerbook marking Hebrew reading proficiency
Grade 2	Family Journeys presentation
Grade 3	<i>Kabbalat HaTanakh</i> milestone: marking the start of Biblical study using the original text
Grade 4	<i>Melaveh Malkah</i> : Saturday evening family program marking completion of <i>Shabbat</i> study unit; Poetry Festival
Grade 5	Shabbaton; <i>Shiur B'Nevi'im</i> (lesson in Prophets): family study; students receive <i>Haggadah</i>
Grade 6	<i>Torah She'b'al Peh</i> milestone: marking the start of the study of Rabbinic literature; <i>Siddur</i> presentation; Science Week
Grade 7	<i>Tu B'Shevat</i> breakfast; Washington, D.C. trip
Grade 8	<i>Yom HaShoah</i> program; Israel Study Tour; All-Hebrew musical

### **HOLIDAYS**

Schechter prepares for and celebrates Jewish holidays in many ways. We study holidays, convene school assemblies, enjoy dramatic presentations, host family events, conduct ritual observances and include holiday-specific prayers in our regular *tefillah*.

The school also marks appropriate secular observances such as Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Memorial Day. The school does not observe non-Jewish holidays such as Christmas, Halloween or Valentine's Day. Children should not bring to school objects such as valentines or Halloween masks that are specific to these occasions.

### **KASHRUT**

Schechter is committed to *kashrut* (Jewish food regulations) observance. Our staff are available to guide families interested in integrating *kashrut* observance into their family lives.

#### ***Lunches and snacks***

To simplify *kashrut* observance, the Schechter kitchen and lunchroom are dairy. Students should bring lunches with dairy and pareve (non-dairy and non-meat) items only. Students may not bring meat or poultry products to school. Fish, non-meat pizza, non-meat-based soups and vegetables are permitted. Shellfish and seafood lacking fins and scales are not kosher and may not be brought to school. Breads for sandwiches, cookies and cake may not contain any animal shortening.

In **Gan Shelanu**, all lunches must be peanut-free, tree nut-free and kosher dairy or pareve (tuna, yogurt, cheese, pasta, etc). Please use an ice pack as necessary.

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Hot meals prepared by a kosher caterer are available for purchase on specified days of the week. Students who order a “meat” meal option will be seated at designated “meat” tables.

If a food item that does not meet the *kashrut* requirements is brought to school, the staff will tactfully point out the problem and provide the student with a substitute lunch. If possible, the food not meeting such requirements will be sent home. For reasons of *kashrut*, health and nutrition, we ask that students not trade lunches or snacks.

### ***Food on school trips***

On school trips, as during other school programs, Schechter observes the laws of *kashrut*. Food may be purchased only from an eating establishment that has been approved by the school. On extended trips, the school arranges in advance for food from kosher caterers or restaurants.

Students must accept these ground rules to participate in off-campus learning.

### ***Food for public consumption***

Only certified kosher foods, prepared in kosher establishments under rabbinical supervision—and not foods prepared at home—may be brought into school for consumption by school groups.

At Gan Shelanu, all food is purchased by the school. Due to food allergies, parent sending food for a class is prohibited.

In the Lower and Upper Schools, fresh bakery goods must come from a kosher bakery approved by a reputable *halakhic* authority. A full list of such bakeries is available in the school office. Items purchased in supermarkets must carry one of the acceptable kosher labels (a “K” alone is not sufficient).

Kosher labels include, but are not limited to:



## **RELIGIOUS PRACTICE**

Schechter families come from a wide range of Jewish affiliation, observance and practice. We recognize that each student and family is on their own Jewish journey and welcome the diversity of practice that our community represents. Our religious practice at school follows the tenants of Conservative Judaism and religious policies are crafted within the framework of the movement.

Schechter is committed to providing resources to support your family’s Jewish journey and we are happy to make school materials and personnel available to you to help you grow with your child. Resources to enrich your understanding and practice of Judaism are also available through your synagogue or *minyan*.

### **Tefillot**

Our goals for *tefillot* (prayers) are for students to demonstrate competence in the skills of *tefillot*, experience joy in prayer, appreciate the various purposes of prayer and see *tefillah* (prayer) as a resource for celebrating and deepening one’s religious life and connection to Jewish community.

## VII. Religious Policies

Children in Gan Shelanu begin Monday mornings with a Havdallah service to kick off each week. Each day they participate in reciting the blessings before snack and lunch as appropriate. Each Friday morning we end the week with a Kabbalat Shabbat celebration in which we participate in the blessings over the wine, candles and challah.

Days begin with *tefillah*. In kindergarten, our students study some of the words and experience a taste of the *ru'hanyut* (spirituality) essential to the spiritual practice of traditional *tefillah*. As they progress through the grades, students grow their *shali'ah tzibbur* (prayer leader) skills and are encouraged to discover new and deeper ways of engaging in Jewish prayer.

Students in grades 1-3 use *Halleli Nafshi*. This *siddur*, published by our school, features gender-neutral translations, *kavannot* (meditations) to spark discussion and reflection, explanatory introductions and student illustrations. Students and families are given a CD with recordings of the *tefillot* for learning. Students in grades 4-5 receive an expanded edition of *Halleli Nafshi*. Upon entering sixth grade, each student receives a pocket edition of *Siddur Sim Shalom*, the *siddur* of the Conservative movement.

By fifth grade, students learn much of what is required to participate fully in a traditional morning service. They also practice *shali'ah tzibbur* skills and are introduced to *Torah* trope. In grades 6-8, students master *shali'ah tzibbur* and *Torah* reading skills, study the structure and deeper meaning of the *tefillot* and pursue meaningful ways to further their *tefillah* learning in personally chosen *tefillah* electives.

### **Kippot**

Covering the head, whether for prayer and study or at any other time, is a sign of Jewish identity and acknowledgement of our relationship with God. Although the practice of covering the head is not based on any explicit statement in Jewish legal sources, it is a strong *minhag* (custom) that first appeared among Babylonian Jews over 1,500 years ago.

At Schechter, boys in grades K-8 are expected to wear *kippot* at all times and girls are welcome to do the same. *Kippot* are to be worn whenever students are participating in a school-sponsored program. Students wear *kippot* during all off-campus, educational programming and overnight field trips. The only exceptions to this rule include recess, physical education classes and sports competitions. Students must bring their own *kippot* to school and should keep extra *kippot* in their lockers. Baseball caps and other hats cannot be worn as substitutes for a *kippah*.

### **Tallit and tefillin**

Students learn the mechanics and meaning of the *mitzvot* of *tallit* and *tefillin* in both sixth and seventh grades. Periodically, students and parents have the opportunity to create original hand-painted silk *tallitot* in special workshops. At the end of sixth grade, we hold a *tallit* and *tefillin* special event. Families are invited to attend, learn about and wear *tallit* and *tefillin* with their children.

Boys 13 and over are expected to wear *tallit* and *tefillin* during morning *tefillot*, beginning on the date of their Hebrew birthday. Girls are also encouraged to fulfill this *mitzvah*. A large majority of our girls acquire a personal *tallit* for their Bat Mitzvah and we encourage them to incorporate it into their daily routine at school.

When there are family events that begin with *tefillot*, we ask that parents observe the *mitzvot* of *tallit* and *tefillin* at the morning service.

## VII. Religious Policies

### **Brachot over food**

Students learn the appropriate blessings to be said over each category of food. The appropriate *brakhah* (blessing) is then said before eating lunch or a snack. *Birkat Hamazon* (grace after meals) is chanted in grades K-8 after lunch with students serving as leaders.

### **Shabbat**

Children in Gan Shelanu are invited to be Shabbat helpers both in a large group and in their classrooms. Parents are invited on that particular day to participate in our Shabbat program and to stay and read a book or do a special activity in their child's classroom.

Each Friday, all classes in K-5 prepare for *Shabbat*. Activities may include a class meeting, clean-up, *Shabbat* party, *Shabbat* guest, singing, a story or a special program. The Lower School holds a monthly *Shabbat Shira* in which we sing spirited songs in preparation for *Shabbat*.

On Friday afternoons from November through February, school is dismissed earlier, at 2:00 (Grades K-3)/2:10 p.m. (Grades 4-8), so that students arrive home before the start of *Shabbat*.

In order to ensure that all members of our community can participate in private events and celebrations, the standard practice of our community is that no Schechter-related business, birthday parties or joint homework projects be conducted on *Shabbat* from Friday candle-lighting time until an hour after sundown on Saturday. *Candle-lighting and Havdallah times* are listed weekly in the *Shavuon*.

In preparation for Shabbat and in-school Shabbat celebrations, students in Grades 4-8 often dress more nicely on Fridays.

### **Rosh Hodesh**

*Rosh Hodesh* (the start of a new Jewish month) is celebrated as a key part of the Jewish calendar cycle. *Tefillot* include *Hallel* with a greater number of selections as students get older. Starting in grade 5, the *Torah* reading for *Rosh Hodesh* is included.

### **Tzedakah**

The school's efforts to create a caring environment are governed by the Jewish principles of *Mitzvot beyn Adam l'Havero* (commandments governing relations among people). The *mitzvah* of giving *tzedakah* on a regular basis is particularly important. *Tzedakah* is not merely charity. From the root *tzedek* meaning justice, it is a religious obligation to create a caring, supportive, just society and to accept responsibility for other members of the community.

Gan Shelanu participates in a variety of *Tzedakah* opportunities, eg. diaper drives, toy drives, food drives. We also invite children to bring loose change from home and collect *Tzedakah* on Friday's during classroom Shabbat celebrations. The Lower School runs several *tzedakah* drives throughout the year and in the Upper School, classes, *havurot* and Student Council participate in numerous *tzedakah* programs. We very much appreciate your support of these programs.

## VIII. School Routines

### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

Early each fall, the school sponsors an evening for each grade during which you can meet your child's teachers and learn about the curriculum for the year. Parents are strongly urged to attend this important and informative evening.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

***Gan Shelanu Birthday Celebrations:*** We recognize that birthdays are a special time for children. On the day of your child's birthday we will participate in special activities to enhance the birthday experience (e.g. crowns, singing, etc.). Once a month we will celebrate the month's birthdays with a special snack provided by Gan Shelanu. For the safety of all our children with allergies, we ask that parents refrain from bringing food for birthday or other celebrations. If food is brought in, we will be unable to serve it and we will send it home. Your cooperation on this matter is appreciated and will help ensure the safety and well being of all our students.

An alternative would be for the parent to come in and read a book, lead a project or spend the morning in the class volunteering.

***Grades K-3 Birthday Celebrations:*** Teachers will share their classroom birthday policies at the beginning of the school year.

***Please do not hold out-of-school birthday parties on Shabbat or Jewish holidays.*** No student should be put in a position of having to choose between observance of *Shabbat* and attendance at a social function. We ask you to be especially sensitive in the spring when *Shabbat* may not end until 9 p.m. Please start parties after that time or choose another date. *Shabbat* starting and concluding times are listed in the weekly *This Week at Schechter*.

We request that you do not serve non-kosher foods at parties either in your home or in a restaurant.

If parties are held out of school, *please be sensitive to all classmates' feelings when sending invitations.* Please do not deliver gifts in school.

### **FAMILY TABLE**

Schechter is a participating organization in support of Jewish Family & Children's Services (JF&CS) Family Table, Greater Boston's largest kosher food pantry. This year, we have been asked to collect 45 cans of tuna fish each month. Collection bins are located in the lobbies of both buildings. In addition, your family can volunteer to sort, package and deliver the monthly food orders to Family Table's recipient families. It's a wonderful opportunity to fulfill an important *mitzvah*. Look for details in the *Shavuon*. Thank you in advance for helping to make a difference in the lives of those in need by feeding the hungry in our community.

## VIII. School Routines

### LUNCH/SNACKS

Lunch and recess are scheduled as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Recess</u>
K-1	11:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	11:10-11:40 a.m.
2-3	11:10-11:40 a.m.	11:40 a.m.-12:10 p.m.
4-5	11:55 a.m.-12:20 p.m.	12:20-12:45/50 p.m Mon.-Fri. Fall/Spring
	12:00-12:30 p.m	11:30 a.m-12:00 p.m. Winter Fridays
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Lunch</u>	
6, 7 & 8	12:20-12:50 p.m.	
	11:10-11:40 a.m	
	10:55-11:25 a.m.	

Children bring their own lunches to school. If your child forgets lunch, you may bring one to the office or the school will provide a simple substitute. Milk can be purchased for the year (via online form). Please provide your child with all utensils needed for lunch.

Children at Gan Shelanu are provided a morning and afternoon snack. Snacks consist of fruits and vegetables as well as some type of carbohydrate or cheese and yogurt.

Children in grades K-8 should bring a nut-free and sesame-free mid-morning snack to school. Smalls snacks are provided for kindergarten students with supplemental fruits and vegetables supplied by families.

Snacks and lunches should consist of nutritious dairy or pareve foods. Suggestions for snacks include: fruit (fresh or dried), cheese, vegetables, yogurt and crackers. **Please do not send soft drinks, candy or junk foods to school and do not send any item in a glass container.**

Pizza lunches are available for purchase and are served every Friday.

Other hot lunches are available for purchase in grades K-8.

A kosher Chinese lunch is offered once a month from October through June to students in grades 4-8. These lunches are purchased in advance for the school year by using the order forms available online.

### OFFICE HOURS

Office hours for students in grades 6-8 are held most weeks on Wednesdays. A schedule is available in the office. On office hours days, classes end at 3:25 p.m. Students have time between 3:25-4:05 p.m. to meet with teachers to receive additional assistance, or they may work in a quiet, supervised study hall. At times, teachers may request that students meet with them for make-up work, testing or additional support. (Sixth graders can receive extra support during Success Club.)

## VIII. School Routines

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Gan Shelanu	8:00am-3:30pm Mon.-Fri.*
Shaller Campus	Grades K-3:8:10** a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Shoolman Campus	Grades 4-5: 8:00 a.m.-3:10 p.m. Grades 6-8: 8:00 a.m.-4:05 p.m. Tue.-Thu./8:00 a.m.-3:10 p.m. Mon. and Fri.***

\* Gan Shelanu offers a 2, 3, 4 or 5 day program for toddlers who are 18 months through 3 years by September 1 and for preschoolers who are 3 through 5 years by September 1<sup>st</sup>. For an additional fee, early drop-off at 7:30 a.m. and extended day until 4:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. are available as well. Summer and vacation programs are from 8 – 3:30 p.m.

\*\*Lower School teachers begin greeting students in their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. Classes begin promptly at 8:10 a.m. It is important that students have time to reach their classrooms, put things in lockers and be in their classrooms by 8:10 a.m.

\*\*\*Due to the early arrival of *Shabbat*, Friday dismissal time from November–February is: 2:00 p.m. for Grades K-3, 2:10 p.m. for Grades 4-8.

Schechter provides supervision beginning at 7:30 a.m. and through 3:15 p.m. for Grades K-5 or 4:15 p.m. for Grades 6-8 (except for students enrolled in the Afterschool Enrichment or Extended Day programs). Please do not bring children earlier or pick them up later than these times.

If you are unavoidably delayed at dismissal time, please notify the office. Students who have not been picked up by 3:15 p.m. at the Lower School and 3:25 p.m. at the Upper School will be signed in to Extended Day and parents will be assessed a fee for Extended Day drop-in.

### **STAFF DAYS**

Staff days allow teachers time to expand their professional expertise by attending workshops and group meetings. Schechter schedules both half and full staff days. On half staff days, children must be picked up at the designated time. Afterschool programming is available on all staff days for a fee. Enrichment programs are also available on staff days.

### **SNOW DAYS**

Announcements of cancellations or delayed openings on snow days will be sent by 6:30 a.m. to radio stations WBZ (1030 AM) and WRKO (680 AM); WBZ-TV Channel 4, WCVB-TV Channel 5 and WHDH-TV Channel 7.

If a storm develops during the school day that portends dangerous road conditions, parents may come to school to pick up their children early, even if the school remains open. If it is necessary to close school early, you will be notified by phone and email through the AlertNow Rapid Notification Service. Students will take their usual buses - and we expect, usual carpools - home. No child will be left unsupervised at school, but it is important to get children home quickly in the event of a school closing. Parents should make advance arrangements for places their children could go if school were to close midday. It is

## VIII. School Routines

recommended that parents identify someone who could pick up their child in the event that they are unavailable at the time of an early closing.

Whenever Newton public schools are closed, there is no bus transportation for our Newton families. This applies not only for snow closings or delays, but also when the Newton schools are closed for vacation and Schechter is open. When there is a delayed opening, there will be bus service only when Schechter and the Newton public schools delay the opening of school for the same amount of time. If the delay is different, such as 90 minutes for Schechter vs. two hours for Newton public schools, there will be no bus service.

## IX. School Security

### **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP**

For the safety of our children, faculty and staff, we have instituted a **No Cell Phone Policy** at both campuses during drop-off and pick-up. We sincerely appreciate your support in not using a handset, headset or speakerphone while dropping off in the morning and once dismissal starts in the afternoon.

For safety and health reasons, parents are asked to keep dogs and other family pets in their cars and not to bring them into the buildings.

#### ***Gan Shelanu***

Children must be brought into their classroom by an adult each morning. Please make sure your child's teacher knows he/she is present before leaving your child.

Curbside drop off is offered between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. If you choose to use this service, please wait in the designated area for a staff member to meet your child and bring him/her into the building.

Parents must sign their children out at the end of the day. Your child will only be released to those for whom you have given written authorization. Teachers and siblings under the age of 18 may not sign out your child for you. In the event you are unable to pick up your child as planned, please call the school and let us know of the change so that we can prepare your child. If the person picking your child up is not on the authorized release list, written permission will need to be emailed to [ellen.agulnick@ssdsboston.org](mailto:ellen.agulnick@ssdsboston.org).

***Gan Shelanu Late Pick-Up Policy:*** Please make every effort to pick your child up at your contracted time as delayed pick-up may make children upset. In the event you are running late, please let the school know. If this becomes a common occurrence (more than three times) you will be charged \$10 per late pick-up.

#### ***Lower School***

All children should be dropped off and picked up at the curb. Students should stay behind the yellow line so they will not be hit by opening car doors. Children should use the sidewalks. Do not cut across the circle with students to get to school. Please do not park at the curb adjacent to the school between 7:30-8:30 a.m. or 2:30-3:15 p.m. Please observe all No Parking signs.

If your child must leave school early any day, please send a written note to the teacher in advance. When you arrive at the office, you will sign your child out and receive a dismissal pass to take to the teacher. Teachers will not release students without a dismissal pass. All children being picked up early must be signed out in the office.

If someone else will be picking up your child after school, please notify the office and teacher in advance in writing. The school will not release a child to anyone other than the regular carpool without written permission from home.

All students who generally ride a bus will be expected to take the bus unless advance written notification is received by the office.

Students are not allowed to use the path between the Shaller Campus and Shoolman Campus without adult supervision.

## IX. School Security

### *Upper School*

Morning drop-off: Please drop off your children by the entrance to the school building no later than 7:50 a.m., and no earlier than 7:30 a.m. Do not double-park in the circle so that your child must walk behind another car to get to the sidewalk.

Afternoon pick-up: Students are dismissed at 3:10 p.m. and 4:05 p.m. and asked to wait in an orderly manner under the canopy for bus/carpool pick-up. Please follow instructions given by the faculty/staff traffic officers who are positioned along the driveway and circle.

Students should not cross the driveway without an adult. Students should enter and exit vehicles along the sidewalk only. Do not double-park and ask your child(ren) to walk between cars to meet you.

If your child must leave school early on a particular day, please send a note to the school office indicating the date and time of departure. Parents must sign the student out with the office receptionist. The student is responsible for keeping track of the dismissal time and for arranging to collect work s/he missed.

If the student is to be dismissed to anyone other than a parent, parents must make special arrangements in advance, preferably in writing.

Please avoid scheduling doctors' appointments during school time, if possible, as they can compromise student progress. Students are responsible for work missed because of doctor or dental appointments.

### *After school Dismissal Procedure*

As of September 1, 2015, a new process has been put into place for dismissal of students in Extended Day. After dismissal is over, children who are waiting for rides will be brought and signed into the Extended Day room. Children may not be left unattended. At the Upper School, sports coaches and play directors will stay with students until they all have been picked up. Adults must enter the building to pick up children; we will not send children out to cars. The guard may release a child to a parent with a photo ID. Everyone other than parents must pick up their child from the front desk or Extended Day staff; this includes grandparents and nannies.

**SCHECHTER ID BADGES** All visitors to the school are required to check in at the security desk to receive a Schechter-issued ID. These badges tell all other occupants in the building that the visitor has been cleared by security. Every parent is issued his or her own individual photo ID badge. All adults are required to wear this photo ID badge at all times while they are in the building even if they are coming in for only a few minutes.

### **TRAFFIC SAFETY** — SHOOLMAN CAMPUS (WELLS AVENUE)

*The following safety guidelines have been devised for the safety of your children.*

The speed limit within the driveway area is 10 mph. The circle is one way. Be aware of small children. Don't block other vehicles. Park your car in a space if your child needs extra time before getting out of the car.

**Parking is not permitted in the traffic circle between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.** If your child is not ready to load, or if you need to enter the school, please find a parking space. If your child plays on a

## IX. School Security

sports team, please do not park in the circle when you come to watch your child play. Parking in handicapped spaces is reserved for handicapped people only. Parking in Gan Shelanu spaces are reserved for Gan Shelanu drop-off/pick-up only.

Areas marked “Don’t Block the Box” must remain clear to allow easy bus access and egress. Please do not wait in your car in these areas.

*Note: Students are not allowed to use the path between the Shoolman Campus and Shaller Campus without adult supervision. Students are not to wait on Wells Avenue to be picked up. Students may not walk or bike home, to the JCC or to other destinations on Wells Avenue without an adult.*

### **TRANSPORTATION**

***Carpools:*** Many carpools have been arranged by Schechter parents. The school office will help you get in touch with families in your neighborhood. To promote *derekh erez*, we expect that students and drivers will follow safety rules, be courteous to one another and be on time.

***Van transportation:*** One-way transportation in the morning has been organized for students living in Brookline, MetroWest and South Shore area communities, and in the morning and afternoon for students living on the South Shore. Transportation costs are paid by the families involved. For more information, contact the Business Office at 617-630-4520.

***Newton bus:*** The City of Newton provides bus transportation to Newton residents. Students must have a bus pass to board the bus. School personnel at each campus supervise loading. Buses leave the Shaller Campus no earlier than five minutes after the official dismissal time. On Mondays-Thursdays, there is an additional 4:10 p.m. bus at the Shoolman Campus.

A Newton resident with a bus pass may use the Newton bus to go to the home of another classmate who is a Newton resident. Lower School students may not ride the Newton bus to the Upper School in order to disembark and meet a carpool there. Newton bus pass applications are available from the School Transportation website at [www.newton.mec.edu](http://www.newton.mec.edu).

If any problems or questions arise en route, the driver is instructed to radio immediately the bus company dispatcher who is responsible for taking prompt and appropriate action and informing the school.

**Whenever Newton public schools are closed, there is no bus transportation for our Newton families.**

This applies not only for snow closings or delays, but also when the Newton schools are closed for vacation and Schechter is open. When there is a delayed opening, there will be bus service only when Schechter and the Newton public schools delay the opening of school for the same amount of time. If the delay is different, such as 90 minutes for Schechter versus two hours for Newton public schools, there will be no bus service.

***Backup plan:*** Newton bus drivers will let a child off at the correct stop whether or not an adult is there. It is vital to plan for an unforeseen situation that could prevent an adult from being at the stop on time to meet the child. Backup plans may include walking home with another child or to a neighbor’s house. It may be useful to place a card with this information in the backpacks of younger children. It is imperative that your child knows the number of the bus and the name of the bus stop and his/her phone number and can recognize the approach to the bus stop according to the designated route.

## X. School Organization

### **GOVERNANCE**

The Solomon Schechter Day School is an independent school that runs according to a set of bylaws filed with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. According to the articles of organization, the purpose of the school is “to operate and maintain an educational institution teaching both general studies and Jewish studies, consistent with the tenets of Conservative Judaism.” It is organized principally for such purposes and for other pertinent charitable and educational purposes. The success and growth of the school continues as a result of the caring, commitment, foresight, planning and energy of the Board of Trustees in collaboration with the wisdom and expertise of the administration and faculty.

#### ***Board of Trustees***

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the policies and finances of the school. For more information about the Board of Trustees, consult Article V of the bylaws or contact the school president.

#### ***Board Committees***

Committee members are designated by the president or by the chair of the relevant committee. The standing committees include:

- Finance: consults with the head on the formulation of the annual budget. Develops and recommends fiscal policy.
- Development: recommends policies and goals for the development activities of the school, including the Annual Campaign, the Major Gifts/Capital Campaign and Legacy Program, and supports these efforts.
- Committee for Trustees: develops processes for the continual improvement of the functioning of the board through evaluation, training and development of the board and ensures the operations of the board are in accordance with the by-laws; nominates the slate of officers and new trustees, who then are voted upon by the Board of Trustees
- Head Support and Evaluation: provides advice, counsel, support and evaluation for the head of school.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

The Office of Institutional Advancement is responsible for recruitment, marketing, communication, admission and development. Our ultimate goals are to bring in new students at all grade levels and to raise financial resources to support the school’s program, faculty and future.

We coordinate a number of programs and open houses throughout the year for prospective students and their families. As parents, you can play a very powerful role to help us connect with new families. Share your positive Schechter experiences with prospective families and connect them with the Admission Office.

Schechter’s Annual Campaign is the foundation of our school’s fundraising, providing the school with the resources it needs to open its doors and fulfill its mission each and every day. The Annual Campaign contributes 11 percent of the school’s annual operating budget. Schechter’s 2016 Annual Campaign runs

## IX. School Security

from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. This year's goal is \$1.5 million. Your gift to the 2016 Annual Campaign supports Schechter's outstanding secular and Jewish education, dedicated faculty and staff and their professional development and our innovative family tuition assistance programs. All Schechter families are encouraged to contribute as we strive for 100 percent parent participation. Gifts at every level help us to reach this goal.

Schechter is proud to have earned the generous support of prominent leaders of the Jewish community, in addition to gifts from current and alumni parents, grandparents, alumni, faculty and staff. Generous donors beyond the parent body contribute more than 60 percent of the funds raised in the Annual Campaign.

Legacy or planned gifts are those given to the school through an estate plan, will or trust. Legacy funds usually become part of the school's endowment. Planned giving is an important vehicle for supporting Schechter and allows many donors to make a larger, more impactful gift than they can during their lifetime. Individuals or couples who indicate that they have made a provision in their estate plan or will to the school become part of the Jacob's Ladder Society.

To learn more about making a gift to the school, or to become involved in one of our many parent volunteer opportunities, please contact Natalie Matus, Associate Head of School for Institutional Advancement at 617-630-4617.

### **PARENT ASSOCIATION**

The Parent Association (PA) is made up of the entire parent community at Schechter. Every parent is considered a part of the PA whether you give a little or a lot of your time and energy to enhance the life of our students, faculty and parents. Each act of participation in the creation of a dynamic, generous and connected Schechter community is valued highly. In addition, a donation is requested from each family to help fund the many extras we all enjoy including new student summer reading books, community building events and even paper goods for all our celebrations. Opportunities to be involved can be at the classroom, grade- or school-wide level. You can answer the call of your room parents (or be one yourself) to socialize, help at programs, make a phone call or help with *hesed* (*see next section*). You can come up with your own ideas and do as much or little as your time allows. All Gan Shelanu parents are automatically members of their Parent Association which plans events and supports school activities. It all helps build our community!

The mission of the PA is to:

- Promote the overall mission of the school
- Foster a strong sense of community
- Facilitate communication between parents, administration and the board of Trustees
- Enhance grade-wide celebrations and milestone events
- Identify opportunities for parent participation in the school
- Provide social gatherings both with and without children
- Recognize faculty efforts and achievements

## IX. School Security

### **SCHECHTER HESED COMMUNITY**

Schechter is a remarkable school in which our children learn, grow and flourish. But we are more than just a school. We are also a community of families who support each other whether to celebrate or to comfort during the significant transitions in our lives.

When we perform acts of *hesed*, literally “lovingkindness,” we are reminded that we belong to a generous, loving Schechter community. Acts of *hesed* are especially important in times of family need: the arrival of a new baby, an immediate family member with an illness, recuperating from surgery; undergoing prolonged medical treatment or the death of a family member. Involvement in the *Hesed* Community could include providing meals, helping with rides and carpools, helping with errands and attending *shiva minyanim*.

Asking for help may be difficult; however, we all need help at some point in our lives. Others truly want to help. All help is provided privately and with discretion.

To sign up to become a Schechter *Hesed* Community member, please send an email to [hesed@ssdsboston.org](mailto:hesed@ssdsboston.org) with your name and contact information. When there is a need in the community, an email will be sent to *Hesed* members. There is no obligation, only an opportunity to help when you can.

Likewise, to let us know about a *hesed* need or for more information, please contact us at [hesed@ssdsboston.org](mailto:hesed@ssdsboston.org) or by phone:

Sylvia Haber      781-460-9505; [sylhaber@gmail.com](mailto:sylhaber@gmail.com)

Serena Madar      617-327-5626; [serena.madar@comcast.net](mailto:serena.madar@comcast.net)

### **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Upper School students have the opportunity to develop organizational and leadership skills through participation in Student Council. Students are introduced to the democratic process of government in a way that includes Jewish values of honesty, fairness, integrity and mutual respect for the individual and the group. Student Council is central to building a sense of community and school spirit.

The Intermediate Division Student Council organizes fundraising activities, *tzedakah projects* and special programs for grades 4-5. Representatives are appointed on a rotating basis and all students have an opportunity to serve.

The Middle Division Student Council, *Mo'etzet HaTalmidim*, plans extracurricular activities such dances, movie nights and *tzedakah* projects for grades 6-8. The Student Council also helps maintain and improve daily school life. Middle Division students elect Student Council officers each fall. Each *havurah* elects representatives to the Student Council to help with the planning and to involve all students in school activities.