

Av 5779
August 2019

Dear Mesivta Parents and Talmidim:

Welcome to a new zman! I am very excited and looking forward to personally greeting and meeting each of you, as together *Bezras Hashem* we embark on a productive and wonderful school year.

During the summer, I had the privilege and honor to work very closely with Rabbi Schwartz, Rabbi Steinberg and other key personnel in planning a program of outstanding *hasmada* and academics in *Limudei Kodesh* and General Studies which we trust will be motivating and challenging. We have also developed a wide range of extracurricular activities and chesed projects. I strongly encourage every Talmid to take full advantage of the exceptional *shiurim*, night *sederim*, classes and extra-curricular activities which the Mesivta will be offering, so that you can soar to the highest levels of *Yiddishkeit* and reach your potential scholastically, as well as maximize your intellectual, social and emotional potential.

Attached here, you will find the *Mesivta Guide for Success* which delineates school policies and expectations for our students. This handbook will assist in making the excellent choices that will assure your success as a Mesivta student. These policies are designed to enhance our students' security, participation in davening and class, appearance and conduct as B'nei Torah, and avoidance of risk-taking behaviors.

Once again, I look forward to meeting each of you and extend my warmest wishes to everyone for a successful year, *Bezras Hashem*.

Rabbi Gedaliah Oppen
Menahel

The Mesivta Guide for Success

This Guide will help you understand how a *Talmid of the Mesivta* is expected to conduct himself. The guide delineates school policies and expectations of students, as well as the consequences of not adhering to these policies.

As a successful Mesivta Talmid, you will recognize that you are a Ben Torah, and as such, your conduct in and out of the Mesivta must always reflect the highest standards.

The successful Mesivta Talmid will engage promptly and enthusiastically in all aspects of the day, including *davening*, *lemudei Kodesh* and *lemudei chol* classes, and special programs.

The successful Mesivta Talmid respects himself, his Rebbeim, Teachers, peers, every staff member and, indeed, all with whom he comes into contact in and out of the Yeshiva. The same applies to all property, whether it belongs to him, to someone else, or to the school.

A big part of success at the Mesivta is taking advantage of the skills, talents and experience of the Menahel, Principal, Rebbeim and faculty. You are strongly encouraged to share any issues that may impede your best functioning during the day, and we look forward to working productively with you to address and eliminate those situations.

This year the Talmidim will be learning Kiddushin for Iyun, Bekiyus TBA and for Night Seder, Talmidim will be given a choice of different chaburahs (signup sheets will be posted).

Fathers are strongly encouraged to join and learn with your children at Thursday Night Mishmar and to stay for an inspiring Farbrengen.

DERECH ERETZ KADMAH L'TORAH

Successful Mesivta Talmidim will conduct themselves with proper *middos* and *derech eretz* at all times. Our Mesivta is a serious place of learning, in which every Rebbi/Teacher has the responsibility to teach, and every Talmid has the right to learn.

Any Talmid who interferes with a Rebbi/Teacher's instruction, or who impedes another Talmid's ability to learn, will be referred to the Menahel for disciplinary action. Repeated incidents of disrespectful or disruptive behavior may result in suspension or expulsion from our Mesivta.

Talmidim who eat meals in the Yeshiva may not leave the dining area unless their table and surroundings are clean and all trash is placed in the appropriate receptacle.

At no time is a Mesivta Talmid permitted in either the Pre-school, Elementary or Middle School building without explicit permission from the Menahel or Principal.

DAVENING

All talmidim will receive a grade in Davening based on the Davening Rubric. The grade will be based on being punctual, prepared and participating. Every talmid begins the year with a davening grade of 100. Two points will be deducted for every absence; two points will be deducted for three tardiness. Each additional tardy will result in the loss of one point. This grading system also applies to *mincha and maariv*. **Points deducted for unexcused absences from Davening cannot be restored.** This grade will appear on the Talmid's transcript and will be included in the Talmid's grade point average.

Dress Code for davening: A hat and a jacket is required at all Tefilos. (A suit type jacket is required).

STUDENT VEHICLES

The use of student driven vehicles to and from the Mesivta is only permitted in certain situations as requested and authorized by parents and permitted by the Menahel. **In such cases, students still may not use their cars during the school day, including breakfast, lunch, dinner, or any school activity. Students may not be passengers in another student driven car. Violation of these rules will result in suspension/expulsion for both the student driver and any passenger. Students must leave the keys with the Menahel and the keys can be retrieved at the end of the school day.**

No electric scooters will be allowed on school premises. Use of a scooter will result in the student being suspended.

Parent Responsibility: Parents are fully responsible for any student who uses his car to and from school. In addition, parents bear full responsibility for any student who uses his car during the school day, or to and from school activities, in violation of school policy.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety and well-being of our Talmidim and faculty are paramount in our Mesivta, and our Mesivta has identified and implemented strategies to upgrade security measures at Mesivta building and grounds. The following protocols are in place to enhance the security of our facility:

1. Students may **enter and exit** the Mesivta **only** through the front doors at the main entrance.
2. All other doors have been outfitted with alarms and cameras and are locked.
3. An alarm will sound when someone enters or exits through a door other than the front door. Once an alarm sounds, the cameras will be checked to identify the person who violated the security protocol.

4. The dorm building is closed and locked. Therefore, no student should ever be in the dorm or its vicinity.
5. Fences with cameras are in place around the TA campus for security. A student may never climb over the fence.
6. A student who violates these security policies is not only jeopardizing his own safety and security, but that of the entire TA and will be suspended/expelled from the Mesivta.

Every student, parent, staff member and visitor in TA has the individual responsibility to follow these procedures at all times in order to insure the safety of all of the members of our TA community. Parents are asked to please review these protocols with their children. We look forward to the full cooperation of every member of the TA Mesivta community.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is one of the fundamental keys to success at the Mesivta. To make the most of the many opportunities we offer you, regular attendance is essential and required. Class attendance, note-taking, attentiveness, conduct, and participation are all part of evaluating your performance in any context. Rebbeim/Teachers will have the discretion to include these factors in their grading policies.

Night Seder and Thursday night Mishmar attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken.

Leaving the School Grounds: During the school day (7:45am – After night Seder/Mishmar), a student may not leave the school grounds without explicit permission from the Menahel or if a parent signed out the student from the Mesivta office.

Signing In and Out of School: We encourage you to plan appointments at times other than during the school day. If you must leave at any time during the school day your parent must either come into the Mesivta office or email Mrs. Sarah Stern at sstern@talmudicalacademy.org with explicit permission, including time of departure and plans for your return to school. Students must sign out with in the office before you leave and sign back in on your return.

(Please be mindful, when possible, if picking up during the day, please try to arrange that it not be during the elementary division dismissal time). A student who **does** leave school grounds without permission will be suspended.

Each unexcused absence/cut will carry a three point deduction from the trimester grade. (Please note: a “verified” excuse does not mean the absence is excused - all excused absences are based solely on the discretion of the Menahel and Principal.

A student marked “unexcused late” three times in a single trimester for a single class will have his grade reduced two points for each additional lateness.

It is the responsibility of the Talmid to verify that his lateness or absence was excused.

DRESS CODE

The Mesivta's dress code represents our values as a Yeshiva and as a preparatory program for college and career. Students' appearance in the Mesivta and on TA grounds, must reflect the concepts of a dignified Ben Torah and Mesivta Talmid.

- ❖ A hat and (suit) jacket is required for all Tefilos.
- ❖ Talmidim are expected to wear dress shirts (no Hawaiian shirts or the like). Shirts must be tucked in at davening, in the Beis Medresh, Shiurim and class time.
- ❖ Dark colored (only dark blue, black, dark gray) dress pants are acceptable. Khaki, jeans and light colored pants are not acceptable.
- ❖ Dress shoes (not dark sneakers or crocs...)
- ❖ Socks must cover the ankles.
- ❖ Only Sweatshirts with the TA logo (purchased from the PTA) may be worn.
- ❖ Personal grooming and facial hair must be with the utmost Kavod of a Ben Torah.
- ❖ Yarmulkes must be appropriate size and in good taste.

CELL PHONE POLICY

We are all aware of the need to have a cell phone policy that will enable Talmidim to communicate with parents and yet, to avoid the distractions cellphones (i.e. Smartphones) may pose.

The only phones permitted by the Mesivta are the K Phones which provides unlimited talk and text service with no time restriction through Verizon Wireless. Please follow this link to purchase a K Phone - Tinyurl.com/kphones613TA. **See attached flier.**

Throughout the day the phones may only be used during break times. Phones may not be used during Davening, Shiur, Seder, class time or in the Bais Medrash. Failure to keep these rules will result in the phone being confiscated. Any non-approved phone that is found in a student's possession will be confiscated as well as the student being suspended.

SUBSTANCE USE

The Mesivta educates students and parents on the dangers of drug and alcohol use, smoking and vaping, and teaches students strategies for making good choices that will ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Under the supervision of the Menahel, a professional will conduct a screening program to identify students engaged in drug or alcohol use. The Mesivta may elect to use various screening methods, including interviews, cheek swabs, urine samples, and/or hair samples. The Mesivta also reserves the right to question any student and to search his person, possessions and locker.

In the event that screening confirms drug use, the Talmid's parents will be notified, and the Talmid and the family will be referred for professional guidance. Depending on circumstances, the Talmid may be placed on probation, suspended or expelled.

Facilitating another's use of drugs or alcohol, or being an accessory to such use, will be considered an infraction which will subject the student to appropriate action.

Sale or distribution of illegal substances, drug use, smoking, vaping or drinking alcohol on Mesivta grounds or off Mesivta grounds, during the Mesivta day or after the Mesivta hours, will result in suspension and/or expulsion.

CHESED REQUIREMENTS

"Al Shlosha Devarim Ha'olom Omed—Torah, Avodah, and Gemilus Chasadim". At the Mesivta, we believe that the performance of chesed is an integral part of every Talmid's weekly activities. Through engagement in chesed, the Talmidim will develop and internalize the commitment to help others and to contribute to the community. **Talmidim are required to perform a minimum of 30 hours of chesed every year**, between the months of September and June. Students who perform over 60 hours of chesed will be eligible to be inducted into the Chesed Honor Society. Talmidim must submit detailed documentation for their engagement in chesed activities to Mrs. Sarah Stern in the Mesivta office. Chesed hours requirement will be reflected on your transcript.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Shacharis	Sunday - Friday	7:45am
Chumash Shiur	Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday Monday and Thursday	9:00am 9:05am
Gemara Iyun Shiur		9:30am
Break		11:00am - 11:15am
Shiur Halacha		11:15am - 11:45am
Seder/Shiur Iyun		11:45am - 12:45pm
Lunch		12:45pm - 1:30pm
Period 1. Machshava/Gemara Bekiyus		1:30pm - 2:35pm
Mincha (At the Mesivta)		2:35pm
Period 2.		2:50pm - 3:35pm
Period 3.		3:38pm - 4:23pm
Break		4:22pm - 4:32pm
Period 4.		4:35pm - 5:17pm
Period 5.		5:20pm - 6:05pm
Dinner		6:05pm - 6:45pm
Night Seder		6:45pm - 7:45pm
Maariv		7:45pm
Monday, 9th Grade and 10th Grade Mandatory Gym		
Tuesday, 11th Grade and 12th Grade Mandatory Gym		8:00pm - 8:45pm
Wednesday Intramurals		8:00pm - 9:20pm
Thursday Night Mishmar		8:00pm - 8:45pm
Cholent and Farbrengen		8:45pm

Rubric for Davening

All students will receive grades for davening based on the Rubric below.

	A	B	C	D
Punctuality	Student does not arrive on time for davening.	Student rarely arrives on time for davening.	Student arrives on time for davening most days.	Student arrives on time for davening every day.
Upholding Environmental Kedushah	Student is not an active participant in davening and/or frequently engages in distracting behavior.	Student is sometimes an active participant in davening but engages in some distracting behavior.	Student is an active participant in davening but engages in minimal distracting behavior.	Student is an active participant in davening and engages in no distracting behavior.
Dress Code (Hat & Jacket)	Student is not dressed appropriately for davening	Student sometimes is dressed appropriately for davening.	Student mostly comes dressed appropriately for davening.	Student always is dressed appropriately for davening.
Presence	Student frequently leaves davening.	Student sometimes leaves davening	Student rarely leaves davening.	Student never or rarely leaves davening.
Beiur Tefilah Assessments	Student does not engage in lessons and displays no mastery of material.	Student engages minimally in lessons and displays limited mastery of material.	Student engages in lessons and shows mastery of material.	Student engages at a high level and displays superior mastery of material.

A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The Mesivta strives to foster an environment of commitment to Torah, its values, and Yiddeshkeit. We remind you that your conduct, on and off school grounds, reflects upon you as a Ben Torah and a Mesivta student 24/7. We are confident that you will make good choices that will make us proud of you and will enhance the TA community.

We extend our best wishes to every Talmid for a happy, successful and productive school year!

Bracha V'Hatzlacha!!