

Menachem Av 5780

August 2020

Dear Mesivta Parents and Talmidim:

Welcome to a new zman! I am very excited and looking forward to personally greeting each of the talmidim, as together *B'ezras 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 Steinberg, Rabbi Brown 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 stimulating. Although, we are living in a very challenging time with an pandemic and civil unrest in the world, while we were designing shiurim, classes, curriculum and structure we first and foremost had the social and emotional wellbeing and of our beloved talmidim in mind. The curriculum and schedule are geared to inspire and stimulate your mind, enhancing knowledge and preparing students for post high school Yeshivos and colleges of their choice. Therefore, the hanhala and I strongly encourage every Talmid to take full advantage of the exceptional *shiurim*, night, sedarim, classes and extracurricular activities which *B'ezras Hashem*, the Mesivta will be offering. These classes will ensure that the Talmidim can soar to the highest levels of *Yiddishkeit* and reach their goals scholastically, as well as maximize their intellectual, social and emotional potential.

Attached you will find the *Mesivta Guide for Success* which delineates school policies and expectations for parents and talmidim. 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, *B'ezras 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 both 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 Chezkas Ha'Batim for Iyun.

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 erez* 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/Principal for disciplinary action. Repeated incidents of disrespectful or disruptive behavior may result in suspension or expulsion from our Mesivta.

When eating meals in the Yeshiva a talmid may not leave the dining area unless the 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

Shacharis begins daily at 7:45. All talmidim will receive a grade in Davening based on being punctual, prepared, participation and decorum. The Davening grade is listed on your transcript along with Judaic grades and counts as a Judaic credit.

Due to the Covid19 epidemic, (for the time being), parents and talmidim who require special accommodations for shacharis or maariv must arrange and get permission from the Menahel or Principal.

All Rabbeim/Faculty and talmidim of the Mesivta will be strictly adhering to the social distancing guidelines.

No phones allowed in the Bais Medresh during Davening.

Dress Code for davening: A hat and a jacket is required at all Tefilos. (A suit type jacket is required). Gym shoes or slippers are unacceptable.

SHIURIM/CLASS PLACEMENT

The Hanhala of the Mesivta puts in much effort and time working on which shiur/class is best suitable for each Talmid, his needs and social and emotional growth as an individual. No student may switch his shiur or class without written permission from the Menahel /Principal. **In Lemudei Kodesh there will be no switching shiurim until after the first marking period at which time parents and talmidim may discuss shiur placement with the Menahel.**

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. 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 scooter being confiscated.

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:

Due to the daily changes of policies regarding the pandemic - Parents and students MUST adhere and be fully in compliance with all restrictions and Mesivta guidelines.

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 ensure the safety of all 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 and Teachers will include these in grading as per Yeshiva's policy.

Night Seder is mandatory and attendance will be taken.

Leaving the School Grounds: During the school day, a student may not leave the school grounds without explicit permission from the Menahel/Principal 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 a talmid must leave at any time during the school day parents call 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. (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 subject to suspension.

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 Menahal and Principal.

A student marked "unexcused late" three times in a single trimester for a single class will have his grade reduced one point for each additional lateness.

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

Lateness or absence must be verified within same trimester. Once points are deducted they are not refundable subsequent to the close of the trimester.

DRESS CODE

The Mesivta's dress code represents our values as a Yeshiva. 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 (even dark colored) and light colored pants are not acceptable.
- ❖ Dress shoes (no sneakers) must be worn in the Beis Medresh, during shiurim and class time. (Ugg moccasins (or the like) and crocs may never be worn in the Mesivta)
- ❖ Socks must cover the ankles.
- ❖ Hoodies (this includes 'Grade Hoodies') and Sweatshirts with large print writing are not permitted
- ❖ Personal grooming and facial hair must be with the utmost Kavod of a Ben Torah.
- ❖ Yarmulkes must be the 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 cell-phones (i.e. Smartphones) may pose.

A talmid who receives permission from the Menahel or Principal to bring a Smartphone to school, must hand the phone to the Menahel, Principal or Rebbe for the duration of the day. **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 or you can email kphone613@gmail.com or call 410-790-5649.

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 subject to disciplinary action.

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 Shlosa 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 - for beginning of year to be re-evaluated after Sukkos, and subject to change at any time as dictated by law, safety requirements or administrative discretion.

Shacharis	Sunday - Friday	7:45am
Gemara Iyun Shiur	Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday	9:05am - 11:00
	Monday and Thursday	9:15am
Break		11:00am - 11:15am
Shiur 11th & 12th Grade		11:15am - 12:45pm
Shiur 9th & 10th Grade		11:15am - 1:00pm
Lunch 11th, & 12th Grade		12:30pm - 1:00pm
Break for all shiurim		1:00pm - 1:15pm
Lunch 9th & 10th Grade		1:15pm - 1:45pm
9th & 10th grade Mincha in Beis Medresh		1:45pm - 2:00pm
Period 1. Gemara Bekiyus 11th & 12th Grade		1:15pm - 2:30pm
11th & 12th Grade Mincha in the Beis Medresh		2:35pm
Period 1. Gemara Bekiyus 9th & 10th Grade		2:00 - 2:45
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
Night Seder		6:50pm - 7:35pm

DAILY SCHEDULE - for when Covid restrictions are lifted

Shacharis	Sunday - Friday	7:45am
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Shiur	Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday	9:05am
	Monday and Thursday	9:15am - 11:00am
Break		11:00am - 11:15am
Seder/Shiur		11:15am - 12:45pm
Lunch		12:45pm - 1:30pm
Period 1. Gemara Bekiyus		1:30pm - 2:35pm
Mincha		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 - 6:50pm
Night Seder		6:50pm - 7:45pm
Maariv		7:45pm
Thursday Night Optional Mishmar		8:00pm - 8:45pm
Cholent and Farbrengen		8:45pm

A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The Mesivta strives to foster an environment of commitment to Torah, its values, and Yiddishkeit. 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!!