



# Lower School

## Parent - Student Manual

2023-2024

5783 – 5784

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# Introduction

## Our School

Founded in 1917, Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim – Talmudical Academy of Baltimore is one of the most venerable institutions of Jewish learning in the United States. Over these many years, TA has succeeded in producing young men of stature in Torah learning, secular scholarship, and communal leadership.

The mission of Talmudical Academy is to provide a program that will encourage each student to achieve his highest potential as he strives for excellence in Limudei Kodesh and General Studies. Based upon the principles of Torah, halacha, and derech eretz, and by emphasizing the “total person,” TA aims to develop the general character of the student on his journey to become a responsible and productive member of the Jewish community.

TA aims to:

- Instill *Ahavas HaTorah* – love for learning.
- Foster *Simchas Hachaim* – love of life.
- Develop a sense of pride in being a part of the greater Klal (community).
- Instill a sense of responsibility to the Klal (community).
- Develop character (*Middos*).
- Encourage each student to reach his highest potential.
- Cultivate proficiency in all subject matters.
- Prepare our students to be future leaders and role models who will create a *Kiddush HaShem* (sanctify G-d).

We take pride in our excellent rebbeim, teachers, and morahs. We have an outstanding staff of dedicated and devoted individuals whose sole interest is the chinuch and well-being of the children in their care. They strive for continued growth and elevation in the pursuit of excellence.

Our Rebbeim have spent many years in yeshivos learning intensively day and night, devoted to Torah study and the acquisition of *yiras Shamayim* and *ahavas Hashem*. During these years of study, our Rebbeim were ordained with *smicha*, which in the secular world would be the equivalent of a post-graduate degree. Because of these years spent in Torah study, the erudition and expertise that each Rebbe brings to his classroom is extraordinary. Even more important, however, is their deep-seated belief that functioning as a Rebbe is their calling. Recognition of their responsibilities as an integral link in the *mesora* translates into an incredible degree of love and devotion toward each and every talmid in their respective *shiurim*.

We are extremely proud of our professional and dedicated General Studies teachers. In addition to Bachelor’s degrees, many teachers also have Master’s degrees. Our teachers take part in continuing education and professional development trainings. As a result, they are constantly applying new strategies and techniques to our programs and classrooms. Reaching every student at his level helps ensure that he reaches his potential. Our teachers are well-known in the community for going the extra mile to meet each student’s needs.

Our Morahs are well-known in the community for their expertise in Early Childhood instruction. Their warmth and care for each student, as well as their dynamic teaching styles, ensure that each student can grow and thrive in the most optimal learning environment.

## Lower School General Information

The educational administration and the Vaad Hachinuch of our yeshiva have mandated specific student ratios for our classes, which are as follows for 2023-24. The maximum nursery ratio is 1 teacher/assistant per 9 children, and the maximum Kindergarten ratio is 1 teacher/assistant per 11 children. However, on average, each nursery class has approximately 2 teachers/assistants per 16 students and each Kindergarten class has approximately 2 teachers/assistants per 20 students. The maximum Elementary ratio is 1 rebbe/teacher per 25 students. However, on average, Elementary classes have approximately 1 rebbe/teacher per 20 students. These ratios apply for class trips as well.

The school does not discriminate in student admissions, retention, or expulsion, or otherwise discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Students must live their lives based on the Torah and by following the *Shulchan Aruch*. A child must be 5-years old or older on or before September 1 of the school year to be age-eligible for Kindergarten.

## Lower School Contact Information

**Address:** Talmudical Academy of Baltimore / 4445 Old Court Road / Baltimore, MD 21208

**Phone:** 410-484-6600 / Dial "1" for Early Childhood / Dial "2" for Elementary

• Rabbi Hillel Hexter, Menahel	ext. 7999
• Mrs. Shoshana Berzon, General Studies Principal	ext. 7328
• Mrs. Tzipi Gottlieb, Administrative Coordinator	ext. 7323
• Rabbi Norman Lowenthal, Guidance Counselor	ext. 7322
• Mrs. Rivky Danziger, Lamdeinu Learning Center Director	ext. 7373
• Mrs. Elisheva Weinberger, Director of Behavior Programming and Support	ext. 7311
• Nurse, Elementary	ext. 7330
• Mrs. Batsheva Twersky, Early Childhood Director	ext. 7326
• Mrs. Dassey Zweig, Associate Early Childhood Director	ext. 7508
• Nurse, Early Childhood	ext. 7360

**Emergency Communication:** (see "communication" on page 7)

**Lower School Fax:** 443-725-2058

**Lower School Email:** [elemoffice@talmudicalacademy.org](mailto:elemoffice@talmudicalacademy.org) or [earlychildhood@talmudicalacademy.org](mailto:earlychildhood@talmudicalacademy.org)

**Website:** [talmudicalacademy.org](http://talmudicalacademy.org)

## Curriculum

We use the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) for all core areas of secular instruction: English-language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. You may access a copy of the Maryland VSC by going to <http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/index.html> or requesting a copy from the elementary school office.

## Special Education Services

We are fortunate to offer Lamdeinu special education services at our school with the support of SHEMESH, an educational support program for students with learning differences. Mrs. Rivky Danziger, TA's Lamdeinu Learning Center Director, leads a team of special educators who are employed by TA, with partial funding from SHEMESH. Students can be referred for services by teachers and/or parents, and children with identified learning differences are serviced through specialized learning plans. Services range from in-class support and case management to individualized instruction in our Learning Center and support in a self-contained classroom. Students also receive support from the services offered by Mrs. Sara Ottensoser, Shemesh Executive Functioning Coach. Additionally, our Early Childhood benefits from the SHEMESH services of Mrs. Debbie Logue, reading specialist, and Mrs. Michal Tessler, behavior specialist.

Mrs. Stacie Arfa, our Elementary reading specialist, works with small groups of students with identified lags in reading skills on a daily basis. She uses carefully selected strategies and leveled materials to help students improve their abilities. Mrs. Arfa is available on Parent-Teacher Conference night and can be contacted through the Elementary office.

Mrs. Helen Hexter, our Early Childhood kriaH specialist, and Rabbi Dov Becker, our Elementary kriaH specialist, work with students to ensure their kriaH skills are developing and up to par. They spend additional time with students who require greater assistance.

## Guidance Counselor

Rabbi Norman Lowenthal, MS Ed., MSW, LCSW-C is our Lower School Guidance Counselor. The School Counseling Program supports and enhances the school's educational program by addressing the needs of children comprehensively and systematically. When children have worries connected to school or home, it can adversely affect their ability to be successful in school and in life in general. Through prevention and intervention programs, these barriers to learning are addressed. Rabbi Lowenthal consults with parents and teachers and interacts with students through classroom guidance lessons, small group counseling sessions, and individual counseling. **Classroom guidance lessons** consist of activities on topics of concern or interest as identified by the classroom teacher or the developmental needs of students, i.e. self-esteem, responsibility, and bullying. **Small group counseling sessions** are designed around topics such as making friends, changing family structures, and social skills. Students can also receive **individual counseling**. Referrals for individual counselling are made by parents, faculty, and the students themselves. Questions regarding parenting concerns are always welcome. Students can communicate directly with Rabbi Lowenthal through a special secure mailbox located in the Elementary lobby. Additionally, when possible, Rabbi Lowenthal provides mentoring to school counseling interns who assist in supporting our school counseling program.

# Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

## Arrival / Dismissal Timetable

	Early Childhood Arrival Times	Elementary Arrival Times	Early Childhood Classes Begin	Elementary Classes Begin	Early Childhood Only Dismissal	Mixed Early Childhood / 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Dismissal	1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Only Dismissal	4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Dismissal
<b>Sunday (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>	N/A	9:00am-9:15am	N/A	9:15 am	N/A	12:15 pm		
<b>Monday-Thursday</b>	8:30am-8:50 am	8:30am-8:45 am	8:50 am	8:45 am	3:20 pm	3:25 pm	3:35 pm	4:30 pm
<b>Friday</b>	8:30am-8:50 am	8:30am-8:45 am	8:50 am	8:45 am	1:25 pm	1:30 pm	1:40 pm	1:50 pm
<b>Mishmar (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>	N/A	6:15 pm	N/A	6:30 pm	N/A	7:20 pm		
<b>3:45 pm Dismissal (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>	N/A	8:30am-8:45 am	N/A	8:45 am	N/A	N/A	N/A	3:45 pm
<b>Half-Day</b>	8:30am-8:50 am	8:30am-8:45 am	8:50 am	8:45 am	12:25 pm	12:30 pm	12:40 pm	12:50 pm
<b>Daily Half-Day Nursery</b>	8:30am-8:50 am	N/A	8:50 am	N/A	Mon-Thurs 12:30 pm / Fri 12:00 pm	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Early Childhood Early Dismissal Option</b>	8:30am-8:50 am	N/A	8:50 am	N/A	Mon-Thurs 3:00 pm / Fri 1:05 pm	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Arrival/Dismissal Parking Lot Procedures

Parking lot safety is **extremely important**. The following procedures were developed to ensure your son's safety during arrival and dismissal. We thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please also reference the "Arrival/Dismissal Procedures" and the "Arrival/Dismissal Parking Lot Map" sent out in the summer. We kindly ask that parents refrain from using their cellphones while driving on campus.

### Arrival

- During arrival, the parking lot is designated as a one-way route to be traveled at no more than 5 mph. Early Childhood and Elementary cars snake through the Elementary parking lot, ultimately ending up by the lanes parallel to the Elementary Building.
  - Elementary carpools pull up to the **Lane A** and **Lane B** drop-off lanes parallel to the Elementary building. Carpools that have *both* Elementary *and* Early Childhood students *then* proceed to the Early Childhood parking lot drop-off lane. Elementary students must be dropped off **first** and Early Childhood students must be dropped off **second**.
  - Early Childhood only carpools use **Lane C** to continue on to the Early Childhood parking lot drop-off area in front of the Early Childhood building.
- Students may be dropped off from the **right-side car door only**, thereby they will not be endangered by cars pulling in and out of spots as they exit the drop-off area. Carpool drivers must be vigilant as they pull out of their parking spots.
- If no spot by the curb is immediately available, please wait patiently in line. Do not double-park as this poses a tremendous risk to the boys exiting your vehicle.
- Carpool drivers who choose to bring their children into the building need to park in a designated parking spot. Carefully escort children **around the perimeter** of the parking lot and drop-off area on the way to the building. No child may walk across the parking lot—even accompanied by an adult.
- No stopping is permitted along any fire lane, even for just a few moments. We have been informed by the Police Department that cars parked in prohibited spots will be ticketed.
- Early Childhood and Elementary students enter their school building through the **front doors by the office**.

## **Dismissal**

- As with arrival, the dismissal parking lot is designated as a one-way route to be traveled at no more than 5 mph. Early Childhood and Elementary cars snake through the Elementary parking lot.
  - Elementary carpools pick up students from either:
    - A. Their designated **numbered parking spot** parallel to Old Court Road or the Highway (the yellow spots). Only “head in” parking is allowed.
    - B. Their designated **Lane A or Lane B pick-up lane** parallel to the Elementary building. Cars in Lane A/B pull up first-come first-serve. Students may be picked up using the **right-side car door only**.
  - Carpools that have *both* Elementary *and* Early Childhood students must pick up the Elementary students **first** and the Early Childhood students **second**.
  - Early Childhood only carpools use **Lane C** to continue on to the Early Childhood parking lot pick-up area in front of the Early Childhood building. Carpools must display their **carpool number dashboard sign** on the passenger side so faculty can see the signs from the sidewalk and there is no delay in gathering their children / no delay for the entire carpool line. Early Childhood only carpools will have a **red** dashboard sign and mixed Early Childhood/1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade carpools will have a **green** dashboard sign. Students may be picked up using the **right-side car door only**. We recommend that carpools have enough booster seats to accommodate the entire carpool as it is very challenging for the students to carry boosters.
- In order to facilitate the smooth flow of dismissal, it is extremely important that you do your utmost to arrive at your designated dismissal location on time. Should you arrive early or late for your carpool, you may be asked to wait until you are permitted to proceed to your designated dismissal location.

## **Arrival Information / Signing-In a Late Student**

It is crucial that children arrive at school prior to 8:45 am (Elementary) and 8:50 am (Early Childhood) on weekdays, and before 9:15 am on Sundays. We cannot stress enough the importance of students being in class before class begins. Please keep in mind that tardiness is disruptive to the education of the entire class. Please do not drop off your child before the arrival times listed in the timetable above, as there will not be supervision for them. This is a safety issue which we take very seriously, and we cannot allow any exceptions. **Please note that in case of a late opening, planned or unplanned, students are expected to daven at home, unless otherwise instructed.**

The front doors of the Early Childhood / Elementary buildings will be locked shortly after the official arrival time. After this time, parents assume the responsibility that their children and all children in their carpool enter the building safely. There is a buzzer and intercom system to allow people to enter the building once these doors are closed, and students should be instructed to use both. **All students in grades nursery-5<sup>th</sup> need to stop by the office for a late note before proceeding to class if arriving to school after approximately 5 minutes from the time classes begin.** Early Childhood students must be escorted to the office by a parent, and a Morah will be called to pick them up. Sometimes a Morah is not available, or the class is in a location other than the classroom. Accompanying parents will be signed in as a visitor so they can escort their son to class. Elementary parents do not need to accompany their child to the office, but they are welcome to do so if they like.

## **Dismissal Information / Picking Up a Student Early**

Whenever possible, please relay information regarding an early pickup, a change in carpool, etc. through a **note** to your son's teacher. 4th and 5th grade students will NOT be allowed to be dismissed early on Fridays, or other days with closely spaced dismissals, to carpool with younger siblings. Likewise, please do not plan on having your Nursery - 3rd grader wait in school on Fridays, or other days with closely spaced dismissals, to go home with the 4th and 5th grade classes. As there is no supervision for them, this is a safety issue that we take very seriously. Please plan accordingly.

**All students in grades nursery-5 need to be signed out through the office when leaving school early.** It is our policy that students may not wait in the lobby to be picked up. **We can only call your child out of class once you have arrived at TA.** Helpful tip: for pre-planned early pickups, we suggest sending your son with a reminder note that he can show his rebbe/teacher. This way, his teacher will be prepared to dismiss him, and you will have minimal wait time. For student safety, please wait in the lobby until your son makes his way to you from his classroom. There may be times when your child's class is in a location on our campus that we cannot directly communicate with easily (i.e. the playground, gym, cafeteria, etc.). In these cases, you may be signed in as a visitor and given directions to pick up your son. Please note: if your son will be returning to school later that day, he must first stop by the office to get signed back in (Early Childhood parents must accompany their child; Elementary parents are not required to do so). As a courtesy, please notify your carpool driver if your child is absent or is picked up early. We recommend checking with the office prior to scheduling appointments for your child to ensure that there are no special school events or activities scheduled that day.

## Walkers

Students walking to and from the Scotts Hill neighborhood must use the **pedestrian gate** located by the **stairwell** right next to the Early Childhood building. Only students who have a “**Walker’s Pass**” will be permitted to walk to and from school. Any walkers leaving early must have parental permission in order to leave campus. Elementary school students are not permitted to bike to school.

## MTA BUS

We are pleased that the MTA is continuing to offer bus service to TA Lower School students. **The MTA bus is a public transportation service.** This means that the bus operates and follows policy in the manner of other public buses. Please note that TA does not provide a bus monitor or take responsibility for student behaviors and interactions that occur on the bus. TA students who ride the MTA bus are expected to adhere to and sign off on a written code of TA and MTA conduct and policies. TA reserves the right to suspend or terminate bus service for any student who does not behave appropriately. TA does not have any input regarding bus routes, bus stops, changes in schedule, or bus delays. The TA bus route number is **#92** and the 2023-24 ticket price per ride is **\$1.50**. The Monday-Friday **arrival** bus is for **Nursery-5<sup>th</sup> grade** students. The Monday-Friday **dismissal** bus is for **4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students only**. The Sunday **arrival and dismissal** buses are for **2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade** students.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

We recognize there may be traffic or other unplanned situations that arise, and we therefore allow parents a grace period for late pick-ups. However, TA reserves the right to charge a fee for carpools that are chronically picked up late, as this imposes on our staff members who must stay late, as well, to supervise them. We thank you for your understanding of the importance of being on time.

# Communication

## Parent / Teacher Communication

Open communication between parents and teachers is essential to the success of every child. Teacher-parent communication is the first line of contact, and the administration is available when further interaction is needed. The most effective way to communicate with the Yeshiva, rebbeim, and/or teachers is through the through the Early Childhood / Elementary School offices or a TA email address. Please refrain from calling or texting staff members on their cellphones, unless they have explicitly communicated that you may do so. Please do not call or text a staff member after 9:30 PM. Should you have any school-related concerns or questions, please reach out to your son’s rebbe, teacher, or the administration directly. It is inappropriate to use social media and “group chats” as a means to resolving an issue and can be detrimental to your cause.

## School / Parent / Emergency Communication

TA communicates messages, information, updates, and reminders to parents through various mediums. These include emails, letters, and flyers. Please note that a majority of communication is relayed through email, and parents are encouraged to check their email frequently. TA primarily uses **email** and **text message notifications** sent through our Parent Locker school database system to update and inform parents of school-related announcements regarding inclement or questionable weather, emergency closings, school trips, or other unusual circumstances.

## Parent / Teacher Conferences

There are two scheduled conferences throughout the school year. These conferences provide parents an opportunity to briefly touch base with their son’s morah / rebbe and teacher regarding the progress of their child.

## Report Cards

Report cards are sent home three times a year for Elementary students. Kindergarten students receive report cards twice a year as well as one mid-year progress report. Report cards / progress reports are a means to communicate with parents, in a clear and comprehensive manner, regarding their child’s educational performance and growth. The information relayed in these reports serve as confirmation of what the parent should already be knowledgeable of.

# STAR Behavior Program

TA's STAR Behavior Program is a school-wide behavior management system that teaches and reinforces positive behavior and character development. Supervised by Mrs. Elisheva Weinberger, Director of Behavior Programming and Support, it promotes strong behavioral standards, develops self-control, fosters a positive school environment, and encourages students to strive for excellence. For further information, please reference the "**STAR Behavior Program**" brochure sent out in the summer mailing and available on our website (Parent Resources / Forms and Documents).

## Discipline

The classroom teacher handles most discipline situations. The following course of action is followed when students are sent to an administrator for discipline. There are degrees of rule infraction, which at the discretion of the administration, result in various consequences.

Reasons for being sent to an administrator include:

- Fighting with another student
- Use of inappropriate language
- Defiance to teachers and /or administrators
- Disruptive behavior

The consequences for inappropriate behavior may include any of the following:

- A phone call, email and/or letter in the mail from the office or an administrator may be sent to parents regarding an incident.
- An assignment from an administrator which must be signed by a parent and returned to the administrator prior to returning to class.
- After-school supervised detention. The parent will provide for the child's transportation home.
- Out of school suspension. (Parents are called and the student is sent home.) Parents must have a conference with the administrator and student **before** student is readmitted to school. The purpose of the suspension is to allow time for the student to reflect on his behavior. This time at home should be used appropriately in order for the student to understand the consequences of his actions.

The school reserves the right to expel any student due to conduct in or out of the school that is not in accord with the values that the school is trying to cultivate or for lack of sufficient spiritual, behavioral, or academic development.

## Lower School Proper Hygiene and Attire

TA Elementary does not have a school uniform. However, we believe that appearance and hygiene influence a student's work habits and general performance. A student whose physical hygiene is poor may draw unwanted attention to himself. Students feel best when they are clean and look well-groomed. Recognizing that appearance can affect one's attitude towards yeshiva and derech erez, we encourage our parents to dress their children in conservative clothing which promotes a sense of kavod toward learning.

**Preschool:**

- **Yarmulkes** or **caps** should be worn every day.
- Shirts must have sleeves; no tank tops permitted.
- Any wording or graphics should be appropriate and befitting of a yeshiva setting.
- Socks and shoes/sneakers are required.

**Elementary Student Dress code:**

- Shirts must have a collar and at least 2 buttons.
- Dark colored pants should be worn.
- We recommend that students in grades 4 and 5 **not** wear shorts.
- **Yarmulkes** only should be worn in the classroom, not hats or caps.
- Students are encouraged to wear **white shirts** on Rosh Chodesh.
- Fully closed shoes or sneakers should be worn. Socks should be visible above the ankle.
- Hair styles should be neat and trim and in accordance with Halacha and the Yeshiva atmosphere.



**Prohibited clothing/styles:**

- Articles of clothing with logos, graphics, or wording.
- Blue jeans, denim, dungarees, jeggings, jean-type material pants, or pants with "ripped out" knees.
- **In recent years, athletic track pants have become a popular wardrobe item for boys and young men. Please note that track pants of any type or stripe do not meet the yeshiva's dress code standard and should not be worn to school.**
- Jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, chains), cologne and styles that are attention-seeking or excessively informal.
- Slides, natives, crocs.
- Smartwatches, or any wearable device with apps or games.

## General Policies

### Technology Policy

In today's modern world, we are all too familiar with the potential risks and detrimental effects that technology can impose on our families and children. While we recognize the necessity of internet access, it is our collective responsibility to safeguard ourselves and our children from its unrestricted reach. Sometimes, even when we believe we have implemented sufficient precautions, it is easy to underestimate our children's capabilities.

As parents, we have the ability to model responsible technology use by practicing healthy screen time. It is important to show our children that technology is a tool to be used purposefully and in moderation. Perhaps set aside dedicated technology-free times and zones in your home and establish tech-free time during meals and bedtime so we can spend quality family time.

A critical component of chinuch and parenting is establishing structure and setting boundaries. These elements not only convey our expectations and values but also provide our children with much-needed direction, purpose, and a secure space in which they can truly thrive. We encourage open and honest communication with your children to foster an environment where they feel comfortable discussing their experiences and challenges with technology.

We would like to emphasize the importance of seeking guidance from technology safety experts who specialize in creating a secure online environment for our families. Additionally, to help keep our homes a safe place for our children, we would like to share the following Yeshiva recommendations:

- Preschool and elementary age children should not own their own phone, tablet, or computer.
- All internet devices should only be used in high-traffic areas of the home and never in a child's room or in private. Make sure to occasionally look over their shoulders.
- Ensure all devices in your home are properly filtered.
- Children should not use any social media platforms or communicate with other children or adults.
- If a child is allowed technology time, enforce a time limit for usage.
- Preschool and elementary age children should not have their own email accounts.
- Downloading content or opening attachments should only be done with parental consent.
- Gaming can be extremely dangerous. If a child does have a gaming console, please review the following recommendations:
  - Check the access the child has and thoroughly review the website.
  - No violent games.
  - Discourage games that allow multiple players to play remotely.
  - Enforce time limits.
  - Parents should have their children's passwords and access their account regularly.
- Children should not know the passwords to the Wi-Fi or your personal devices or your online accounts. Note -The Wi-Fi password provided by your internet provider is easily accessible (usually on the side of the router). Although inconvenient, change the passwords periodically.
- Avoid charging devices in bedrooms. Instead, designate a central overnight charging station in your house.

### General Health Policies

#### Forms

TA parents must comply with all health policies and submit all required health forms each school year. The following health forms are available on Parent Locker under **Files- Nurse Medical Forms**

- Medication Administration Authorization Form
- Health Inventory Form (including an Immunization Certificate and Blood Lead Testing Certificate should your child(ren) require it)
- Forms for Allergies, Asthma, Diabetes, and Seizures

- Maryland Department of Health Vaccination Requirements

### Immunizations

The Maryland Department of Health requires that all immunizations are up to date prior to the start of the school year. Please visit Parent Locker (**Files- Nurse Medical Forms – Maryland State Vaccination Requirements**) for specifics. For students that turn 5 years old during the school year, Baltimore County Health (COMAR 10.06.04.03) regulations require that the students receive their 2nd dose of MMR within 20 calendar days of turning five or be excluded from school. Read across the row for each grade for each required immunization. The number in the box is the number of doses required for that vaccine based on the current grade level of the child. Please send in an updated immunization record as soon as the vaccine is received so that we can maintain compliance.

Grade	DTP	Polio	Hib	MMR	Varicella	Hep B
Nursery	4	3	1(after 12 months)	2	1	3
K & Grade 1	4	3		2	2	3
Grades 2 - 5	3 or 4	3		2	2	3

### Notifying the Nurse

Notify the nurse if your child develops a communicable disease or condition (e.g. strep throat, pink eye, head lice, impetigo). If your child has a serious illness, injury, or hospitalization, please notify the nurse. Students who need crutches must have a note from the physician indicating the nature of the injury, the need for the use of crutches while at school, and the estimated length of use. As a courtesy, please ensure the nurse and/or office is aware of alternate contacts in the event of an emergency / sick child while parents are away.

### Illness / Fever

Please note that the school reserves the right to send home children whose symptoms suggest that they may be contagious to others. Children who become ill at school and need to go home are required to be picked up by a parent or other designated person within **one hour** of the call from the nurse. Children recover better at home. Prolonged stays in the nurse's office expose other children to germs. Have an emergency plan in place so that should you receive a sick call during the school day your child can be picked up in a timely manner.

**Please see the following list for when to keep your child home:**

- Any child with a temperature of **100.4 degrees Fahrenheit** or above must be kept home or will be sent home. Children should be 24 hours fever-free without the aid of fever-reducing medications, such as Advil, Motrin, or Tylenol, before returning to school. Should a child present with an elevated temperature (less than 100.4 but greater than 98.9) as well as feeling/looking ill the nurse's office may recommend the child go home per their discretion.
- A minor **sore throat** is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be strep throat even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat in children are headache and stomach upset. If a child is diagnosed with strep throat, he must remain home until 3 doses of antibiotics have been administered or 24 hours after antibiotics have been started and the child feels better.
- A child with active **vomiting and/or diarrhea** must remain home. He should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child vomits in school and is feeling ill, he may be sent home despite lack of fever.
- Children with untreated **infections/rashes** on the skin should be kept at home until seen by a medical provider.
- Children with **pink eye**/conjunctivitis should be kept at home until prescribed eye drops have been used for 24 hours. A child with viral pink eye may return to school when the eye(s) has no discharge.
- Children who have **wheezing** which persists after the use of inhaler/nebulizer should be kept home.
- Children with excessive fatigue, lack of appetite, and/or any genuine sickness which makes it difficult for them to focus/remain in class should be kept at home.

### Lice Policy

A lice outbreak often affects groups of students at a time. When one child is discovered with lice, other children likely have lice as well. We therefore ask that parents immediately inform the school if their child has lice so we can take the steps needed to ensure the health of all students involved. **No child who has lice is permitted to be in school.** Upon return to school, the child must be checked by the nurse before he will be allowed back into class.

### Administering Medications

We discourage administration of medication in school. However, if your physician decides it is necessary for your child to receive any medication regularly / on occasion during school hours, a "Medication Administration Authorization Form" must be filled out. This policy applies to the administration of all medications, **prescription and over-the-counter**. Certified Medication Technicians (CMTs) and Nurses (RNs) at school can administer medication during school hours according to the Maryland State Department of Education regulations.

**The following regulations apply to any medication or treatment a child may require while in the care of school staff.** This includes medications for the treatment of acute illness, management of a chronic condition, supplementation, or emergency administration. Medications include but are not limited to: prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, inhalers, nasal sprays, eye drops, ear drops, injections, medicated skin applications, vitamins, supplements, homeopathic remedies, insect repellent, lip balm, etc.

- Please arrange the times of dosage so that medications will not have to be administered during the school day if at all possible. The first dose of any prescription medication must be administered by a parent at home or by the child's physician.
- Medications will only be administered to the child when all documentation is complete and accurate. **According to state law, we cannot administer any medication or treatment without a "Medication Administration Authorization Form" on file signed by BOTH the prescribing physician and the parent and renewed for each school year.** The form can be brought in by the parent or faxed/emailed to nurse@talmudicalacademy.org. The school has the right to refuse to administer any medication if an order is unclear or missing information. We will do our best to work with you and your physician's office to clarify any information.
- **Prescription medication** must be provided in its *original container* with the pharmacist's label and prescription information intact (i.e. with the child's name and the name and dosage of the drug) and be accompanied by the completed authorization form.
- **Non-prescription medications (OTC)** may only be used for the reason stated by the physician on the original authorization form. For example, Tylenol prescribed for and kept on hand for chronic headaches cannot be administered for a sore throat or fever. **The form of medication given must match what is prescribed.** For example, if your child's Medication Administration Authorization Form prescribes Motrin in liquid form, that is what must be given; the chewable tablet or capsule cannot be substituted. Another authorization form must be obtained before it is administered.
- Medications and the accompanying physician authorizations must be delivered to the office by a **parent or designated adult** and handed in to the Medication Technician or School Nurse. Please do not give any medications to your child's teacher. **Your child may not bring in medications or authorization forms.** Any changes in dosage, times, etc. must be made in writing with a date and signatures of the parent and physician. The parent, upon the final date of the requested dosage time period, shall pick up all medications, or the Nurse or Medication Technician will affect disposal. The Nurse or Medication Technicians will notify parents when a student's ongoing medication is running low.
- If you and your child's physician feel that it is appropriate for your child to self-carry a medication, such as an inhaler, the appropriate line must be signed on the Medication Administration Authorization Form on file and the actual medication verified by the Medication Technician or Nurse (*do not send the medication with your child to school – it must be dropped off by the parent*). The student's teacher will be notified that the child is allowed to have the medication with him. If, at any time, a teacher or other faculty member feels that the student is being unsafe or irresponsible in any way with the medication, the Nurse has the right to refuse to allow the child to self-carry. The medication will have to be kept and administered by the Medication Technician or Nurse.

### **Lunch / Food / Nut Policies**

Children should bring lunch and snacks to school daily. If you participate in the Hot Lunch Program, you will be informed of the menu at the beginning of the week. There is no hot lunch on Fridays. Our PTA offers pizza on select Fridays throughout the school year. Please note that in general, on days with a **"Half-Day" schedule**, there is **no lunch** for Elementary (Early Childhood *does* have lunch on these days).

Milk is provided by the school. Elementary students are not permitted to use the hot water urn (i.e. for "Tradition" soups, etc.). Students are not permitted to share food with other students, even during recess or lunch.

The entire Lower School (including Early Childhood) is peanut-free. Therefore, no peanut products may be brought into the Lower School in any form (e.g. peanut-butter filled crackers, trail mixes, candies with peanuts, Reese's, etc). Students **are** permitted to bring items that state "may contain *traces* of peanuts" on the package label.

There may be individual classes that have additional food restrictions, such as tree nuts or sesame, depending on the severity of the allergies found in that class. **A notice will be sent home** at the beginning of the school year to inform parents if there is additional food that may not be sent in due to a classmate's allergies.

### **Siyumim and Parties**

All refreshments sent in to be shared with the class must be non-dairy or cholov Yisroel and meet the standards of the Vaad Hakashrus of Baltimore. Birthday parties are permitted in Early Childhood and first grade classes with prior teacher approval. All other parties must have administrative approval. No home cooked or baked refreshments may be distributed in our yeshiva. This does not include food provided by our limudei kodesh staff. All siyumim and class parties must abide by these guidelines.

### **Guidelines When Visiting TA**

Our Yeshiva is a *Makom Kadosh* where well over 1,200 boys and staff members strive to maintain a healthy *torahdig* atmosphere. The way our parents dress when visiting our campus is an important part of that atmosphere. We request that men and women alike wear clothing befitting a visit to a Yeshiva, and respect the Yeshiva's standards with regards to appropriate dress. While we recognize the busy schedules of our parent body and the fact that they come and go from various activities to pick up their children, the Yeshiva's standards must be upheld

at all times while coming onto our campus. Entering the Yeshiva property is entering a holy place and is to be treated with a healthy reverence. This applies at any time on TA's campus, whether in the carpool line, a grade event, or at Parent-Teacher conferences. We thank you for your partnership, commitment, and cooperation in the chinuch of your children.

## Visitors to School

To ensure the security of our student body, all parents and visitors are required to report to the Early Childhood / Elementary School office prior to proceeding further into the building or the campus. The doors to our buildings are kept closed and locked, and visitors must buzz the office to enter. Visitors must stop at the front office, provide their name, and their destination, and receive a visitor's badge. This policy applies even if a parent or visitor is entering the campus only briefly. Parents who are dropping off forgotten lunches, backpacks etc. should leave these items at the office, pre-labeled with their son's name and teacher. Your son will be called down from class to pick it up.

## Homework

Homework is an essential opportunity for students to review and reinforce their daily school lessons. It is important that the proper environment be established for completing assignments at home. We recognize that students need an opportunity to "recharge" after the school day. Therefore, the chart below designates the maximum amount of time per grade/subject that should be allotted for homework each day.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Maximum Time Allotment</b>
Kindergarten	Limudei Kodesh	5 minutes
	General Studies	5 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
Grade 1	Limudei Kodesh	10 minutes
	General Studies	10 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20 minutes</b>
Grade 2	Limudei Kodesh	15 minutes
	General Studies	15 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30 minutes</b>
Grade 3	Limudei Kodesh	20 minutes
	General Studies	20 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40 minutes</b>
Grade 4	Limudei Kodesh	30 minutes
	General Studies	30 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>
Grade 5	Limudei Kodesh	30 minutes
	General Studies	30 minutes
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60 Minutes</b>

If your child is regularly spending more than this allotted amount of time on his homework, he may be excused with a note of explanation to the rebbe or teacher. Please communicate any concerns about homework directly to your child's rebbe and/or teacher. Long-term assignments such as book reports are not to be included in the category of daily homework.

In addition, we are committed to ensuring that all children develop a love for reading and become fluent readers. This facilitates their success in all subjects. As such, all students in grades 1-5 are encouraged to read for fifteen minutes each evening under adult supervision. Children in first grade may fulfill this recommendation by being read to by a parent. We also recommend that students in grades 1-5 practice their kria skills with adult supervision for 5 minutes each evening.

## Student Assessment

In order to ascertain your child's scholastic development, various measures will be implemented in the classroom by the rebbeim and teachers. Examples of these methods include written and oral examinations, papers, daily homework, classroom participation, etc. Students will not receive more than one major test in kodesh and one major test in general studies on any given day. (Quizzes and weekly spelling tests are excluded.) Ample notice will be given prior to each examination. Please recognize that the ultimate goal of these evaluations is not to be judgmental, but rather to assess and build upon each student's progress. We encourage parents to review these assessments with their children and assist us in motivating them to reach their potential.

Standardized examinations and administrative evaluations will be given as well. Once again, the intended purpose is for the administration to evaluate the progress of our student body. This will help us to determine the most appropriate educational plan to motivate the students.

# Special Programs

## Mishmar

Mishmar is on select Thursday evenings for grades 3-5 and begins after Sukkos. Please be sure to pick up students on time after Mishmar so as not to infringe upon the rebbeim's other responsibilities.

## Physical Education

Students in Nursery through 5th grade have physical education classes weekly.

## Additional Special Classes

Elementary students participate in library, computer, and STEM classes. Early Childhood students receive music and movement classes.

# Special Policies

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend school unless there is an unavoidable conflict, such as a doctor's appointment, or in the event of personal illness. Extended and frequent absences from school may be cause for investigation and parents will be held accountable under the Maryland Compulsory Attendance Law.

## Textbooks

All textbooks regularly sent home must be covered within a week of receiving them. Parents will be billed for any lost or damaged books.

## Recess

Children are encouraged to play **outside** during outdoor recess. When warranted, a child should have a written note from home requesting permission to remain indoors. Please make sure your child has a jacket, hat, and gloves during the cold winter months.

## Objects Not Allowed in School

In our yeshiva, we take pride in nurturing the learning and achievements of our talmidim in a safe environment that is free of potentially negative distractions. To this end, certain objects are not allowed in our yeshiva. Please note that this policy does not outline every individual unacceptable item, rather, it is meant as a guideline. We use our best judgement to rule on the acceptability of any items called into question, and the administration reserves the right to confiscate such items if brought to school.

The following objects (and items similar in nature) are not allowed in school:

- Flammable, sharp, and/or dangerous objects
- Baseball bats and hard balls
- Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, or "razors"
- Toy guns and noisemakers
- All electronic games, radios, and music/media players
- "Smart" / "Video" watches (e.g. V-tech), Kindles, iPads, and iPods
- Cameras, video cameras, or any other recording device

In an effort to maintain the proper atmosphere for learning and growth, we may at times conduct a search of students' lockers, desks, knapsacks, etc. for any of the above-mentioned (or similar) items.

## Student Purchasing

We do not allow either the purchasing and trading of any items, whether it is toys, food etc. Elementary students are not permitted to use any canteens or vending machines.

## School Property

Our building upkeep is paid for not only with tuition dollars, but to a great extent, it is subsidized by *tzedaka* funding as well. Students should

recognize that damaging and/or defacing any property other than his own constitutes *gezeila* (stealing). If G-d forbid, a child damages school property, in addition to *gezeila*, he is taking *mamon hekdish* (money that has been set aside for Hashem). Students should understand that such actions are never acceptable to the school or their parents. Students will be held responsible and parents will be liable for defaced or destroyed school property or private property. School disciplinary measures will be taken.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Policies and Procedures

Occasionally, there are factors in a student's appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Service Division, and the local police department. At all times, the intent is to protect children from harm by providing services to maintain and strengthen the child's own family. Should you have questions regarding this information, feel free to discuss them with the administration.

## School Conduct Policy

Talmudical Academy's School Conduct Policy can be obtained upon request from our office or viewed on our website (Parent Resources / Forms and Documents). We encourage parents to familiarize themselves with this policy.

## Talmudical Academy Policy Concerning Parental Rights and Responsibilities

Talmudical Academy strives to serve as a partner with our school parents in guiding and educating our students. School policy provides that each parent is given equal access to all educators, administrators and school records. When the school needs to contact a child's parents, the presumption is that contact with either parent is sufficient and the school is under no obligation to contact both parents. At times, however, particular circumstances may dictate different practices. The school policy concerning such situations can be obtained upon request from our office or viewed on our website under Parent Resources / Forms and Documents.

## PTA

There are numerous wonderful opportunities throughout the year for parents to lend their talents, energies, time, or creativity to the school by volunteering to assist in programs or projects overseen by the PTA. Your participation greatly enhances our programs and allows us to run activities that otherwise would not be possible. We ask you to seriously consider becoming involved as a volunteer. Please contact our PTA ([pta@talmudicalacademy.org](mailto:pta@talmudicalacademy.org)) to learn more about how you can make your valuable contribution.

## Miscellaneous

### School Supplies

School supply lists are provided during the summer. Your child's specific teacher may request additional items which should please be purchased within the first week of the school year.

### Lost and Found

Articles of clothing and other items quickly accumulate in our lost and found collection. To avoid losing these articles, we strongly recommend that you **label all items belonging to your children**. Disclaimer: unlabeled items which are not claimed after **three weeks** are considered hefker and may be disposed. Please check the lost and found areas regularly.

## Eligibility for the Non-Public School Textbook Program for the State of Maryland

This funding opportunity is designed for nonpublic schools registered to operate in the state of Maryland. To be eligible to participate, a nonpublic school must:

- 1) Hold a certificate of approval from or be registered with the State Board of Education.
- 2) Not charge more tuition to a participating student than the statewide average per pupil expenditure by the local education agency, as calculated by the MSDE, with appropriate exceptions for special education students; and
- 3) Has incorporated the following language into its student handbook as required by the Annotated Code of Maryland Code, Education Article §26-704(c):

It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- a) Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
- b) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and

programs may not:

- i) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
- ii) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or
- iii. Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.

## **Conclusion**

It is through the joint efforts of our administration, faculty, and parent body that TA experiences such success and growth. Our rebbeim and morahs are renowned for their warmth, caring and dedication, and for forming indelible impressions while motivating each and every talmid to become the best possible Ben Torah. We recognize, likewise, the professionalism and dedication of our general studies teachers, who reinforce the values instilled by the rebbeim as they imbue in their students the knowledge and the educational experiences that allow them to become productive members of society.

We also recognize and appreciate the efforts of our Leadership, Administrative Division, Maintenance and Kitchen staff, and the PTA, who work so closely with us to offer the best possible chinuch and experiences to our students. Finally, we express our appreciation to our wonderful TA parents whose support and partnership enables us to succeed in the task of being mechanech our shared children.