



**Akiba Yavneh
Academy**

בית ספר עקיבא יבנה

K-8 Handbook



2022-2023

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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear AYA Families,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year at Akiba Yavneh Academy.

We are so grateful that your student(s) will be joining us for a year of learning, development and growth. As you know, an important element in your child's experience at school is a productive partnership between you and Akiba Yavneh Academy.

This K-8 Handbook is meant to strengthen that partnership by sharing with you important policies, procedures and daily operations at our school. We hope you will find answers to all of your questions, and I look forward to a productive, positive school year with your family.

All the best,

Chris Gorycki

Interim Head of School

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

If you have a question about:	You should contact:
School Policy	Chris Gorycki Interim Executive Director cgorycki@akibayavneh.org
Lower School (Grades K-5) Middle School (Grades 6-8)	Rabbi Chanania Engelsman Principal of Judaic Studies, K-8 cengelsman@akibayavneh.org Danielle Gershon Rothenberg Principal of General Studies, K-8 drothenberg@akibayavneh.org Karen Zucker Assistant to the K-8 Principals kzucker@akibayavneh.org
Student Support Services *Ma'alot Learning Platform	Jeanine E. Cox. Director Student Support Services jcox@akibayavneh.org
Admissions	Andi Bonner Director of Admissions abonner@akibayavneh.org
Finance Manager	Chris Brons Finance Manager cbrons@akibayavneh.org
Nurse	Doba Rudberg, RN Campus Nurse drudberg@akibayavneh.org

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

- Phone: (214) 295-3400
 - Fax: (214) 295-3405
 - Website: AkibaYavneh.org
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HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Akiba Yavneh Academy (AYA) believes in a close and harmonious relationship between home and school. Such cooperation helps each child derive the utmost from his/her experience.

AYA believes that all students, staff and parents have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The administration, teachers, staff, and fellow students and parents have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Events will be held early in the year to help acquaint parents with staff, educational objectives and classroom routines.

Should a teacher recognize an academic or other concern, he or she will notify a student's parents through email and/or a phone call. A formal Parent–Teacher conference will take place in the fall and in the spring.

Children's positive attitudes towards learning are enhanced by interested parents who express a positive opinion about school, staff and studies. Parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate school personnel directly to discuss any aspect of their child's education and growth. The first school contact for parents should be the classroom teacher. Most concerns can be resolved at that time. If this does not occur, then the appropriate administrator should be contacted. We ask that all phone communications be conducted via the school phone rather than a teacher's personal cell phone. **Please be considerate and do not call or text teachers or administrators at home or on their cell phones.**

We also request that our parents not deliver messages or other items to their child's classroom, as these visits can be very disruptive. The item(s) should be left at the front desk. We also ask that parents email teachers and to expect a response will be returned within 24 hours. Student visitors are asked to obtain prior approval from the Head of School before coming to the school.

We believe that students' perceptions of the school, and the seriousness of academics are influenced by the attitudes of the adults. Parents are requested to dress appropriately when on campus. Clothes should be neat and respectful of the academic and religious environment. All parents who enter the school building are requested to dress modestly at all times. Gentlemen must wear a kippah (yarmulke) available in the ECP or Main Lobby. Ladies are requested NOT to wear excessively revealing or overly casual clothing. We rely on parent support to create the overall atmosphere on campus.

UNIFORM POLICY/DRESS CODE

Please refer to the [Uniform Policy](#) here

SCHOOL HOURS

- Lower School starts at 8 a.m. and will dismiss at 3:30 p.m.
- Middle School starts at 8 a.m. and will dismiss with their siblings in Lower School at 3:45 p.m.

Friday Dismissal Schedule

- 2:25 p.m. Year Round
-

SECURITY MEASURES

Every effort is made to maintain a safe and secure environment for our students, parents, staff and visitors to our campus. In order to do so, we have implemented the following:

- For carpool drop off and pick up, all cars entering our campus will require a sticker identifying them as cars of our families. No car will be allowed to enter the carpool gates without a sticker.
 - Carpool vehicle stickers may be obtained via [AYA Connect](#) and picked up in the Welcome Center.
 - Parents and visitors who enter buildings will be required to sign in at the Welcome Center and to obtain a name tag.
-

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

General Rules

The safety of your children is of utmost importance. All drivers, without exception, must follow the procedures outlined below.

1. All children must be dropped off and picked up in the carpool lane, which is a **no cell phone zone**. We are bound by the guidelines of Texas House Bill #55 regarding cell phone use in a school zone.
2. We cannot assume responsibility for students who are dropped off before school hours. A teacher or an administrator will be on duty at the Lower School main entrance by **7:40 a.m.** each morning to greet students and allow the early-arriving students to enter the LS Atrium and wait until 7:45 when classrooms are unlocked.

On Time Arrival

Please use the **Coit Road carpool entrance only**. This entrance is for one-way traffic.

- When dropped off, children must exit cars at the curb
 - Do not discharge children in the drive-through lane or leave your car unattended at the curb
 - Follow the directions of the person on traffic duty
 - Please do not block the crosswalk
-

TARDIES, DISMISSALS & AFTER CARE

Tardies

- Students are expected to be at school by 7:45 a.m. School begins at 8 a.m. Students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to begin at 8 a.m. Prayers (tefilla) begin at 8 a.m. daily. Students arriving after 8 a.m. will be marked tardy. (Exceptions will be made for high traffic and weather-related reasons.)
- All Middle School students are required to attend the morning minyan and to be on time.
- Students who attend a Brit Milah (circumcision), a Bar/Bat Mitzvah or medical appointments will not be counted tardy
- Attendance will be recorded every morning at 8 a.m. for K-8. Students arriving after that time will be marked tardy. Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. will have to sign in at the Main Office.

Regular Dismissal Days: K-5

Students may only be dismissed to the carpool area or After Care. They may not meet parents or carpools at any other site on campus, including the flagpole, front circle drive or lobby in the administration building. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during carpool time.

All parents/caregivers with a current year vehicle sticker should enter the carpool line from the **Coit Road entrance only** to collect Lower School or Middle School students. (Speed Limit –5/MPH). Please pull up as directed by the teacher on duty.

Change in Dismissal Arrangements

- **Please notify us of changes by submitting a Blue Note by 1 P.M.:** Submit a [BlueNote](#) through the AYA website, under Student Life.
- The Bluenote Form is located on the school's website homepage under the Quicklinks at the top of the page and also under the Student Life tab.
- Use this feature to deliver notifications to the school for your child's absences, late arrivals, early dismissals, carpool changes, etc.
- List child's name & grade plus a detailed explanation, including expected arrival/pick up times as applicable. Use full names of any other children/adults referenced in the message.

Early Dismissal

If you need to pick up your child before the regular dismissal time, you must submit a Blue Note on the website. Please see the instructions above. All students in K-8 may be picked up in the Administration Office after the parent has signed them out. We ask that you not go to the classroom yourself to collect your child. In addition, please do not ask your child to leave his/her classroom at a certain time and wait for you in the lobby or any other location on campus. **For student safety and security, do not leave campus with your child before regular dismissal time without first signing them out in the main office.**

Normal Dismissal

Students may not wait in the lobby of the Administration Building or outside of any of the buildings for parents to pick them up. They will be sent to After Care.

For an additional fee, After Care is available:

Monday – Thursday 3:30 p.m.– 6 p.m.

Any parent who does not arrive by 6 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$1/minute from 6 p.m. onwards.

Fridays and Jewish Holiday Eves: 3:00 pm or approximately 90 minutes before candle lighting, whichever is later.

CLOSINGS AND EARLY DISMISSAL TIMES

Aftercare Plus: Care is available from noon until approximately 90 minutes before candle lighting time on half-day sessions and is available from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. on Parent-Teacher Conference Days and Teacher Inservice Days for children whose parents must work or attend classes. Fees are on a per-year basis, payable in advance.

Childcare is available until 6 p.m. on early dismissal and conference days, except on Fridays/Shabbat when candle-lighting times apply. ***Fees are on a per-year basis, payable in advance.***

Children whose carpools arrive late will be taken to After Care; the fee is \$15 per hour, with a minimum one-hour charge.

For further information about After Care and/or After Care Plus, please contact Hannah Schepps, Interim Director of Early Childhood Program, at hschepps@akibayavneh.org.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES

Attendance

Students are expected to attend school on a daily basis and to be on time. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child arrives at school on time. Tardies and absences will be reflected on report cards.

Absences

- If a student is ill and absent from school, a parent must submit a [Blue Note](#) by 10 a.m. on the website.
- A student who is absent is not eligible to participate in any afterschool activities, including Athletics and Discovery, for that day.
- After nine (9) absences (for any single class in the Middle School), the student will be placed on attendance notice, and a conference may be held with the parents. Parents will be notified once a student has Five (5) absences on their attendance record.
- A student who is absent for a sustained amount of time (as per the Principals discretion) for a specific subject, may receive an incomplete grade.
- Siblings are encouraged to attend grade wide programming. All siblings will be brought by staff. All children will be returned to class after the program. Please send in a Blue Note the day before the program if you do NOT want your child to attend the sibling program.

HEALTH

A child who is in good health has a distinct advantage when starting school. Steady progress is dependent on physical well-being. Good health enhances the ability to learn more easily, to adjust to classroom activities, and to get along well with others.

- All students should have a complete check-up before school starts. Special consideration such as near or farsightedness, speech or hearing difficulties, medication, etc. should be called to our attention in writing.
- Students with chronic health issues, such as asthma or juvenile diabetes, etc., must design a written health plan in tandem with the school nurse before the start of the school year.
 - All medications must be accompanied by our medication authorization form.
 - If your child has any allergies, you must provide a letter from their physician listing their allergy (ies) and any needed accommodations needed as well as have the Allergy Action Plan (AAP), filled out.
- The information in the school office with vaccination dates and emergency numbers must be updated annually **before** school begins. All immunizations must be current for a student to be admitted to school. The only exception will be the rare, documented medical exemption. It is the school's position that established Halacha dictates that children should be vaccinated for their own protection, as well as for the protection of the community at large.

To prevent an ill child from infecting classmates and teachers, the following will apply in addition to general school policy

- A child who has a temperature of 100.4 or higher must stay home. Children are to stay home for 24 hours after they are free of fever, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- A child with a green or yellow discharge from the nose, an infectious rash on the skin, and/or an eye discharge will be assessed on an individual basis to determine whether or not they may attend school. At times children will not be allowed to return to school without a doctor's written authorization. In addition, children who are recovering from an infectious rash (hand/foot/mouth, chicken pox, etc.) will need to be cleared by the school nurse before returning to class.
- If a child is diagnosed as having strep throat, he/she must be kept out of school for 24 hours from the time an antibiotic is given, and fever subsides.
- When a child has croup (a cold of the vocal cords which produces a barking cough), the child must be kept at home until cleared by their physician.
- If a child is vomiting or has diarrhea, the child must be kept home until they are free of symptoms for 24 hours.
- Children will also be excluded from school if they have a condition that prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities, results in a need for care greater than staff members can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, or poses a risk of spread of harmful disease to others.
- Any child known or suspected of having a contagious ailment must be kept at home and will be readmitted to class only with written authorization from their pediatrician and at the discretion of the school nurse.

Please inform the school office if your child has a contagious disease or will not be reporting to school due to illness.

Children who become ill in school will be kept in the nurse's station ONLY until a parent/guardian arrives.

First Aid and Health Care

In case of emergency, parents will be notified immediately. It is the responsibility of each parent to leave his or her current business and personal phone numbers with the school office to enable us to contact you at once if necessary. It is our policy to call 911 and/or take the child to the nearest hospital when indicated. School personnel may treat only superficial wounds.

The State of Texas and the school insurance policy prohibits the faculty or office staff from administering any oral medication to a student, including but not limited to acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Motrin), unless it is supplied by the parent in the original container with a signed and dated note instructing when and the dosage to administer. If your child must take prescription medication during school hours, the medication must be brought to the school office in its original container with a signed note from the physician stating at what time(s) and in what dosage the medication is to be given. Written instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed the recommended medication for that child must be kept on file in the office; alternatively, the licensed health provider's office may give instructions by telephone to the program staff.

Students may not store or administer their own medications, prescription or over the counter.

All medications, over the counter or prescription, must be labeled with your child's first and last name. Prescription medications must also include the date that either the prescription was filled or when the recommendation was obtained from your child's licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and the instructions on how to administer and store it.

Medications should be taken to the nurse's clinic, where you will need to complete permission forms. The nurse will store all medications in the clinic and administer them. Some medications may need to be kept in the classroom, such as an Epi-pen for a child with severe allergies or an inhaler for a child with asthma. This will be decided as per the child's Individualized Health Care Plan.

In addition, parents of any children in our care who have special management procedures ordered by a physician should meet with the school nurse to discuss the procedures necessary to meet their needs. The school nurse is trained to handle a variety of special pediatric health issues, including diabetes, asthma, and allergies. In addition, all teachers are trained in the use of an epi-pen and will also be trained to handle certain special management procedures for students in their class when ordered by a physician. This will help us ensure that while students with specific medical needs are present, there is always someone on campus trained to meet their needs. In some circumstances, the school administration will need to determine whether or not we can meet a child's medical needs while at school.

Head Lice

Lice infestation may occur in any age category and is more frequent among elementary school children. Though not a disease, students identified as having head lice are excluded from school until they are "re-screened" and determined to be "nit-free." It is recommended that parents discuss this with their children.

AYA Allergy Policy

“Yafa Torah Im Derech Eretz”—Study and learning are enhanced by sensitivity and respect toward others. Within this guideline, families without allergy sensitivities in their families are expected to be supportive of this policy.

To best meet the needs of children with life-threatening allergies, the school and families must work together to help ensure a safe and inclusive educational environment. The school will be responsible for and help ensure that all faculty and staff are trained to understand how to recognize the signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, as well as how to respond when a child or adult is having a reaction. At times, the school may need to limit the use of certain food items in the classroom when a life-threatening allergy for any child is present. All parents and teachers are expected to comply with any decisions made to help ensure the safety of a child with a life-threatening allergy.

Parents of children with seasonal, food, or other life-threatening allergies, must notify the school nurse, the appropriate director or principal, and the child’s teachers in writing of their children’s allergies before the child begins any on-campus activities. Children with allergies must have a written Allergy Action Plan (AAP), signed by a physician, in place before the start of the school year, or as soon as a new allergy is diagnosed. The AAP must include the details on the child’s allergies, previous signs of a reaction is occurring, (knowing that this will not necessarily be present during a future reaction) and action to be taken and must be shared with the school nurse, appropriate director or principal, and all teachers responsible.

Parents will need to provide epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPen, Auvi-Q, Adrenaclick, or their generic counterparts) for their children’s classrooms when necessary, and it is the responsibility of the parent to make sure epinephrine auto-injectors are current and not expired. Parents may also need to keep a “safebox” in their child’s classroom. The safebox should contain safe non-perishable snacks for their children to use when necessary. It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure that the school nurse, appropriate director or principal, and teachers are aware of any changes to the child’s allergy profile, and the AAP must be updated and reviewed at least annually. All children with allergies will have their photo, allergies, and AAP posted in all necessary classrooms.

Parents of children with allergies are encouraged to work with their children’s teachers to help plan for safe activities, which involve food. Parents will be notified of any activity that involves food at least one week before the activity takes place; when possible, the child’s allergen will not be used.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

“Yafa Torah Im Derech Eretz”—Study and learning are enhanced by sensitivity and respect toward others.

We encourage students to develop self-discipline based upon the guidelines of Jewish ethics and a positive self-image. Emphasis is upon “being a Mensch”—by displaying a refined, respectable character. Students are expected to abide by the:

Code of Citizenship

- Always strive to do your best
 - Respect all adults
 - Respect all peers, and differences
 - Take responsibility for yourself and the community
 - Contribute to a positive learning environment
 - Be inclusive in learning and play
 - Respect school property and communal spaces
 - Show gratitude
-

DISCIPLINE PLAN AND ENFORCEMENT

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Education at Akiba Yavneh is not only academic but also focuses on the children's behaviors. The school's primary focus is **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**. In K-5 students receive Kavod (respect) cards to reinforce good behaviors e.g. helping friends, helping to clean up. Additionally, Lower School students from each classroom who go above and beyond are publicized on our Kavod Tree during the Shabbat Shebang program. From a young age this PBIS moves the focus from the negative of discipline to the positive of how we would like our children to behave. This PBIS system creates a safe, joyful learning environment where children are encouraged to be kind, respectful and caring to all around them.

Responsibility Centered Discipline (RCD) K-8

On the occasion that a child needs further support to learn appropriate behavior, the school employs Responsibility Centered Discipline (RCD). RCD has 3 levels of response:

- Level 1: The child quickly recognizes that he or she made a mistake, takes responsibility for the problem and works well with the teacher to resolve the issue.
- Level 2: The child begins to display signs of unwillingness to accept responsibility including arguing, denying, tattling, ignoring the teacher or interrupting the teacher.
- Level 3: The child refuses to accept responsibility and is unable or unwilling to work through the process with the teacher.

“Give ‘em Five”

In these situations, the “Give ‘em Five” method is used to help the child accept responsibility for their actions. The teacher will:

1. State **support** for the child.
2. Let the child know the **expectation** for the class.
3. Communicate where the **expectation** was not met.
4. What the **benefit** is for the child to meet the expectation.
5. Help create **closure** - how we move on together.

Office Referral

Once the teacher has used this method to help the child move forward if the child continues the said behavior the child will be asked to leave the class. Were this to happen a member of the Administration will continue the conversation with the student to help them understand the issue and

guide the child in accepting responsibility for their actions and creating a solution. If a child is referred to the office a parent will be notified.

If the child repeats the behaviors after an office referral or if the administration feel the situation warrants it, one or more of the following may be used:

- **Creating a positive behavior support plan:** Positive behavior support plans will identify specific strategies and interventions to help the child develop self-control. These plans will be reviewed on an individual basis.
- **Parent conferences:** Set-up parent conference with principal and/or school therapist.
- **In-school suspension:** If progress is not being made in-school suspension may be enforced.
- **Home suspension:** Home suspension will be implemented for any form of aggressive or physical altercation out of anger. The child will not be permitted to attend school for up to one week for acts of aggression that repeatedly put the teachers or other children in danger or require excessive time with another adult. This includes regularly hitting, kicking, pinching, scratching, drawing blood, throwing furniture or excessive foul language. Excessive time with another adult is defined as regularly needing more than 5 or 10 minutes away from the class to calm down.

Expulsion

If there is insufficient improvement in the child's behavior and attitude toward school within a reasonable period, the child will be asked to leave our school. All actions taken and the reasons for expulsion will remain part of the child's permanent record.

The RCD method process is sometimes confused with the traditional timeout process (including detention and in-school suspension), but the two processes are quite different. RCD is not a consequence or punishment. The objective is to teach students to recognize when they are too emotionally charged to make the best decisions and to get them to the point where they can handle situations in a positive manner.

BULLYING

The definition of bullying below is taken from stopbullying.gov and adl.org/combatbullying.

Bullying is a widespread and serious problem that can happen anywhere. It is not a phase children have to endure; it is not "just messing around"; and it is not a developmental stage. Bullying can cause serious and lasting harm.

Although definitions of bullying vary, most agree that bullying involves:

- **Imbalance of Power:** People who bully use their power to control or harm and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves.
- **Intent to Cause Harm:** Actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm, damage a student's property, or place a student in fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- **Repetition:** Incidents of bullying happen to the same person over and over by the same person or group.

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Verbal or written:** name-calling, teasing
- **Social Aggression:** spreading rumors, leaving people out on purpose, breaking up friendships, creating an intimidating or threatening environment for one or more students
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, shoving
- **Cyberbullying:** using electronic communication to harass, threaten, intimidate or otherwise mistreat others. New to this generation, cyberbullying has become an easy and convenient means for some to bully and harass others, sometimes anonymously. Many students do not recognize that this can be the most far-reaching, long-lasting, insidious and most damaging form of bullying. While most cyberbullying does not take place in school, there is still a significant impact on the school following such an incident. Thus, there will be consequences at school because of it.

What Bullying is Not

Students may demonstrate inappropriate behaviors to others from time to time, but these behaviors may not necessarily be considered bullying. The two critical aspects of the inappropriate behavior that have to be present to be considered bullying involve the imbalance of power and the repetition of the behavior.

No Excuses

When the behavior is determined to be a form of bullying, students may try to downplay their bullying behavior by characterizing the harm inflicted as “it was just a joke” or “I was just kidding” or “we are friends; he knows I was just kidding.” Bullying is harmful and destructive and unacceptable in any form.

We are committed to ensuring the physical and emotional safety of each child. One child being bullied is one too many. Our process for dealing with bullying issues is as follows:

Reporting Bullying

Any parent who is concerned that his/her child is being bullied should contact his/her child’s teacher, one of the counselors, or an administrator. The earlier the school finds out about the situation, the better chance that early intervention will be able to resolve the situation. A child who feels bullied should speak to one of the teachers, to one of the school counselors, or to an administrator. Part of dealing with a bullying issue is teaching our students the skills to take the initiative to report and/or discuss these kinds of issues, rather than be reduced to a victim or a bystander. Whenever a potential bullying incident is reported, the administration will be made aware of it.

No Retaliation

Retaliation towards anyone who reports bullying will not be tolerated.

Interventions for Bullying

The first action at the school is taken by our school counselors who are involved in preventative steps and programming within the classroom and campus environment.

The teachers, counselors and administrators, in consultation with the parents of the victim and perpetrator(s), will collaborate to ensure the accuracy of the information regarding the alleged bullying incident. Once it has been established that a bullying incident has taken place, the school will take the following actions:

The administrators and counselors will collaborate to determine appropriate guidance for all parties (both victims **and** perpetrators) in an effort to resolve the issue.

Appropriate guidance *may* include:

- Counseling
- Individual behavior plans
- Removal from extra-curricular activities, including sports
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Long-term removal from the classroom

Subsequent occurrences of the bullying behavior by the same perpetrator(s) will be dealt with on an individual basis and can include more severe consequences, including expulsion.

In the case of cyberbullying, consequences may also include

- Restriction or prohibition of individual cell-phone use at school
- Loss of computer and/or network access at school.

With bullying, some situations are more complex than others and some situations are not clear-cut. The Head of School, director of the educational division, and school counselor will make decisions of what is in the best interest of the child and of the school at large.

Follow-Up For The Victim And The School Community:

- The school may recommend that the targeted student receive psychotherapy and/or psychiatric or therapeutic intervention.
- It may be necessary to discuss incidents of bullying with the classmates of the students involved and inform parents.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling services are available as a partnership initiative with Jewish Family Service (JFS) to aid students in developing the attitudes, knowledge, and insight necessary to make judicious decisions. These services include academic, personal guidance, and group counseling.

Our counseling program is based on the principles of care, respect, responsibility, and confidentiality. Within this framework, the counseling staff works together with the teachers, administration and parents in an effort to enable each student to derive full advantage from the school's educational program. Our counselors focus on the whole child and give attention to children who are having challenges at home and in school. All involvement with our professional staff is done with the highest degree of confidentiality.

Permission For Release Of Information

Akiba Yavneh Academy of Dallas (AYA) is proud of our partnership with Jewish Family Services of Dallas. As part of our partnership, our students receive on-site social work support and services through employees of JFS. By signing this handbook, you give permission for our school counseling staff to meet with your student one on one or in a small group setting. Additionally, you give the staff of AYA and the on-site employees from JFS permission to share information regarding your students with each other as deemed necessary to best meet the needs of your child and the other students of AYA.

The following services are provided by our counselors:

- Assessing the behavior of children who have been referred by observing classrooms, recess and lunch, and then making recommendations.
- Assisting teachers, parents and administrators with academic, behavioral, social/emotional or family issues.
- Providing crisis intervention and limited individual counseling to students, 1–2 sessions. If further support is needed, the school will refer the student to outside services.
- Providing group intervention when appropriate on topics such as peer relationships, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.
- Offering consultation to parents.
- Referring students to outside resources and intervention providers, such as community agencies, private mental health professionals, and or Rabbis for additional assistance.

Faculty or parents may refer students, or students may request to see the counselor themselves. All personal information about the students is kept in strictest confidence. Information regarding a student will only be released with written consent from the parent or caregiver.

Our full-time school counselor, Rennie Silverman, can be reached at rsilverman@akibayavneh.org

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Promotion

It is our desire that our students experience success, accept responsibility for their own work, and make the transition from year to year as easily as possible. Therefore, in order to be promoted from one grade to the next in the absence of mitigating circumstances, a student must have a passing grade in **all** of his/her academic subjects (depending on grade level) on the cumulative year-end grade. If a student does not meet these requirements:

- The school will meet with the parents to discuss steps that need to be taken for the student to pass the course.
- The student may require tutoring, remedial assistance, or counseling.
- It will be the responsibility of the parents to provide tutoring and assistance.
- Failure of a course will require that the work be made up during the summer.
- Tutoring and summer school will be at the parents' expense.
- Upon submission of the required work, students and parents will be notified of promotion.

- In the event that the student does not satisfactorily complete the required work, the student may have to be retained.

There are times in which the school may determine that it is in the best interest of the student developmentally or academically to remain in their current grade level for the following school year. This would only occur following ongoing conversations about student progress and challenges during the current school year.

Student Support Services

Throughout a student's academic career, there may be times that additional support is necessary for one or more areas. The Student Support Services team provides leveled intervention services that work in conjunction with the classroom teacher to help each student reach their maximum potential. Akiba Yavneh serves students with exceptional learning differences through two service delivery venues: the Ma'alot Learning Platform (MLP or Ma'alot) and Student Support Services. Both MLP and SSS are considered part of the Student Support Services Department and service Early Childhood through 12th-grade. MLP and SSS service students with a host of learning differences or exceptionalities and provides support/enhancement in the following areas:

- Dyslexia therapy,
- Reading, writing, and language intervention and remediation,
- Math intervention and remediation,
- Academic support in all core classes,
- Academic skill remediation,
- Social skill instruction,
- Behavior/emotional regulation intervention,
- Executive functioning intervention and support,
- Speech-language intervention services,
- Judaic support services, and
- Gifted and talented enrichment.

Service delivery can be provided as push-in (in-class assistance) and/or pull-out (out of class) interventions, depending on the student's individual needs. We believe that members of the educational team, the family, and when appropriate, the student, must collaborate to design the best possible Formal Education Plan (FEP) for the student to excel. When necessary, the parents may be asked to provide an outside psycho-educational evaluation to guide teaching strategies.

Athletic Eligibility

- Part of participating in school athletics is committing to being responsible as a student. This includes completing all homework assignments on time and preparing for assessments.
- If a student is ineligible to perform, the teacher will notify an administrator.

Disciplinary Eligibility

If a student does not meet behavioral expectations, as outlined above, the student may become ineligible immediately. An administrator may suspend a child's athletic eligibility at any time for disciplinary reasons. In addition, teachers may complete a probation form and submit it to an administrator.

If a student becomes ineligible because of disciplinary reasons, he/she may not rejoin the team until approval from an administrator. The procedure to regain the privilege to play is as follows:

- Meet with an administrator and teacher(s) depending upon the offense;
- Develop a contract that indicates areas that must be addressed and outlines goals;
- Determine the period of ineligibility in the contract;
- Complete successfully, all of the goals stated in the contract.

Only an administrator may deem a student ineligible to participate in athletics and inform the Coach. Teachers **must** go through Administration and not directly to the Coach.

Report Cards

Grade reports will be issued at the end of each trimester grading period. This report will reflect the student's academic performance, effort, and behavior. A teacher will also provide additional comments.

Conferences

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice a year in the fall and spring. At this time, the parent and teachers have the opportunity to review the student's progress and explore any areas of concern. The school strongly encourages both parents to attend conferences, as these meetings are very important to the student's success at the school.

Homework

What is the purpose of homework?

- To apply what was learned in school to a real-life situation or other new circumstances outside of school.
- To reinforce skills, concepts and ideas learned in class.
- To teach students levels of responsibility.
- To provide students the opportunity to acquire background knowledge about an upcoming lesson, activate each student's metacognition about a topic, to stimulate curiosity within the student about the upcoming lesson/topic, and to allow students more class time for classroom collaboration.

Once a child can read, the school does not expect parents to help their children actively with homework.

Homework Assignments

Students are expected to read at least 20 minutes per night. Additionally, students may receive additional assignments. Students are not expected to do writing assignments on Shabbat or Holidays.

Written homework should not exceed the following amounts in each grade level:

First Gr:	20 minutes total
Second Gr:	30 minutes total
Third Gr.	35 minutes total

Fourth Gr	40 minutes total
Fifth Gr.	50 minutes total

Middle School students will not be expected to do more than two hours of homework per night.

It is the responsibility of the students to record all homework assignments in the planners distributed by our teacher. Teachers help instill that responsibility in each student. In addition, parents and students may access assignments on Teacher Pages on the website or Google Classroom.

Textbooks

Textbooks are issued at the beginning of the school year. Additional books may be issued during the year.

- Students are to write their name in the appropriate space or label.
 - Students are responsible for the proper care of their texts.
 - In the event that a textbook is lost or damaged, the teacher needs to be notified. A new book will be issued as soon as possible following receipt of payment from the family for a new textbook.
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Supplies

Akiba Yavneh Academy provides all school supplies to students at the start of the school year. The school does not replenish lost or misplaced items. All technology is provided by the school.

Lockers

Each Middle School student is assigned a locker (Grades 6–8).

- Students are responsible for keeping their lockers neat, content-appropriate and well organized.
 - Students may “decorate” the insides of their lockers (not the outside) but limit their photos to those of family and close friends.
 - Students may only use magnets to affix pictures or notes on the inside of their lockers. Tape is not permitted.
 - Lockers may be inspected at any time, and a student may be asked to clean out a locker.
 - Students cannot bring a lock to secure their locker.
 - At no time should a student be going into another student’s locker.
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GENERAL RULES

Personal Possessions

Personal items from home, such as sharp or dangerous objects (including penknives, Swiss Army knives, etc.), cameras, and sports trading cards are not allowed in school. If brought, they will be confiscated and released only to a parent. Additionally, students who bring knives to school may be

suspended. We also ask that students leave all toys at home. We recommend leaving any valuable objects at home.

Telephone Use

- If a parent needs to get a message to a student, the school will cooperate fully and transmit urgent messages to and from the child without disrupting the class.
- Parents who need to get an urgent message to a teacher may phone the school's main line, and we will contact the teacher as soon as possible. Parents will not be allowed to phone directly into a teacher's classroom or a teacher's cell phone or leave a text message. For non-urgent communication, parents are requested to email the teacher. The teachers will answer their emails within 24 hours.
- Students are not allowed to use their personal cell phones at all during the school day to either phone or text parents (see below). Students are asked to refrain from using the school telephones for non-emergencies. They will be allowed by their teachers to use the classroom phone in cases of emergency. Emergencies are considered to be situations that involve safety, such as the cancellation of an after-school event that impacts student pick-up, etc.

Cell Phones and Other Devices

- **Children in grades K-5 are not allowed to bring cell phones to school.** In case of extenuating circumstances, please contact your child's teacher and adjustments to this guideline will be made accordingly.
- Middle School students are permitted to bring cellphones to school. Students may not have their phones with them during the day. Those that want phones before and after school will turn them in upon arrival to the Middle School and will be returned by carpool.
 - A first- offense will be met with a warning and loss of the device until the end of the day.
 - Upon a second offense parents will be notified via email and loss of the device until the end of the day.
 - After a third offense the parents will be asked to ensure that the student does not bring a cell phone to school and the parents will have to come to collect the device.
 - **Smart watches are not allowed.**

Electronic Devices

Because face-to-face interaction and collaboration are integral to learning, students may not bring the following devices to school unless explicitly directed to do so by a teacher.

- iPods, iPads, CD players, MP3s and similar devices
- Electronic Gaming devices of any kind
- Personal laptops

If any of these devices are brought to school, they will be confiscated, requiring parents to pick them up from an administrator.

Lost and Found

All clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. Apparel left in classrooms, lunchroom, gym or washrooms will be retained in the 'lost and found' for a limited time before being donated to charity. Items lost, can be found in the 'lost and found,' located in the hallway between the Welcome Desk and Pollman Hall.

Class Trips

During the course of the year, we plan and arrange a number of field trips. Parents may be asked to volunteer as a chaperone for the trip. Upon enrollment, parents give blanket permission for their child(ren) to participate on such trips.

Lunch

Lunchtime Rules for Students:

- wash their hands for *hamotzei* and recite the appropriate *brachot*
- use appropriate table manners and polite behavior
- remain seated except when throwing out the trash or leaving the lunchroom
- keep their own table and floor area clean
- do not bring glass containers to school
- show respect for and get along with peers and supervising staff
- avoid drinking from the same container as another student, using the same utensils, or other unhealthy practices
- do not share food

Forgotten Lunches

If a child forgets his/her lunch, A Taste of the World can provide an "emergency" lunch for your child for which you may pay [online](#).

Yiddishe Kup Cafe

When our students spend time in line at the Yiddishe Kup Cafe, they are missing time in the cafeteria and shortening their time at recess. Students are not allowed to purchase items from the Yiddishe Kup Cafe during the school day. If parents accompany their students to the Yiddishe Kup Cafe either before or after school hours, students are welcome to buy items. No food may be brought into the Lower or Middle School after 8 a.m.

Recess

Students participate in outdoor recess except on rainy days or days that are extremely hot or cold. Proper clothing for outdoor activity, such as boots, mittens, scarves and hats, will protect your child's health. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to bring hardballs or bats to school.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah is collected at *tefillah* (prayer) daily. Students are encouraged to develop the habit of fulfilling this *mitzvah* as often as possible. On a monthly or bi-monthly basis, the eighth graders determine to which charity the money should be sent.

PARTIES / BNEI MITZVAH

We pride ourselves on cultivating an all-inclusive-family setting. We are sensitive to the needs of the children from all backgrounds. Hosting a party where ALL children are invited and can attend and partake in all the culinary delights makes all families feel welcome in our school. Please only serve kosher food and follow the tips below to ensure inclusiveness for all. Please schedule parties on Sundays or weekdays but not on Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

All foods given out to a class must be packaged and unopened. No home-baked goods allowed. If you are giving out drinks, orange juice and apple juice that are 100% pure or from concentrate without additives, are acceptable in the school without a kosher symbol. All other juices must have a kosher symbol that is on the Dallas Kosher (DK) list of acceptable symbols. (See below.)

By enrolling my child at a modern Orthodox school, I agree to abide by the following party policies:

- * All food served at parties or bnei mitzvah will have a kosher symbol that meets the Dallas Kosher standards
- * Any cooked or baked goods will come from a kosher certified establishment.
- * All parties will occur on Sundays or weekdays but not on Shabbat or Jewish holidays. Any Saturday night parties will begin at least 20 minutes after Shabbat ends.
If students are invited to Bnei Mitzvah services, there will be reasonable accommodations made to allow students who wish to stay within walking distance of the Synagogue.

Where to Purchase Food

Please visit [Dallas Kosher](#) for a helpful list.

Please verify with the school or with the parents in your child's grade/class if anyone is allergic to peanuts/nuts/trace of nuts including peanut oil

In School Celebrations

Bar/Bat Mitzvah In School Celebration

Bar and Bat Mitzvahs are celebrated at school. Below is an overview of how we define the event, along with a checklist to help families plan for the celebration at school.

Ideally, a Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be celebrated as close as possible to the actual Hebrew birthday, but never before.

BOYS: Monday and Thursday are ideal days to choose since the student is called up to the Torah for an Aliyah—the honor of reciting the blessing on the Torah. The bar mitzvah boy may choose to read from the Torah portion. Family members are invited and encouraged to attend. If parents would like, they will be able to purchase food from the school to celebrate the event at the cost of \$95. Parents are requested not to bring in their own food

GIRLS: Girls are invited to select any Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday. The bat mitzvah girl is invited to prepare a *D'var Torah* to deliver in front of the Middle School students. Family members are invited and encouraged to attend. If parents would like, they will be able to purchase food from the school to celebrate the event at the cost of \$95. Parents are requested not to bring in their own food.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Checklist

- Confirm your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date with Karen Zucker at kzucker@akibayavneh.org.
- Have your child prepare a *D'var Torah*/Torah reading or *berachot* over the Torah. Our faculty can help with this step.
- Confirm food order with Karen Zucker. Inform Karen Zucker of any noted food allergy/dietary restrictions.
- On Bar/Bat Mitzvah day, arrive at 7:45 a.m.
- Bring camera/video equipment.

We look forward to celebrating your simchah together with you. Feel free to contact Rabbi Chananian with any questions you may have.

- Birthdays in Lower School will only be celebrated in classrooms once a month.
- School celebrations are for students only.
- **All snacks provided will be allergy free and will take into account any dietary restrictions.** Any food brought to campus to share must bear a sticker or label certifying kosher/pareve.

KASHRUT POLICY

Lunches and Snacks

- All snacks and lunches brought to school must be kosher. No meat or poultry lunches may be sent with your child. The only meat that is allowed on campus is served by the caterer or served at special school-related events.
- No prepackaged food with a kosher symbol.
- Please do not send along a lunch that will need to be heated in a microwave.
- When going on a school trip and given express permission by a faculty member, children can only purchase items that meet the school's kashrut standards.

Please refer to the following list of recommended symbols:

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Inclement Weather Policy

If school administration determines that a school day should be canceled or have a delayed start, a message will be sent using the school's Alert system by 6:30 a.m. Please use your discretion regarding safety if driving in potentially hazardous conditions.

Note: If weather impacts a school day already in progress, the same method will be used to notify parents.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

We recognize that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work and life. To that end, this Social Media Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on campus.

We have created these social networking/media guidelines:

- Use good judgment
- Know and follow the school's Behavioral Expectations and Code of Citizenship.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.
- Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.
- Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online "conversations" are never private. Do not use your birth date, address, and cell phone number on any public website.
- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.
- Don't take information you may receive through social networking (such as e-mail addresses, customer names or telephone numbers) and assume it's the most up-to-date or correct.
- If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of a schoolteacher or staff member.
- Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school (if applicable).

Other sites

- Interaction on blogs, Twitter, Facebook and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or linking to helpful resources. However, the school is ultimately responsible for any content that is shared. Don't blindly repost a link without looking at the content first.
- Pay attention to the security warnings that pop up on your computer before clicking on unfamiliar links. They actually serve a purpose and protect you and the school.
- When using Facebook and other tools, be sure to follow their printed terms and conditions.

And if you don't get it right...

- If it's a major mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so the school can help minimize the impact it may have.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be

mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others.

I will (please read with your student):

- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat social media carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.

I will not (please read with your student):

- Use social media in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to myself or others.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others--staff or students.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.

These are not intended to be exhaustive lists. Users should use their own good judgment when using social media.

Limitation of Liability

We will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of volunteer privileges
- Removal from positions of leadership within our school
- Removal of student from school
- Additional consequences determined by Administration.

Social Media Acceptable Use Policy Acceptance

While this policy applies to all, we ask that our Middle School students and their parents sign authorization forms that you will be emailed.

INTERNET AND NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Our network was established for the educational and professional use of our students, faculty and staff. When accessing the network from any device, personal or school owned, students should be respectful and responsible digital citizens. Online actions by our students should be consistent with

the rules and values presented in this Handbook. Students will be held accountable for their use of the network—this access is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time if abused. Students may be given access to accounts created by the school. Use of these accounts is subject to the guidelines set forth in this policy, as well.

To allow for network health, all activities on the network are monitored and logged. This information can be retrieved, as necessary, if a violation of the AUP is suspected. Devices may only be used in class at the discretion of the teacher. Violations of the AUP may result in loss of computer privileges or other appropriate disciplinary actions (such as suspension or expulsion). Depending on the nature of the offense, law enforcement may be contacted. Access to our network is contingent upon students and their parents/guardians reading and signing the AUP.

Network Terms & Conditions

Acceptable Use & Personal Responsibility: Internet use must be consistent with the educational objectives of our school. The use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the educational goals of Akiba Yavneh.

- Transmission of material in violation of any law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material restricted by school policy.
- Information stored or communication transmitted over our network should not be considered private. Network supervision and maintenance may require review and inspection of directories. In addition, we reserve the right to access stored records in cases where there is reasonable cause to expect wrongdoing or misuse of the system.
- Users must not use another individual's account. Attempts to log into the system as any other user will result in cancellation of user privileges.
- Use of Internet games, multi user domains, and IRCs (Internet Relay Chat Rooms) is strictly prohibited, unless instructed otherwise by a faculty member.
- Internet use for commercial purposes, financial gain, personal business, product advertisement, or political lobbying is not permitted.
- Offensive messages that originate outside of school but disrupt the school's educational process or deface the reputation of Akiba Yavneh, its teachers and/or students, are subject to disciplinary action.

Netiquette:

Users of Akiba Yavneh's technology are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include but are not limited to:

- Keep safety in mind. Do not reveal any personal information (i.e. addresses, phone numbers, codes). All users will be held accountable for any activity that uses their school passwords.
- Be mindful of common standards of decency. Do not view, download, or upload offensive materials. Report unacceptable sites to a faculty member.
- Only be using online technology when a teacher permits.

Students are expected to uphold our core values of Derech Eretz (respect/appropriate behavior), Kedushah (holiness), by upholding the following:

Respect – I will not plagiarize other's words or intellectual property. I will properly cite my sources when using other's ideas, words, pictures, music, video, etc. I will truthfully represent my identity in any online interactions. These interactions can include forums where intellectual debate often

occurs. I will make sure to keep these debates respectful. I will not access or alter another person's files.

Educational Leadership – I will be a role model when interacting online. I will not post anything online that I would not want friends, parents, teachers or future employers to see. I will respect others and think first before any online interactions.

Responsibility – I will use responsible language. I will not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. I will not use web sites that I know contain objectionable/inappropriate content.

Appreciation – Using technology in the classroom for educational purposes only is a way to show appreciation to your teachers and peers.

Therefore, I will not abuse this privilege for my own personal amusement or entertainment at the risk of disrupting the classroom setting. Consequences of not adhering to this policy are as follows:

Personal Device Use: The first time a student abuses the use of personal devices in any way, the privilege of using any personal device will be revoked for one week. Any further abuse will result in permanently losing the privilege to use personal devices at school for the remainder of the school year. Depending on the individual situation, other disciplinary action may be necessary, as well.

Cell phones: During the school day, students may not have cell phones. If a student has a cell phone, it will be taken away for the rest of the day. Repeated offenses will result in disciplinary action, if needed.

School owned Device Use: Each situation will be handled depending on the severity of the abuse. Violations may result in loss of computer privileges or any other appropriate disciplinary actions.

Use of technology outside of school: Inappropriate use of the Internet/electronic devices outside of school can affect a student's relationship with peers at school. Inappropriate use of electronic media includes, but is not limited to, hurting or teasing, bullying, public humiliation, making real/false accusations, posting of pictures/video without the permission of all people depicted, harassing phone calls, etc. This behavior will not be tolerated and consequences of these actions will be implemented at school.

Internet and Network Acceptable Use Policy Acceptance

By signing this handbook, you abide by all internet and network policies of AYA..