

# TEMPLE EMANUEL ECC

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

# 2023-2024



Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center  
10101 Connecticut Ave.  
Kensington, MD 20895  
301-942-2000

# WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Families,

In 2008, Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center was founded as an integral part of the greater Temple Emanuel community; a community that honors intellectual and spiritual growth, holds a deep appreciation of the natural environment, practices a commitment to social action, and respects and celebrates the diversity of our membership. Since then, these rich Jewish values continue to guide and influence the culture and daily life of our ECC program.

Our learning practices and pedagogical philosophy are inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education. We view children as competent and capable citizens of the world, full of rights instead of needs. Our educators view themselves as partners and collaborators in the learning process rather than purveyors of knowledge. We encourage children to take risks, question, hypothesize, and think critically.

At TEECC, we uphold the value of community and connection, learning to recognize ourselves within the other. Relationships are at the forefront of everything we do. By cultivating rich and meaningful relationships amongst children, families, and educators we foster a learning environment where children feel safe, valued, connected, and supported. Our goal each day is to help children realize the many capacities they possess and discover a love of learning through curiosity, exploration, and inquiry.

We look forward to partnering with you on this journey of learning, wonder, and joy. Here's to a fantastic year together!

L'Shalom,

**Dana Robinson**

Director of Early Childhood

## Honoring All

Temple Emanuel opens its doors to every person who comes to celebrate, pray, visit, learn, and participate with our community. We strive to build a caring, inclusive community based on Jewish values and principles in the spirit of our mission statement and bylaws. As a people who have struggled to be accepted throughout history, we embrace our commitment to be welcoming and celebrate the strength we gain by joining together. We must and will continue to learn and expand our efforts even as we keenly recognize there is more work to be done. Temple Emanuel is determined to make our membership, our leadership, our staff, and our activities more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

## ECC Leadership Team

Contact: 301-942-2000



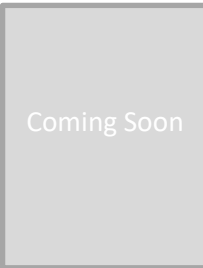
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## Temple Emanuel Clergy & Senior Staff

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## EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER PHILOSOPHY

- Our program is based on the spirit of community where children, parents and staff feel a strong sense of partnership and belonging. We aim to create and maintain a culture of collaborative learning inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education.
- We are committed to: (1) values based on the image of the child as curious, competent, and capable of co-constructing knowledge; (2) providing an exceptional early childhood education for all children; (3) exposing our children to the rich Jewish values of Temple Emanuel.
- We believe that children learn best by being active, experiential learners. We provide a rich environment in which children have the opportunity for discovery and growth. We encourage the love of learning and the development of the inquisitive mind.
- We believe that children have the right to grow at their own pace in a warm, joyful, and nurturing environment.
- We believe that all children and their families should be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

### Guiding Principles Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education

#### **Progettazione - Educational intentions**

Intentions are a means of focusing an experience, attempting to maximize an opportunity so that the teachers and the children can be aware of each other's discoveries. Intentions allow for a more refined ear with which to take in how children relate to the world and make sense of its complexity. Each year we introduce a school-wide intention. Intentions are starting points. Ideally, areas of interest will blossom, providing each individual classroom the opportunity to explore and investigate the greater, school-wide intention, within a uniquely defined and fascinating way.

#### **The 'Third' Teacher - Educational environments and aesthetic design**

The environment acts as another educator. The school's aesthetics have intention and the environment is designed to provoke children to wonder, engage, challenge, manipulate, dream, express and think. Educators thoughtfully organize space for large and small group exploration. From placement of materials to spaces of interaction, the set-up of the environment gives value to relationships- physically, emotionally, and socially.

#### **Exploration and Reflection - The role of time**

The ability to slow our pace and take our time provides a platform for listening. Our ability to engage in an open dialogue provides opportunity to ask questions and reflect. Intentional investigational studies are not fragmented; rather they build upon one another over time. As the children revisit their original work and ideas, time provides the opportunity for new experiences which deepen the knowledge already learned. Time is also important in building and sustaining relationships.

#### **Collaboration - Small and large group work**

Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to talk, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem-solve through group work. Collaboration occurs among educators, educators and children, children and children, children and parents, parents and educators, as well as the community at large.

### **Documentation – Communication and visibility of children’s learning**

Documentation of children’s work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, educators, and parents. Photos of children engaged in experiences, their words written out as they discuss what they are doing, feeling, and thinking, and the children’s interpretation of experiences are displayed to make learning visible.

### **The Atelier - The many languages of children**

Multiple materials are available to children. Through gaining experience with various mediums, children learn to express themselves in many ways. Children can learn to express any idea through what is traditionally thought of as artistic media. Because young children are often difficult to decode, giving them multiple media to express themselves ends up making their thoughts much more readable or transparent to an educator who can better help them to extend upon and fully develop their theories.

### **Co-Learning- The role of the educator**

Educators view their role as partners with children in the educational process. They are observers, documenters, and planners. Using children’s ideas, hypotheses and questions, educators collaborate with children to provide opportunities for research, discovery, and learning.

### **The Protagonist – The role of the child**

We see children as competent and capable, as a responsible decision maker, a citizen within our learning community, with rights instead of needs. Children are the protagonists of their learning journey.

## **Guiding Principles Inspired by the Values of our Reform Jewish Context**

תקון עולם

**Tikun Olam** - Repairing the world

הכנסת אורחים

**Hachnasat Orchim** - Welcoming guests

בל תשחית

**Bal Tashchit** - Do not destroy needlessly

צדקה

**Tzedakah** - Justice and charity

כבוד

**K’vod** – Kindness and respect

## **TRANSITIONING TO PRESCHOOL**

Children separate from their parents and adjust to school in many ways. One child may run into the classroom and never look back. Another may take several weeks to feel comfortable in a new setting. Some children make an easy transition in the beginning and have separation difficulties later in the year. All situations are normal and we are well prepared to help your child in a way that is best for him or her. We are also here to provide any support that you may need.

Parents also separate from their children in different ways. It is helpful for you and your child to have a goodbye ritual and to reassure your child that he or she is going to have a wonderful day. Your show of confidence will enable your child to do that. If you need to check on your child's progress during the day, please feel free to check with a member of our Leadership team.

### **First Week Schedule\***

Children 2 years old:

Day 1 & 2- Half-day schedule (9:00 am – 12:30 pm)

Day 3- Pick up after naptime (9:00 am – 3:30 pm)

Day 4- Begin full-day schedule

Children 3 years old:

Day 1- Half-day schedule (9:00 am – 12:30 pm)

Day 2- Pick up after naptime (9:00 am – 3:30 pm)

Day 3- Begin full-day schedule

Children 4 years old:

Day 1- Optional half-day schedule (9:00 am – 12:30 pm)

*\*Returning TEECC children are not expected to follow a graduated schedule*

### **New Family Orientation**

During the summer, we will typically hold a New Family Orientation. We also encourage families to bring children to visit prior to their first day of school. Please call the Director to arrange a time to visit.

## **FAMILY PARTICIPATION & COMMUNICATION**

Families are an integral part of our program. We welcome, encourage, and depend upon parental involvement to enrich the culture of our community and the learning occurring in our classrooms. Family members are invited to join the community each week for Ta'am Shel Shabbat (A Taste of Shabbat) as well as throughout the year for various events such as Hanukkah and Purim celebrations, Pre-K Siyum, Parent Coffee Hours, family picnics, and much more.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

In addition to participating in the day-to-day life of TEECC, parents are invited to take on additional responsibilities within our community through a variety of volunteer opportunities such as becoming a Room Parent, coordinating an ECC event, or joining the ECC Board.

### **ECC Board**

The ECC Board is made up of current and former ECC parents, the Director of the ECC, and other ECC educators. The mission of the ECC Board is to foster deeper connections between the Director of the ECC, ECC families, and the larger Temple Emanuel community. The Board serves as a resource for the Director and families and promotes the best interests of the ECC to the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees. The Chair of the ECC Board is an Ex-Officio Voting Member of the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees.



## **2023-2024 Temple Emanuel ECC Board Members**

Jen Pollack Goldschmidt (ECC Board Chairperson)

Russ Burnett

Jen Cherner

Robbie Voigtmann

Julia Derrigo

Amy Rosenfeld

Russ Burnett

Jessica Reader

Nicole Schechter

Erica Vagnoni

## **Communication**

While our educators can chat with you briefly during morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up, these can be very busy times where educators should be focused on engaging with children. For longer questions, concerns, or conversations, please send a message through email or the Remini application. Additionally, we are always happy to set up a phone or in-person conference time with classroom educators.

To reach TEECC directly during the day, call the main line at 301-942-2000 and ask to be transferred to the ECC. If your phone call is urgent or time sensitive, and you are unable to reach a member of the TEECC leadership team, please speak with someone in the administrative office of the Temple and they will be glad to assist you.

We strive to maintain an active and transparent flow of information between home and school. Please let us know when your child will be absent for vacation or if they are experiencing symptoms of illness. We also encourage families to share news (both good and bad) to assist us in better caring for and supporting your child. Sometimes, something as simple as a family member leaving after a visit can affect your child's mood. Please rest assured that we value your privacy, and all information shared will remain confidential.

## **Remini Application**

Remini is a web-based and mobile application used for daily communications. It allows educators and families to send and receive messages. These messages are also copied to the administrative team, allowing for any important or timely messages to be communicated throughout the day. The classroom Remini feed allows families to see a glimpse into the pedagogical research conducted within a classroom. Educators use videos, photography, and children's words as tools to convey questions, discoveries and moments of wonder found within a day. Once a week, typically on Fridays, educators share a selection of the photos showing the life of the classroom, taken throughout the week. In addition, they will take an opportunity to share a summary of upcoming events and plans for the classroom. Finally, Remini has an online calendar, regularly updated with birthdays and community events.

Families are added to Remini (remini.me) when a child begins at TEECC. Parents will begin receiving push notifications to create an account following this addition. Additionally, 'fans' can be added to view a child's page; however, due to privacy concerns only immediate families are able to view a classroom feed.

## Email

### *Class Email*

Each teaching team will use a shared email account to communicate with families about general classroom business. The email address starts with the 'ecc' prefix, followed by the class name, @gmail.com (e.g. [eccdalot@gmail.com](mailto:eccdalot@gmail.com)).

### *Weekly Newsletter from the Director*

A brief email newsletter will be shared with families from the Director each week on Friday afternoon.

## Other Communication

- **Website:** The ECC section of the Temple's website highlights information about our program and includes important forms and enrollment information (<https://www.templemanuelmd.org/early-childhood-center/>)
- **Documentation:** In addition to the Remini App, educators will utilize a variety of modalities (notes, photographs, written narratives, samples of work, etc.) to create visible traces of children's learning in the classroom and throughout the school.
- **Parent Events**
  - **New School Year Reception:** Takes place in early fall; Provides families an opportunity to hear about the school's goals and intentions for the year, get to know your child's educators, and meet other ECC families.
  - **Parent Learning Nights:** Scheduled throughout the year; Offers families the opportunity to learn more about our pedagogy and the values and philosophy behind the Reggio Emilia Approach.
  - **Conferences:** Scheduled in February; A formal opportunity for families to meet one-on-one with their child's educators. Other opportunities to meet can be scheduled throughout the school year whenever a parent or educator feels that it is necessary.

## Issues, Concerns, & Feedback

If you have an issue, concern, or feedback, you are encouraged to speak with the ECC Director. If you require further assistance, you may contact the chairperson of the ECC Board, who serves as a representative on the Temple's Board of Trustees or to the Temple's Executive Director. All financial matters should be addressed with the Temple's Bookkeeper or Executive Director.

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### Enrollment

#### Application Process for New Students

For new students, a one-time application form must be submitted along with a non-refundable application fee. Priority enrollment is given to temple members and siblings of current TEECC students. Once you are offered and accept a spot in the ECC program, an enrollment contract must be signed and returned with additional

fees as well as a one-time \$500 deposit. This deposit is returned at the end of your child's final enrollment contract period.

Please contact the ECC Director for specific information regarding enrollment fees and tuition rates.

## **Reenrollment**

All currently enrolled children are guaranteed enrollment for the following school year, provided families return the annual contract and all required fees by the specified deadline. Payment of fees and tuition must be current to re-enroll a child. Membership fees must also be current to receive the Temple Member Tuition Rate.

## **Required Forms**

In addition to the [Application & Enrollment Contract](#), the following forms must be completed and submitted prior to your child's first day of school:

- [Emergency Information Form](#) (Resubmitted annually)
- [Family-Child Information Form](#)
- [Health Inventory](#)
- [Immunization Certificate](#)
- [Blood Lead Testing Certificate](#)
- [Medical Attention Release](#)
- [Photo Release](#)
- ['Off Grounds' Permission Form](#)
- [Coronavirus/Covid-19 Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability](#)
- [Topical Application Authorization](#)
- If applicable: [Medication Authorization Form](#), [Allergy Action Plan](#), [Asthma Action Plan](#), & [Seizure Action Plan](#)

For your child's safety, if there is a change in address, home or work phone numbers, emergency contacts or caregivers, please notify us of this change in writing immediately.

### ***Medical Immunization & Health Forms***

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that all immunization and health forms be completed by a physician and submitted before a child may begin school. All children must receive appropriate vaccines and blood lead testing. Allergy Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan, Seizure Action Plan, and Medication Administration Authorization forms must also be completed if applicable.

## **Billing & Tuition**

All fees and tuition are non-refundable. Tuition is based on the total number of months a child attends TEECC. Families are required to pay tuition for their full contracted period. Tuition is based on the total number of months a child attends TEECC. Families can elect to enroll in the full 12-month program or the 10-month program that concludes in June. If a child begins attending on the 1-15<sup>th</sup> of the month, a full-month's tuition will be due. If a child begins attending on or after the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, tuition will be prorated by 50%.

Tuition is due on the first of each month. If you do not pay by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, you will be assessed a late fee of \$30. If payment is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, your child will not be able to attend school until payment is made. If payment is not made by the end of the month, your child will be withdrawn from the ECC program.

Monthly payments can be made by check, ACH, or credit card. There is a 2.5% fee for credit card payment.

## **School Calendar**

Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center is open year-round from 8:00 am-6:00 pm each day. In addition to some federal and Jewish holidays, TEECC closes for a winter break at the end of December, Spring Break, a Professional Development week in August, and a one-day Professional Development Conference in February. Please see the TEECC Calendar for specific holiday and closure dates.

## **Attendance & Pick-up Policies**

### **Illness & Attendance**

TEECC's illness policies are always established and implemented with consideration for the health and safety of our community at large, in balance with the needs of our working families. For the well-being of our community members, we require that ill children be kept at home until symptoms have resolved and children are without incidence of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours. More specific illness guidelines can be found on page 17 of this document.

### **Morning Arrival**

TEECC opens at 8:00 am daily. From 8:00 am-9:00 am, our community combines in one or multiple designated shared spaces. The flow and location of morning drop off will be shared with families at the start of the school year. At 9:00am children then separate into individual classes with their classroom teachers.

Ideally, children should arrive no later than *9:30 am* so that they can orient themselves each morning and engage in key moments of classroom community-building and intentional learning. If you know your child will be arriving late due to an appointment or other circumstance, we ask that you notify your child's teachers and TEECC leadership team.

### **Afternoon Dismissal**

TEECC closes promptly at 6:00pm. It is very important that you arrive on time to pick up your child, as late pick-ups can cause anxiety for the children involved. In addition, our staffing schedules and compliance of teacher/child ratios are dependent upon timely pick-up of your child. We are not licensed to care for children after 6:00 pm.

We do understand that emergencies and delays can happen; please call the TEECC at (301) 942-2000 if you encounter any issues that will result in a late pickup.

### **Late Pick-up Fees**

Continued instances of late pick-up will result in assessment of a late fee. A fee of \$10 per 10-minute increment per child will be billed for arrivals past 6:00 pm. Upon your late arrival, you will be asked to sign a slip documenting your arrival time.

## **Sign-in/-out Policies**

For security reasons, your child will only be released for pick-up to a parent, guardian, or other individual authorized for 'daily pick up' on your child's [Emergency Information Form](#). In the event of an emergency, when parents or guardians cannot be reached, your designated emergency contact may be requested to pick-up your child. Additional written notification is required for any temporary release authorization (e.g. visiting grandparents, neighbors, other TEECC families). Identification will be requested of any individual a staff member does not recognize or has not met previously.

For safety and licensing reasons, children are required to be formally signed-in and -out each day. Upon arrival or pick up, a designated staff member in your child's classroom or community space will document the time. Please be sure a staff member is always aware of your child's arrival or departure.

## **Classroom Procedures**

### **Faculty and Staff**

Our staff members are interviewed and carefully chosen based upon the special qualities, experiences, and unique talents that they can offer the children in our program. As a school that is inspired by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia, we believe strongly in the value of collegial collaboration and partnership. Each classroom has two co-educators who work together, with support of the Pedagogista and Atelierista, to plan and implement engaging and rich learning experiences.

Our Chaverim faculty members possess the same qualifications and experience as our classroom-based educators. Chaverim play a very important role in the life of our school and are vital members of our community. They build relationships with all the children at TEECC and are familiar with daily routines and intentional work in each classroom. A Chaver may join a classroom when an educator is absent, to cover meetings and planning sessions, or give additional support when needed. They are active participants and contributors to all that we do in our school.

As educators, we consider ourselves to be life-long learners, dedicated to continued growth and professional development. TEECC is deeply committed to supporting staff learning and we participate in many opportunities for continuing education and professional development throughout the year. Several of our staff have participated in learning seminars in Reggio Emilia, Italy and many are active participants in both local and national Jewish ECC and Reggio Emilia Inspired professional organizations.

Throughout the year staff members are formally and informally observed and provided with opportunities for professional growth and constructive feedback. There may be rare situations when a staff member's contract must be terminated or not renewed for the coming school year. The decision may be based on either personal or professional reasons. Details of termination are governed by the protocol of human resources and cannot be shared with the public. We will inform families of changes as appropriate.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) requires that all faculty and staff are fingerprinted and subject to a background check. All our educators are CPR and First Aid Certified and many are trained in Medication Administration. Additionally, each year, TEECC staff members undergo both generalized and active threat security training

### **Leadership Staff**

While each member of the leadership team has an area of focus, we work in close collaboration and would be happy to answer any of your questions or direct you to the person who can be most helpful.

#### ***ECC Director:***

Leads the ECC educational team and serves as the primary liaison to the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees, Clergy & Senior Staff, ECC Families, and wider Temple Emanuel community. Oversees all school operations including staff supervision, fiscal management, creating and implementing policies and procedures, and coordinating events & ECC programming.

#### ***Pedagogista:***

Primarily focuses on the curriculum and learning that children experience while at Temple Emanuel ECC. Responsible for supporting the growth and professional development of the faculty to ensure they provide the highest level of learning that aligns with our Reggio-inspired and Jewish values. Serves as a resource for both teachers and families.

***Atelierista:*** Focuses on extending the growth and understanding of the use of expressive materials and creative languages to deepen children's learning in both the classroom and Atelier. Creates and maintains an Atelier that strives to be the heart of the school and ensures that TEECC reflects the values of being an aesthetically rich environment.

### **Guidance & Discipline**

TEECC's guidance and discipline philosophy is based on our approach to teaching young children. We focus on fostering problem-solving skills, enabling children to solve problems with their peers, and on helping children build positive relationships. This reinforces our belief in and respect for the capability of children.

Temple Emanuel ECC recognizes that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. While some behaviors may be typical for a specific "age and stage" we recognize that children learn appropriate social behaviors at different rates. With that in mind, we observe and make individual behavior plans when necessary.

Our staff provides a positive model of behavior by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care, and respect. Reflecting our strong belief in the competence and capability of children, we work with them to help them plan strategies to handle conflict, to problem solve and make positive choices. We focus on good behavior, rather than bad. We may need to redirect a child and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm, but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove a child from the rest of the group so that we may speak with them privately or simply give them an opportunity to be in a quiet, peaceful place.

If behavior persists, we will meet with the child's parents to create a behavior management plan that meets the needs of that particular child. If there is continued concern, it is also our practice and policy to consult with specialists who work with children and families. This is always done in partnership with parents.

As part of the synagogue community, we believe in working with families during difficult times. We ask for the family's cooperation and assistance so that we may be able to continue our relationship with them. If we are

unable to make progress in improving a child's behavior, we may need to assess our program's appropriateness for the child.

### ***Accidents and Injuries***

In the event of an accident, staff will comfort the child and attend to any injury, as needed. Due to MSDE licensing regulations we are not permitted to administer any oral or topical treatments without a doctor's note. In the case of a wound or injury, the area will be washed with soap and water. Ice or a bandage will be applied if needed.

Following an accident, a copy of the report will be sent home for your records. Injuries requiring additional attention from a physician require a follow up report, per licensing regulations. Please see the ECC Director if your child's injury requires additional medical attention. For added peace of mind, a phone call to families will be made for any injury to the head or face. In the event of a biting incident, both families will be notified by phone.

### **Partnering with Families When Children Need or Receive Support**

We recognize that all children grow and develop on their own trajectory, but there may be times that we realize a child is having a specific challenge or delay in reaching certain developmental milestones. At that time, we may suggest that your child be assessed or evaluated by a diagnostic professional. We are committed to supporting all of our children and families in the best way possible and must have the best information available to be able to do that. We believe in early intervention and partner with families and specialists who provide the services a child may need.

If your child is already receiving services from Infants and Toddlers, Child Find or a private provider, it is imperative that you supply that information to us so that we can help you build a solid foundation for your child.

## **Daily Life at TEECC**

### **Flow of the Day**

From 8:00 am-9:00 am, our community combines in one or multiple designated shared spaces. The location of morning drop off will be shared with families at the start of the school year. At 9:00 am children then separate into individual classroom teachers. Each class designs their own map of the day specific to their intentional work and community culture. Overall, the general flow of the day is as follows:

- Welcoming children
- Meeting (conversations about ongoing classwork, open-ended dialogue, setting intentions for the day)
- Small group work (collaborative, intentional work in groups of 3-5 children)
- Snack
- Outdoor time
- Lunch
- Story
- Nap/Rest time
- Afternoon snack
- Choice time
- Outdoor time/Gross Motor Play

- Story
- Pick-up

## **Outdoor Play & Learning**

We view our outdoor space, Gan Emanuel, as another classroom and we spend time outdoors as often as possible throughout the year. We plant and tend to our gardens, play in the snow and rain puddles, and explore the natural world around us. Additionally, we utilize other local natural spaces such as the forest or nearby parks and fields. Please keep this in mind when planning your child's school wardrobe, sunscreen, and bug repellent choices. Each day, Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center considers a variety of factors including precipitation, temperature, wind chill, humidity, and air quality, to determine the viability and safety of outdoor play. In the case of inclement or unsafe weather conditions, classes will use the social hall and Kikar spaces for gross motor activity.

## **Napping**

All TEECC children rest after lunch from 1-3 pm, no matter their age. We monitor the patterns children develop during the first few months of the school year. Some older 3- and 4-year-olds begin to give up napping. This type of transition is a delicate stage in a young person's life. Children are growing rapidly; their bodies need rest/don't need rest and it is a cycle of sleeping/no-sleeping. We think of ways to provide an adequate balance between nap and rest while staying in compliance with state-mandated policies. We are always evaluating children's nap patterns and our staffing patterns in order to support children's needs.

In our Pre-K classes, we offer "menucha" (*rest time*). Children still meet the first half of the mandated nap time with books on tape/chapter books/soft music and in the second half of the mandated nap time they are met with quiet activities, such as board games, puzzles, and drawing. Older children that still do need a nap are always given the opportunity to sleep.

## **Toilet Learning**

Toilet learning is not a requirement at TEECC. When your child is ready, we work closely with you and your child to gain the self-help skills necessary to use the toilet in a consistent, calm, and empowering manner. We celebrate successes and keep a positive, upbeat attitude when the child has an "accident." The parent and educators should follow a consistent and similar schedule. Your child's educators will keep you posted on progress. Please keep the teachers updated on progress at home, as well. Please note that while we recognize there are many methods for toilet learning, for sanitary reasons children must wear either a diaper or underwear at all times.

Parents are expected to provide diapers and wipes for their child. If your child uses diapers or pull-ups, they will have a designated drawer in the bathroom for these supplies. The staff will let you know when you will need to replenish your child's diaper supplies.

## **What to Pack**

While each classroom community may vary slightly, the following are some general items children will need at school. All items sent to school should be clearly and conspicuously labeled with your child's name.

- Framed Family Photo
- Lunch (no nuts, pork, or shellfish)



- Reusable Water Bottle
- Nap/Rest Items (Crib sheet or nap roll, pillow, blanket, lovey, etc.)
- Diapers/Pull ups, diaper creams, wipes, etc.
- Seasonally appropriate spare clothing (including multiple tops, bottoms, socks, underwear, and shoes)
- Rain/Snow Boots
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray

## **Clothing**

Children use materials such as paint and glue on a regular basis, they actively play outdoors in a variety of weather conditions, and they may have toilet accidents that require a change of clothes on occasion. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for children to get in and out of and something they would not feel badly about getting soiled.

A few changes of clothes should be sent each day. Clothing should include underwear, shirts, pants, and socks. If your child wears diapers or pull-ups, they will have an assigned drawer in the bathroom in which to keep an ample supply. Please be sure to update your child's extra clothes as the weather changes.

We take children outdoors in all types of weather. Please send your child to school in seasonally appropriate jackets, raincoats, snow apparel such as hats and mittens, and boots. Shoes should be comfortable and safe for running, climbing, and playing outdoors. Flip flops and thin-soled sandals are not allowed. Snow boots, rain boots and sturdy outdoor shoes can be kept at school – please label all items.

## **Photographs**

Throughout the school year teachers take photos of the daily life at TEECC. We may use these candid photos for documentation posted in classroom or hallways, in Remini posts, and occasionally on our Facebook account. Temple Emanuel may also incorporate these photos in our newsletter, website, and promotional literature. Parents are required to complete a photo permission release form as part of your child's enrollment paperwork.

Professional school photographs are typically taken once a year (during the Spring).

## **Jewish Holidays & Special Occasions**

At Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center we approach our daily lives and each Jewish holiday through the lens of our rich Jewish values. Some of these values that guide our work include Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World), Hachnasat Orchim (Welcoming Guests), Bal Tashchit (Do Not Destroy), Tzedakah (Justice & Charity), and K'vod (Kindness).

We respect and value the diversity of our community. While we do not celebrate Christmas or other religious holidays that are not part of our Jewish tradition, such as Halloween and Valentine's Day, we encourage and support all children in sharing their family traditions, stories, and rituals with us.

## **Ta'am Shel Shabbat (A Taste of Shabbat)**

Shabbat is a special day in the Jewish week set aside for rest and reflection. Each Friday, the TEECC community, including, children, teachers, parents, and clergy, gather to celebrate Ta'am Shel Shabbat, or 'A Taste of Shabbat'. Together we sing songs, listen to a special story, and recite the ritual blessings over the candles, wine (juice), and challah. We then return to our classrooms for a special snack of challah and grape juice.

### ***The Shabbat Blessings***

#### ***Blessing over the Candles:***

The lighting of candles at sunset on Friday evening is the traditional ritual to welcome Shabbat. After lighting the candles, it is customary to cover the eyes and recite the following blessing:

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

#### ***Blessing over the Wine (Kiddush):***

The following blessing is recited over wine or grape juice:

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

#### ***Blessing over the Bread (Hamotzi):***

Prior to eating the bread (challah) on Shabbat the following blessing is recited:

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.*

Temple Emanuel also holds monthly Tot Shabbat services that are held on Friday evenings. Members of our community and their friends are invited to participate. Please see the Temple Emanuel website for dates of these monthly services.

## **Birthdays**

Birthday traditions are an important part of our school culture. In each class, children will create and present a gift to the birthday child based on the year's intentional work with materials. The gift represents the child and becomes a permanent part of the classroom for the school year. Parents are invited to join the class for a brief celebration during the day. Many families bring a favorite book to read and then donate to the classroom library and then share a special [commercially produced] snack with the class. When possible, we encourage healthy birthday treats. Please refrain from sending in "goody bags." For safety and health reasons, balloons are prohibited at TEECC.

## **Food Policy**

TEECC follows Temple Emanuel's *Kashrut* policy. **Pork and shellfish products are NOT permitted.**

TEECC is a 'nut-free' school. A peanut/tree nut allergy can be life-threatening, and it is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for all the children in our community. Please see **Appendix A: Nut Policy**.

## **Lunch**

Children should bring lunch to school each day in a clearly labeled bag or lunch box. After 9:15, lunches are stored in the refrigerator. Warm food may be sent in a separate labeled thermos, but staff cannot heat food for children. You may include a drink in your child's lunch, or they can drink from their water bottle.

We ask that you do not pack candy in your child's lunch or send it in to share with others.

## Snacks

TEECC provides snack each morning and afternoon. Our snack menu is based on recommendations of a registered dietician who specializes in the health of young children, as well as MSDE regulations. Morning snack includes a cup of 1% or fat free milk. On Friday mornings, we will provide challah and grape juice to celebrate Ta'am Shel Shabbat

## Health Policy

### Medical Forms

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that all immunization and health forms be completed by a physician and submitted before a child may begin school.

The following doses of immunizations are required by the state of Maryland:

- 4 DPT
- 3 Polio
- 1 MMR
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 1 Hib and 1 Varicella

Proper documentation of blood-lead screening is also required

### Illness Policy

TEECC's illness policies are always established and implemented with consideration for the health and safety of our community at large, in balance with the needs of our working families. For the well-being of our community members, we require ill children be kept at home until symptoms have resolved and children are without incidence of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours. Specific guidelines are listed below:

- **Fever:** A child with a fever should stay home until fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours. A fever is defined by MSDE as 100.4°F. It is our policy that we will notify families of a fever when a temperature rises to about 100°F.
- **COVID-19/Coronavirus:** Children who test positive for COVID-19 must remain isolated at home until they test negative on a rapid antigen test and have been fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours (Please check most current school Covid-19 Policy for updates).
- **Strep Throat:** Your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotics have been started and the child is fever free for 24 hours.
- **Vomiting, Diarrhea:** Vomiting and diarrhea generally indicate an active intestinal infection. Diarrhea is best defined as a significant increase in the frequency of normal bowel movements. Children may

return to school if there is no vomiting for a minimum of 24 hours, and the frequency of bowel movements is returning to normal.

- **Colds:** A cold's symptoms are described as irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes and sneezing. A cold may or may not include a fever. Children are often most contagious in the early, runny nose stage of a cold.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Bacterial** - Your child may return to school after antibiotic treatment has begun and eye ooze has stopped. **Viral** – Your child may return with a doctor's note that states the child is no longer contagious.
- **Head Lice:** The ECC follows the guidelines of Montgomery County Public Schools, which at this time states that a child may return to school after being treated. In order to keep outbreaks to a minimum, we ask parents to carefully follow hair-combing procedures after treatment.
- **Impetigo:** Your child may return to school if she or he has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours and shows significant symptom improvement.

### ***Notifying School***

Please notify us as soon as possible when your child is ill. You can leave a message on the phone line or contact us by Remini/email. This will enable us to track patterns of illness in the school and notify our community when necessary.

### **Medication**

In general, Maryland licensing regulations do not allow for staff to administer any medication or treatment at school without the proper [authorization form](#) from a child's physician. Completed forms along with the accurately labeled medication must be submitted to an ECC administrator. Please see specific guidelines below:

- **All Medications:** In addition to providing the proper consent/authorization form. A parent must administer the first dose/application of any topical product or medication and observe no adverse effects.
- **Over the Counter & Homeopathic Remedies:** Requires 'Medication Administration Authorization Form' completed by parent/guardian and prescribing physician. The medication must be in its original bottle/packaging and must be accompanied by the appropriate measurement spoon.
- **Epi Pens & Antihistamines:** An 'Allergy Action Plan' must be completed by a physician and submitted for all children with allergies. The documentation should include the allergen, history, symptoms, reactions, and treatment. This information will be kept on file and posted in your child's classroom. If your child's treatment plan includes an Epi Pen we require **two** be provided- one will be kept in the classroom emergency bag and the second will be stored in the Director's office. All medication, including Epi Pens must be in the original box from the pharmacy. The medication must be in its original bottle/packaging and must be accompanied by the appropriate measurement spoon.
- **Sunscreen, Insect Repellent, Diaper Cream:** Requires 'Topical Application Authorization Form.' Children may only use sunscreen, insect repellent, and diaper cream sent in by a parent/guardian. Sharing between children is not permitted.

**Please turn in all medications, creams, etc. directly to an ECC staff member. Do not leave them in your child's backpack or cubby.**

## **Security, Safety, & Building Procedures**

### **Reporting Abuse**

In Maryland, the child abuse law requires that anyone who suspects a child is being mistreated must report the matter to Protective Services or the police: "Notwithstanding any law on privileged communications, each health worker who has reason to believe that the child is neglected or abused, shall notify the relevant authorities and if acting as staff of a hospital, public health agency, childcare institution, school or similar institution, notify immediately the head of the institution or the designee of the head. Any person who in good faith makes a report of abuse or neglect is immune from any civil liability or criminal penalty."

### **Security**

The Temple Emanuel community takes security concerns seriously and, as necessary, plans are reevaluated when specific concerns arise. We will keep parents up to date when specific situations arise. The emergency procedure plan is evaluated and administered by the Temple Emanuel Board and its Security Committee.

Children and staff enter TEECC through the doorway that faces the side parking lot. The ECC doors are locked at all times but can be exited in case of emergency.

For security reasons, we ask that only adults use the keypad to enter the building. Please do not give the code to your children or allow them to enter the numbers into the keypad.

For those who need, we have handicap access to and from the building. Please only use the handicap buttons if you need them. We talk to children about the purpose of the handicap access and appreciate that you reinforce that.

### **Evacuations**

In the event of an emergency that requires evacuation, we will exit the building through the doors closest to the classroom. There are three emergency exits on the ECC level. These are the doors adjacent to the parking lot, at the end of the main ECC hallway, and Kikar.

In the event TEECC needs to evacuate the building children and teachers will conduct themselves as if it were a fire alarm. Teachers have been given previous instruction of the different fire routes and fire-drills are held monthly. In the case that children and staff cannot return to the building they will be brought to Warner Presbyterian Memorial Church.

Teachers carry copies of your child's emergency information form in the classroom emergency bag. This bag always remains with the teacher when children are outside of the building.

In the event that we need to "shelter in place," emergency supplies will be stored in an accessible area. We have both fire and emergency drills throughout the year.

## **Parking**

Families may use the parking spaces in the lot adjacent to the TEECC. Handicapped parking spots are available only to vehicles with a state-issued permit. We have a busy parking lot, and it is important to exercise caution when driving and walking through the lot. Please follow the directions indicated when entering and leaving the parking lot. Please do not park right in front of the entrance doors. This area needs to be kept clear for emergencies.

## **Snow/Inclement Weather Policy**

There may be weather conditions that force us to close or delay our morning opening for safety reasons. Our decisions are made with consideration for the safety of our children, parents, and staff. Whenever possible, these decisions will be made by 7:00 am and families will be notified through a recorded telephone 'Voice Shot' message. In addition, a message will be posted to Remini and on the Temple Emanuel ECC Facebook page.

Decisions regarding closures are generally made on a case-by-case basis with the following considerations:

- If the Federal Government is closed due to inclement weather conditions, the ECC will be closed.
- TEECC will check the decisions of MCPS Childcare Centers and Montgomery County Administrative Offices and may use that as a guideline for closing.
- The decision to close TEECC may also be based on safety conditions of the immediate area surrounding Temple Emanuel. If local road conditions are hazardous, we will close TEECC.

If we begin to experience inclement weather during the day, we will endeavor to remain open. Should we determine that it is necessary to close, we will notify parents and you will have a two-hour window in which to arrive at school. It is important for you to arrange to pick up your child as soon as possible, as chances are weather conditions will continue to deteriorate.

## APPENDIX A: NUT POLICY

Temple Emanuel strives to maximize the health and safety of each person in our community who may be subject to a life-threatening allergic reaction. In that spirit, we have instituted the following nut policy:

**The entire downstairs ECC school wing is nut free.** We ask that foods used or sent in for snack, lunch, or any other reason should be checked to make sure they are nut free.

**The remainder of the facility is nut sensitive,** meaning there can be no nuts in any ingredients in any food on the premises. The items do not have to be certified nut free or made in a nut free facility. Because this area is nut sensitive not nut free, we cannot guarantee that those who have nut allergies are totally protected.

You MUST avoid foods with any of the following ingredients:

Almonds	Marzipan
Almond Milk	Mixed Nuts
Artificial Nuts	Mortadella
Beechnuts	Nangai Nuts
Beer Nuts	Nougat
Black Walnuts	Nut Butters
Brazil Nuts	Nut Extracts/Flavoring
Bush Nuts	Nut Flours/Meal
Butternuts	Nut Meats
Cashews	Nutella
Chestnuts	Nut Milks
Chinquapin Nuts	Nut Oils
Coconut	Nut Pastes
Energy/Protein Bars	Peanuts
Filberts	Peanut Butter
Gianduja	Peanut Flour
Gingko Nuts	Peanut Oil
Granola/Granola Bars	Pecans
Goobers	Pesto
Ground Nuts	Pine Nuts
Hazelnuts	Pistachio Nuts
Hickory Nuts	Pralines
Lychee Nuts	Shea Nuts
Macadamia Nuts	Walnuts