



# Hillel Torah

בית ספר הלל תורה



## Welcome to Kindergarten!

As your child transitions into the exciting new world of Kindergarten, we are sure you have many questions about processes and policies.

We have created this handbook to provide you with the answers to popular questions as you prepare for this wonderful year of growth!

Join our PTA Facebook group!  
[Hillel Torah PTA & Parents](#)

Don't forget to like and follow our  
[Facebook Page](#) and [Instagram Account](#)  
to stay updated with news and  
pictures - all happening in real time!

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# Kindergarten Q & A

## What time does Kindergarten start?

- **Class begins at 8:20 am.**
- **It's only Kindergarten – why the big rush?** Hillel Torah's dual curriculum includes designated circle times, group projects, and Hebrew and English language immersion activities. It requires careful time management to allow for appropriate socialization and individual interests and talents. Our minutes are precious and filled with enriching experiences. Maximize your child's day by arriving on time, and ready for school.

## How does morning drop-off work?

- Early drop-off begins at 7:30 am in the auditorium. Children will be supervised and brought to their classroom at 8:00 am.
- Regular drop-off for Kindergarten begins at 8:00 am. Children go directly to their classrooms.
- If you arrive after 8:20 am, please park and walk your child to the office.



## Who should I inform if my child will be late for school?

- If arriving late, call the school office at 847-674-6533 who will notify your child's teachers. Once you arrive, walk your child to the office to check in.

## What should my child wear to school?

### Clothing

- Clothing should be simple, not too tight, safe, and easy to manage.
- Boys should wear tzitzit and a kippah (no hats).
- On gym days, girls are required to wear pants/shorts.
- All clothing (including outerwear such as coats and boots) must be washable and clearly labeled.

### Shoes

- Shoes must have backs and be appropriate for outdoor play (no crocs, flip-flops, or thonged sandals).
- On gym days, sneakers are required.
- Boots should be large enough to be put on independently.
- Snow/rain boots may not be worn in class - an extra pair of shoes may be kept at school.

## What do I pack my child for lunch and snack?

- Please provide your child with two healthy snacks Monday through Thursday (and one snack once long Fridays begin). Suggestions include fresh fruit, yogurt, cheese sticks, pretzels, granola bars, crackers, etc. Snacks should be sent in separate bags from lunch and clearly labeled with your child's name. If a utensil is needed, please be sure to include one.
- Lunch should contain healthy foods. We recommend one main and one side. Dessert is optional. Refrigeration is not available; keep this in mind as you prepare. It is helpful to indicate if an item is vegetarian or parve (such as veggie burgers, tofu dogs, etc.).
- All food brought into the building must be Kosher and all packaged food must have an approved Kashrut symbol. More information on Kashrut and lunches can be found in our Parent Handbook.
- **Kindergarten adheres to the school's No-Nut Policy** (see the Parent Handbook for more information).
- Teachers will partner with parents of students who have food-related allergies to ensure safety and to make alternative options available for special events, Shabbat snacks, etc.
- Please send in a reusable, filled water bottle each day. All water bottles should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Water bottles will be sent home daily to be washed and should be returned to school full each morning.



## Can you tell me more about Hot Lunch?

- Hot lunch is available for purchase through the PTA on a pre-order basis. Menus and signup instructions will be sent via email.

## My child's birthday is coming up! What can I do to celebrate in school and/or at home?

- If you would like, you may provide a special birthday snack for your child to celebrate with his or her classmates at school. Contact your child's teacher to coordinate.
- If you would like to donate a book in honor of your child's birthday, please ask your child's teacher for suggestions.
- Refer to our Parent Handbook to learn more about birthday celebrations and kashrut requirements. Out-of-school party invitations can be distributed according to the Parent Handbook guidelines.

## What specials will my child participate in weekly?

Gym • Art • Digital Literacy • Library • Ivrit  
Music with Morah Linda • Sing-a-Long with Rabbi Linzer



## How does dismissal work?

- **Dismissal is at 3:50 pm.**
- If your child is going home with another student, inform your child's teachers by sending an email or calling the office.
- Students are safely dismissed from classrooms and sent to their bus or car in the carpool line at the appropriate time. Carpool and busing procedures will be communicated to parents in an email before the start of school.
- Early dismissal begins on Fridays at the start of the school year and continues until Friday, Friday, April 25, 2025 when we follow our regular dismissal time at 3:50 pm.

## How does busing work? Who can I call with questions?

- Busing is a prepaid service provided for our students.
- Busing information with routes and stops will be provided at the beginning of the school year.
- Each bus will have an adult monitor to ensure each child gets off at the correct stop.
- All busing questions, including lost items, incident reports, or other concerns, can be directed to Dov Shandalov, [dov.shandalov@hilleltorah.org](mailto:dov.shandalov@hilleltorah.org).



## What if I need to take my child out of school early or if my child will be away for a few days?

- Send an email to [htoffice@hilleltorah.org](mailto:htoffice@hilleltorah.org) if your child will be leaving school before dismissal. Children must be signed out from the school office when leaving early.
- If you will be taking your child out of school (ex. vacation, family *simcha*, etc.), please inform your child's teachers in advance.
- Call the office if there will be any changes to your child's usual pick-up routine. Teachers may not see email during the school day.

## What should I do if my child is ill?

- Call the school nurse at 847.674.6533 to report any illness.
- Contagious diseases must be reported to the nurse immediately so notices can be sent to all the parents of the children in the class.
- If the school calls to inform you that your child is ill, please make arrangements for pick up as quickly as possible. Children who are unwell and unable to participate in our activities at school need to stay home.
- Children with fever must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

We strive to maintain the wellness of the Hillel Torah community, which requires consideration and care from each family. If your child can't participate in all activities due to illness, fever, extreme coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, or fatigue, you will be asked to keep your child at home.

### **Children should remain at home if they have any of the following symptoms:**

- They have excessive nasal discharge, with or without fever.
- They vomited or have diarrhea. After vomiting, a child should remain home for 24 hours, with or without fever.
- A fever of 100 degrees or more. Children should be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Parents are required to notify the school if their child has a diagnosis of COVID, strep throat, or any other infectious illness or disease including conjunctivitis and lice. We notify parents of infectious diseases in the class. A child with diagnosed strep throat should not return to school until the child has been on the antibiotic for 24 hours.

### **If my child has allergies or asthma or takes medication during the day, what do I do?**

- Fill out the proper form with the school office if your child takes any medications or has allergies.
- There is a specific form for an Allergy or Asthma Action Plan if your child has allergies or asthma.
- Our school nurse is trained to administer medicines and asthma inhalers as needed and can only do so with a consent form on file with our office.
- In case of an emergency, the school will always call 911 and then notify the parent immediately.

All forms can be found on the [Parent Resources](#) page of our website.

### **I feel my child excels in math or reading or could use some extra help. Who do I contact?**

- Our teachers are always the first in line to aid students in both enrichment and extra support. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher if there is anything you would like to address regarding educational or emotional development.

### **My child doesn't tell me everything he/she learns about during the day. How can I find out more?**

- Kindergarten "catch-ups" and important information are sent out regularly. In addition to regular catch-ups, pictures will be emailed periodically.
- The weekly Hillel Torah Highlights all-school email newsletter reviews major events of the week and announces upcoming events.
- Your child will bring a folder to and from school each day – please make sure to empty it and/or put in any notes for the teachers.
- Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, with online progress reports emailed home in January and in June.
- Join our [Hillel Torah PTA and Parents](#) Facebook group and like and follow our [Facebook page](#) and [Instagram account](#) for pictures, daily happenings, and the latest announcements.

## I would love to get more involved at Hillel Torah! How?

- Hillel Torah offers many exciting opportunities for parent involvement. Below are a variety of ways to become part of our family!



- **Give/Get** – Opportunities to earn Give/Get credit are announced throughout the year. Volunteering in the library, at PTA events, or office help are just a few ways you can earn credit and become involved. Contact Dov Shandalov if you have questions about our Give/Get program.

- **Parent Teacher Association** – Our very active PTA offers numerous options for parent involvement throughout the year. Volunteering at Book Fair, running and/or helping coordinate an event – there is no shortage of opportunities. Contact Michelle Prince or Stephanie Strenger to get involved at [PTApresidents@hilleltorah.org](mailto:PTApresidents@hilleltorah.org).

- **Grade Parents** – Each year, a parent volunteer is selected to coordinate different programs and aid our teachers wherever they may be needed.

# Who to Call for What



Below is a brief list of primary contact information for school matters. Please allow a 24-hour response time on all communication during the school week. For anything time-sensitive, call the school office.

- **School Website:** [www.hilleltorah.org](http://www.hilleltorah.org)  
All aspects of our school including calendars, forms, and staff/faculty contact information.
- **Main Building School Office:**  
Phone (847) 674-6533 | Fax (847) 674-8313 | [hoffice@hilleltorah.org](mailto:hoffice@hilleltorah.org)
- **Preschool (Skokie Valley) Office:** Phone (847) 677-1021 | [hearlychildhood@hilleltorah.org](mailto:hearlychildhood@hilleltorah.org)
- **Teachers:** Your child's teacher is your first stop for any questions about your child including remediation, enrichment, social or emotional issues. The primary and most efficient way to contact teachers is via email. Teachers' emails are listed on the school website. Please allow for a 24-hour response time. For a time-sensitive matter, parents can call the school office and the office will relay the message to the teacher.
- **Administration:** After you have contacted your child's teacher, if you need further assistance, feel free to contact an academic administrator:
  - Principal:** Rabbi Menachem Linzer, [menachem.linzer@hilleltorah.org](mailto:menachem.linzer@hilleltorah.org)
  - Early Childhood:** Mrs. Jennifer Wasserman, [jennifer.wasserman@hilleltorah.org](mailto:jennifer.wasserman@hilleltorah.org)
  - Judaic Studies:** Rav Natan Brownstein, [natan.brownstein@hilleltorah.org](mailto:natan.brownstein@hilleltorah.org)
  - General Studies:** Mrs. Miriam Kopelow, [miriam.kopelow@hilleltorah.org](mailto:miriam.kopelow@hilleltorah.org)
  - School Social Worker:** Ms. Carly Glink, [carly.glink@hilleltorah.org](mailto:carly.glink@hilleltorah.org)
  - Student Services:** Mrs. Rivka Varnai, [rivka.varnai@hilleltorah.org](mailto:rivka.varnai@hilleltorah.org)
- **Admissions:** Mrs. Karin Felix - Director of Admissions, [karin.felix@hilleltorah.org](mailto:karin.felix@hilleltorah.org)
- **Financial, Busing & Building:** Mr. Dov Shandalov - Business Administrator, [dov.shandalov@hilleltorah.org](mailto:dov.shandalov@hilleltorah.org)
- **Development:** Morraine Sweer - Associate Director of Development, [morraine.sweer@hilleltorah.org](mailto:morraine.sweer@hilleltorah.org)
- **PTA:** PTA Co-Presidents: Mrs. Michelle Prince and Mrs. Stephanie Strenger  
[PTApresidents@hilleltorah.org](mailto:PTApresidents@hilleltorah.org)



# Kindergarten School Supply List

Below are the supplies to bring to school on orientation day.

- A shoebox with a **complete change of clothing** including underwear and socks (an extra kippah and clips for boys). Please label everything in the box
- One **large** backpack to accommodate school projects, no wheelies, please
- Headphones



Every day, your child should bring the following items to school:

- Reusable, filled water bottle (preferably with a straw and non-spillable)
- Tzedaka – a penny a day is suggested. A supply of pennies may be kept at school in a bag or closed container
- Boys – a kippah and tzitzit
- Two kosher snacks, and a lunch including a beverage and cutlery (refrigeration is not available). Please do not send soda pop, hard candies, lollipops, or gum.

## **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**Rabbi Menachem Linzer, Principal**

**Rav Natan Brownstein, Director of Judaic Studies**

**Miriam Kopelow, Director of General Studies**

**Jennifer Wasserman, Director of Early Childhood**

**Rivka Varnai, Director of Student Services**

**Samara Kipnis, Student Services Coordinator, Middle School**

**Sari Kravitt, Dean of Student Life, Primary School**

**Sarah Lakin, Dean of Student Life, Middle School**

## **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**Dov Shandalov, Business Administrator**

**Karin Felix, Director of Admissions**

**Chaya Gordon Burstyn, Director of Communications**



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