



# caskey torah academy

A blueprint for inspired learning



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

5780

2019-2020

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<http://taphila.org>

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**SPECIAL NOTE:**

Though some of this information has remained the same from past years, a great deal is new and has been updated especially in regards to Middle School. We respectfully request that you (and older children) read this new Family Handbook in its entirety. Please note that this handbook is not a contract. The administration and/or Board of Directors of Caskey Torah Academy reserve the right to change policies and procedures. The most updated copy will be posted at <http://taphila.org/>.  
Thank you for partnering with us in the education of your children.

**Introduction**

At Caskey Torah Academy, we strive for excellence in both our Judaic and General Studies programs. In order to achieve this goal, our school emphasizes two major elements: academic excellence and personal concern for each child. It is our goal to help our students develop a strong, positive Jewish identity, a love

for Torah Learning, and a deep sense of commitment to and involvement with Israel, the Greater Philadelphia Jewish community, and our brethren worldwide.

We are proud of our school's achievements and eagerly anticipate the opportunity to build on our reputation and provide an exciting year of quality Torah and secular education to our students, our school, and the community.

There have been changes in this year's Family Handbook. Please read the Handbook carefully and keep it throughout the year for reference to any questions you may have pertaining to activities, policies, and procedures.

No pamphlet, however, can take the place of direct and personal contact among parents, faculty, and administration. We look forward to hearing from you and working closely with each and every parent and in fostering a strong school-home bond.

### **School Mission Statement**

Caskey Torah Academy of Greater Philadelphia educates boys and girls from nursery through grade eight. With a curriculum rooted in Torah and General Studies, characterized by academic excellence and providing skill proficiency in all areas, CTA provides a dynamic Jewish education that fosters intellectual as well as spiritual understanding and love of Torah through a commitment to its mitzvos and values. An emphasis on middos tovos infuses all aspects of school life.

CTA will make every reasonable effort to provide tuition assistance to those families who demonstrate financial hardship.

By creating a climate of active intellectual inquiry in both Judaic and General Studies, Caskey Torah Academy:

- Encourages exploration and understanding of the world.
- Emphasizes the responsibility of each Jew toward G-d and all people.
- Instills in its students Ahavas Yisrael, love of Israel and the Jewish people, as embracing the Land and State of Israel, and fellow Jews.
- Inculcates in its students the ideals of the American democratic heritage of freedom, justice, and human dignity.
- Views each child as an individual and provides a stimulating education for students with different levels of academic ability and learning styles.
- Partners with parents to nurture each student to develop as an entire person.
- Enables and encourages students, through critical thinking, skill proficiency, and substantive knowledge, to discover and excel in fields in which they can lead meaningful lives.
- Prepares its students with the skills to pursue their Judaic and General Studies at the next level of learning and throughout life.

In sum, Caskey Torah Academy provides the foundation for its students to mature as Torah-observant Jews and role models who are contributing members in Jewish and general society.

### **Caskey Torah Academy Administration**

*Our administrative team is efficiently organized to make sure that as a school, we meet the needs of every child. In most cases, concerns should first be addressed with your child's teacher(s). If you need further assistance, the list below can guide you in knowing who to contact. There may be instances when you may not know where to turn. Please feel free to contact any member of CTA.*

**Rabbi Isaac Entin**, *Head of School- Menahel*

ientin@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x229

**Mrs. Rebecca Sasson**, *Principal of General Studies*

rsasson@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x270

**Rabbi Zecharia Weitz**, *Assistant Principal of Judaic Studies*

zweitz@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x269

**Mrs. Rivka Dear**, *Director of Early Childhood Program*

rdear@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x210

**Mrs. Michal Weinstein**, *Executive Assistant, School Records/Transcripts*

mweinstein@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x260

**Mrs. Rachel Mazurek**, *Director of Communications*

rmazurek@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x265

**Mrs. Tanya Libesman**, *Director of Admissions*

tlibesman@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x255

**Ms. Nicole Afriat**, *Director of Student Needs*

nafriat@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x272

**Ms. Debbie Grad**, *CPA Business Manager, Billing, Tuition and Financial Aid Issues*

dgrad@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x224

**Mrs. Chaya Schneider & Ms. Nechama Eisenberg** *Admin Assistants, Educational Office*

cschneider@taphila.org & neisenberg@taphila.org or 610-642-7870 x222 & x221

**Coach Kenny Myers**, *Athletic Director and Sports Programs*

kmyers@taphila.org

**Grade Level team leaders are here to help you with your concerns.**

**Please use them when needed:**

Mrs. Rivka Dear -- 3Y-1st grade

Rabbi Zecharia Weitz -- *2nd-4th grade*  
 Mrs. Rebecca Sasson -- *5th grade-8th grade*  
 Ms. Nicole Afriat -- *Special Needs all grades*

## **IMPORTANT PROCEDURES**

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

#### **CLASSES:**

3Y and 4Y: 8:25 am to 3:50 pm

K – 5: 8:25 am to 3:50 pm

6-8: 8:25 am to 4:45 pm

Friday dismissal is at 3:50 pm and 1:00 pm during the winter months. Please see the school calendar for early/late dismissals.

Please be punctual for all arrivals and dismissals. Your child's positive school experience depends on timeliness.

Any lower school students arriving after the carpool gate closes should proceed directly to the security desk with their parent, who must sign them in. Students will not be allowed into class without being signed in by their parent. Students 3Y-K arriving after carpool must be walked to class.

There is Sunday School between Sukkot and Purim for boys in grades 5-8. Boys in fourth grade have the option of attending as well. This is an exciting learning experience that begins at 8:30 am with Minyan and is followed by breakfast and creative Torah learning, ending at 11:30 am.

There is Motzei Shabbos learning for girls in grades 4-5 and Sunday school for girls in grades 6-8. This is an exciting experience with a Torah focus. Information about dates and times will be determined.

#### **EDUCATIONAL OFFICE:**

The educational office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and on

Fridays from 8:00 am until 20 minutes after dismissal.

**Office:** 610-642-7870 x221 or x222

**Office Fax:** 610-642-2265

### **TRANSPORTATION, ARRIVAL, AND DISMISSAL**

#### **BUS TRANSPORTATION:**

Many public school districts provide round-trip transportation free of charge for students in grades K-8.

Prior to the first day of school, families eligible for district bus service will be notified in writing by the district with bus stop information. Questions and change requests must be directed to the local public school district transportation office.

#### **SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT:**

The rules in this section apply whether children ride on school district or CTA buses.

Children are expected to practice safe and courteous bus behavior.

- At the end of the school day, get off the bus at your designated stop. We cannot allow students to get off at stops other than their designated stop.
- If your child needs to take a different bus, please contact the office in advance for bus policies.
- Please note that Philadelphia, Cheltenham, and Lower Merion bus riders can only go home on their own district assigned bus.

Please note that Caskey Torah Academy neither owns the bus nor employs the bus drivers (or other transportation employees). However, on both school district and CTA-hired busses we are

expected to provide support for issues of behavior. Students who engage in unsafe or inappropriate behavior will receive a consequence which will range from a warning to loss of bus riding privileges.

While there is no CTA staff on the district busses, our expectation is that students will display Derech Eretz and will only access appropriate materials on personal devices. Any bullying, harassment, or inappropriate behavior that is reported to the school, will be addressed by the school administration. Music needs to be played on earphones.

Inappropriate use of technology, will result in a consequence, which may range from a warning to a loss of bus privileges.

#### **DAILY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES:**

- ★ Dismissal area for carpool at 3:50 pm will be from the cafeteria door. Bus riders will wait in gym until buses are called.
- ★ For a safe dismissal, we ask that all changes should be made in 360 by **2:00 pm**.
- ★ Please note that the security desk is closed 30 minutes prior to school dismissal to manage the carpool line. No security desk dismissals can be done once the security desk is closed.

### **ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMICS**

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

Punctual attendance in school is essential for learning. Children who arrive late disrupt learning that is already in progress and miss key information. However, we do encourage you to keep your child at home if he/she is sick. Our office should be advised if your child will be absent, so that teachers and classmates can call and also forward missed assignments. Please email [neisenberg@taphila.org](mailto:neisenberg@taphila.org) to report an absence or tardy arrival by 10 am. Students who are absent for more than 10% of school days risk not being promoted to the next grade.

**Family vacations:** Please coordinate family trips with the school calendar. Students who leave for extended trips risk falling behind and not passing their courses. It is not the teacher's responsibility to prepare days or weeks of makeup work for vacationing students. When possible, teachers will provide some educational materials so students do not fall behind. Please provide 2 weeks notice to your child's grade level team leader.

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS:**

Although regular attendance is imperative, it is just as important to keep children home when they display symptoms of communicable disease. A child who becomes ill during the day will be referred to our office. Parents will be called and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.

**Please arrange pickup in a timely manner. Sick children who stay in school communicate illness to others and require individual supervision from our office staff.**

#### **Guidelines for Keeping Students Home:**

Please be considerate of the entire school community by keeping your child home when they are ill. The following guidelines have been developed to assist the school staff when making decisions regarding sending students home from school for health concerns.

Students are to stay home from school if they have:

- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Temperature of 100.0 (per Lower Merion School District policy) or higher.
- Positive throat culture for strep throat. Student may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and the student is fever free, without medicine such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- Presence of lice or nits in hair. Students must be rechecked prior to returning to classes and

bring in a note from a nurse or doctor confirming they are cleared to return to class.

- Pink-eye symptoms
- Severe headache, severe earache, severe or persistent abdominal pain
- Rash suspected to be contagious
- Wheezing/coughing episode which is not relieved by prescribed medication
- Injuries which require medical attention
- Severe emotional concerns
- Please notify the office immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease, such as chicken pox or head lice, so that necessary medical advice can be made available to the parent body.
- Required lice checks will be performed prior to the opening of school. Please sign up ASAP as appointments are limited.
- In case of emergency and parents cannot be reached, it is our procedure to call 911 and take the child to the nearest hospital.
- If a child is to be excused from physical education activities, recess, or use the elevator, or must remain indoors, a note signed by a parent must be presented to the office.
- Each child is required to have on file, via 360, a current Emergency and Medical Authorization Form which lists people to contact in case of emergency and allows us to deal with an urgent situation. In the event your child becomes ill at school, and it is deemed necessary that s/he be sent home, the school will contact you or those listed by you on the Emergency Form in 360 and request that your child be taken home. **It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make arrangements for child care in the event a child develops signs of communicable disease or other illness/injury that prevent the child from functioning in class.**

- Please be sure your emergency records are up to date so that we may contact you if there is a problem.

#### **Treatment of School Related Injuries:**

The office staff takes care of minor injuries (scrapes, insect bites, bruises, bumps etc.) with cold compresses, ice, antibiotic ointment, or band-aids as the need arises. Parents will be notified about minor injuries at the discretion of the office staff. Parents may be called to ask permission for administration of acetaminophen or the like.

#### **REPORT CARDS:**

Parents of students in grades 1-8 will receive report cards on a trimester basis. Parents of ECP students will receive report cards in December and June. Ends of trimesters are noted on the school calendar. Please note that report cards/transcripts/diplomas are not released unless all financial obligations to Caskey Torah Academy are met. Report cards are accessed via 360.

#### **The Marking Guidelines for Grades 1-3 are:**

E: Exceeds Expectations

M: Meets Expectations

I: Inconsistently Meets Expectations

N: Needs Improvement

#### **The Marking Guidelines for Grades 4-8 are:**

97-100: A+    93-96: A    90-92: A-

87-89: B+    83-86: B    80-82: B-

77-79: C+    73-76: C    70-72: C-

67-69: D+    63-66: D    60-62: D-

below 60: F

Grade averages below 60 will be given an incomplete or F and students are expected to exert effort by a clear deadline to complete the work, retake a test, etc. to achieve a passing grade.

Incompletes change to an "F" following the deadline.

Students who do not pass a particular class may- at the discretion of the administration- be permitted to advance to the next year on academic probation and/or be required to take a summer course or independent study class in order to achieve a passing grade. Promotion to the next grade is based on performance. If a student does not meet CTA's academic and behavioral standards, every effort will be made to guide parents to internal and external resources that will help foster improvement.

Graduation Requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students:

1. Students have passed all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade courses
2. Students have completed a service learning project successfully
3. Students have an attendance rate of 90% or better
4. Students have passed their final *Yediot Klaliyot* exam.

**PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES:**

There will be two Parent/Teacher conferences each year. Reminder notices will be emailed home for you to schedule your appointments. Please make sure to be timely as other parents holding later appointments will be kept waiting. Should you desire a longer conference, please let your child's teacher know and a mutual date/time will be selected.

**TEFILA:**

All students at CTA will participate in daily Tefila (prayer). Their participation will be reflected on report cards. We are committed to developing our students' Tefila skills along with a deep and personal connection to the art and acts of Jewish prayer. This is reflected in our curriculum, as well as during Tefila time. Minyan for boys grades 6-8

takes place daily in the Beit Midrash. Girls in grades 6-8 join the minyan on Mondays and Fridays.

**STANDARDIZED TESTS:**

In General Studies, we administer MAP achievement test for grades 3-8. In Judaic Studies, we administer Kriah (grades 1-3), Chumash (grades 2-8), and Ivrit (grades 6-8) tests several times per year in order to monitor progress in the curriculum. In primary grades, we use the DIBELS to monitor reading.

**MIDDOT TOVOT/Character Development:**

Our goal is to create a caring and respectful learning community in cooperation with parents, students, and teachers. Our curriculum is infused with the values of character development and Derech Eretz— proper conduct and acquiring middot tovot. These values are emphasized in both the Judaic and General Studies academic programs.

**CLASSROOM VISITATION:**

Parents are welcome to visit classrooms by making prior arrangements with the classroom teacher. Please do not bring young children with you as they will disrupt the classroom.

**PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP: TEAM MEETINGS AND MEETING STUDENTS' NEEDS**

Caskey Torah Academy values and encourages involvement from our parents as we work to meet the needs of every student. As part of the planning process, parents, teachers, and administrators will constantly be involved in assessing student achievement.

Caskey Torah Academy has formed a Grade Level Team to be proactive to examine and propose interventions for a student who is experiencing academic, behavioral, or emotional difficulties. This team consists of the student's

teacher, an administrator, the school counselor, and support personnel from the school. The student and parent(s) also comprise part of the GLT team.

### **SCHOOL TRIPS:**

Field trips complement the school curriculum and will occur periodically throughout the year. Parents will be notified well in advance that the field trip will be taking place. All school policies, including uniform, are in effect when on a school trip. The attire of parents who are invited to come on school outings should reflect our school dress code.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR TEAMS/ACTIVITIES:**

In order to remain eligible for representing Caskey Torah Academy on athletic teams students must maintain at least a C- average, good behavioral record, and good attendance in each and every class. Our Athletic Director will check eligibility before each game. Students who fall below this standard will not be permitted to participate in games and/or practice. Students who are absent may not play in a game or practice on that day. This includes Sunday School.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:**

Students are expected to always be honest, including in academic issues. Copying from other children or turning in someone else's work as their own, talking or sharing materials during quizzes/tests, etc. are all examples of cheating. Students may never copy directly from printed material or from the internet and then submit it to a teacher as their own work. Depending on the severity of the situation and the age of the child, consequences for academic dishonesty may include (but are not limited to): a "zero" on the assignment, need to redo an assignment, mandatory parent-teacher-administrator conference, or loss of privileges.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING**

When school must be canceled due to inclement weather, an announcement will be shared on email and text services.

When an unanticipated snowstorm or emergency necessitates the mid-day closing of school, parents will be contacted via email and text services.

As a general rule, when Lower Merion schools announce a one or two hour delay in opening or closure, CTA will follow suit.

### **FOOD AND HEALTH AT CTA**

#### **KASHRUT:**

In order to maintain a uniform standard of Kashrut, we ask that families adhere to the following guidelines.

- Food sent to school should bear one of the following certifications:



- Please consult the Head of School about other certifications and he will work with the rabbinic advisory committee to clarify the matter.
- Cholov Yisroel dairy products are to be served at CTA events, so that all students may participate.
- Homemade food may not be distributed at school.
- Utensils may not be brought from home for public use at school.
- Pre-cut fruit, if not under rabbinic supervision, should not be served to the class.

In addition to lunch time, students have opportunities to eat snacks sent from home. In preparing lunch, please keep in mind that there are no facilities for refrigeration or heating. *Drinks in glass containers should not be brought to school.*

Cholov Yisroel milk is provided to children with dairy or pareve lunches. Early Childhood classes receive a snack once a day provided by the school.

*For younger children (age 7 and under):*

We recommend that you do not send the following items in your child's lunch. Although your child may handle these foods well at home, they are considered a choking hazard in the larger, classroom setting.

- Candy
- Grapes
- Raisins
- Popcorn
- Olives
- Raw carrots

#### **ALLERGIES IN THE CLASSROOM:**

Caskey Torah Academy will make every effort to accommodate children with food allergies. After consultation with medical professionals and the Lower Merion School District, the following policy is in effect:

1) Parents of children with allergies need to provide the school with written documentation from their doctor that details the allergy, the extent of the allergy (whether it's only by ingestion or even by contact, and if the student's life may be in danger) as well as an action plan in case of an allergic reaction.

2) Caskey Torah Academy is a completely nut-free environment. Please do not send your child with peanuts, tree nuts, or any food that contain nuts. Items marked "manufactured in a facility that processes nuts" are acceptable. As this is a matter of sakanas nefashos - life and death, please exercise extreme caution in this area. Food products with nuts will be taken away and stored in a safe place for a parent to pick them up. Other allergies will be handled on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the administration.

3) Caskey Torah Academy faculty and staff are not responsible for any medical problems (including allergic reactions) that result from their child being in a mainstream school. Although we will make every effort to accommodate the needs of the children, there is no way that CTA can guarantee that the school, a classroom or any other area is truly free of any allergen of any kind.

#### **HEALTHY FOOD AND SNACKS:**

CTA strives to educate our students about healthy eating habits at every grade level. Snack time is provided in the morning and afternoon for all grades. Please make sure to send healthy snacks that do not contain excessive sugar or any caffeine. Sugar filled sweet foods hamper classroom performance. Please choose a variety of fruits, vegetables, or other healthy snacks and drinks.

At times, we celebrate special occasions with special treats, in moderation.

**Please do NOT send children to school with caffeinated or heavily sugared beverages such as soda, coffee, or Gatorade. Students will not be allowed to drink any form of soda at school.**

**Chewing gum is never allowed in school.**

#### **HEALTH RELATED PROCEDURES:**

State law mandates that medical forms for each student be updated annually and filed at school. Annual screening tests for vision and hearing are conducted at school, as well as screening for scoliosis at the appropriate age.

#### **IMMUNIZATIONS:**

**Students attending CTA must be immunized in accordance with Pennsylvania requirements. CTA does not accept religious exemptions. Medical exemption requests will be reviewed by a medical committee for approval.**

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND MEDICATION:**

Chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and behavior disorders must be reported to the administration and the nurse. Please notify us and send in doctor's instructions if your child is injured, hospitalized, or seen at an Emergency Room.

Parents and doctors must fill out the necessary forms if a medication needs to be taken at any time during the year even if this is only in sporadic situations.

Please do not give students medicine to carry around with them. The medicine could be lost, stolen, or misused by their peers. If your child takes medicine, parents are required to provide the signed LMSD form (a copy is available in our office) to the educational office, which authorizes medicine to be dispensed at school.

All medication taken by the student will be monitored by a staff member. The staff will ensure that the medication is stored and secured; therefore, all medication must be brought to the office.

**No medication is to be stored in the classroom, students backpacks, or student lockers.**

Please note that Caskey Torah Academy offers this service as a convenience to parents. CTA and its staff cannot be held liable for loss of medication, forgetting to administer medication, side effects to medication, or accidental/improper administering of medication.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **SECURITY AT CTA:**

The Caskey Torah Academy School staff takes every possible precaution to ensure the safety of every student. Exterior doors are locked during the school day. No one is permitted access to any part of the building without permission from the

office and the issuance of a visitor's pass. Any parent or visitor who does not have a pass will be referred to the office. School staff is assigned to supervise students in the yard.

All students are required to be supervised by an adult at all times.

At no time may a student leave campus without a supervising adult. At no time may students be in "restricted" areas of the building (e.g. roof, boiler room, etc.) where their safety- or the safety of others- would be in jeopardy.

**Violation of these rules may result in a suspension or even expulsion from school.**

### **VISITORS:**

Caskey Torah Academy welcomes parents to visit the school. For safety reasons, parents and visitors must enter the building from the parking lot on Wynnewood Road and will be greeted at the security desk where they must sign in. A visitor pass will be issued.

Lunches, projects, homework, written messages for children and the like that are delivered to the school should be left at the security desk.

Children may visit CTA during the school day only with prior permission from a member of the administrative team. Parents of visitors will need to provide a signed release and emergency contact information.

### **CUSTODY AND OTHER LEGAL PAPERS:**

A copy of relevant, current legal papers should be brought to the office where they will be safely filed. It is assumed that both parents listed on the record card and school application in the office have custody of the student unless otherwise notified. Legal papers, not verbal information, are required by the school in special situations.

### **FIRE/LOCK DOWN:**

Drills are held regularly at CTA. Each drill is an important practice so that everyone is prepared in the event of an actual emergency. Students are to conduct themselves in a silent and orderly way during a drill and treat each drill as if it were an actual evacuation.

### **VIDEOS/PICTURES OF STUDENTS:**

CTA takes pictures and video to share our wonderful school with the public. These pictures may be used in school publicity and/or on our website (without names). If a parent/caregiver objects to their child being in such pictures, they must notify the Educational Office.

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY:**

Students are responsible for the proper care of school property. Students are responsible for the care, maintenance, and timely return of all textbooks, chromebooks, the CTA building, furnishings, etc. Students and/or their parents will be financially responsible for lost or damaged textbooks and/or property.

### **REPORTING OF ABUSE:**

In accordance with the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, it is the policy of Caskey Torah Academy of Greater Philadelphia that- as mandated reporters- staff members who have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or endangered are required to report without delay to the proper legal authorities.

## **OUTSIDE RESOURCES**

### **Intermediate Unit**

Private schools in Montgomery County have access to a range of health – related services under the auspices of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (I.U.). Referrals to the professionals of the Intermediate Unit for evaluation of a student are at the discretion of the administration, in consultation with parents and teachers. A parent who is interested in obtaining these services for their child, should contact the Director of Student Needs.

## **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

### **PARTIES:**

Birthdays are exciting events and offer children the opportunity to celebrate with their peers. Parents of *Early Childhood* students may celebrate the child’s birthday with the class. Parents may bring in a special treat such as cake, cupcakes, ice cream, etc. A healthier option of making fruit kabobs or fruit smoothies is also available, and should be coordinated two weeks before the party. Please do not bring in candy, gum, juice, or soda. Inexpensive, age appropriate non-food “goodie bags” are permitted (though not required). A gift to the classroom in honor of the child’s birthday such as a book or toy makes the day very special. Please consult with the classroom teacher at least a week prior to the date of the party. Beginning in first grade, children do not have class parties. However, they may make arrangements with their teacher to bring a special treat to school at lunch time.

If you are using the school as a party location after hours, please email [cschneider@taphila.org](mailto:cschneider@taphila.org) for pricing and availability.

### **CLOSED CAMPUS:**

CTA is a closed campus school. Students are not allowed to leave the grounds during the school day.

### **RECESS:**

Recess is a vital part of a child’s social and emotional development, as well as a welcome break from long stretches of class study. Students in all grades will have appropriate break times during both Judaic Studies and General Studies classes.

**All recess times are monitored by multiple teachers and supervisors.**

### **UNIFORM:**

The Caskey Torah Academy uniform exists to

foster a positive, distraction-free learning environment. In keeping with this, all students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to the spirit of a Jewish Day School and *Makom Torah*. Caskey Torah Academy's technical standards of *tzniut* were determined in collaboration with our Rabbinic Advisory Board to be as considerate as possible to a diverse community.

Students (grade 1 through 8) should adhere to the following guidelines during school hours, school events, field trips, and any after school activities, unless otherwise instructed by a teacher or administrator.

Our uniform was designed with the goals of affordability, easy access, and conforming to our current *tzniut* guidelines. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rachel Mazurek or any member of our administrative team.

Our uniform was designed with cost in mind. If, however, there are cases of particular need, please reach out directly to Rabbi Entin ([ientin@taphila.org](mailto:ientin@taphila.org)) for assistance.

Boys':

- Uniform long or short sleeve polo or button-down shirts are to be light blue or burgundy and purchased from the selected vendors only.
- \* All long sleeve shirts may be rolled up to elbow length for all students, grades 1-8.
- Pants for boys are to be navy or gray uniform pants and must be purchased from selected vendors. (No cargo pants or skinny jeans allowed)
- Jewelry and/or shoulder length or unkempt hair are not permitted
- Boys must wear Kippot and Tzitzit.

Girls':

- Girls in grades 1-3: Uniform long or short sleeve polo or button-down shirts are to be light blue or burgundy and purchased from the selected vendors only.

- For girls in 4th grade and above, uniform long sleeve polo or button-down shirts are to be light blue or burgundy and purchased from the selected vendors only. Sleeves are at least up to the elbows and shirts may not be tight fitting.
- \* All long sleeve shirts may be rolled up to elbow length for all students in grades 1-8.
- Skirts are to be navy or gray and purchased from the selected vendors only. All skirts must be below the knee when sitting and standing. Skirts may not be tight fitting.
  - Camp Skirt (Three Bows)
  - School Uniform Girls Solid A-line Skirt Below the Knee (Lands End Item No. 430813-BP6)
  - Kick pleat below the knee skirt (French Toast Item #1268G)
- Make up is not permitted for girls, but they may wear jewelry.

Sweatshirts and sweaters for boys and girls:

- Caskey Torah Academy navy, zip-up sweatshirt from CTA office or CTA website
- Navy uniform hooded zip front sweatshirt (with no logo or writing)
- Navy crewneck, button-down, or zip-up uniform sweater from Lands' End, Children's Place, or Old Navy

Approved Vendor List for Caskey Torah Academy Uniforms:

Land's End:

<http://www.landsend.com/pp/SchoolSearch.html?action=landing&selectedSchoolNum=900183609>

French Toast:

<https://torahacademyofphila.itemorder.com/sale>

Children's Place: [www.childrensplace.com](http://www.childrensplace.com)

Old Navy: <http://www.oldnavy.com>

Jody's Collection-2 N. Highland Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, PA

- Other than the top button, all other buttons are to be closed on any tops.
  - Shirts should be long enough so that the entire stomach and back are covered, even when hands are raised.
  - Footwear includes socks with shoes or sneakers. Sneakers are required for gym.
- Please note that sandals or “cros” are not permitted due to safety issues.**
- Baseball-style hats are permitted outside.

For students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades, please see the uniform flyer in our summer mailing.

***For students in the Early Childhood Program (3Y through Kindergarten):***

Suitable clothing is essential for your child to feel completely free and happy during the day. Teachers recommend light, comfortable clothes and closed shoes, so children can run and jump, and clothes that can get messy. Please remove drawstrings from jacket and sweatshirt hoods as they can be hazardous. Boys should wear tzitzit and a kippah. Mondays through Fridays your child should come in “play clothes” that are washable. On Fridays, however, if your child is the Shabbos Abba or Ema, they may wear special clothes.

As all children must be completely toilet trained, “pull ups” are not acceptable.

Parents will be notified of dress code violations and the student will not be admitted to class until appropriate clothing is brought to school. We will also keep a variety of school-appropriate clothing for students to change into for the remainder of the day to relieve parents from having to come to school, if possible. **Borrowed school clothes must be laundered at home and returned to the school the next day.**

**LOCKERS:**

- Lockers are provided for middle school students.
- Lockers are to be kept neat and orderly and may be checked periodically.
- Teachers and administrators may open lockers to inspect, deliver items, etc.
- Expensive and/or irreplaceable possessions should not be brought to school. The school does not accept responsibility for items which are brought to school.

**NON-SCHOOL ITEMS:**

We strive to create a distraction free environment in our school.

**CELL PHONES:**

We strongly discourage the presence of cell phones in school. If you feel that your child must have a phone, it must remain off and in a child's bag during school hours. If the device is seen during school hours, it will be confiscated until picked up. At that point, the device will no longer be allowed on campus at all.

Students must not bring:

1. Dangerous objects of any kind, including toy weapons.
2. Inappropriate books or magazines.
3. Smart watches are not allowed.

If any of these items are brought on campus, the items will be held and returned only to the student's parents, who must pick them up.

**LOST AND FOUND:**

Possessions found on the premises are generally turned into the office, where they are placed in a box labeled “Lost and Found”. Every trimester, unclaimed items are turned over to charity. Please check the “lost and found” regularly for missing items.

**COMMUNICATION IS KEY:**

An effective system of communication is the sign of a healthy school system. An effective process

allows for questions and concerns to be addressed in the quickest and most efficient manner. When a concern arises, please contact your child's teacher first by calling the school. All teachers will do their utmost to return your call within 24 hours. If, after talking to the teacher, a concern still exists please contact the appropriate administrator. The official school newsletter, Kol Torah, will be distributed to all families weekly via email. A hard copy will also be given to each family (via their youngest child's backpack). In the newsletter you will find up-to-date information on all school happenings.

Our school website is [taphila.org](http://taphila.org) and carries our newsletter and other important information. Please make sure to visit it regularly!

### **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:**

#### **Rights and Responsibilities *In Our School:***

- 1) Everyone has the right to be safe (their bodies, their property, and their feelings).
- 2) Everyone has the right to be respected.
- 3) Everyone has the right to be treated fairly.
- 4) Everyone has the right to learn.
- 5) Everyone has the right to a clean and neat school.

*The rights that we all enjoy result in all of us having specific responsibilities:*

- 1) Everyone has the responsibility to be in the right place at the right time, and to be with an adult.
- 2) Everyone has the responsibility to do their best to resolve conflicts by talking through appropriate dialogue.
- 3) Everyone has the responsibility to be kind and considerate towards others.
- 4) Everyone has the responsibility to participate respectfully in class, and to follow the instructions of the adults in school.
- 5) Everyone has the responsibility to be honest and to talk respectfully to others (both adults and children).

- 6) Everyone has the responsibility to act in a safe manner at all times.
- 7) Everyone has the responsibility to clean up after themselves and not damage the property of others or our building property – either individual or communal.
- 8) Everyone has the responsibility to learn from their mistakes and plan for a new start.

**Please note: Fighting is never tolerated and may result in suspension or expulsion.**

**Swearing is not accepted in Caskey Torah Academy. Students who swear may be immediately sent home for the remainder of the day.**

**BITING: 1st offense** – the child who bites will quickly be placed in “Time Out,” while the teacher comforts the child who has been bitten, and attends to cleaning the bite. Then, the teacher will return to “Time Out” and speak with the offending child about what has happened. The child is reminded that teeth are for eating food & smiling, not for biting. Both sets of parents will be told of the incident.

**2nd offense (within 3 months)**– The child's parents will be asked to pick up the child immediately.

As with all school rules, the faculty and administration will enforce these rules in an age appropriate, loving, caring, fair, and consistent manner. While CTA's discipline procedures progress in a logical sequence, some behavioral issues may require skipping some stages, or a modification of standard procedures.

### **BULLYING:**

Caskey Torah Academy takes bullying and/or harassment allegations seriously. Bullying or harassment is defined as follows: **when a student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more**

**students. This behavior may be in the forms of physical, verbal, or nonverbal actions.**

If and when an allegation of bullying occurs, we are careful and thoughtful as to how we proceed. We do a thorough investigation (including private meetings with those involved and potential witnesses) since accusations of bullying have gravity and can be harmful to victims, bystanders, and alleged bullies. After such an investigation, students who repeatedly initiate behavior that makes others physically or emotionally unsafe, will be subject to disciplinary interventions. Sometimes there are one-time incidents which seem like bullying, but may instead be fights or peer conflicts. Sometimes younger children's behavior may appear to be bullying when it is, in fact, not. Bullying is always purposeful, but interpreting these behaviors is part of the investigative process.

*Students who display such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action, including immediate suspension, indefinite suspension, or permanent expulsion from school.*

**For more information on bullying,  
to gain insight on preventative  
measures and problem solving, visit**

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/warning-signs/index.html>

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/respond/on-the-spot/index.html>

**CONFIDENTIALITY:**

Caskey Torah Academy views confidentiality as critically important. Our faculty and staff will not discuss children in public venues with parents, nor will they discuss children with anyone else other than their parents or teachers. It is very important for parents and students to assist us in maintaining everyone's confidentiality. Please do not discuss confidential matters in a public venue. In addition, it is very important that the school, its

personnel, board, and students are never discussed on internet sites such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. Violating this expectation undermines one's part of the Caskey Torah Academy community. Thank you for assisting us in protecting your children's privacy.