



85 Taft Avenue Providence, RI 02906 401.751.2470 www.jcdsri.org

jewish community  
day school of rhode island

# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2016-2017/5777



**Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island**  
**85 Taft Ave**  
**Providence, RI 02906**  
**(401) 751-2470**

*"The very world rests on the breath of children in the schoolhouse."*  
-Talmud, Shabbat 119b-

Dear JCDSRI Families,

On behalf of all the JCDS faculty and staff, we welcome you to the 2016-17 school year!

Our committed educators work to provide an environment that prepares your children to be confident, collaborative, critical thinkers for the 21st Century. Working within a progressive educational framework, our students utilize their creativity and curiosity while pursuing academic rigor. And our pluralistic Jewish values infuse our school, helping children develop strong personal character while helping to build a warm, inclusive, and vibrant community.

We understand that YOU play an essential role in your child's educational journey. Your support is crucial because family involvement has a positive and long-lasting impact on our students' success in school. This includes asking your child about his/her day, checking your child's backpack daily, encouraging daily reading, reviewing school and classroom communication (including emails and blog posts), communicating with your child's teacher on a regular basis, and joining our incredible JCDS Parent Association (a welcoming and joyous organization!)

As educators, we depend on your support, knowledge, and commitment to learning. As such, we are pleased to provide you with our Parent Handbook, an invaluable resource that will orient you to our exceptional learning environment. This handbook will help you to become more familiar with the JCDS school culture, expectations, policies and procedures.

**Please read the information carefully and keep it as a reference throughout the school year. In addition, we ask that you sign and return the Signature Page at the end of this handbook to the front office *before school begins.***

Here's to a wonderful 2016-17 school year!

Adam Tilove  
Head of School

Andrea Katzman  
Principal

## **The Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island**

### **Mission Statement**

*"The Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island prepares confident, collaborative, critical thinkers for the twenty-first century. We employ a progressive curriculum that nurtures each student's innate creativity and curiosity while promoting academic rigor and developing personal character. Supported by an inclusive community of families and staffed by an outstanding team of educators, JCDSRI reflects the values and ethics of a vibrant and diverse Jewish community."*

### **ABSENCE AND LATENESS**

**We strongly believe in the importance of coming to school on time every day.** School time is precious, and we want our students to be part of the community of learners from the first minute of the day. Parents will be contacted if students are continually late to school. **Students should arrive between 7:30 and 7:50 AM.**

When your child will be absent, please notify the School Office.

**Please make every effort to schedule your child's appointments and any other obligations after school hours.** Children learn best when they are full and active participants during the entire school day. We encourage you not to schedule vacations when school is in session.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

One of our core principles is *Klal Yisrael* (the community of all Jews). As a community-wide school, we open our doors to students from across the spectrum of Jewish practice, whose parents/guardians seek to strengthen their family's and children's Jewish identity, deepen their humanity, and support the mission of the school. JCDSRI is not affiliated with a particular denomination or movement within Judaism.

JCDSRI accepts applications from families of students entering Pre-K through 5th grade. We are committed to a formal admissions process overseen by the school administration. Details of the admissions process can be found on the school web site ([www.jcdsri.org](http://www.jcdsri.org)).

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin, or handicapped status in the administration of its admissions policies, educational policies, and scholarship programs.

***The Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, disability, nationality, sexual preference, or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, employment practices, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.***

*Please Note: No political, religious and/or commercial solicitation is permitted to be distributed in the school building without the prior knowledge and permission of the Head of School.*

## **ARRIVAL**

JCDSRI will open its doors **each day at 7:30 a.m.** The homerooms will be open, with our **homeroom teachers welcoming their students, from 7:45 a.m.** Students who arrive earlier than 7:45 a.m. will wait in the reception area until classrooms are open. **\*\*\*At 7:55 sharp, the school day begins.**

In Pre K, parents and caregivers are expected to enter the Pre K classroom at arrival and dismissal.

In Kindergarten, parents are welcome (but not required) to escort their children to and from their classroom, provided they arrive on-time for school. If a child arrives after 7:55, parents must get a visitor's badge before entering the school.

In first grade and up, students are expected to make their own way to and from class at arrival and dismissal.

**If a child comes to school after 7:55, he or she will be marked as tardy.**

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS/SNACKS**

In-School—If you would like to sponsor a special snack in school for your child's birthday, please make sure it comes from a kosher bakery or that it has a kosher certification (such as THE K-V-H OR THE O-U).

**PLEASE NOTE THAT, WHILE THE BAKE SHOP AT THE BRANCH AVE. STOP & SHOP IS CERTIFIED KOSHER, NONE OF THE OTHER SUPERMARKET BAKE SHOPS IN RHODE ISLAND ARE ACCEPTED AT JCDSRI AT THIS TIME, INCLUDING THE OTHER RI STOP & SHOP BAKERIES.** Ice cream with a Kashrut label is also acceptable. **No home-cooked food may be served.** (For clarification of Kashrut labels, see our Kashrut Policy, written below.)

At Home—Although birthday parties are a home event, we ask for sensitivity in several areas. While many children invite all of the children in the class, this may not always be possible. Please consider potential hurt feelings as you make your plans and do not exclude a handful of children. **Party invitations may only be brought to school if they include the entire class.**

Creating a pluralistic community requires consideration of the diversity of our families' religious practice and observances. **It is our goal that all families and children will be able to participate in the full life of our school community, including outside celebrations and get-togethers.** In consideration of the diversity of our school community, please provide

kosher food for your children's friends who observe kashrut. If you have any questions about where to buy kosher food or what kind of food should be made available, please ask in the school office. We will be more than happy to guide you.

Similarly, **please do not schedule parties on Shabbat or the Yom Tov days of holidays: two days of Rosh HaShannah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Pesach and Shavuot.** Attention to this consideration will help us to continue building an inclusive school community, based on Jewish tradition and values, where students of all Jewish religious observances can participate and thrive.

## **BULLYING**

This Statewide Bullying Policy is promulgated pursuant to the authority set forth in §16-21-34 of the General Laws of Rhode Island. Known as the Safe School Act, the statute recognizes that the bullying of a student creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the student's health and negatively affect learning. Bullying undermines the safe learning environment that students need to achieve their full potential.

**BULLYING** means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- d. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as: Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

**CYBER-BULLYING** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;

- b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages;  
or
- c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

**AT SCHOOL** means:

- a. on school premises,
- b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- c. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- d. at an official school bus stop,
- e. using property or equipment provided by the school, or
- f. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Parents / Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/ guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/ guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the principal, director or head of school.

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the school/district appropriate authority. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Admonitions and warnings
- b. Parental/ Guardian notification and meetings
- c. Detention
- d. In-school suspension
- e. Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass
- f. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities
- g. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities
- h. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional
- i. Police contact
- j. School suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed to be an activities necessary consequence of the violation of this Policy.

If you would like to report an instance of bullying, please fill in a copy of the Bullying Report Form at the end of this document.

## CELL PHONES

We ask that students not use cell phones during school hours, from 7:45 a.m. until dismissal. All student needs should be addressed through the School Office. Parents who need to get a message to their children during school hours should call the School Office. Student cell phone use during school hours may result in the confiscation of the cell phone (returned to the parent).

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL

For questions concerning your child, contact the appropriate classroom teacher, via their email address. If you need to contact your child's teacher on an urgent matter or have an immediate question, please contact the school office and they will leave a message for the teacher.

The school has a policy of a 24-hour response time, however, some school employees do not check emails or phone messages on Shabbat (from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday). Emails received over Shabbat may not be returned until Monday morning.

For general questions and concerns, such as interactions with the faculty, homework, disciplinary issues, etc., contact **Andrea Katzman, Principal and/or Adam Tilove, Head of School**.

If you have questions concerning curricular issues, contact **Jill Davis, Director of General Studies**. For questions regarding our **Judaic Studies curriculum**, please contact **Adam Tilove**.

For questions pertaining to Admission to JCDSRI, please contact **Naomi Schorsch Stein, Director of Admissions. Ext. 16**

For financial issues, such as financial aid questions, tuition questions, etc., contact **Harshita Lakhiani, Business Manager. Ext. 19**

If you still have questions or concerns after speaking to the appropriate staff member and you would like to meet with the **Head of School, Adam Tilove**, please contact **Eileen Ellis, Executive Assistant**.

We invest much effort in creating an accurate and clear flow of information to our families. **We encourage you to read carefully each and every message that the school sends to you and to respond appropriately when requested.**

Classroom blogs will be posted on our website and classroom information, calendar event updates, and announcements will be shared regularly. Please read them carefully and take note of any new information provided.

The JCDSRI school website, [www.jcdsri.org](http://www.jcdsri.org), is updated regularly and we encourage you to visit it often.

## DISCIPLINARY POLICY

An important goal of the Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island is to teach our students self-discipline. Our staff members are role models for our children. We encourage our students to resolve conflict through words. This problem solving approach is a learning opportunity for students to strategize alternative methods of dealing with confrontations.

### JCDS Fundamental Values:

- V'AHAVTA L'REYACHA Kamocha—You shall love your neighbor as yourself: Treat fellow students, faculty and staff in a respectful, kind, and courteous manner.
- Our motto and goal is that *JCDSRI Rocks* because we are:
  - Respectful and Responsible, taking
  - Our own initiative,
  - Cooperating, showing
  - Kindness, with a
  - Sense of pride in ourselves and our school!

An atmosphere of learning is our goal at JCDSRI. It is expected that all teachers will facilitate learning activities that teach and reinforce our fundamental values. As a result, we anticipate that all children will demonstrate behavior that is conducive to the learning process. Often a verbal reminder is all that is needed to change students' misbehavior. However, if the misbehavior continues, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The teacher will administer logical and related consequences on an individual basis (talk with the student, call the parent, send a note home, etc.) It is expected that the child's family will be informed by phone and/or email of any moderate to serious behavioral infraction. And email should be sent to the principal informing him/her of the incident and follow-up.
2. If a student does not respond to the above, the teacher will notify the Head of School or principal. They will process the event further and decide on logical and appropriate actions. The parents will be contacted by either of them.

Some behaviors are of a more serious nature. Examples of these behaviors, include, but are not limited to, any behavior that threatens the safety of another child such as hitting, biting, consistent rudeness and/or disruption. In these cases, the student who exhibits these behaviors will be sent to the Head of School's office or appropriate administrator. Parents will be notified and expected to pick their child up immediately if it is deemed necessary. Upon the child's return to school, there will be a meeting between the child, parents, and principal and/or Head of School to work together to set short and long term goals for the child.



If a student is sent home more than twice, a meeting will take place with the Head of School and/or principal and the appropriate teacher, and parents to discuss a course of action.

- Bal Tashhit—Do not destroy: respect and not break, damage, or deface school property or personal property of others.

**School Property:**

Respect for books and property is an important value for children to learn. Students are held responsible for books and supplies provided in the course of the school year. Students will be charged for any damage or loss of books, supplies, equipment or property.

Parents who have concerns regarding discipline should follow this contact procedure:

1. **First notify the appropriate teacher**
2. If there is a need for further discussion, please contact the Head of School and/or principal.

**\*\*\*DISMISSAL**

**Every child has a daily plan for dismissal that should be coordinated in advance with the school office, i.e.: bus, JCC, carpool, parent, caregiver, etc. Please complete the transportation form in the beginning of the year so that the school office knows how your child is getting home.**

**THE SCHOOL DAY FOR ALL STUDENTS K-5 ENDS AT 3:15PM,  
EXCEPT FOR FRIDAYS WHEN WE DISMISS AT 2:30.**

Pre-Kindergarten students are dismissed from their classroom at either 12:00pm or 3:00pm (2:30 on Fridays). Half and full day schedules are coordinated through the business office and with our Pre-K staff. **Please pick up your children on time!** K-5 students must be picked up by their guardians/parents or designated adult in the school lobby OR you may remain in your vehicle, lining up in front of the school along the right side of the Taft Avenue block and children will be escorted to your vehicle. **We will not send a child home with any adult who has not been designated by the parent or guardian to pick up that child from school.**

As each child leaves the school building at dismissal, he or she is checked off the student roster as being dismissed to their adult in charge. *Your patience and adherence to the policy is necessary for the safety of all our children.*

For your child's safety, please notify the School Office of any change in dismissal routines, including going home with a friend for play dates. **We ask that all changes in dismissal be planned ahead of time; students may not make plans on their own during the school day.**

**If a child must leave the school building before dismissal time**, he/she must bring a written note, signed by the parent/guardian, to the School Office at the beginning of that day, or a phone call must be placed to the school office the morning of the early release day. Parents/guardians must report to the Office when picking up a child before the scheduled dismissal time. Students will not be called out of their classrooms until the parent arrives. **Please allow sufficient time for office personnel to locate the student.** Students are not permitted to wait outside the building for an excused early release. Parents must sign the student out of the building and, if returning during the school day, escort the child back into school and sign him/her back in.

### **Bus Transportation and Car Pools:**

**Bus Transportation:** Please follow the link below to see if your family resides in a town/city which is a participating school district of the statewide transportation system. If so, you must request transportation through the statewide website.

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/AdditionalResources/StudentTransportation.aspx>

At dismissal, students riding the bus will be escorted directly to the bus on Taft Avenue.

**Please Note: Pre-Kindergarten** students are not eligible for student busing.

Many families find it convenient to participate in car pools. If your child will be in a car pool, make sure the office knows who will be picking up your child.

**At dismissal, Taft Avenue may be entered only one way from Savoy Street. Please observe the 20 m.p.h. speed limit on Taft Avenue. Please be considerate of our neighbors and each other—DO NOT BLOCK THE STREET OR THE NEIGHBORS' DRIVEWAYS.**

**If you stay in your car during pick-up, you may pull up on the right side of Taft Avenue ONLY. If you are entering the building to pick up your child, you must park your car in the parking lot. Please note: you may *not* park on the right side of the street between the two yellow signs in front of the school or you risk being towed.**

## **DRESS CODE POLICY**

Clothes send a message. They transmit a sense of our values, our identity, and our self-respect. We expect students to come to school dressed in a manner consistent with a respectful attitude toward school and their peers. Designs may not contain profanity or promote alcohol, drugs, suicide, sex, nudity, ethnic hatred, sexism, or other offensive or disruptive messages.

Clothes should be neat, clean, comfortable, and not ostentatious or distracting. Appropriate school attire is encouraged; any student wearing clothes deemed too revealing or disrespectful of others or the academic environment will be asked to change. For safety

reasons, students should not wear "flip-flops" or other backless sandals. Appropriate rubber-soled, closed shoes should be worn on gym days.

If there are any questions about what is appropriate, please call the school.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

In August, each family will receive a Universal Permission Slip for each of their children at JCDSRI. This form, signed by the parent or guardian, gives consent so that the child may leave the campus of JCDSRI for educational purposes. This form also requires the signature of parents with regard to the transport of their child on the trip, i.e., by school bus, by private vehicle, or by a group walk to the destination. Parents will be informed of each separate field trip for informational purposes. Please remind the teacher of any medications, allergies or other special issues.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND SNOW DAYS**

All families will receive an automatic phone message and/or email message announcing that school has been cancelled or delayed due to inclement weather. *Be sure that your most current information is on file in the JCDSRI School Office so that you receive notification.* In addition to this service, school closings will be announced on Rhode Island Television Channels 12, 10 and 6 and radio stations LITE 105.1 FM; WHJJ, AM 920; WBRU FM 95.5 and WPRO, AM 630; and 92.3 FM. Please listen for the name of our school, as we will be making decisions on school closings independently of any school system.

We try to make every effort not to close school during the school day; however, if there is an emergency cancellation during the school day, parents will be contacted through the automatic phone system, email and the television and radio stations will be notified.

## **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

### **Annual Campaign and General Donations:**

**Annual Campaign:** In order to assure the continued success of JCDSRI, we rely on your continued support from alumni, alumni families, grandparents, community supporters and current families. JCDSRI relies on funds raised through the Annual Campaign to cover a portion of the school's annual operating expenses. *Tuition does not cover our operational costs.* The Annual Fund is one of the best ways possible for parents, grandparents, JCDSRI Board members, faculty and staff, alumni, alumni parents and community members to help JCDSRI reach its goals! We hope that every parent will participate in the 2016-2017 Annual Campaign—every dollar counts! Having 100% participation from our parent community is very important in fundraising throughout the year. For further information and to get involved in the school's fundraising efforts, please contact Alison Walter in the Development Office, Ext. 22.

**In Honor and Memory of Donations:** General Donations to JCDSRI are a wonderful way to commemorate celebratory times in your life, as well as times when you would like to memorialize a loved one. *Donation envelopes are available in the front office or you can make a donation online at [www.jcdsri.org](http://www.jcdsri.org). A personalized donation card will be sent on your behalf. An \$18 donation is suggested per request. For more information, please contact Alison Walter in the Development Office.*

**Financial Aid Guidelines:** Guidelines for financial aid are based on family income, number of children, and other family financial obligations. These guidelines help us to determine both eligibility and the amount of the award. The awards are based on need and available funds.

Financial Aid is processed by *FACTS (Fast Automatic Cash Transfer System)*. You can find the *FACTS* link on the JCDS website, [www.jcdsri.org](http://www.jcdsri.org). The online application must be completed and submitted to *FACTS* by February 15. All tax returns and W-2 Forms must be mailed directly to *FACTS*. After *FACTS* verifies all financial information, our Financial Aid Committee will award financial aid. You will receive notification letters from our school Business Office.

**Tuition:** Tuition is set by the Board of Trustees. There are **two levels charged**, one for Pre-Kindergarten and one for Grades K through Grade 5. A re-enrollment letter is sent home by the end of February requiring parents to notify JCDSRI that a student is returning for the next school year. At that time, parents are asked to sign a re-enrollment form and submit a deposit in order to secure their child's spot at JCDSRI for the following year.

Enrollment Agreements are sent to each family along with the tuition schedule. This document outlines payment amounts, procedures and requirements.

Families need to register with *FACTS* for tuition payments. The link for *FACTS* is found on the JCDSRI website, [www.jcdsri.org](http://www.jcdsri.org) or directly here: <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3HR14>.

Our policy stipulates that any family with an outstanding balance, and who has not made arrangements to pay the balance, will not be allowed to enroll their child(ren) for the upcoming school year. The school has the right to withhold services if accounts are not current.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY:**

JCDSRI is committed to providing an environment of mutual respect, tolerance and sensitivity, free of harassment of any kind. Harassment includes any repetitive behavior or repeated derogatory remarks that belittle another individual or group of people based on some specific characteristic of the person or group of people.

JCDSRI policy prohibits harassment of any kind. Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment, and is prohibited. Sexual harassment covers a range of repetitive behaviors including, but not limited to, sexual insults and name calling, gossip, jokes, intimidation by words or actions, offensive touching and pressure for sexual activity.

In order to provide an environment of mutual respect, tolerance and sensitivity, it is important that every member of the community recognize guidelines for appropriate behavior.

## HEALTH POLICY

JCDSRI follows all guidelines of the State of Rhode Island Department of Health. A school nurse is provided by the Providence Public School Department two hours per week.

**Physical Examinations:** A physical examination form completed by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner must be submitted *for every student*.

Rhode Island law requires that immunization records be completed and presented to the school **prior to opening day** in order for a child to begin school. If you have chosen not to immunize your child, JCDSRI must have the proper notification, from the Rhode Island Department of Health, submitted to our office **prior to the first day of school**.

**Medications:** Medications cannot be given to students without parental permission. A signed form for over-the-counter as well as prescription medications must be on file in the School Office in order for medication to be dispensed.

All medications, over-the-counter and prescription, are maintained in the School Office. Prescription medication must be in the prescription bottle with the name of the student, dosage, physician's name and signature and pharmacy name, address and telephone number.

Parents/guardians must notify the office and the classroom teacher if a child has any allergies or special medical conditions. For severe allergies, two "Epi-pens," provided by the parents, must be kept at school--one for the office and one for the classroom.

**Contagion/Fever:** Students with contagious illness and/or fever are not permitted to attend school. The school should be made aware of any contagious illness in order to notify class parents. **A student must be fever-free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.**

When a child is ill and will be out of school, parents must notify the School Office. Children who are sent to school will be expected to take part in all school activities, including recess and gym. If a child becomes ill during the school day, parents/guardians will be notified and the child must be picked up.

We will send your child home if: your child has a fever (above 99F); has vomited; has diarrhea (two or more loose bowel movements in a two-hour time span); a rash of undetermined cause; if we have reason to believe your child is contagious (this includes a serious and/or persistent cough); if your child's illness is disruptive to his/her learning or to his/her classmates' learning.

Please let us know ASAP if your child has a communicable disease (e.g: strep throat, conjunctivitis). *A child must be fever-free or on antibiotics for 24-hours before returning to school.*

**Head Lice:** In cases of head lice, JCDSRI follows the policy of the Rhode Island Department of Education. This is highly contagious and the school needs the full cooperation of the family in treating the infestation. The affected child must be treated at home. Students may not re-enter school until treatment has been administered.

**Emergencies:** In the event of a medical emergency, Emergency Medical Services (911) will be contacted when appropriate, and parents will be notified immediately. If the parents cannot be reached, the child's physician and emergency contacts will be notified. If transport is necessary, Emergency Medical Services will take the child to the hospital designated on the child's Emergency Form or to the closest hospital, as appropriate, accompanied by a school employee.

**Emergency Form:** Each student must have a current Emergency Form on file in the School Office, listing emergency contacts who can be easily reached and who have agreed to take full responsibility for the child's care if the parent cannot be located. **THIS MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

**Peanut/Tree Nut Allergies:**

Thank you, in advance for your support of the implementation of the "peanut/tree nut law" (H5671), which is applicable to all public AND non-public schools serving elementary and middle school students. We recognize that for many of you, implementation of this plan will require "creative modifications" to what your child may typically bring for lunch or snack.

1. A sign alerting people that there are individuals in the school with a peanut/tree nut allergy will be posted at each point of entry to the affected classroom and at the lunchroom entrance (Goldberg and Meeting House).
2. The school prohibits the sale of items containing peanuts/tree nuts.
3. In the lunchrooms, there will be one table designated as "nut-free." This table will be available for those individuals whose allergies warrant physical separation from the other tables where there may be nut products. **Other children may also sit at the nut-free table, as long as they do not have peanut/tree nut products as part of their lunch.**
4. The homerooms for the grades in which there are children who have peanut/tree nut allergies will be designated as "nut-free." **If your child is in a grade in which there is another individual in his/her class with a nut allergy, we will be sending a separate letter home to you detailing specifics of what "maintaining a nut-free classroom" entails.**

5. Due to the use of some classrooms by individuals from multiple grades, the following school spaces are designated as “nut-free” and will be maintained as such.
  - a. Library
  - b. Art Room
  - c. Computer Room
  - d. Music Room
  - e. Judaics/Lashon Rooms
  - f. Gym
  - g. Design Lab
  - h. Administrative Offices
  
6. If your child does not have a peanut/tree nut allergy, he/she CAN bring peanut/tree nut products from home Mondays through Thursdays when lunches are eaten in the Meeting House foyer of Temple Emanu-El. Fridays at JCDSRI are nut-free Fridays and no peanut butter or other nut products may be brought into the school. However, if your child is in one of the grades in which the homeroom is designated as “nut free,” you MUST inform your child’s teacher that he/she has brought in a nut product; the teacher will arrange for your child to store his/her nut-product outside of the classroom. Your child MAY NOT store or eat the product in any of the designated nut-free areas. (See #5). Your child may eat the nut product in the lunchroom.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to see a copy of the law, please feel free to contact the school.

## **HOMEWORK**

At JCDS, we nurture the whole-child. This requires that our students are involved in meaningful, creative, and rigorous learning, significant community building, and substantial spiritual engagement. We also encourage children to play after school, engage in extra-curricular activities, spend time with their families and friends, and get a good night’s sleep!

Because we recognize how valuable our families and childrens’ time and energy is, we only give homework when we feel it is useful and important. Children at JCDS may begin to receive homework beginning in First Grade. Expectations concerning homework in each grade will be communicated to families by the classroom’s General Studies, Judaic, and Hebrew (*Lashon*) teachers.

The main purpose of homework is to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning, to reinforce specific skills, and/or to deepen their understandings. Thoughtful homework can also provide an opportunity for caregivers to find out more about their child’s learning and teachers’ expectations. In addition, occasional homework provides some children an opportunity to practice being responsible for their learning and work, how to study independently, and how to plan their time. These management skills are important for building executive function. Parents should expect that teachers will explicitly introduce, scaffold, and practice these skills with their students in class.

In the event your child has any questions and/or is unable to complete a homework assignment, we encourage students to practice self-advocacy by speaking directly with their teachers. Parents/caregivers should also feel free to contact the teachers with any concerns regarding homework.

## **INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The Internet is one of our most important global information resources. The goal of providing Internet access is to enhance educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication in support of all subject areas.

All users must adhere to the same code of ethics that governs all other aspects of life within the bounds of the JCDSRI community. Any actions performed or initiated through the Internet and e-mail must reflect integrity, honesty and compliance with JCDSRI rules of conduct.

JCDSRI takes precautions to limit access to inappropriate materials. However, it is impossible to control access completely. Nevertheless, we believe that the benefits of the information and interaction available on worldwide networks far outweigh the possibility that some users may access materials that are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school.

To insure proper use of this school's computer resources and of the Internet, we have established an Acceptable Use Policy for the JCDSRI community:

### **JCDSRI Internet/Computer Acceptable Use Policy**

#### **Use is a Privilege**

The use of school computers is a privilege, not a right. The teachers and Head of School decide when students may use computers or the Internet. If a student uses a computer or the Internet in ways that are not appropriate, he or she may have privileges revoked. Also, please remember that computer files are not private. School and system administrators may see your work.

Students will be explicitly taught about acceptable use of technology and about internet safety. Below is basic outline of our technology policy for students.

#### **Acceptable Use**

At school, use of computers and the Internet is for education only. Students may conduct research, learn, and communicate with others. All students agree to follow the rules of appropriate behavior:

- Students may not copy material and say that they wrote it (plagiarism).
- Students will visit only Internet sites suitable for children and for educational purposes, outlined by the teacher.



- Students will only use technology with permission from their teachers, and with clear educational directives.

### **Rules of Use**

Students will follow school standards for appropriate behavior. Some (but not all) of those rules are listed below. Please be aware that for good safety and digital citizenry these rules should extend beyond walls of the school!

- Be polite: Use appropriate language when writing.
- Be kind: Never say anything to a stranger on-line that you wouldn't say with your parents listening.
- Be honest: Students may use computers for research, but must identify sources where information is found. Do not share account or password information with others, and do not try to log on as someone else.
- Be responsible: Do not review, download, or bring any materials that are obscene, vulgar, derogatory or otherwise inappropriate. Do not try to see the folders, work, or files of others.
- Be ethical: Do not plagiarize the words or ideas of others. Comply with all copyright and licensing laws. Treat Internet sources as if they were printed in a magazine or other publication, and cite properly.
- Be discerning: As with all sources, evaluate information found on the Internet for reliability and accuracy.
- Be a leader: Tell a teacher or other school official about any site or message that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable. **Never give your phone number or address to anyone over the Internet.**

### **Security**

If a security problem or weakness is identified, a school administrator must be notified immediately. Installation of programs or attachment of peripherals to any computer on the network must have expressed prior approval.

### **Vandalism**

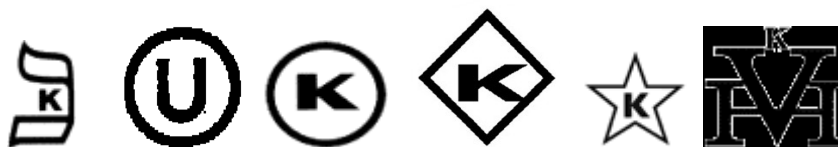
Any vandalism will result in the loss of privilege to use the Internet, and/or the computers themselves.

Vandalism includes: ·

- physical damage to the computers
- damage to files that belong to others
- changing any computer settings or software
- any attempts to bypass security settings

## KASHRUT POLICY

Kashrut (from the Hebrew word kasher, meaning “fit” or “proper”) is the name given to the Jewish dietary laws. The JCDSRI is committed to a kashrut policy that unites our entire school community. As a community school that welcomes Jewish families of all levels of observance, it is important that all food served by the school and at school functions be kosher. Below are examples of Kosher designations which the school follows: The school acknowledges the following Kosher designations:



Families seeking more information about the school policy on kashrut are encouraged to contact the school for further information.

Student lunches and snacks: All student lunches and snacks must be either dairy or pareve (i.e., neither dairy nor meat). Due to differing levels and understandings of kashrut, as well as the possibility of allergens, students are not permitted to share food that they bring to school.

Food brought into the school: Packaged or baked goods brought to school for an entire class (e.g., for a birthday or celebration) must bear one of the above-mentioned kashrut symbols. Items from the Branch Avenue Stop and Shop Bakery in Providence are kosher, as are Carvel Ice Cream cakes and some other prepared ice cream cakes. **No home-prepared foods are permitted to be served at school activities.** In planning celebrations for the class, parents should consult with the teacher in advance for details about scheduling and dietary needs.

School functions outside of school: Official school trips, meetings and programs, even when off campus, are part of school life. As such, we observe the school’s kashrut policy on these occasions as well. Students, staff, and parent chaperones may purchase dairy /pareve food items for their private consumption where appropriate, but are expected to adhere to the policy governing “school functions” on every occasion that food is served as part of the event or trip.

Private events: At birthday parties and other events or play-dates, we encourage JCDSRI families to remain sensitive to the needs of all and to the Jewish values of our school community. When inviting school friends to meals or parties outside of the school, please be aware that there may be children in your child’s class who keep kosher or have other dietary needs such as gluten, dairy or nut sensitivities. If you are unsure of other children’s dietary needs, you can contact your child’s teacher and/or the school office. We encourage you to choose your menu carefully and thoughtfully to meet everyone’s dietary needs/restrictions and to provide kosher food at your event. If you need suggestions on where to purchase kosher products, please consult the school office.

## **KEEPING INFORMATION CURRENT AND SPECIAL FAMILY SITUATIONS**

Please notify Vicky Dziok in the School Office in writing of any change of address, phone number or other information on school records. If there is a special family situation regarding communication with specific family member, we ask that you help us by providing information to comply with legal requirements; please contact Andrea Katzman, Principal, or **Adam Tilove, Head of School**.

### **KIPPAH POLICY**

Jewish men and boys have traditionally covered their heads by donning a head covering called a “kippah” (Hebrew) or “yarmulke” (Yiddish). Initially intended as a sign of recognition and respect for living in the presence of God, the kippah in modern times has also become a symbol of Jewish identity. Although the wearing of a kippah is not a *mitzvah* (religious regulation), it is a well-established *minhag* (religious custom). More recently, many Jewish women and girls have adopted this custom as an expression of their religious commitments as well.

As a community day school, JCDSRI encourages all students to wear kippot- especially during prayer, the study of religious texts, and during meals. We ask that, in addition to supplying your child/ren with a **LABELED** kippah for school each day, you send additional kippot for use as spares. For reasons of hygiene, kippot are never shared while at school. Please contact the office if you would like to buy a supply of kippot for your child to wear in case they forget their own (which happens often).

### **LOST AND FOUND**

It is recommended that each student’s name be written inside all items of outdoor clothing, lunch boxes and backpacks to avoid permanent loss. In the event an item is misplaced, a lost and found collection is kept in the school office. If your child comes home without his/her belongings, please have your child check the classroom and the Lost and Found on the following day. Unclaimed items are donated throughout the school year to local charities.

### **PARENT ASSOCIATION**

The Parent Association at the Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island (JCDSRI) would like to welcome you to the 2016-2017 school year!

JCDSRI has an active Parent Association and welcomes the participation of all parents. The Parent Association is a group of parent volunteers who seek to represent the community interests by serving as liaisons between the parent body and the JCDSRI board. The PA also supports the school community through fundraising and community building events - otherwise known as **HAVING FUN!**

The Parent Association has donated \$15,000 to our school in the last 3 years. These funds help support the school in many ways: field trips, tuition assistance, community Shabbat dinner, equipment, technology and more!

\*\*\*For further information, please contact **Rachel Mersky Woda and Craig Woda, co-chairs of the JCDSRI Parent Association**, at [merskoda@gmail.com](mailto:merskoda@gmail.com) or [cwoda@hotmail.com](mailto:cwoda@hotmail.com).

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES and REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are sent home twice a year. The first Report Card is dated mid-way through the school year and emailed home shortly thereafter; the final report card of the school year is dated on the final day of school and emailed home within one week of the closure of school. All report cards are read and signed by the **Grade-level team of teachers, the Principal, and the Head of School**.

Successful educational outcomes are based on a partnership between teachers and parents. We seek to create an ongoing dialogue with our parent body concerning your children's educational progress. **The Fall and Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences** are the formal opportunities to discuss your child's program and raise any questions or concerns you may have. Of course, if you have concerns at any time, you are welcome to contact your child's teachers.

**Parents receive a sign-up sheet, via email, for their Fall and Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences.** The Fall Parent-Teacher conferences will be held on Monday and Tuesday, **November 21 and 22, 2016**. The Spring Parent-Teacher conferences will be on Wednesday and Thursday, **April 26 and 27, 2017**. These conferences are considered to be a crucial meeting; if you cannot attend, please contact your child's teacher to schedule an alternate date and/or time.

## **RECESS**

Students have recess every day. Recess is outside unless it is extremely cold or wet. **During the winter, be sure your child comes to school with a warm coat, mittens or gloves, boots and a hat, as well as shoes to wear in the classroom.** All students go outdoors to enjoy the snow, as well, so be sure your child has snow pants for outdoor activity during the winter months.

Please clearly label all jackets and removable clothing (sweaters, snow pants, boots, etc.).

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

**Safety:** It is the policy and intent of JCDSRI to provide a safe, healthy environment for its students, teachers and administrators, and to comply with relevant laws as they apply to safety and health. JCDSRI has regularly scheduled fire drills in accordance with Rhode Island law.

It is the responsibility of all students, teachers and administrators to adhere to all safety policies and regulations. Students and teachers must promptly report any safety violations or potential safety hazards, and teachers and/or administrators must ensure all reported incidents or possible hazards receive timely attention.

**Security:** JCDSRI is concerned for the security of students, teachers and visitors while they are at JCDSRI. As such, JCDSRI has undergone multiple security audits from Homeland Security and Providence Police Department. Our school is monitored 24 hours a day through video surveillance. Please respect the following guidelines to ensure the safety and security of our school.

- o All visitors, including parents, must enter through the front door.
- o All visitors to the school, including parents, must report to the School Office and sign the registration book upon entering the building. **Visitors (including parents) must be identified with a Visitor's Badge.** All visitors, including parents picking up children during the school day, must report to the School Office to receive authorization and sign the student release book.
- o Unauthorized visitors are not allowed on JCDSRI property or at JCDSRI functions. All unauthorized visitors will be referred to JCDSRI security.
- o Students, teachers and administrators will report any unusual or suspicious behavior to security personnel and/or administrators.
- o Suspected thefts should be reported immediately to JCDSRI security and/or administrators.
- o All valuable and confidential materials should be locked when not in use.
- o No backpacks or other belongings should be left in the hallways.

**Visits During the School Day:** All visitors to the school must report to the School Office upon entering the building and sign in the registration book. Visitors must be identified with a Visitor's Badge.

Except in highly unusual circumstances, no students are permitted to be removed from their classroom to meet with or see visitors (including family members). Any permitted visits shall be with the knowledge and permission of the custodial parent(s) and the Head of School or other designated administrator.

It is the policy of JCDSRI to follow the law in all cases. In child custody matters, students may be seen only in accordance with the legally mandated visitation schedule. JCDSRI may request written evidence (e.g., a court order or agreement between the parents) prior to allowing any in-school visitation.

Official representatives of the Department of Children, Youth and Families of Rhode Island or the Department of Social Service of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are permitted to see children during the school day with the knowledge and permission of the Head of School or other designated administrator in accordance with applicable state law.

## SHABBAT POLICY

Our school teaches its students the customs, laws, and beauty of Shabbat and the Jewish holidays, as well as respect for differences in belief and observance. Our school makes every attempt to be inclusive of all our community members, so JCDSRI will never schedule non Shabbat related events or advertise non-JCDSRI events that take place on Shabbat (sundown on Friday to sundown Saturday) or Jewish holidays. Please **do not schedule parties on Shabbat, two days of Rosh HaShannah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Pesach and Shavuot.** Attention to this consideration will help us to continue building an inclusive school, based on Jewish tradition and values, where students of all Jewish religious observances can participate and thrive.

## TZEDAKAH

The giving of *Tzedakah*, whether in the form of monetary donations or through acts of kindness, is an important Jewish value and expectation. *Tzedakah* comes from the word “*tzedek*” which means justice. By giving *tzedakah* we contribute to *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world. At JCDSRI we encourage the habit of giving *tzedakah* each week, often on Fridays in preparation for Shabbat. *Tzedakah* donations may be monetary and/or non-perishable food items for the Kosher Food Pantry and the Rhode Island Food Bank. Our students also fulfill the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* throughout the year with special service projects and special collections as particular needs arise in our greater communities. JCDSRI is proud to be an *Alan Shawn Feinstein School of Good Deeds and Leadership Program*.

## VOLUNTEERS

Parents play an important role in their child’s educational team at JCDSRI. Perhaps you have a specific skill, talent, special interest or hobby you would like to share with your child and/or other students. Volunteering provides a wonderful experience, not only for your child, but also for other students...and yourself! What a wonderful way to be a role model for doing *mitzvot*! We encourage you to give freely of your time and talents to enhance our students’ learning. Volunteer opportunities are reviewed by our Head of School or other appropriate administrator before permission is granted to enter the classrooms. All classroom volunteers at JCDSRI must undergo a background check through their local police department.

## **SIGNATURE PAGE**

**(Parents/Guardians: Please sign this form, along with your JCDSRI student, and return to the school office.)**

**My JCDSRI student(s)** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**and I have read and reviewed the JCDSRI Parent Handbook and agree to follow the guidelines of the school as outlined.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature (Grades 2-5)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions about this reporting incident:  
List the name of the alleged bully, and/or cyberbully.

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Describe the incident:

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Were there any witnesses? [ ] yes [ ] no                      If yes, who?

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Other information, including previous incidents or threats:

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I certify that all statements made in the complaint are true and complete. Any intentional false statement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary in pursuing the investigation.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School official receiving complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School official conducting follow-up: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This document shall remain confidential*