

# Parent Handbook

## School Routines

### School Hours

#### Grades K-3

Monday-Thursday	8:15am-3:30pm
Friday*	8:15am-2:30pm

#### Grade 4

Monday-Thursday	8:00am-3:30pm
Friday*	8:00am-2:30pm

#### Middle School (grades 5-8)

Monday-Thursday	8:00am-4:00pm
Friday*	8:00am-2:30pm

\*Early dismissal for winter Fridays is at 1:30pm, as noted in the school calendar.

### Arrival at School

The building opens at 7:45am. Parents are requested not to bring children to school before 7:45am as there is no adult supervision in the building. Students who arrive earlier should remain in the front lobby until 7:45am. We ask your cooperation in seeing that your child is ready for the beginning of the school day. This means arriving at least ten minutes before the start of the day to prepare for class. Students in grades 4-8 should arrive no later than 7:55am, as first period begins at 8:00am. K-3 students arriving by bus or coming with an adult earlier than 8:15am should be dropped off in the gym. At 8:15am, a staff member will escort these students to the classroom. K-1 students arriving after 8:15am should proceed directly to their classrooms upon arrival. Students from grades 2-8 should proceed to their classrooms independently. If they arrive after 8:00am, the office will issue a late pass and the student will proceed to class. Parents and caregivers arriving with their children after 8:30am must stop at the security desk and sign the late arrival log. The office will issue a late pass and the student/s will proceed to class.

### Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal time is a transition for children, parents/caregivers, and teachers. In order to promote a relaxed transition, and since there may be slight variations in the schedule, please plan to be at school 10 minutes before dismissal to pick up your child. It is important for both children and teachers that children be met promptly.

All students in grades K-4 will be dismissed and picked up in their classrooms at the end of each day. At 3:30pm, authorized adults will be invited to come to the classroom and pick up students. Teachers will stay in their classrooms to see their students off for the day until 3:40pm at which time they will leave their classrooms to take any remaining students to Room G34. Students that take the bus or have after school will be escorted by teachers during this time. Parents or caregivers must inform teachers when they pick up their children. This allows us to keep track of children during dismissal.

Students in grades 5-8 will be dismissed from their classes and will proceed out of the building independently. Teachers from grades K-4 supervise the dismissal of their students; while we understand that many parents wish to know whether their children have left the building, those who work in the office are unable to provide specific information about who has been dismissed or who has left the building.

Arrival and dismissal are not appropriate times for an impromptu conference with your child's teacher(s). If you want to get a message to a teacher, we ask that you send a note or leave a phone message in the office so that the teacher can contact you when s/he is free to talk.

In consideration of others, parents or caregivers who enter the school building with a dog are asked to carry it in an appropriate pet bag or in their hands at all times. Under no circumstances may dogs be walked or roam freely in the school building.

### Arrival and Dismissal Schedules and Changes

At the start of the school year, you are asked to inform the office of your child's regular dismissal schedule (e.g. bus, parent pick-up, After School Program). Based on this information, children are dismissed to a parent or authorized guardian, an after school program, or a transportation service. To ensure the safety of your child, any variation from this schedule must be authorized by a parent in writing. Telephone calls are not an accepted means of communicating these changes. It is essential that you send a dated and signed note with your child on the day of any dismissal change. Your child should be instructed to give the note to his/her teacher upon arrival to school. Should dismissal plans change during the school day, please contact the office staff by telephone, and follow up with an email or fax for verification no later than 2pm. Emails sent during the school day to teachers or office may not be read by dismissal time.

Bus children without a note of a change in plan will be put on their regular bus. **We cannot allow students to make changes in dismissal routine without written or emailed notification from parents.** This procedure is important for the safety of our students. Again, these changes must be made no later than 2pm.

Should your child arrive after the start of the day, or should you need to pick up your child from school before dismissal, please stop in the office to sign your child in or out. A staff member will escort your child between the classroom and the office. We hope you understand that this is a prudent security measure designed to protect everyone.

## Transportation

Bus service is provided by New York City. Routes are created by the Department of Transportation based on student addresses and their distance to the school. The school is not able to make changes to the bus routes. Please contact Nathalie Cabot at [ncabot@hannahsenesh.org](mailto:ncabot@hannahsenesh.org) for more information. At times the bus may be delayed due to weather or traffic. In the case of a delay, a message will be sent via text message.

All students who use either bus or parent carpools are expected to act courteously. The driver is the authority, and students must abide by the stated rules. Fighting, horseplay, and verbal abuse are not allowed. At the discretion of the school, students may be suspended from school bus service. Everyone's cooperation is needed to make school transportation safe and pleasurable.

## After School Program

There are a number of after school options available for Hannah Senesh students. Please visit the school website for program details and prices. The "4:00 room" offers a ½ hour late pick-up option.

After school classes meet:

Monday-Thursday, 3:30-5:00pm

Friday, 2:30-4:00pm OR 1:30-3:00pm, depending on early dismissal schedule

## Middle School Athletics and Enrichment Program

There are a number of athletic and enrichment options available to middle school students. Information about the program will be communicated to students in school and to parents through email and school website.

## Medical & Emergency Information

### Health, Emergency, Immunization, and Medication Forms

Students entering Hannah Senesh must fulfill the requirements of the State of New York for immunization each year. Medical, Emergency Information and Administration of Medication forms must be submitted to the school for all students before the start of the school year.

Any child who is found to be out of compliance is required by the NYS Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to be excluded from all classes and activities until s/he completes the necessary immunizations. This will be strictly enforced by the educational and administrative staff of Hannah Senesh Community day School. Individual concerns can be addressed by the school nurse and Nathalie Cabot, operations manager.

## Medications in School

Administering medication to students must be done with caution and only with written permission and specific guidance. Even in the event of an emergency, we will not make a decision to give a child unauthorized medication, nor can we accept authorization over the telephone to give a child medication.

Students are not to carry any medication, including over-the-counter medications, for self administration. If parents wish the school nurse or designee to administer medication to their child during school hours, we require that an Administration of Medication form be completed and returned to Nathalie. The school nurse and Nathalie Cabot will be the only employees to administer medication to students.

Both prescription and non-prescription medication must be sent in to the school nurse in its original bottle. Prescription medications must also include the attached pharmacist's label. An order for the medication must be provided from a licensed physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or podiatrist. The medication label must also list the student's name, medication, and prescriber. All orders must be renewed annually or whenever a change in treatment is made. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that the medication is replaced when expired and that medication is refilled as needed.

The school staff will not dispense any medication without written permission from the parents as well as a doctor's order. Please note that the Administration of Medication form releases the employees of Hannah Senesh Community Day School from any liability arising from administration of this medication.

### Tylenol and Advil

Tylenol and Advil will be administered by the school nurse

or Nathalie Cabot only if permission is given on the Emergency Form and signed by a parent or guardian.

## First Aid

Minor first aid will be given in school and a parent/guardian will be notified if necessary. In an emergency, if a parent cannot be reached or cannot retrieve the student in a timely manner, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital by EMS ambulance transport and the parent/guardian will be notified.

## Food Allergies

Hannah Senesh is a food allergy sensitive school. The school nurse maintains a list of student allergies and works directly with classroom teachers to make them aware of student needs. Students in grades K-8 eat lunch in the gym, and nut-free tables are provided as needed. Due to nut allergies, specific grades may have a nut-free classroom for snack and birthday party treats. Teachers will communicate food allergy information to parents, and parents are requested to respect restrictions.

Children with food or other allergies should be identified to the school nurse, and information regarding exposure discussed and outlined. Those students who have epi-pens/auvi-Q prescribed must have two non-expired devices in the nurse's office at all times. For further information, contact the school nurse.

## Student Illness

When children become ill in school and appear to need home care, parents will be telephoned to pick up their children. The school will consider any child with an oral temperature above 100.0° F or an auxiliary temperature above 99.0° F as having fever. The school does not have the facilities to care for sick students for the duration of the school day. Parents are expected to arrive within an hour of being called.



In the unlikely event that there is a serious injury or illness and parents cannot be reached, every effort will be made to reach the individuals listed on the Emergency Form. If none of those listed can be contacted, Hannah Senesh is authorized to determine the immediate course of action.

Students may not return to school after they are ill until they are fever and vomit free without Tylenol or similar treatment for twenty-four hours. For colds and less severe conditions, we ask you to consider the comfort of your own child and the well-being of the others in the class in deciding whether or not your child should come to school. If your child does come down with a contagious condition such as strep throat, conjunctivitis or the flu, let the office and the school nurse know as soon as possible so that we can inform other parents. Other situations, such as bed bugs, also need to be reported. Reporting these circumstance helps prevent the spread of conditions to the school community.

### Head Lice

School-wide lice screening programs will take place as needed. If it is discovered that your child has head lice you will be called to pick him/her up. Children will not be readmitted to school without a note from a lice checker (unrelated to the child) who has determined their hair to be nit-free. If your child returns to school with any remaining nits or without a note, you will be asked to take your child home and complete the nit removal process. Speak to your pediatrician or call the school office for referrals to assist you in caring for your child.

### Bed Bugs

If you discover that your home has bed bugs, this must be reported to the school office. Appropriate measures must be taken to address the infestation. More information is available at [www.nyc.gov/health](http://www.nyc.gov/health). Contact the school office for further protocol details.

### School Attendance and Absence

Regular and timely school attendance is necessary for success in school. Consult the school calendar so vacations and medical appointments do not conflict with learning time.

Please inform the office of your child's absence by 9:00am.

An absence from school for three or more consecutive days must be accompanied by a doctor's note upon return to school. When a student returns to school after an absence, s/he must submit a note explaining the absence to Hannah Senesh, signed by a parent or guardian. Excessive and/or unexcused absences will be discussed with parents and may be referred to the Truancy Board or Child Services for homebound tutoring. Excessive absences may prevent promotion to the next grade for the following year.

Parents of middle school students should email the Middle School Director as far in advance as possible, and no later than 9:00am of the specific day, with information about scheduled student absence. Since many middle school students travel to school on their own, it is especially important for the school to be informed if a student will be absent. Many eighth graders visit high schools during the school day; please inform the Middle School Director as soon as these appointments are set, and she will pass on the information to the relevant teachers. Students who miss school for family trips outside of school vacation times are expected to make up all class work and homework on their own; please do not ask teachers to prepare special assignments for these situations.

### Snow Days and Other Closings

Hannah Senesh is closed whenever NYC public schools are closed due to inclement weather or citywide emergency. Please listen to your local radio and television stations for pertinent announcements. In the event of a school specific closure or delay, a notice will be posted on the school website, and email communication will be sent to all parents. The school also uses an outside provider to communicate this information to you through text messages delivered to the cell phones we have on file.

### School Safety and Security

Visitors to the school building are greeted by a security guard, and all non-parent/caregiver visitors are required to sign in.

Hannah Senesh follows comprehensive school safety and crisis management policies. Faculty and staff are trained in how to respond to emergencies, and drills are conducted regularly to prepare students for a variety of emergency

situations.

A central alarm system is utilized for fire and emergency drills. All students and staff in the building participate in orderly evacuation drills. In the event of an evacuation emergency, students would be escorted to Mary McDowell Friends School at 133-135 Summit Street.

## The Child and School

### Creating Safe Space

It is important that school be an environment which is emotionally and physically safe for all students and staff. Students are encouraged to be active participants in creating and maintaining a positive environment in which everyone can learn and be safe. In order to foster such an environment, negative acts of a physical, verbal, or emotional nature will not be tolerated. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse (hitting, punching, pushing, tripping, etc.) of another student or staff member
- Destroying or damaging student work, teacher materials, or school-supplied resources
- Writing on walls, bulletin boards, or school furniture
- Stealing
- Insulting or putting down another student or teacher
- Bullying or intimidating another student
- Sexual harassment
- Cheating
- Lying to avoid punishment for wrongdoing
- Inappropriate student communication involving cell phones, texting, internet, and instant messaging. (For more information, please see the school's Acceptable Use Policy for technology on the school website.)

Students should speak up when they observe such behaviors



occurring, and should feel confident that the school will address the unacceptable behavior in an appropriate manner. At the discretion of the Head of School, students may be suspended or expelled from school for participating in the above listed behaviors.

## Life Outside the School Building

The school community continues to exist outside of the school building. Playdates, parties, b'nai mitzvah, and other events can deepen student relationships and strengthen our community. Conversely, negative interactions outside of school can have tremendous impact on students' ability to learn when they are inside our walls. We ask parents to be involved, aware, and engaged in the lives of their children, and work with the school as partners in ensuring their happiness, safety, and ability to learn and flourish. Parents of older children should pay particular attention to student communication involving cell phones, texting, internet, and instant messaging. (See **Creating Safe Space**)

## Appropriate Dress Guidelines

The way students dress contributes to the classroom tone and school culture, and can impact the ability to have a positive learning environment. We expect children to come to school dressed appropriately for work, play, and study.

### Lower School

- Students must wear sneakers to physical education class
- For safety reasons, sneakers with wheels are not permitted in school
- Shoes should be worn that allow for comfortable and safe travel in and outside of the school building
- Pants should not have excessive frays, holes, or rips
- Messages written on t-shirts should be appropriate for a school age population
- Please label all outer clothing to ensure that lost items are returned to the owner. Kindergarten and first grade students should have a labeled change of clothes for emergency use, packed in a shoebox and kept at school.

### Middle School

- Students must wear sneakers to physical education class

- For safety reasons, sneakers with wheels are not permitted in school
- Shoes should be worn that allow for comfortable and safe travel in and outside of the school building
- Pants should not have excessive frays, holes, or rips
- Messages written on t-shirts should be appropriate for a school age population
- Shorts and skirts should not be shorter than mid-thigh, and midriffs and undergarments may not be exposed
- Spaghetti straps, overly tight shirts, low cut tops, and halter tops should not be worn

In the event a child is dressed inappropriately, s/he will be asked to change their outfit.

## Ritual Head Covering

School policy with regard to ritual head coverings reflects Hannah Senesh's respect for tradition—and diversity. The custom of covering the head is a ritual practice of great antiquity. Students may wear *kipot* or other acceptable head coverings all day, but children will be required to wear appropriate head coverings specifically for prayer, eating, and for *limudei kodesh*, the study of Jewish texts. All students should come to school with a head covering each day. Please provide extra head coverings for your child.

Specific concerns about the ritual head covering policy should be addressed to the Head of School.

## Kashrut



As an organization, Hannah Senesh observes kashrut, which means that all food served at school events, including the school lunch program, is certified kosher. Additionally, certain restrictions are put on any foods that are brought into the school building. Our policy aims to balance an authentic communal standard with a respect for individual home practices.

There are many intricacies to the Jewish laws of kashrut, but the basic points are as follows:

- Dairy and meat products may not be prepared or

served together.

- Separate dishes and utensils are used for dairy and meat food. Pareve foods, which are neither dairy nor meat, may be prepared and served with either dairy or meat dishes and utensils.
- In order to be considered kosher by the strictest standards, food handling and production must be closely supervised by a trained professional called a *mashgiach*, which is Hebrew for supervisor.
- Foods that are certified kosher (*hekshered*) bear a mark on their packaging called a *heksher*, which is a Hebrew word that indicates a state of being certified kosher. While there are many acceptable kashrut certification marks, below are some of the more prevalent ones you may encounter:
- PLEASE NOTE: the presence of a K on a package does NOT indicate that the food handling and production has been supervised by a *mashgiach*, so the food product is not considered kosher by school sharing standards.
- You may notice some other letters near a food's *heksher*: D indicates that the food is dairy; DE indicates that the food was processed on dairy equipment, but does not include dairy ingredients; P indicates that the food is certified kosher for Passover, in addition to being kosher for the rest of the year. The word *pareve* indicates that the food contains no dairy products.

## Applications of Kashrut Standards in the School Building and on School Trips:

**Lunch:** Student lunches brought from home must be dairy or *pareve*. School lunch program lunches are dairy or *pareve* and are certified kosher.

**Class Parties:** All food brought to school to be shared with the class must be certified kosher. No homemade foods are permitted. (Please see **Birthday Parties** sec-





tion below for more information.)

**School-Sponsored Events:** All food served at school events, such as the Hanukah party, dinner dance, class celebrations, etc. is certified kosher.

If you have any questions, please call the office.

## Lunches

Students may purchase a hot lunch from school or may bring their own dairy or *pareve* lunches. Do not send any meals with meat. Please be aware that children may not share food because of dietary concerns, allergies, and nutritional issues for children. Please send a beverage with lunch for your child. In the interests of good nutrition, we ask that parents not send candy or gum to school with children. Soda is not permitted in school, and desserts are not sold with our lunch program. We are not able to refrigerate lunches; therefore extremely perishable food items should not be sent. If a student forgets to bring lunch, school personnel will provide a light lunch and drink. Parents will be charged for their child's lunch. Children will be asked to bring their uneaten food home with them, so parents can keep track of what their children are eating. On field trip days, students are expected to bring a disposable dairy or *pareve* lunch.

Parents are strongly discouraged from sending glass containers/bottles in their child's lunch, as cracks and breaks of these containers can result in serious injury.

***Under no circumstances may parents order food from local restaurants to be delivered to school for their child's lunch.***

## Snacks

Each morning, lower school students have a brief snack time. Parents should include snacks in the lunchbox for their child. Some snack ideas: fruit, vegetables, raisins, popcorn, pretzels, cheese, or rice cakes. Please send nutritious snacks that are quick and easy to eat. Middle school students have a brief snack time during class. Please send snacks that are easily consumed. Gum chewing is not allowed in school.

## Birthday Parties and Playdates

Students often enjoy celebrating their birthdays in school with their classmates. In the lower school, it is customary to bring a small birthday snack to share with the class. Middle school students may bring a small birthday snack to share with their classmates during morning break. Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher to plan accordingly, and to provide a healthy snack for these celebrations. Families are encouraged to donate a book to the classroom or school library in honor of their child's birthday. A special bookplate will be placed inside the book acknowledging the donation.

In keeping with the school's *Kashrut* policy, homemade refreshments should not be brought for celebrations. Shared snacks should be kosher. These can be purchased from kosher bakeries and supermarkets that carry pre-packaged kosher products. See below for details.

Many students celebrate their birthdays outside of school as well. We ask you to be sensitive to the religious practices and dietary restrictions of all who are invited to the party. Parents are encouraged not to schedule a party on or close to Shabbat or Jewish holidays, so as not to exclude children from the class. Please provide kosher food so all children can be included in the celebration, and be sure to check with other parents regarding food allergies. When scheduling a party, please be aware of school events by checking the Hannah Senesh calendar to prevent conflicts.

While we recognize the child's and family's right to choose who is invited to a party, we hope that in making the list of those to invite you will be as inclusive as possible. In a small school, feelings can be easily hurt; some options are to invite the entire class, or all the girls, or all the boys. Excluding just a few students from any of these groups can cause hurt feelings.

The following lists are provided as a helpful service to families, for informational purposes. Hannah Senesh does not endorse any of the products, vendors, or party locations listed below.

Kosher products and vendors:

- Amnon's Pizza (718) 851-1759 (They will deliver anywhere in Brooklyn.)

- Carvel & Häagen-Dazs cakes (Carvel cakes are available in the freezer section of most supermarkets.)
- Entenmann's desserts (Available at most supermarkets.)
- Costco (718) 965-7603 and Fairway (718) 694-6868 have many kosher bakery selections, including custom designs.
- Crumbs Bakery: [www.crumbsbakeshop.com](http://www.crumbsbakeshop.com) (Manhattan and Brooklyn Heights locations.)
- Various kosher restaurants and bakeries throughout Borough Park, Midwood, and Crown Heights.

A few locations that provide or accommodate kosher birthday parties:

- Kids 'N Action (718) 377-1818
- Aviator Sports and Recreation (718) 758-7551
- Maple Lanes Bowling Alley (718) 331-9000
- BounceU (718) 238-3288
- The Painted Pot (718) 222-0334 (Carroll Gardens) (718) 491-6411 (Bay Ridge) and (718) 768-8379 (Park Slope)
- The Little Gym (718) 422-7744 (Brooklyn Heights) and (718) 259-6878 (Bay Ridge)

## School and Classroom Libraries

Each classroom has a library in addition to our school library. Both collections are used for organized class projects and student research. In addition, students may borrow books for their personal use. Lost or damaged books must be paid for or replaced.

## Textbooks

Textbooks and trade books are lent to students. Except for consumables, books must be returned at the end of the school year. Students will be charged for books that are not returned or are returned in poor condition.



## Physical Education

Each student is required to participate in physical education unless excused. Students requesting to be excused must present a written note and explanation from the parent to the office. A medical excuse from a doctor is required to exempt a student from physical education for a period of more than one week. All students must wear sneakers for physical education classes.

## Homework

Judaic and general studies teachers coordinate homework assignments so that the children are not overly burdened with homework. There will be homework four times a week for grades 1-8. Extensive homework will not be assigned over weekends or Jewish holidays.

When a student is absent, parents of elementary school students should call the office by 9:30am to request homework and to discuss means to get the books/materials home to the child. Middle school students are expected to contact a classmate to find out what was missed. Concerns regarding any homework assignments should be first directed to your child's teacher.

Students work at various paces, so there is a range of time that a child may spend completing daily assignments. As students progress through the grades, and especially in middle school, time management in regard to long term assignments increasingly becomes the responsibility of the student. Below is a guide to the approximate amount of time your child may spend completing homework. If you notice assignments taking much longer than noted, please be in touch with your child's teacher.

### Homework Time Guide

Grade 1	15-20 minutes per night
Grade 2	20-30 minutes per night
Grade 3	30-40 minutes per night
Grade 4	40-50 minutes per night
Middle School	60-90 minutes per night

## Evaluation and Assessment

Teachers assess student progress by evaluating homework, class work, projects/tests, and participation. Twice a year, in January and June, parents receive formal progress re-

ports with detailed narratives of this assessment. Additionally, parent/teacher conferences in November and March allow for discussion of student achievement.

In addition to extensive teacher feedback, middle school students receive letter grades. Each teacher has her/his own system for evaluating student work and assigning grades, so please see individual teacher handouts (available at Back to School Night) for more information. In addition to the detailed narrative sections, middle school students receive letter grades beginning in sixth grade. However, only seventh and eighth grade students will have grades included on their progress reports. Parents are encouraged to help students remember that teacher comments are as important as letter grades, especially in identifying specific areas of challenge or accomplishment.

Once a year in May, students in grades 3-7 undergo standardized testing, as the school administers the ERB CTP 4 tests in math and English. These tests help the school evaluate student progress, and seventh grade scores are used as part of the high school admissions process.

## Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of your child's learning experience. While parent consent for students to participate in class trips is given by parents when signing the enrollment contract, parents will receive a trip-specific form before each trip with information regarding the date, destination, and schedule. A parent or guardian must sign these forms in order for your child to accompany the class. Students are expected to bring a disposable lunch to school on the day of a class trip.

Fifth graders participate in an all-day NYC challenge and middle school students participate in overnight class trips, for which there is an additional trip fee. Sixth grade students spend four days at the Teva Learning Center, seventh graders explore Washington DC for three days, and eighth graders travel to Israel for two weeks.

## Transcript and Recommendation Requests

Detailed instructions of the high school admissions process are provided for middle school parents. For families in other grades opting to leave Hannah Senesh, two week's notice is required to process transcript and/or recommen-

dation requests. Requests must be accompanied by completed paperwork, and must include all contact information. In general, transcripts and recommendations are not released to families. Transcripts will not be released unless the family is current with its financial obligations to the school.

## Technology and Telecommunications Use

Students have access to teacher-supervised computer time at school, for research, writing, and enrichment. Many students use school computers to work on essays and other long term projects. Beginning in third grade, students are provided with a Google Apps for Education account, which allows them to access their work from any computer with internet access. The school's computers, iPads, Chromebooks, and network have been established for educational purposes, not as a public access service. Under no circumstances are students permitted to use school computers to access personal email accounts, social networking sites, video games, etc. Beginning in fourth grade, students and parents are asked to read, discuss, and sign a Technology Acceptable Use Policy which cites important expectations related to technology, and which provides the basis for a critical conversation about the responsibility that comes with technology use.

Cell phones, iPods/MP3 players, and video games may not be used anywhere in the school building or on school field trips without explicit permission from a teacher. Teachers may confiscate these items if they are found to be in use. If a student's cell phone rings while he/she is at school, the phone will be held by the school until the end of the day. Repeated offenses may require the student to hand in his/her phone to the front office upon arrival to school each day.

Students are permitted to use electronic devices to read ebooks during breaks and other free time, but may not use these devices to access the internet or play games during the school day.



## Bar and Bat Mitzvah

Celebrating milestones together builds community. As such, we request that parents invite a child's entire grade to the bar or bat mitzvah. Please use sensitivity in extending invitations to students from other grades. (For example, excluding three or four student from a class will cause hurt feelings.) Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the administration.

### Calendar of Dates

The Hannah Senesh office keeps a calendar of bar and bat mitzvah dates to avoid scheduling conflicts. Before you schedule your child's bar or bat mitzvah, please call the school office to see what is already on the calendar. Then, after you have finalized your date, please call the office to add that information to the calendar.

### Lateness and Absence Policy

While most services and celebrations are on Shabbat and/or Sunday, some do occur during the week, in the morning or in the evening.

The bar or bat mitzvah child and his or her siblings will not be marked late or absent if the service is on a weekday morning. Please notify teachers well in advance. We suggest that weekday evening celebrations end at a reasonable hour to allow classmates to arrive at school on time the next morning, as these students will not be excused for lateness.

We encourage families with non-weekend celebrations to select days on which school is closed to allow classmates to attend without missing school. Please be aware that high schools look at tardiness and absences as part of the admissions process.

## Lost and Found

The lost and found is located by the entrance to the gym. If you are missing an item, please have your child look in this area, or feel free to look for yourself during arrival and dismissal times. Twice a year unclaimed items are donated.

## Parent-School Communication: Fostering a Partnership Contacting School Personnel

Teachers and parents are partners in ensuring the safety, happiness, and academic growth of students. Teachers are in contact with parents through blog postings and email updates about class activities, as well as specific communications about individual students through email, phone calls, and in-person meetings.

We care deeply about addressing and resolving any concerns that arise as thoughtfully and rapidly as possible. We ask that parents share matters with the school as soon as possible. Always start with your child's teacher, as he/she should be the starting point for all class-related matters. While email is a wonderful tool, please be mindful that emails do not generally allow for meaningful conversation. Serious issues are more constructively addressed via phone calls or face-to-face communications, though email may be useful in setting up these types of appointments. To email any member of the school staff use the following formula:

First initial of the staff member's name, followed by his/her last name, @hannahsenesh.org. For example, to email Nicole Nash, the correct email address is: nnash@hannahsenesh.org

To contact a staff member by phone, please leave a message in the school office: 718-858-8663. Teachers will make every effort to respond to your communication within 24 hours.

Parents should be alert to the possibility of being overheard when having sensitive conversations. Please be aware that anything said in the hallway or lobby may be overheard. Arrival and dismissal times are not appropriate times to have impromptu meetings with teachers. In addition, parents are asked to respect teachers' privacy outside of school. Synagogue on Shabbat as well as other casual encounters are not appropriate times to discuss school concerns with a teacher.

The school administration is easily accessible by email and welcomes your communication. Please see the inside cover of this calendar for a detailed list of administrative personnel and their email addresses.

## Gift Policy

The PA collects funds from families and coordinates collective gifts for all school personnel, which are distributed twice a year, at Hanukah and at the end of school. Hannah Senesh requests that any individual expressions of appreciation be limited to student-made cards or personal notes.

## Back to School Night

To learn more about school pedagogy and procedures, parents are invited to attend Back to School Night in the fall, when the scope of the year's study is explored and educational materials are displayed for parents. This is a good time to meet other parents and get to know your child/ren's teachers, but it is not a time to explore personal issues that may be of concern.

## High School Admissions

The middle school director facilitates the high school outplacement process. Meetings are held in the spring for seventh grade parents and again in the fall for eighth grade parents and students to provide an overview of the high school admissions process. One-on-one meetings with families are subsequently held to discuss and document thoughts on high schools. In the fall, additional meetings are held to finalize prospective high school lists, discuss specifics for individual students, and refine next steps.

By late November/early December, students complete the process to both private and/or public schools. The middle school coordinates teacher recommendations, report cards, and transcript delivery to high schools. The process concludes when students are notified of acceptances to high schools, and they make their final choice.



## Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to be involved at Senesh through the many opportunities available. The *Delet P'tucha*: Open Door program gives parents the opportunity to visit classrooms and see learning in action. Throughout the school year, open conversations are led by school administrators about school programs, curriculum, and child development. We hope parents will get involved both in classrooms and at school events based on their interests and areas of expertise.

## Progress Reports/Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents will receive notice when progress reports will be posted online, in January and in June. All parents receive a secure sign in. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November and March. In advance of conferences, parents will receive information of how to sign up for appointments online. Conference dates are noted on this school calendar. We have a tradition of nearly 100% attendance, and we encourage you to attend.

## Other Forms of Hannah Senesh Communication

The weekly school news, class blogs, email, our website, and the school Facebook page, are our most reliable methods of communicating with you throughout the year. Additionally, materials may be sent home with students.

For the most up-to-date information, access to forms, and details about school activities, please visit [www.hannahsenesh.org](http://www.hannahsenesh.org), and be sure to “like” our Hannah Senesh Facebook page.

## Phone Calls

Students may not make or receive phone calls in the school office except in cases of emergency and with permission. The office staff is not able to leave the office to deliver messages to students, except in an emergency.

Student use of cell phones is not permitted in the building at any time.

## Fees and Contracts

An enrollment contract, tuition schedule, and scholarship fund pledge form are sent to parents after the winter vacation, and are due back the end of January. A student is offi-

cially enrolled when this signed contract and the registration fee have been returned. Tuition payment options are listed on the contract. The scholarship fund contribution supports economic diversity at Hannah Senesh and will be acknowledged as a charitable donation to the school.

In the event that a family's account goes into default, the parents or guardians will be notified by certified mail of the default. The family must either pay the remainder of the school fees that are due or approach the Hannah Senesh office to discuss their present situation. The Business Manager will work with you to revise your payment schedule. If no agreement can be worked out, dismissal from the school may be necessary. Final student progress reports will not be released until all financial obligations are fulfilled for the school year. No student will be admitted to class in September if there remains any prior balance or if the enrollment contract is not on file.

After the return of the signed contracts, the parents' obligation to pay the fees for the year is unconditional, notwithstanding the absence, withdrawal, or suspended enrollment of the child.

When a student transfers from the school, a written statement is required from the parents giving the school permission to forward student records. This statement should inform the school administration of the child's final day of school. Transcripts, report cards, and other student records are not sent to the new school until financial obligations are satisfied.

For further information regarding business matters please contact Shai Carmel at [scarmel@hannahsenesh.org](mailto:scarmel@hannahsenesh.org).

## Development at Senesh

There are many ways for parents to give and get involved in an effort to help advance the school.

The cost of educating a Hannah Senesh student is not covered in full by tuition. Approximately 85% of the school's income comes from tuition and the other 15% needs to be raised. The school depends on these fundraising efforts to retain our excellent staff, sustain our commitment to diversity, enhance our school program, and maintain our facility. Volunteering is also essential to the health and strength of the school. All Senesh fundraising and volunteering efforts are coordinated with the Development Director and Head

of School.

We hope that parents, grandparents, extended family members, and friends will participate in Senesh fundraising activities, which will ensure our growth as a unique educational community.

## Opportunities to Give and Volunteer

**Annual Fund Campaign** is a drive to kick off the annual fund. This annual fund goes to yearly operations, and helps make up the difference between tuition and the full cost of educating each child. The annual fund has the goal of 100% parent participation. Parent volunteers are needed to be annual campaign captains, which entails encouraging families to contribute to the campaign.

**Gala Benefit** income also goes towards the annual fund. Funds are raised in the way of tickets, sponsorships, journal advertisements, and auction purchases. The gala is time for school families and members of the greater community to get together and enjoy an elegant yet relaxed atmosphere. Volunteers are needed to help solicit sponsorships and journal ads, organize the event, encourage participation in the event, and even stuff envelopes.

**Legacy and Endowment Giving** allows parents, grandparents, and community members to give a gift that will go towards future sustainability. Through Legacy gifts, donors become a continuous part of Senesh giving. Legacy gifts will be directed towards building the school's endowment which will help sustain Senesh's commitment to affordability and maintain the building infrastructure.

Hannah Senesh relies on the commitment of our parent body through both giving and volunteering. This kind of support has a direct impact on the success of our students' learning.





## Supporting Student Work at Home

Parents, students and school staff are a team in the education process. Parents are their children's first teachers. While homework and assignments are the student's responsibility, the role of the parent(s) is a crucial part of this process. There are a number of ways parents can help their children become interested and responsible students:

1. Provide a proper place to study. A desk and storage unit or cabinet, in which books and other school belongings can be kept, should be available to avoid time-consuming hunts for school materials. The study place should be quiet and well-lit. It may be in the child's room, at the kitchen table, or any other appropriate space.
2. Keep distractions to a minimum. Loud music or television programs can prevent students from doing their best work. When doing school work on a computer,

students should not be interacting with friends online.

3. Help your child budget time. Designate a time to complete homework assignments. Homework should be done as early in the evening as possible.
4. Express an interest in your child's work. Answer occasional questions, but please avoid doing your child's assignments. Parental approval is more effective in motivating students than the parent doing the assignment.
5. Recognize when a child has a problem with an assignment. Encourage your child to inform the teacher of any concerns, or attach a note to the assignment. When teachers are informed about problems, they can help solve them!
6. "Clean house" together. Periodic clean-ups of your child's school backpack and work area will not only help in getting rid of accumulated clutter, but may lead you

to find some unexpected gems in the form of library books, newsletters, notices, drawings, compositions or test papers. This process also teaches organizational skills that we all need as adults.

7. Set an example for your child by demonstrating a love of reading books, discussing ideas, and attending cultural events. Create a home environment that encourages your child to develop a love of reading. Teach your child to use the public library and to read a variety of books beyond those required in school. Discuss books read by all family members. Institute a family game night. Share your favorite films with your child, and take the time to discuss the action. New York City offers so many opportunities to attend general and Jewish cultural events. Have fun learning together!



Second Grade: Someone important to me