

Educational Administration

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Mrs. Sharon Levine

Early Childhood/Kindergarten Director

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School Accreditation

The R.A.S.G. Hebrew Academy is accredited by

NAEYC

SACS/CITA

FLORIDA GOLD SEAL OF EXCELLENCE

PARTICIPATING MEMBER OF CAJE

R.A.S.G. Hebrew Academy of Greater Miami

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RELEASE FORMS

A general "RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM" is included as part of this handbook, to which we ask you to pay special attention. In addition, a written and signed permission slip must be handed into the school office before each off-campus scheduled activity. **NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITY WITHOUT THIS WRITTEN, SIGNED FORM. TELEPHONE PERMISSION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

In consideration of the Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as "the Board", of the Rabbi Alexander S. Gross Hebrew Academy, hereinafter referred to as "the Academy", arranging for the attendance of my child /children at the Academy, for the academic year and in consideration of the Board's providing the opportunity for and permitting my child/children to attend, participate and/or take part in the programs of the Academy, including but not limited to, academic, religious, athletic and social, we do hereby release, remise and forever discharge indemnify and agree to hold harmless the Board, its officers, teachers, members, agents, servants, employees, and/or any one of more of any thereof against any claim, demand or cause of action whether now in existence, or hereafter arising for any injury to the person of or for the death of the participant arising out of, resulting from, caused by, occurring during or in any way connected with the aforesaid attendance at the Academy whether or not such injury, death or damage is caused by or contributed to in whole or in part by any action or failure to act, negligence, breach of contract or other misconduct on the part of the Board, its officers, teachers, members agents, servants, employees, trustees, any other Participant in said Academy any participating parent and/or any one or more of any thereof excluding any willful misconduct or gross negligence. Each parent and child by receipt of this document, whether delivered separately or as a part of the 2005-2006 Hebrew Academy Handbook, and by virtue of their enrolling their child or children at the Hebrew Academy agrees to the terms of this release of liability.

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4. Listen to the local radio and television stations for updates about weather conditions and school closings.
 5. After a school closure, we must thoroughly inspect the campus before reopening. Information will be made available through the same sources, and as soon as possible, phone calls will be made.
 6. In the event of a sudden tornado or severe weather warning while school is in session, the students will be moved into the school auditorium if deemed necessary for safety.

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NAEYC **Congratulations, Parents!**

You have chosen an early childhood program for your child that is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. The Academy administers the only national, voluntary, professionally sponsored accreditation system for all types of preschools and child care centers. The Academy is a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators.

What is accreditation?

Early Childhood programs accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Academy's Criteria for high Quality Early Childhood Programs, and have been found to be in substantial compliance with the Criteria. A copy of the Criteria can be obtained from the Academy.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

THE CORNERSTONES OF OUR INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY ARE:

GOOD JUDGMENT
COMMON SENSE
SAFETY FIRST

The Academy will follow the lead of the Miami-Dade Public School System regarding school closure and evacuation.

In the event that there is not public school scheduled for a day when the Academy is in session, and therefore no announcement

regarding the public school system, we will act according to the following guidelines:

In the event of a HURRICANE WATCH OR HURRICANE WARNING for Miami-Dade County, there will be no school. If school is already in session and a hurricane watch or warning is posted, students will be sent home in an organized manner.

In the event of a TROPICAL STORM WATCH OR WARNING, the school will be open.

3. In all cases when the Academy is open, use good judgment and common sense in deciding whether to go to work or send your children to school. If you live in Broward or Monroe counties, act in accordance with the conditions where you live if the weather is more severe than near the school, and/or you feel that it is not prudent to travel to school. Even if you live in Miami-Dade County, if in your best judgment the roads near your home are not safe, or you have any other safety concerns, act accordingly.

PARTIES

Birthday parties can be scheduled with classroom teachers on FRIDAYS, in connection with the SHABBAT celebrations.

While “goody bags”, party favors and entertainment are not allowed, parents are welcome to provide festive paper goods, an edible treat (ice cream/cake or cupcakes from a kosher bakery) and drinks.

BIRTHDAY BOOK FUND

We are happy to be able to share your child's birthday. A book will be purchased in your child's honor to be added to his/her classroom library. The cost of this book is included in your annual school activity fee. Your child will be given the opportunity to bring this book home for Shabbat to share with your family. Afterwards, it will be added to your child's CLASS library where it will remain to be shared with his/her classmates.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the school year we will plan exciting, creative holiday performances and field trips for your child. We will collect a one time fee for the school year. This fee will cover annual events such as:

1. Rosh Chodesh Celebrations
2. Puppet Shows
3. Shofar Factory
4. Passover Model Seder & Matzah Factory
5. Israel Independence Day Celebration
6. Live Animal Shows
7. Field Trips to Local Theatres, Parks, & Museums
8. End of the Year Celebrations

There will be no other collection fees during the year!
(with the exception of Kindergarten graduation)

What is a high quality early childhood program?

A high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

In accredited programs, you will see:

- Frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- Planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development, such as block building, painting, stories, dress-up, and active outdoor play
- Specially trained teachers
- Enough adults to respond to individual children
- Varied age-appropriate materials
- A healthy and safe environment for children
- Nutritious meals and/or snacks
- Regular communication with parents who are welcome visitors at all times
- Effective administration
- Ongoing, systematic evaluation

The RASG Hebrew Academy Early Childhood Program offers a process-oriented, hands-on approach to learning. Developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials allow each child to work according to his/her ability or skill level. Based on the theories of Piaget and current brain-based research, the children learn through direct interaction with their environment, one in which there is a natural integration of Torah and general studies. Active participation in various mitzvot internalizes a love and respect for the Torah and its inherent values. Life cycle events, Shabbat and holiday celebrations develop within our children an identification with and sense of responsibility to the school community, Klal Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael.

The Early Childhood department is proud to be the first Orthodox day school in Southern Florida to have earned the prestigious accreditation of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a distinction we have held since 1989. We are also the recipients of the Florida Gold Seal of Excellence. This is a reflection of our high standards and the quality of our program and staff. We employ a dedicated, caring educational staff who strive to meet the needs of individual children as they guide and assist our young students in their personal process of discovery, development and learning. Our low teacher-child ratio, which varies by age group according to the guidelines of the State of Florida, as well as NAEYC, creates a warm and nurturing environment in which our children can safely explore, experiment and grow.

We encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education. With our open door policy, we invite parent participation in the classroom and offer many opportunities for frequent communication with the teachers and director. The parents and teachers work in a partnership to evaluate, appreciate and improve upon our outstanding program here at the RASG Hebrew Academy.

TOYS FROM HOME

The Hebrew Academy is well equipped with educational play materials. Please do not send toys from home to school with your child. If a child brings a toy from home, there is always the risk of it being lost or broken.

Children are, however, encouraged to bring interesting items from home to share during sharing time. These types of items include souvenirs from trips, interesting bits of nature such as a special leaf, or rock, or perhaps a good book that can be read to the whole class. Be sure to label items clearly. Please, **NO TOYS GUNS OR WEAPONS ARE EVER PERMITTED.**

TZEDAKAH

Students have the opportunity to perform the Mitzvah of Tzedakah each morning in class. Please give your child a penny or two daily.

RECYCLE

We welcome your child's outgrown toys, wooden puzzles, and books in good condition. We recycle paper towel rolls, plastic containers, costume jewelry, shells, "dress-up" clothing, fish tanks... We put it all to good use!

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We invite parents to celebrate Shabbat, birthdays and holidays with us. In addition, we encourage parents to visit our school, sharing their skills or hobbies with our students. We also need parents to assist with field trips, with phone calls, and class projects. Your participation is welcome and appreciated.

PARENT AND VISITOR PROTOCOL

Parents are required to follow security procedures as outlined by the school. All visitors to the Hebrew Academy must register with the security guard before entering the school building. Parent identification badges expedite the entry process and are available through the business office.

Parents and visitors are requested to come to the Hebrew Academy properly attired. You are entering a Yeshiva, a sanctuary of Torah. Men are required to wear a Kippah. Women are requested to dress modestly. Our children will benefit by your example.

SMOKING POLICY

Because we have your child's health and safety as our primary concern, there will be NO SMOKING IN OR AROUND THE BUILDING. Second hand smoke is harmful to young children and smoking is a fire hazard. Please extinguish your cigarettes before entering our beautiful building.

ADMISSIONS

Children must be 4 years old for Pre-Kindergarten and 5 years old for Kindergarten by September 1st. Parents of children born after the September 1st cut-off date and before October 15th who wish their child to be placed in either Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten may request to have their children participate in a developmental screening process administered at school for a nominal fee. Based on these results and an interview with the director, placement will be determined.

INCLUSION

The early childhood program is designed to be inclusive of all children, including those with special developmental or learning needs. Parents and staff work together to develop and implement individual education plans to meet the needs of our students.

STAFF

Our teachers are licensed and experienced in Early Childhood Education. Our personnel meet the rigorous standards of NAEYC as well as those of the Florida Department of Children and Families. The staff all participate in local Early Childhood In-Service Training Institutes and also receive individual staff guidance through the director and other local experts in the field.

DAILY SCHEDULE

PLAYGROUP (1/2 DAY)	8:00-12:30	p.m.
PLAYGROUP (FULL DAY)	8:00-3:45	p.m.
NURSERY (1/2 DAY)	8:00-12:30	p.m.
NURSERY (FULL DAY)	8:00-3:45	p.m.
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	8:00-3:45	p.m.
KINDERGARTEN	8:00-3:45	p.m.

SPECIAL FRIDAY DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

PLAYGROUP(1/2 DAY)	12:00 p.m. DISMISSAL
NURSERY(1/2 DAY)	12:00 p.m. DISMISSAL
FULL DAY CLASSES	2:30 p.m. DISMISSAL

PLEASE NOTE: Full day students remaining after 4:05 p.m. on weekdays and 2:45 p.m. on Fridays **will be billed a \$5.00 late fee for every 15 minutes** as late delays present significant problems for our staff.

You can arrange in advance for your child to stay later than 12:30 p.m. on an occasional basis, provided there is classroom space.

Fee till 2:00 p.m. - \$10:00 per day

Fee till 3:45 p.m. - \$15.00 per day

Please speak to your child's teacher to arrange this.

DISCIPLINE

Our policy at the Hebrew Academy regarding a discipline problem with a child is to minimize conflict and cultivate conflict resolution and social skills through the following approaches:

- Communicate with the child in a calm, persuasive manner regarding the behavior.
- Investigate the classroom situation to seek clues to the behavior and possible solutions with the classroom teachers.
- Conference with parent(s) to discover possible cause(s) and to plan a cooperative solution.
- Involve the Director to observe the child in the classroom environment.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parent communication is an integral part of your child's educational experience. If the school has any concerns involving your child, we will communicate with you as soon as possible.

Weekly class newsletters and the Sabbath Lights will help to inform you of happenings in your child's class and throughout the school.

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year. Additional conferences are scheduled as needed for your child during the school year. Of course, parents are invited to discuss the specific needs of their child and every effort is made to maintain open channels of communication between parents and staff. Please keep us informed of any events which might affect your child on a personal level. We love to give an EXTRA measure of TLC, if we are aware of any problems.

The Early Childhood department sponsors meetings for parents dealing with topics such as the importance of play, health, nutrition and discipline with your pre-schooler.

COMMUNICATION WITH DIRECTOR

If at any time you would like to talk with the Director about a problem or concern, please do not hesitate to call her or see her in person. We are here to be responsive to your questions and ideas. Please share your concerns with us so we can address them in a timely and effective manner.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD

In accordance with the state law we must have on file the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the individuals permitted to drop off and collect your child(ren) from our school. If someone arrives to pick up your child(ren) whose name is not in our file we CANNOT allow your child to leave with them. Filling out the authorization pick-up form will help ensure the safety of our students and avoid any possible embarrassment, inconvenience or Heaven forbid, tragedy.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. It can be very upsetting to a child whose parent is late picking him/her up. Fears of abandonment are very real in children and when parents are late, these fears can become overwhelming. Please bring your child on time so that he/she can begin the day with everyone else in a happy and relaxed manner.

Last minute changes of schedule for going home are often difficult to arrange. Please let your child know in the morning if there is a change.

SEND A DATED NOTE TO THE TEACHERS TO INFORM THEM OF SUCH CHANGES.

HEALTH FORMS

Miami-Dade County Health Department requires all students to have complete and **CURRENT IMMUNIZATION and HEALTH RECORDS ON FILE.** These forms are available from your doctor's office and **MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

ILLNESSES

A child who becomes ill during the day will be referred to our school nurse. Parents will be telephoned and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. Facilities for all-day care of ill children are not available.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF YOUR CHILD:

- HAS A FEVER
- HAS A GREEN OR HEAVY NASAL DISCHARGE OR A PERSISTENT COUGH!
- HAS SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE (These may include, but are not limited to rashes, diarrhea, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, and abdominal pain).

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Children will be provided a snack both in the morning and in the afternoon. These snacks are generally fruit, cereal, pretzels, crackers or delicacies the children prepare as part of the curriculum.

Early Childhood's pizza/hot lunch program is available through the school office on a monthly basis. For lunch, each child is to bring a dairy lunch from his/her home. To help us encourage your child to eat well, please minimize sending "junk" food. The following is a list of healthy food items you might want to include:

Peanut butter	raisins	bananas
Cream cheese	cucumbers	crackers
Tuna fish	melon	cheese
Egg salad	applesauce	yogurt
Cottage cheese	orange slices	pasta

BE CREATIVE! USE YOUR IMAGINATION! ALL LUNCHES MUST BE KOSHER!

FOODS WHICH ARE PERMITTED TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL MUST HAVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING KOSHER SYMBOLS:



PLEASE IMPRESS UPON YOUR CHILD THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT SHARING LUNCH FOOD.

CLOTHING

Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothing and sturdy shoes or sneakers. Party shoes are dangerous on playground equipment. Sweaters or jackets should be included on cool days because the children will be playing outdoors part of the day.

For school outings children will need a HEBREW ACADEMY T-SHIRT, available in the Early Childhood office.

Please send a complete change of clothing to remain at school. **ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A SCHOOL UNIFORM THAT CAN BE PURCHASED AT THE FOLLOWING STORE:

Chewing Gum
548 41st Street
Miami Beach, Fl. 33140
(305)674-1636

Boys in Kindergarten may wear long or short pants, as long as they are in uniform. They must wear a kippah or cap and tzitzit.

Parents, whose children are in diapers, must supply the following items to the classroom for their use:

1. DISPOSABLE DIAPERS
2. CLEANSING WIPES
3. LOTIONS OR CREAMS

YOUR CHILD MAY COME TO SCHOOL IF YOUR CHILD:

- Has a cold that is mostly over.
- Has symptoms that are chronic and the illness is not communicable (such as allergies, asthma, etc.).
- If your child is absent due to an illness for three days or more, please send in a doctor's note when he/she returns, indicating he/she is able to resume school activities.
If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the school at once.

MEDICATION

In the event that a child must receive medication during the course of the day's activities, written and dated instructions from a physician as well as a school medication authorization form must be on file in the nurse's office.

Medication must be brought to school in the original pharmacy container. The nurse administers all medications.