



Dear Families,

Shanah tovah and best wishes for a wonderful new year.

I am delighted to welcome you and your children to our new school year. Our first weeks will be devoted to getting to know each other, being comfortable with each other and to building community and trust.

It is a pleasure to welcome Nate Gottlieb as my teaching assistant in Hey 1 on Sundays and Wednesdays. Nate is a graduate of Talmud Torah Beit Hamidrash and has worked as a tutor at SMP and at Talmud Torah.

In preparation for the Yamim Noraim we will learn the different names of Rosh Hashanah and how each connects to its themes. We will also speak about opportunities for teshuvah (repentance) and learn about the Unetane Tokef prayer.

We plan to review Hebrew reading and writing, the days of the week and the Hebrew months,

In our Etgar curriculum we will explore the way Judaism teaches us to interact with one another. We will focus on three mitzvot: (דן - לךף זכות) - *dan l'khaf z'khut*), giving the benefit of the doubt; (הלבנת פנים) - *halbanat panim*), not embarrassing others; and (לשון הרע) - *lashon hara*), not speaking ill of others. Through the study of these mitzvot and the values that they represent, students will consider their own behavior and reflect on where they might wish to grow in each area. Coming at the beginning of a new Jewish and academic year, the unit provides a foundation for our class's work together this year. In an effort to enable students to work collaboratively with one another, the unit intentionally employs the use of both (חברותא) - *havruta*), paired learning, and cooperative learning groups, which our class will call (קבוצות) - *kvutzot*; lit., "groups"). Cooperative learning is a teaching and learning strategy in which students work in groups and are responsible for both individual and communal learning. Your child may be accustomed to cooperative learning from secular school; we look forward to

integrating this technique into our religious-school classroom as well. I am excited about this unit, and I hope that you — and your child — are as well. I look forward to a wonderful and productive year!

Sincerely,