



MIDDLE SCHOOL MANUAL

FOR GRADES 6, 7, & 8

Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School

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MIDDLE SCHOOL MANUAL

Welcome to Middle School! The year ahead promises to be filled with meaningful learning and exciting opportunities. Our middle school community, within Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School, depends on the productive participation of all its members. This manual will help clarify the expectations, systems and rules. We look forward to the wonderful year ahead.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Consistent communication is a vital link to the success of our school. We will contact you through group and individual emails, phone calls, a bi-monthly middle school newsletter and weekly Mah Chadash. You can stay current on your child's progress by checking RenWeb for up to date grades. Teachers will update the grades weekly. You will receive login information at Curriculum Night.

When you wish to communicate with us, please email us at any time or call (314) 576-6177 during school hours. We encourage you to direct curriculum questions directly to the teacher, and general questions to Rick Schmidt, Middle School Coordinator, Shannon Rohlman, Director of Instruction or Cheryl Maayan, Head of School. Parent conferences are held twice a year, but we are happy to set up times to meet with you as needed.

Teachers will be posting daily assignments and information on Google Classroom.

COUNSELOR

The school counselor has limited availability. A student may be referred by parents, teachers or students. Contact the Middle School Coordinator or the Director of Support Services.

HOMEWORK

All assignments are due as indicated by the subject area teacher. As a way to help students learn to prepare for long term projects and tests, the due dates are posted on a board in the hallway. Students are encouraged to check this calendar regularly. In addition, teachers post daily subject area assignments on Google Classroom.

Students are required to have and use, on a daily basis, an assignment book. Maintaining the assignment book is the responsibility of the student; its careful use builds effective study habits.

The student is expected to have his/her assignment book at all classes with the exception of P.E.

Homework at the Middle School level may require a maximum of two hours of daily study at the sixth grade level, and two and a half hours of daily study at the seventh and eighth grade levels. If a student is spending more than that amount of time on homework, parents should contact the teacher first for resolution, and then the Middle School Coordinator. Please help to plan your child's activities accordingly to keep a balance between schoolwork and outside school activities.

Late work policy:

1. Work turned in when due receives full credit.
2. Work turned in one day late may be marked down the equivalent of one letter grade and a minimum of one letter grade each day thereafter.

Completed assignments should reflect the student's best effort and should be complete, neat, legible, and correctly headed with name. All work must be the student's own.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards will be issued on a trimester basis. Anecdotal comments will be presented at Fall & Spring Conferences.

The Middle School grading scale is as follows:

A = 100 - 95

A- = 94 - 90

B+ = 89 - 87

B = 86 - 84

B- = 83 - 80

C+ = 79 - 77

C = 76 - 74

C- = 73 - 70

D+ = 69 - 67

D = 66 - 64

D - = 63 - 60

U = 59 and under

GRADUATION

Graduation will be recognized as the successful completion of study at Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School and will be acknowledged with a school-wide ceremony at the end of the eighth grade.

LOCKERS

Lockers are provided for students to store their schoolwork and supplies. Middle School students may elect to purchase and place a combination lock on their locker (combinations will be kept on record in Mr. Schmidt's classroom). Students will be responsible for any damage to their lockers.

TZEDAKAH

Each student is strongly encouraged to give his or her own money to perform this important mitzvah. We will have tzedakah jars out each Friday and encourage students to bring either money or cans of food for the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry in preparation for Shabbat. Each Mirowitz student will also be expected to make class commitments to tzedakah causes throughout the year.

VAAD CHESED (STUDENT COUNCIL)

The purpose of the Vaad Chesed is to represent the K - 8 student body through guidance, leadership, and chesed opportunities. It consists of a group of elected officers and class representatives who meet on a regular basis to help plan and schedule student activities.

Officers will be selected as follows:

President: Must be an eighth grader.

Vice-President: Must be a seventh or eighth grader.

Secretary and Treasurer: Must be a sixth or seventh grader.

PUBLICATIONS

Middle School students will be responsible for producing the Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School yearbook.

OZRIM PROGRAM (Advisory Program)

During the middle school years, students develop increasing independence and accept greater responsibilities. They move from class to class on their own and are accountable to many different teachers. In order to provide support and stability to our students as they navigate through the middle

school curriculum, in particular, and the early teenage years, in general, we have an ozrim program. In this program, each student is assigned an ozer or ozeret – a Middle School teacher—who is responsible for checking in with that student on a regular basis and providing necessary support. This support may include advice about simple problems, referrals to appropriate personnel, or merely words of encouragement. Ozrim will work with the student’s parents and team of teachers as needed.

DRESS CODE

All students should wear clean, neat, and practical clothes for school activities, including field trips. As students mature, standards of modesty (tzniyut) are increasingly important.

Students and their parents are responsible for managing their attire to limit additional distractions to the learning environment. Teachers will reinforce appropriate attire that is conducive to the learning environment.

Dress is part of the balance of success and challenge. When a student has a dress expectation problem, they will be guided to solve the problem in a loving way before attending/returning to the classroom.

Students must wear:

Top (shirt, blouse, sweater, sweatshirt, tank, etc.);

Bottom (pants, shorts, skirt, dress, etc.)

Close-toed shoes

Students may not wear attire that intentionally shows private parts or undergarments, presents a health or safety hazard, and/or would contribute to a hostile or intimidating learning environment. Shirts should cover the midriff and shorts must cover at least half of the thigh.

Some examples of appropriate clothing are:

- Shirts that don't expose the abdomen when hands are raised above a student's head
- Clothing that doesn't have suggestive, vulgar or inappropriate messages or advertisements (including weapons and alcohol).
- Hats or other head covering but if the student is wearing a hat that is not for religious purposes, and it becomes a distraction during class, a teacher may ask them to remove it.

MASKS

Masks will be required for each student in the Middle School. We are asking that you have several masks in your locker so that if one becomes soiled, it can be swapped out. Masking guidelines are outlined as the pandemic evolves. Reference the most recent Headlines newsletter for current information.

FIELD TRIPS & CLASS TRIPS

The school will provide a variety of educational, cultural, and recreational field trips, often related to ongoing courses of study. All students should remember that they represent Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School on these outings and behave accordingly.

If a student does not participate in a class trip, he or she is expected to be at school for an alternative activity or lesson.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks may be used for transporting books and materials to and from school, but may not be used during the school day. Upon arrival, students are to select their morning books and binder(s) and leave their backpacks in their lockers.

TELEPHONE

Students may only use the telephone with approval from a Middle School faculty member or administrator. The telephone may not be used for making after school plans with other students. Students who have forgotten their work should not depend on the use of the telephone. Student use of cellular phones is not allowed during Middle School hours and we recommend that students not bring them to school.

DUKE UNIVERSITY TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

High achieving seventh grade students are invited to participate in the Duke TIP program if they have scored at the 97th percentile, or higher, on the ERBs (Educational Records Bureau standardized achievement test) given in the fall. Qualifying Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School students will be sent a letter of notification with instruction packets. These students are invited to sit for either the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT (American College Testing Program), and pending results, may be invited to participate in the summer institute at Duke University.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

SAUL MIROWITZ JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL CODE OF BEHAVIOR

Mirowitz is a unique learning and spiritual community that maintains ethical expectations for our students. The description that follows outlines the behavioral boundaries for these expectations. When a student oversteps the boundaries, it is our intention to educate and enable a change of direction in behavior.

Mirowitz to be a place that embraces the Jewish values of:

- Bitachon: ביטחון: We trust others and behave in ways that help others feel

safe and build trust.

- Limud: לימוד: We seek to learn and support the learning of others.
- Kavod: כבוד: We respect ourselves, others, school property and our learning community.
- Tikkun: תיקון: When we see something can be improved, we seek to make it better.
- Hakarat Hatov: הכרת הטוב: We seek out the good in each other and ourselves and call attention to it in positive ways.
- Simcha: שמחה: We seek to be joyful and strengthen the joy of others.
- Kehilla:

The faculty commits to serve as role models by treating students with dignity through listening, working with parents, and maintaining the objective of educating students to help them grow as b'nai adam, בני אדם , human beings.

DISCIPLINE WITH DIGNITY

In keeping with the goals and mission of Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School, we want to ensure that each person in our community is treated with respect to promote personal and community growth. Within the walls of the school, we expect every member of our community to make Mirowitz a place of safety for our bodies, feelings and property; a place of learning and growth; and a place of kindness and respect. In order to meet our goals, the following rules govern our behavior while at school:

Students will be treated with respect and dignity, and must show respect in return to peers and adults.

Students are expected to contribute to a productive learning environment for themselves and others.

Students are expected to maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment for peers and adults.

You may not do anything that causes you harm or could potentially cause you harm. We define "harm" in a broader sense than merely physical.

You may not do anything that harms another person or could potentially harm another person. You may not do anything that harms property or potentially harms property.

Aggressive behavior toward another individual, whether physical or verbal, warrants an immediate response and may be grounds for dismissal for that day.

When a teacher feels that one of these rules is not being followed, he/she will bring the behavior to the attention of the child in a quiet and dignified manner that invites correction. In the event that the behavior becomes a continual disruption to the class, the child will be sent to the office of the head of school. The parents will be called to be part of a collaborative problem-solving effort.

If the behavior continues without any progress or resolution, a student may be sent home for the rest of the day. The student may not return until a parent-teacher-student-head of school conference is held. Mirowitz recognizes that despite the good intentions and best efforts of the students and staff, some students will choose not to participate in the educational process in a productive manner. When a student demonstrates a lack of commitment or inability to modify his/her behavior, an intervention plan will be developed, written and signed by the parent/teacher/student and administration. Continued lack of commitment and any unresolved issues may result in an evaluation to determine whether Mirowitz is the appropriate school for the student.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

As students move through middle school, they will be asked to complete homework that may involve research and writing on specific topics. In the course of such projects, they may be tempted to plagiarize, for a variety of reasons: the difficulty

of the assignment, magnitude of assignments, pressures in life outside of school, etc. **Plagiarism** as we define it is:

1. Use of material that was written or attributed to someone else and not properly cited.
2. The copying of classmates' homework and presentation of such work as one's own.
3. The copy, use, or submission of pre-written electronic papers online as one's original work.

Under any and all circumstances, **plagiarism is unacceptable and violates our school's commitment to academic integrity.** In accordance with the preparatory goal of middle school for high school, and of high school's preparatory nature for college and career, it is essential that students learn now the cardinal importance of academic honesty in the classroom and come to regard academic dishonesty as incongruous with intellectual virtues. Plagiarism also violates the ethos of our school's Jewish identity and *middot*, since the values of *kavod* and *limmud*, respect and learning, naturally entail reverence for the intellectual labor of others and the seriousness of original thought and work.

When students may feel tempted to plagiarize by a legitimate difficulty or pressure, they should instead consult their teachers for the possibility of assistance or extension. Students will be given very specific examples of plagiarism at the beginning of the academic year so that there will be no misconception about what constitutes plagiarism and why, and they will be informed about the process for the determination of plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism.

The **process for the determination of plagiarism** is as follows:

1. Students may be asked to turn in work through an online plagiarism checker, such as on Google Classroom, which may return a higher-than-average rate of parallelism between a student's paper and another source. **In this case, the teacher will compare the identified source with the student's paper and consult at least one other teacher before approaching the student and inquiring about this data.**
2. Teachers may independently identify shared language, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs between a student's paper, where they are uncited, and another source. **In this case, the teacher will compare the identified source with the student's paper and consult at least one other**

teacher before approaching the student and inquiring about this data.

3. Students may be caught in the classroom utilizing sources without citation or utilizing websites designed to aid in plagiarism (SparkNotes, CliffNotes, etc.). **In this case, the teacher will issue a verbal warning to the student not to utilize these sources, may insist on a change of topic for the student paper, and will follow up by checking the student's paper using plagiarism software and by comparison with the website used by the student.**

Ultimately, **plagiarism is determined by the teacher in consultation with the middle school team.** Charity is exercised in evaluating student intentions until evidence of plagiarism becomes unavoidable.

The **consequences of plagiarism** are as follows:

1. For the first offense, students and parents will be notified via a phone call home and private meeting with the student. Students will be given the opportunity to "redo" the assignment, but it will be recorded as late, with grade penalties as determined by the teacher.
2. For the second offense, students will receive a zero for the assignment, and will not be allowed to redo the assignment. An in-school suspension will also be issued to the student.
3. After the third offense, the student will be removed from school and required to have a parent-teacher conference with the head of school to discuss and problem solve how to rectify the situation. Students will receive a zero grade for the assignment as well, with no opportunity of resubmission.

TARDINESS AND ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is vital to success in school. Education is a total process based on continual communication and shared responsibilities among parents, students, teachers, and the school. In elementary school, patterns are formed that will affect a child later in life. Therefore, regular and prompt daily attendance is expected. Each teacher shall be responsible for monitoring student attendance and notifying parents/guardians when a

student's academic progress is being adversely affected by excessive and/or unexcused absences/tardies.

Missouri School Law

Parents have both a legal and moral responsibility to require and promote regular

daily school attendance. Under the Compulsory School Attendance subsection, the burden of responsibility for school attendance is placed on the parents.

Every parent, legal guardian, or other person in this state having charge, control, or custody of a child between the ages of 7 and 16 years shall cause the child to attend regularly some public, private, parochial parish, or home school not less than the

entire school term of the school which the child attends...(RSMo 167.031). Nonattendance by such child shall cause such parent, guardian, or other responsible person to be in violation of the provisions of section 167.061...(RSMo 167.031). Any parent, guardian, or other person having charge, control, or custody of a child, who violates the provisions of section 167.031 is guilty of a class C misdemeanor...(RSMo 167.061).

Family Vacations and Appointments

Families are asked to schedule family vacations during school breaks so as not to interrupt the educational progress of the child or the forward motion of the class as a whole. As possible, all medical, dental, or other appointments should be scheduled after school hours.

Tardies

Essential and important activity takes place in the class from the very beginning of the school day. Students are expected to be ready for instruction by the start time of class. This requires arriving ten minutes in advance of academic start time to organize papers, turn in homework, make

necessary restroom visits, ready pencils and check in with classmates and teachers. Academic start time for middle school is 8:00, requiring 7:50 arrival. Tardies will be marked at the start of academic time.

School Responsibilities

The school will keep accurate records of student daily attendance as required by Missouri State Law and will implement a procedure for notifying parents/guardians of excessive student absences/tardies.

Note: An email will be sent to notify parents/guardians of a child's absence after 5 days, and again after 10 days of absence. Parents will be notified after 5 tardies and again after 10 tardies. These emails are intended to inform parents/guardians of accumulated absences/tardies over the course of the school year. A conference to discuss the impact on student learning may be requested.

Each teacher will be responsible for monitoring student attendance and notifying parents/guardians when a student's academic progress is being adversely affected by excessive absences/tardies.

Excused absences:

An absence due to illness, accident, or a death in the family. Upon return to school, the student will need to bring a written excuse, signed by the parent, to show each teacher.

Scheduled absence due to special events, appointments, or situations. Three days prior to a scheduled absence, appointment, or early dismissal, an email will need to be sent to Mr. Schmidt (rschmidt@mirowitz.org). Students will meet with their teachers to create a plan to make up work. The teacher(s) will decide whether work will be made up before or after the absence.

Missed work for excused absences:

Students are required to make up all work and will receive the day's assignments by checking with their teachers.

Missed tests/re-teaching/assignments:

Any tests scheduled should be taken as specified by the teacher. Rescheduled tests shall be completed at the discretion of the teacher, preferably during the student's free time, which may include time before or after school. Students should not depend on the teacher to re-teach the work missed. The responsibility for all make-up work rests entirely with the student.

Unexcused absences:

Any absence from school not classified as excused will be considered unexcused. In the event of an unexcused absence, the student will receive a zero for any work missed.

AGREEMENT TO READ AND ADHERE TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MANUAL (2021 - 2022)

It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the rules of the school. Students and their parents should become familiar with all of the policies in the Middle School Manual.

STUDENTS SHOULD KEEP THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MANUAL AT HOME AS A REFERENCE.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT MY PARENT(S) AND I HAVE RECEIVED, READ, AND DISCUSSED THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MANUAL FOR SAUL MIROWITZ JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL.

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Date
