



# Parent-Student Handbook

**2022-2023**

## Welcome to Mizrahi Torah Academy!

At MTA, we:

- ❖ Foster *character development* and *ethical personality traits* through an inclusive environment of respect for all members of the school community.
- ❖ *Inspire* a love and excitement for learning within our students, leading to the development of analytical and language skills in mastering both Limudei Kodesh and General Studies curricula.
- ❖ Foster *intellectual honesty, curiosity, and awareness*, and an understanding of people and events that shape the world around us, in accordance with the Torah's point of view.
- ❖ Imbue our students with *love of Hashem, Torah, Eretz Yisroel, and the Jewish People*.

### THE FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP AT MTA

1. **Parenting** - parents can support their children's education by providing a healthy home environment. As partners, we offer and collaborate on parenting workshops with our parents.
2. **Communicating** - parents can be proactive about finding out what is happening in the classroom and in school. As partners, we keep parents informed and make it easy for them to ask questions or express concerns. We hold parent-teacher conferences, send out regular communications via phone calls, e-mails or memos describing the work we're doing in the classroom, and make ourselves available to take parent calls and parent-teacher meetings (with an administrator present, if needed).
3. **Volunteering** - One of the most direct ways for parents to involve themselves in their children's education is to volunteer in the classroom and/or school. We cordially invite parents to join us on campus and we encourage volunteer opportunities within the school, such as helping with office work, teaching extra-curricular subjects, running concessions at fairs, etc.
4. **Learning at Home** - Parents and other family members can be great educational resources for students. To help parents provide at-home learning, we keep them informed about projects and (optional) homework assignments. Additionally, we send home lists of voluntary reading and other activities which can help parents ensure their children have ways to learn outside of the classroom.
5. **Collaborating on Decision-Making** - We encourage parents to collaborate with their children's teachers in the education of their children. We encourage parents to join our PTO, as well.

## **MTA PARENT-STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Arrival** *(Principles 1,5)*

All our students begin their day with Davening. Davening time is a special time to communicate with Hashem. Please drop off your child by 8:15 AM so they won't miss this precious time.

### **Assessments** *(Principles 2,5)*

At MTA, assessments are one of many skill building tools. This means we do not grade our students based on tests. We are constantly and comprehensively assessing our students, and they will never 'become a number' at the expense of their humanity and individuality.

### **Attendance** *(Principles 1,2)*

At MTA, extra care is taken to individualize instruction for each student. When a child misses a day of learning, their learning progress is slowed. Please keep your child's learning consistent by maintaining a consistent attendance record.

### **Birthdays** *(Principles 1,2,4,5)*

- Parents having a birthday party for their child outside of school are asked to invite all students in their child's class. This helps foster Ahavas Yisroel among our students.
- Parents making a celebration in school should please adhere to the following guidelines:
  1. Contact your child's teacher one week in advance of the party to coordinate timing.
  2. No food, other than fresh fruit and fresh vegetables, may be brought in from home.
  3. If you wish to *also* serve something other *than* fruit and vegetables, you may provide PAREVE cupcakes from Winn Dixie in Aventura or an approved local Kosher establishment. No goodie bags or candy may be brought into school. Please contact **the office** with any questions regarding this policy.

### **Books** *(Principles 1,4,5)*

Students are responsible for keeping track of any books brought home. Parents are responsible for replacing any lost book as soon as possible. It is a great lesson in accountability when children are held accountable for their books and schoolwork.

### **Communication** *(Principles 2,5)*

At the beginning of the school year, your children's teachers will share with you their contact information. Generally, all administrators and teachers are available during business hours and will do their best to communicate with you during their breaks. (Please note: Teachers will be unable to answer calls or messages during teaching hours.) You may also call the school office at (954) 526-5253 or email [office@MTAcademy.org](mailto:office@MTAcademy.org). Administrators can be reached via the school office. Please reference the enclosed "Staff Directory" for more information.

School communications/reminders as well as pictures of special events will be emailed or posted via the school WhatsApp chat. If you are not able to click this link to join - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HB1KBb7AA7PCAhjjXnUISw> , please alert the office to add you. (Please note: The chat is an “admin only” chat and for administrative postings only.)

### **Discipline** *(Principles 1,2,5)*

At MTA, our Discipline Plan includes focus on the following student behaviors:

- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others/Respect Authority
- Respect for Property

Students who have difficulty adhering to any of these three guidelines will be redirected with problem-solving skill building. Repeated violations will result in a conference with the parents to develop an action plan for the student. Please note: Our children’s safety is our utmost priority. Therefore, if a student violates a Safety Procedure, we may request for them to be picked up immediately, and an action plan must be developed before being allowed back in school.

### **Dismissal** *(Principles 2,5)*

Dismissal is at 4:00 PM from Monday through Thursday, and 1:30 PM on Fridays. Please be courteous and pick your children up on time. If there is an extenuating circumstance, please contact the office and let us know as soon as is feasible.

Please wait in the parking lot and remain in your car during dismissal. A teacher will bring your children to you. Please help facilitate a smooth dismissal process by neither socializing nor taking care of school matters during dismissal.

Children may only be picked up by their parent/guardian or other authorized person. Authorized persons may be asked to provide a photo ID to verify identification.

### **Dress Code** *(Principles 1,5)*

As we are a מקום תורה, a place of Torah learning, our children are expected to dress in a way befitting of the learning we do every day. As such, we have a Dress Code to assist in fostering this sense of respect and awe.

- ❖ Dress Code for Boys: Collared shirts of any solid color, with no logos, or branding. Black or dark blue long school pants. Tzitzis and Yarmulke. No jewelry of any kind. Boys of Bar Mitzvah age should wear button down shirts.
- ❖ Dress Code for Girls K-8: Collared, long-sleeved or ¾ sleeved shirts of any solid color, with no branding or logos. Long black or navy blue pleated uniform skirt that falls below the knee when seated. Leggings may be worn under skirts but may not be worn alone. Socks and closed-toed shoes are required.
- ❖ Sweatshirts must be a solid color with no words or logos of any kind. Hoods may not be worn on school premises.

Students who do not meet the dress code will have their parents notified. Repeated violations will result in the student not being allowed to attend class until appropriate clothing is provided by their parent/guardian.

NOTE: We respect that our *MTA* parents come from various backgrounds and levels of observance. We request that all parents honor the wholesome Torah environment that permeates our school and dress modestly and respectfully, as per Torah guidelines, when coming onto the campus.

### **Food** (*Principles 1,5*)

Everyone needs healthy nutrition to fuel their day. Please do your best to pack healthful, nutritious, and nourishing food for your child. (Please note: Due to many of our parents being health-conscious, we discourage the sharing of snacks among the children.)

### **Health Records** (*Principles 1,2,5*)

Florida State law mandates that all students must have valid immunization records. Please submit the appropriate forms from your pediatrician or, in the case of an exemption, from your county health department. The blue and yellow forms from your pediatrician are also required. Forms must be submitted before the beginning of the school year.

### **Homework** (*Principles 1,2,4,5*)

At *MTA*, we take pride in providing our children with a comprehensive and differentiated education during school hours. Any home-learning can enrich and supplement your child's education but is not mandatory. As your partner in educating your child, *MTA* may provide enriching suggestions for work at home, and it is you, as the parents, who have the agency to take the opportunity to explore this work. (Please note: There may be times when children will be responsible for projects to be done at home, and/or other work from home, at the teacher's discretion.) Middle school students will be assigned homework as necessary to prepare them adequately for High School curricula.

### **Screen Time and Entertainment** (*Principles 1,2,5*)

Students may not bring electronic devices, such as tablets, phones, or any other personal electronic devices to school. Any books outside of your children's curriculum must be pre-approved to be brought into school. To approve a book, please email Rabbi Azerad at [RDAzerad@MTAcademy.org](mailto:RDAzerad@MTAcademy.org).

Please note: Many of our families have homes where there is limited access to pop culture. In support of this, and to ensure everyone feels welcome and their sensitivities respected, we encourage our students to discuss topics other than movies, TV shows, YouTube/TikTok videos, et al. at *MTA*. Please make sure your child is aware of this policy and understands the reason.

### **Sick Child Policy and First Aid** *(Principles 1,2,5)*

One of the most serious challenges facing schools is preventing illness. We request that a child who is ill should please not come to school. We realize that this can be an inconvenience for parents, and we trust that you will understand the necessity for such a policy and assist us by adhering to it. As per this policy, we require that your child be free of symptoms of illness: fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication. MTA reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be readmitted to the school. Please notify us immediately if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease.

If a child in school appears to be ill, has a fever, or is otherwise unable to participate in class, arrangements should please be made to pick him/her up in a timely manner. (Please note: We cannot provide internal medicine. The first aid that we can administer is limited to cleaning and bandaging wounds.)

If ch"v emergency care is needed, and we are unable to reach the parent or emergency contact, we will take the child to an emergency room immediately and contact the child's primary physician.

### **Toy Policy** *(Principle 5)*

Students are not to bring toys to school. It is distracting and often results in lost or broken toys. The school provides for children to play, both, during outdoor recess and indoor class time. Theft or loss of any toys will not be investigated by school personnel.

### **Tuition** *(Principles 2,5)*

Tuition fees are assessed based on the arrangements made when you signed up through our online portal (FACTS). There are no discounts or reimbursements for days missed due to illness, absences, vacation, severe weather, emergencies, during the holidays when school is closed or should you decide to withdraw.

### **Visitor and Volunteer Policy** *(Principles 3,5)*

We encourage parental involvement in every aspect of your child's education. Visitors and volunteers are always welcome. Please note, for the safety of our students and teachers we ask that all visitors coordinate with the office in advance.

*We are honored that you have chosen MTA to partner with you in educating your children. We look forward to guiding your children's growth in Torah, Avodah, and G'milus Chasadim. The education of a child is a joint effort between the school, parents, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu. When the school and the parents are on the same page, the child benefits exponentially. We look forward to working with you and with HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the avodas hakodesh of educating our children.*

*Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook.*