

Parent/Student Handbook

**2025-2026
5785-5786**

Parents: Please read through the following Handbook, Photo Permission Form, Field Trip For and Student Emergency Information.

You will need to sign the Handbook Acknowledgement Form, Photo Permission Form, and Universal Field Trip Form, and sign and complete all necessary information on the Student Emergency Information Form.

All new information and policies are in gray; please read them especially carefully.

Table of Contents

THE SCHOOL

Mission and Vision	p. 3
Core Values	p. 3
Nondiscriminatory Policy	p. 3
Board of Trustees	p. 4

THE CHILD AT SCHOOL

Daily Routines	
School Hours	p. 5
Drop-Off & Pick-up	p. 5
Attendance/Absences	p. 7
Emergency Communication System	p. 7
School Lunches and Snack	p. 7
Recess	p. 8
Communication with Students During the School Day	p. 9
After-School Programming	p. 9
School Operations and Protocols	
Health	p. 10
Respectful Dress	p. 12
Communication	p. 13
Personal Possessions	p. 14
Student Behavior	p. 14
Schechter Student Responsible Use Policy (RUP)	p. 15
Guest Policy	p. 17

ACADEMICS

Report Cards and Grading Scale	p. 17
Support Services	p. 17
Field Trips	p. 19

JEWISH LIFE

Kippot, Tallit, Tefillin	p. 19
Kashrut	p. 19
Shabbat and Holiday Observance	p. 20
Appendix: List of accepted <i>hekhsherim</i> (kosher symbols)	p. 22
Appendix: Glossary.....	p. 23

The School

Our Mission

Schechter, a Jewish community day school, offers an exceptional, forward-thinking, student-centered education from early childhood through eighth grade.

We inspire students to love learning, celebrate Jewish life, connect to each other, and build a vibrant future for themselves and their community in a joyful, challenging, and creative environment.

Our Core Values

1) *Chochmah*—חכמה—Wisdom

We believe true wisdom comes when we ask complex questions, consider multiple perspectives with empathy, grapple with original texts and primary sources, study the world around us, and discover personal meaning.

2) *Lev Tov*—לב טוב—Good Heart

We believe that by learning to love kindness, pursue justice, treat all human beings with respect, and care for our natural world, our students develop a good heart and a strong moral compass.

3) *Kehillah*—קהילה—Community

We believe in the power and beauty of our inclusive, diverse community, where students build friendships across grades, families connect to one another, and everyone can find a home.

4) *Mitzvot*—מצוות—Jewish Practice

We believe in the power of mindful, meaningful, joyful Jewish practice. Some *mitzvot* can connect us to our fellow human beings; others can connect us to the divine. All offer opportunities to add holiness to our lives.

5) *K'lal Yisrael*—כלל ישראל—Unity of the Jewish People

We believe in the unity of the Jewish people and celebrate the variety of beliefs, ethnicities, and traditions that exist at Schechter and in Jewish communities worldwide. We treasure Israel and the Hebrew language as threads that connect the Jewish people to each other, to our past, and to our future.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Hartford admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded to students at the school. The School will not discriminate on the basis of perceived or actual race, ethnicity, color, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, in the administration of education policies, admission policies, scholarships, or any other school-administered programs.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025-2026

Officers

President: Riva Lewinter

Vice President: Gayle Temkin

Vice President: Jason Kay

Treasurer: Alan Tuvin

Secretary: Erika Santiago

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Guy Neumann

Erika Santiago

Richard Shechtman

Alex Zablotzky

Henry Zachs

Jessica Zachs

Advisor to the Board: Rabbi Yitzchok Adler

A guide to our classroom names

Nitzanim/ניצנים (sprouts) EC2 • Shorashim/שורשים (roots) EC3-4

Ilanot/אילנות (trees) Kindergarten • Anafim/ענפים (branches) Grades 1-2 •

Alim/עלים (leaves) Grades 3-4

Nevatim/נבטים (buds) Grades 5-6 •

Peraḥim/פרחים (flowers) Grade 7 • Amirim/אמירים (treetops) Grade 8

THE CHILD AT SCHOOL

Daily Routines

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K-8

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (EDT)

Student arrival 8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.

School day 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday (year-long), Friday (EST: November 14 - March 6)

Student arrival 8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.

School day 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Extended Day available until 5:30 p.m.

(Earlier on Short Fridays in the winter)

Early Childhood

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Student Arrival 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Morning Program 8:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Full Day Program 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday (year-long), Friday (EST: November 14 - March 6)

Student arrival 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Morning Program 8:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Full Day Program 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Late Afternoon Program 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

(Ends earlier on Short Fridays in the winter)

DROP-OFF

Punctuality

To give students time to greet their peers and get organized for the day, we recommend dropping off your children before 8:20 a.m. each day. **Punctuality is a sign of respect for others, tied to our core value of K'lal Yisrael/Community.** Arriving late on a regular basis has a detrimental effect on a student's learning and disrupts the learning of other students. **We ask that you take this value to heart as you plan your morning routines.** Frequent and repeated tardiness may require a conference between student, parent and the school and may result in administrative action. Students are not considered tardy if their bus is late.

Students who arrive after the 8:30 bell should report to the office to sign in and obtain a late pass.

Students Arriving by Car

Families will pull into the "circle doors" (on the east side of the building), where they will be greeted by faculty and staff. They will enter through the circle doors and proceed to

their classrooms. Classroom teachers will be there to welcome the students and help them get situated.

During the first few weeks of school, children in EC through Kindergarten will be escorted to their classrooms. As part of our efforts to help students become independent, we will encourage them to make their way to classrooms after that point.

Students Arriving by Bus

Students will exit the bus at the front of the building and proceed down the sidewalk to the circle doors. They will be greeted by staff, enter, and go directly to their classrooms.

If the faculty/staff determine, at their sole discretion, that a student is unwell, the student will be escorted to the nurse's office to be assessed. If necessary, the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be called to promptly pick up their child(ren).

PICK-UP

Early Childhood morning program

EC students who go home at 12:45 p.m. will be walked to the front of the building, where parents may pick them up.

Regular dismissal

- **Early Childhood students** will be brought out to the front lobby with their teacher, bags packed, ready to go at 3:25 p.m. (2:25 p.m. on Wednesdays and early Fridays). Parents of EC students will park and enter through the front lobby. **K-8 students going home by car** will be brought to the lobby. Parents of **K-4 students** will park and meet their children in the lobby; it will be an opportunity for parents to mingle, see administrators, and admire student work. (Please note that pick-up is not the appropriate setting for extended/private conversations with administrators – but it will afford a chance for quick check-ins and an opportunity to set a time for longer meetings.) Parents of **Middle School students** are encouraged to park and meet their children in the lobby, for all of the reasons noted above. However, Middle School students will be allowed to walk out to their parents' cars.
- **K-8 students going home by bus** will meet the buses by the circle door entrance.

It will be of crucial importance to drive carefully in the parking lot; please exercise caution at all times.

If you are unavoidably delayed at dismissal time, please notify the school office at least ten minutes before the scheduled pickup time. If your delay is more than fifteen minutes, your child will be sent to aftercare at **a cost of \$12 an hour or part thereof**.

Early Pick-Up / Changes in Pick-Up

If your child must leave school early on a particular day, **please notify the office and teacher** in advance. When picking up your child, please come into the school office and your child will be called to the office. Students must be signed out of school in order to be released.

If someone other than yourself or an identified caregiver will be picking up your child after school, please notify the office in advance, in writing. Both written notes and emails

are accepted. The school will not release a child to anyone other than the parent or identified caregiver without such written notice.

If your children generally ride the bus, **please notify the office in advance, in writing, of any changes.** If for some reason this is not possible, please call the office prior to 12:00 p.m. so we can make appropriate arrangements.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Regular attendance is essential for academic progress and social growth. Parents are urged not to schedule vacations during school days and to avoid scheduling medical appointments during school hours when possible.

- **Please do not send children with fevers, serious coughs, or serious colds to school.** For details, please see the Health Policies section below. **Please note:** If your child is too sick for school, then they may not attend after-school activities and programs.
- If your child will be absent, please contact the office as early as possible by calling 860-561-0700 x300.
- In Ilanot, Anafim and Alim (K-4), teachers are primarily responsible for helping students to catch up after absences; in the Rogow Middle School (Nevatim, Perahim and Amirim, i.e. 5-8), teachers will help, but students are responsible for asking about missed learning and assignments. Middle School students can check Google Classroom to find out what has been assigned.
- If you do choose to plan a family trip when school is in session, you are also responsible for notifying teachers at least two weeks in advance. Teachers will do their best to prepare learning materials and assignments so that your child(ren) can rejoin school as smoothly as possible when they return. However, please note that many learning activities such as science labs, discussions, and group work cannot be made up outside of school.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Schechter will be using the **FACTS Parent Alert System** to make announcements about weather-related school closings and other emergencies. Parents will be notified of any school cancellations, early closings, or late openings via the FACTS Parent Alert System. **Schechter generally follows the cancellation practices of the West Hartford public school system.**

When the Town of West Hartford notifies us about a **delay in bus service**, we will relay that information to you through either the FACTS Parent Alert System or email.

The FACTS Parent Alert System allows you to establish multiple points of communication and to designate times of the day in which they will each be active. You will receive separate notification about how to set-up your account. Returning families should review their profile to ensure that it is accurate.

SCHOOL LUNCHES AND SNACK

EC students eat lunch in classrooms.

K-8 students eat lunch in the cafeteria. Students can bring a dairy or *pareve* lunch from home. (According to Jewish practice, fish is not considered meat, so kosher fish such as tuna is permitted.) For *kashrut* and safety reasons, students may not share snacks or lunches, and we cannot heat food at school.

Schechter's kitchen is kosher, under the supervision of Rabbi Berger. For questions about the *kashrut* of the kitchen, please contact Rabbi Berger. **For a list of the *hekhsherim* (kosher symbols) we use, please see the Appendix on p. 21.**

School lunches can be purchased by signing up prior to each month. Monthly menus are available on the school's website www.ssds-hartford.org, and students may sign up for the particular days they desire lunch. All meals are kosher.

Lunch menus are released a few months at a time. Lunches are either dairy or meat, depending on the day. Please note: **on meat days, lunches brought from home must still be dairy or parve.**

Students are welcome to bring a nutritious dairy/*pareve* snack. Suggestions for snacks include: fruit (fresh or dried), cheese, vegetables, yogurt, crackers, and bagels with cream cheese (already spread). Please do not send soft drinks or candy to school.

Note on nuts and allergens:

Our kitchen is nut free, as are our school lunches.

Due to the severity of allergic reactions to tree nuts and peanuts, and to the fact that some pre-school children may have an undiagnosed nut allergy and be too young to express that they are experiencing signs of an impending allergic reaction, **we have a nut-sensitive policy for all of our Early Childhood classrooms.**

- No food items that contain "peanuts" or "tree nuts" as a listed ingredient
- No food items that state that they "may contain traces of peanuts and/or tree nuts," should be sent to school.
- You may send items whose ingredient label states "processed in a facility that also processes peanuts and/or tree nuts" or "manufactured in a facility that also processes peanuts and/or tree nuts."

In grades K-8, nuts and nut products are permitted in classes in which no students have any nut allergies. Classes in which a student or students have diagnosed allergies will adopt nut-sensitive policies. Parents in such classes will be informed by the school nurse.

Birthdays

We have adopted a "food-free" birthday policy for in-school celebrations. Each class decides on creative ways to celebrate their birthdays. Please do not send in any food products for your child's birthday.

RECESS

Schechter students enjoy recess outside each day unless it is determined otherwise. All students should dress appropriately each day for the weather. If a child does not have a

coat, a parent may be called to bring one to school or the child may be required to stay indoors for recess. In the winter, it is expected that all students are prepared to play outside in the snow.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- The School Office will only accept urgent phone messages for students. In cases of emergency, the office staff will deliver a message to a child's teacher.
- Students may not use the telephones in any classroom in the school, but may use the phone in the main office in case of emergency.
- Students may not use cell phones in the school building during the school day (with the exception of phones approved as part of a student's health plan). After arriving at school, students will deposit their phones in a secure location, and receive them back before leaving.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

EC2 - Grade 8 Program

Schechter will offer **Tzaharon** (our Extended Day Program) for students in EC2 through 8th Grade, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. each afternoon, with an earlier start time on Wednesdays and an earlier end time on Fridays during the winter. Students who participate will have a chance to do homework, have a snack (please provide your own dairy or *pareve* snack) and participate in a variety of physical activities (both indoors and outdoors) and/or game time. **There is no Tzaharon on half-days preceding holidays.**

Please note: to allow us to staff Tzaharon properly, advance sign-up (at least two days in advance) is required. For pricing information, to sign up for Extended Day/Tzaharon on a yearly basis, please contact Karen Shakun at 860-561-0700 ext. 368, or by email at kshakun@ssds-hartford.org. **Last-minute requests for aftercare are not guaranteed; if we are at capacity, students who cannot be picked up on time will still be billed for Tzaharon, but will await pick-up in the office.** Please note that we will not be sending separate invoices for Tzaharon charges; they will automatically be applied to your FACTS Tuition Payment Account.

We also plan to offer additional after-school activities, both sports and arts; details will be forthcoming.

THE CHILD AT SCHOOL

School Operations and Protocols

HEALTH POLICIES

Health Services

The Town of West Hartford provides nursing services for our school. The school nurse is available at all times during the school day. The school nurse is the point person for all matters concerning the health of your student. Should you have a health related matter to discuss, please contact our Nurse at nurse@ssds-hartford.org or at extension 356.

Health Records/Immunizations

Connecticut State law requires that immunization records be completed and presented to the school prior to opening day in order for a child to be admitted to class. A physical examination form completed by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner must also be submitted for each student.

Minor Complaints

Students experiencing minor discomfort will be treated appropriately by the school nurse, or designated school personnel. If a student is not well enough to remain in class or is found to have a contagious condition, the parent will be called to take the child home. If this happens, please arrange for an appropriate and safe pick up within 60 minutes of notification.

Parents are asked to notify the school if their child experienced any symptoms of illness and/or took any medication before coming to school.

Emergency Form

Each student must have a current, accurate, signed Emergency Form on file in the office, listing alternate emergency contacts who can be easily reached and who have agreed to take full responsibility for the child's care if the parent cannot be located. On days when a child's health is questionable, be sure to let us know which parent(s) or other contacts will be available. **This form, sent as part of our August e-mail, must be completed electronically before the first day of school.**

Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, Emergency Medical Services (911) will be contacted when appropriate, and parents will be notified immediately. If the parents cannot be reached, the child's physician and emergency contacts will be notified. If transport is necessary, Emergency Medical Services will take the child to the hospital.

Contagious Conditions

If a child develops a contagious illness or condition, please keep the child at home and notify the school at once. If the condition is discovered at school, we will ask parents to pick up the child immediately.

Children with diarrhea, vomiting, fever, heavy cold symptoms, conjunctivitis, or a rash of unknown origin should be kept at home until the condition is properly diagnosed and treated. Please keep your child home at least 24 hours after illnesses that involve

vomiting, diarrhea, or fever. If a child develops any of these conditions while at school, we will ask you to pick up your child immediately.

Dispensing Medication

Connecticut state law requires that all medications, both prescription and over the counter, be stored securely in the office. They will be dispensed by the school nurse or by properly trained and supervised designated school personnel. **Students may only carry their own medication if special arrangements have been made with the school nurse** (e.g. asthma inhalers).

If your child requires medication during school hours, state law requires that the following guidelines be observed:

- Medication must be brought to school in the original labeled container from the pharmacy/physician. (Pharmacists will provide a second labeled pharmacy container for school if you ask.) For safety, we request that you put the medication securely in a sealed, labeled envelope and enclose a signed instruction note.
- If your child requires an Epipen, a second one is required for our Extended Day Program.
- All medications must be turned in to the office when the student arrives at school.
- A parent or guardian must fill out and sign a Medication Order Form (available on our [website](#) under the Forms section of the Parents tab).
- A licensed prescriber (e.g. physician or nurse practitioner) must fill out and sign a Medication Order, except in cases of short courses of prescribed medications (i.e. antibiotics) that are delivered in a labeled pharmacy container.

No more than a 30-day supply of medication should be brought to school. Emergency medications (i.e. asthma inhalers, allergy medications, Epipens) may be kept in the office for the duration of the school year as long as they meet the above requirements.

Certain over-the-counter medications (i.e. Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl) may be dispensed, with parental permission, by the school nurse. The forms to grant permission are available on our [website](#) under the Forms section of the Parents tab.

* The school nurse is on site until 3:30 each day (2:30 on Wednesdays and short Fridays.)

Pediculosis (Lice)

Head lice are a communicable condition common among children. Lice are usually transmitted by direct contact with infested persons through their clothing, combs, brushes, or other implements that touch the hair. Please remind children that hats, *kippot*, combs, brushes, barrettes, etc. may **not** be shared.

A student found to have lice will **NOT** be excluded from school. The parent of the student will be notified of the findings, the need for treatment, and provided with educational information on pediculosis and how to treat it. The student can return to school once treatment has occurred. ***If your child has lice, they will be asked to keep any long hair up in a ponytail.***

Medical Absences

Students returning to school with a medical diagnosis of concussion, or a condition requiring orthopedic appliances such as crutches, a brace and/or a cast **must** have a medical note from a physician clearing the student to return to school and indicating any necessary accommodations.

RESPECTFUL DRESS

At Schechter, students play, pray, study, think, solve problems, and ask questions. What we wear helps to set the tone for the way we feel and interact with others and the environment. Consistent with our Core Values and recognizing the importance of a safe and respectful learning environment, Schechter has developed the following guidelines for students. These guidelines are in effect at all school functions, including class trips, family education programs, social events, and at graduation in June.

If a student comes to school or a school program improperly dressed, parents may be called and asked to deliver a change of clothing.

Footwear

- Students must wear sneakers to Physical Education classes.
- Students must wear closed shoes or sneakers (no open-toed shoes) to Science Labs.
- Students may not wear flip-flops at any time.

Pants-Shorts-Skirts

- Pants must be neat and clean without excessive rips or tears, and with no writing on the backside.
- Shorts, dresses and skirts must extend, at minimum, past the mid-thigh, and must be worn at waist level (so that underwear does not show).
- Pajamas, pajama pants and scrubs may only be worn on designated Pajama Days.

Shirts/Tops

- Shirts/tops must cover the torso.
- Shirts and tops should not contain inappropriate language.

Kippot

- Male-identifying students wear *kippot* at all times, including at school-related activities outside the building, except for recess, PE, and team sports. Female-identifying and non-binary students are encouraged to wear *kippot*.

Dress for RELISH

To help create a sense of communal unity and anticipation of Shabbat, we encourage students to wear a Schechter shirt on Fridays.

COMMUNICATION

Schechter recognizes that education is enhanced through the family-school partnership. Our family-school partnership is based on our shared goal of helping each student achieve his/her potential in a safe and nurturing environment. The home-school partnership is fostered through parent-teacher and other communications outlined below.

Teacher to Parent Communication

Curriculum Night: Each fall, parents have the opportunity to meet their child's teachers and learn about the curriculum for the year. Parents are strongly urged to attend this important and informative evening to see your children's immersive and creative classroom learning environments and to foster a strong relationship with your children's teachers. We will share more details soon; please check the updated school calendar on the school website for dates and times. Curriculum Night will be in-person only.

Teachers will contact parents by phone or email if concerns about a specific student become evident, including missing assignments, poor assessment scores, or behavior-related concerns.

We hold *Parent-Teacher Conferences* about student progress in November and March; details will follow.

Report Cards are sent home in January and June.

Parent to Teacher Communication

Parents should not hesitate to call or email teachers with questions and concerns. All Schechter staff have email addresses consisting of the first initial of their first name followed by their last name, and ending with @ssds-hartford.org. They are expected to check voice and email regularly, and to return phone calls and reply to emails within one business day (excluding Shabbat and Jewish holidays). **Please note:** drop-off and pick-up are not the appropriate settings for extended conversations, but they can be used for a quick check-in and to set times for longer conversations.

If a parent still has concerns **after** discussion and follow up with a teacher, please contact Robin Werner, Early Childhood Coordinator, for EC concerns, and Sarah Montag, Director of Teaching and Learning, for K-8 concerns.

Website and Social Media

We encourage you to check the Schechter [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for exciting pictures and updates about special events, programs, trips, etc. Our website, www.ssds-hartford.org, is the best place to look for calendars, special dates, and other resources for parents (such as supply lists, medical forms, and more). Another great resource for Schechter parents is the private Facebook group called Schechter Parent to Parent; here you can ask questions of other parents, post information about activities that would be fun for others, offer and/or receive hand-me-downs, and more. Schechter parents will receive an email invitation through Facebook in the coming weeks, or you can click [HERE](#) and ask to join.

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Schechter students learn to be responsible for themselves, their behavior, and their belongings. Please help them to do so by labeling clothing and personal items that come to school, and by refraining from sending expensive personal items and electronics to school. The school does have a Lost and Found box that will be located in the cafeteria. Items not claimed by the end of the school year are given to charity.

To avoid classroom distraction and jealousy, we ask that students generally not bring toys to school, unless teachers have asked them to do so.

Lockers (used in the Rogow Middle School)

- Each student is assigned a locker. All books, jackets, notebooks, personal items, etc. must be stored in the student's locker. Students may not put their belongings in another student's locker or in an empty locker. Nothing is to be stored on top of the lockers.
- If a student's backpack, after it is emptied, does not fit in the locker, it will be placed in a designated space. Backpacks left in the hallway will be taken to the office.
- Students should not bring large amounts of money to school. Money is not to be stored in lockers. If a student is collecting money for a social action project, it should be given to a teacher to be locked up for safekeeping.
- Food or beverages may not be stored overnight in lockers.
- Electronic devices may be stored in lockers at the student's own risk. The school is not liable for damage or disappearance.
- Students may not open other students' lockers.
- Students may personalize their lockers, as long as nothing is written or permanently attached to the outside of the locker. Scotch or masking tape may be used; no stickers, please. Students are responsible for removing all decorations and tape at the end of the year. All decorations must be in good taste and consistent with Schechter's core values.
- Lockers are school property, and the school may elect to open any locker at any time.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

At Schechter, we are committed to assuring that each child has the opportunity to learn in the best environment possible. Such an environment is respectful, honest, emotionally and physically safe, and focuses on the individual learning needs of each student. It upholds, at all times, Schechter's Core Values of *Hokhmah*/Wisdom, *Kehillah*/Community, and *Lev Tov*/Good Heartedness.

With *Lev Tov* (Good Heartedness) as our guide, we are committed to ensuring that our students feel safe, heard and part of the community. We believe that growing children need explicit guidance to adopt kind behavior; they also need clear boundaries and consequences to address their negative behavioral choices.

When students misbehave, our primary response is to teach them to change their behavior and repair the damage they may have done to other students and to their

community. Our approach may include consequences such as in-school suspensions for repeated misbehavior, but it focuses on education and personal change. We build and maintain a positive classroom community, set explicit classroom norms, and carefully balance the needs of the individual and the school.

Classroom Norms/*B'rit*. During the first week of school, each classroom works as a community to develop a *b'rit*, or social contract, which is then used as a guide for classroom behavior. Students discuss strategies for remedying problems in the classroom as a first step. If necessary, teachers will contact the families to discuss on-going issues to create a cohesive plan to help the student.

A note on bullying: It is important to distinguish between individual acts of unkindness or cruelty, which are handled in the manner described above, and true bullying. "Bullying" refers to actions that are persistent or pervasive. The actions can be direct or indirect, and can (A) cause physical or emotional harm to an individual, (B) place an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or (C) infringe on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school. Parents or children who have concerns about bullying should immediately contact the teacher of the student(s) being affected, and also notify Rabbi Berger (jberger@ssds-hartford.org), so that the school can address the concern and assure the well-being of the affected student(s).

2025-2026 SCHECHTER RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY (RUP)

The Schechter wireless network is established for the educational and professional use of Schechter students, faculty and staff. When accessing the network from any device, personal or school-owned, students are expected to be respectful and responsible digital citizens. Any online actions by Schechter students should be consistent with the rules and values represented in the Schechter Student Handbook. Students will be held accountable for their use of the network; this access is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time if abused. Students may be given access to accounts created by the school, including, but not limited to, Google Apps accounts. Use of these accounts is subject to the guidelines set forth in the RUP.

To ensure the safety and security of the Schechter network, any and all activities on this network may be monitored and logged. This information can be retrieved, as necessary, if a violation of the RUP is suspected. Devices may only be used in class at the discretion of the teacher. Violations of the RUP may result in loss of computer privileges or other appropriate responses as guided by a restorative practice approach. Access to the Schechter network is contingent upon students and their parents/guardians reading and signing the RUP.

Students are responsible for the stewardship of their chromebooks, including maintaining the general tidiness and care of the devices. ***Parents/guardians are solely responsible for covering the cost to replace or repair any student chromebooks, chargers, and protective cases that have been lost or damaged beyond repair as deemed by the Director of Technology.***

While using technology at Schechter, students are expected to uphold Schechter's Core

Values by meeting the following expectations:

Respect – I will remember that we are all created *B'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God, and I will speak/write kindly and respectfully of others. I will be a role model when interacting online. I will not post anything online that I would not want friends, parents or teachers to see. I will respect others and think first before any online interactions.

Integrity- I will not plagiarize other's words or intellectual property. I will not access or alter another person's files. I will properly cite my sources when using others' ideas, words, pictures, music, video, etc. I will truthfully represent my identity in any online interactions. These interactions can include forums where intellectual debate often occurs. I will make sure to keep these debates respectful. I will follow my teacher's instructions carefully when it comes to using AI and other powerful new technology in the classroom, and only use these tools with permission.

Responsibility – I will use responsible language. I will not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. I will not navigate to websites that I know contain objectionable or inappropriate content. In addition, I realize that school-owned technology is for the use of all students and faculty. Therefore, I will handle these items with care. Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to charge my device each night and anytime during the day when I'm instructed to do so by my teachers. If I do not charge my device at night, I will not be guaranteed a spare chromebook to use.

Culture of learning - The use of computers in the classroom and access to the Schechter network are privileges maintained by appropriate use, all so students can learn. I will not abuse this privilege for my own personal amusement or entertainment at the risk of disrupting the classroom setting.

Tech-Related Restorative Practices:

Chromebooks/iPads - Each situation will be handled individually depending on the severity of the abuse. Violations may result in loss of computer privileges or any other appropriate actions. Schechter's commitment to fostering a good sense of Digital Citizenship encourages students to learn and grow from their mistakes in a safe, supervised environment.

Cell phones - During the school day, students are not allowed to use cell phones, which will be kept in a secure location during the school day (except when the phones are part of an approved health plan). Violations of this policy will be addressed in a manner based on our restorative practices principles.

Use of technology outside of school - Inappropriate use of the Internet and electronic devices outside of school can greatly affect a student's relationship with peers while at school. The inappropriate use of electronic media includes, but is not limited to:

- hurting or teasing

- public humiliation
- making real or false accusations,
- posting of pictures or video on social media without the permission of all the people depicted
- harassing phone calls or postings

These behaviors will not be tolerated, and consequences of these actions will be implemented at school when the school and learning environment has been impacted by these actions.

GUEST POLICY

As a general rule, students are not allowed to bring guests to school. If a friend or relative is a potential student and wants to visit our school, arrangements should be made through the admissions office. Please contact our Admissions Coordinator, Karen Shakun, at kshakun@ssds-hartford.org.

ACADEMICS

REPORT CARDS AND GRADING SCALE

At Schechter, teachers evaluate students' work in a variety of ways. In grades K-8, the report cards are skill- and mastery-based: each student is assessed by what extent he/she has mastered the specific skill. From EC2-5th grade, letter or number grades are not used on report cards, while in 6th-8th grades, teachers do assign letter or number grades to students' work.

Middle School grading scale

97-100 = A+ 93-96 = A 90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+ 83-86 = B 80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+ 75-76 = C

Below 75 = Incomplete, leading to a plan for how the student can learn and demonstrate an acceptable level of mastery

SUPPORT SERVICES

Guided by our mission and our commitment to individualized learning, Schechter seeks to provide an outstanding education to all of our students. Most students will thrive within the framework of our regular classroom program. However, some students benefit from additional tutoring, either for extra support or extra challenges.

At Schechter, we have a team of specialists who work together to support students. The team is led by Sarah Montag, our Director of Teaching and Learning. The Director of Teaching and Learning works with the Learning Support Specialist, School Counselor, School Nurse, and teaching teams to review the needs of individual students, develop plans to support each student, and implement the plan. Throughout the process, parents

are brought into the discussions to provide feedback, share their ideas, and be a part of the support team. This team works with all students in the school.

The team may recommend involving West Hartford Public Schools to conduct academic testing to help identify the specific needs of each student. With the parents on board, the Learning Support Specialist will work with the teaching team to collect data and submit that to West Hartford Public Schools to begin the testing process. If a parent has any concerns about their child's learning, they should reach out to the Director of Teaching and Learning, who will bring all appropriate members into the discussion to work on a plan of support and next steps. In rare circumstances, the school may conclude that for Schechter to properly accommodate a student's needs, additional, trained 1-on-1 support is required; parents are responsible for the costs of these additional personnel.

At any time during the school year parents, teachers, or students with questions or concerns about a student's progress can speak to the classroom teacher and reach out directly to the Director of Teaching and Learning for students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, or to the EC Coordinator for students in the Early Childhood program, for support. If necessary, Schechter personnel will assist parents in requesting evaluations and related support services from the public school system.

Most services are delivered during regular school hours and coordinated with classroom schedules and activities. As needed, support personnel collaborate with teachers to modify materials and classroom programming to meet the needs of individual students. In some cases, support service personnel provide direct services to individuals or small groups in the classroom, in a resource room, or in the office of the specialist.

Steps to Refer a Student to Academic Lab Support

1. Parent discusses concerns with the student's teacher.
2. Parent/teacher discuss concerns at a team meeting with the Learning Specialist and potentially Director of Teaching and Learning
3. If need is indicated, Learning Specialist asks parent(s) permission to evaluate student using the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement (a comprehensive collection of tests measuring level of achievement in reading, mathematics, written language, and knowledge), the Test of Written Language (a norm-referenced, comprehensive diagnostic test of written expression), or another reliable assessment as appropriate.
4. After testing, the Learning Specialist meets with parents and teachers to discuss results.
5. If a student is in need of support, a plan will be created for classroom teachers, and the amount of time spent in the Academic Lab will be established.
6. Periodic and ongoing reevaluation will be planned to assess the need for intervention.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a vital and impactful part of the Schechter curriculum. Parents will be asked to sign a Universal Field Trip Permission Form via DocuSign to the School Office

granting permission for their children to participate in all field trips during the year. Parents will be notified in writing before each trip as to the time and place. All trips are chaperoned by Schechter staff and, sometimes, by parent volunteers. Field trip planning will be based on local Covid infection rates and consultation with our medical team, the Connecticut Department of Health, and other relevant public health authorities.

Students are expected to act in accordance with our Core Values while on trips.

JEWISH LIFE

KIPPOT

- Male-identifying students wear *kippot* at all times, including at school-related activities outside the building, except for recess, PE, and team sports. Female-identifying and non-binary students are encouraged to wear *kippot*. Clips or bobby pins may be used to secure *kippot* during activities. There is to be no sharing of *kippot* or other headwear.

TALLITOT

- All students are encouraged to wear a *tallit* during Tefillot (prayer services) after they make their own *tallit* in Nevatim (5th-6th grades).

TEFILLIN

- For educational purposes, all students are expected to practice wearing *tefillin* during Tefillot (prayer services) for the first three months of 7th grade.
- In addition, male-identifying students are expected to wear *tefillin* during Tefillot (prayer services) starting 1 month before becoming Bar Mitzvah. Female-identifying and non-binary students are encouraged to wear *tefillin* starting one month before becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- If you have questions or concerns regarding these practices and your child (including concerns about religious compatibility), or for more information about *tallit* and *tefillin*, please contact Rabbi Steve Chatinover (schatinover@ssds-hartford.org).

***KASHRUT* (Jewish Dietary Laws)**

Schechter is committed to building a community in which Jewish values are lived, and in which everyone can feel comfortable. By setting a communal standard of *kashrut*, we hope to maintain an environment that creates a shared sense of obligation and community.

Food served by the school

- Schechter's kitchen is kosher, under the supervision of Rabbi Berger. For questions about the *kashrut* of the kitchen, please contact Rabbi Berger. **Please see the Appendix on p. 21 for a list of accepted *hekhsherim*.**

- All food served by the school, or at school functions, events or programs, must come from a kosher-certified bakery or caterer, or from previously unopened, kosher-certified packages. **Products that are prepared in private homes and kitchens may not be served.**
- Events, meetings, and activities that take place outside of the building should not be held in non-kosher establishments.
- All food that is served during class must be provided by an approved kosher caterer or be served from previously unopened certified kosher products. **Products that are prepared in private homes and kitchens may not be served in class.**

Food brought for personal consumption

- All packaged foods brought by students to school must be dairy or *pareve* (i.e. neither dairy nor meat; please note that in Jewish law, fish is not considered meat).

Events Not Sponsored by Schechter (e.g. birthday parties)

Schechter students come from a wide range of Jewish backgrounds, affiliations, and religious practice—and we are proud of our diversity! We are able to come together as a community because we share core values and a desire to create common ground.

Schechter families, regardless of personal practices, are asked to remember the following expectations when planning parties:

1. Keep *kashrut* in mind. The best way of doing this is to serve only food that is supervised kosher (such as pizza from the Crown Market, and/or a cake from the Crown or Big Y). This is the most inclusive and respectful option.
Our community is blessed to have several credible kosher supervision agencies. Items endorsed by the Hartford Kashrut Commission (HKC) or Orthodox Kashrut of Connecticut (KCT) will be acceptable to almost all SSDS families and students.
2. If you plan an all-dairy or *pareve* (non-meat, non-dairy) menu, such as plain cheese pizza, from a non-kosher establishment, we are grateful to you for trying to align with our values, but some Schechter families will not be comfortable with this option, and some children may be excluded. Please aim to be maximally inclusive.

SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

Schechter observes Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

Schechter programs and activities held on Fridays (or the afternoon before a holiday) must end at least 30 minutes before Shabbat or the holiday begins. Programs and activities held Saturday night (or the evening following a holiday) may begin no earlier than 30 minutes after Shabbat or the holiday has ended. Setup for these events cannot begin until Shabbat has ended.

Birthday Parties

Please keep our core values of *Mitzvot* (Jewish Practice) and *Kehillah* (Community) in mind when planning birthday parties.

- 1) **Birthday parties should not be held on Shabbat or Festivals.** In addition, all food served at parties or other events should be kosher (refer to our *kashrut* expectations, above, for more details). Members of our school community should never be put in a position of having to choose between the observance of Shabbat or *kashrut* and attendance at a social function.
- 2) We work hard with our students to teach them the value of inclusion, of not judging others and of learning from everyone. **When planning parties—for birthdays, bar/bat mitzvahs, or other special occasions—don't leave anyone out!** Plan on inviting the entire class. If for some reason you are only inviting 2-3 children, send invitations in the mail.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Services and Celebrations

When planning your child's *simchah*, please plan to invite all the students in your child's grade. You may, of course, invite students from other grades, but if you reach the point of inviting more than half of any given grade, you should invite that entire grade.

Appendix: List of Acceptable *hekhsherim* (kosher symbols)

This is the primary list of kosher symbols acceptable at Schechter, and includes the symbols you are most likely to encounter in local stores. We also refer to sources like the Chicago Rabbinical Council list for additional acceptable (but less common) symbols. Please come to Rabbi Berger with any questions you may have about these or other symbols.



Kof-K Kosher Supervision



Chicago Rabbinical Council (cRc)



The Organized Kashrus Laboratories (O/K)



The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations (OU)



Hartford Kashrut Commission



Blue Ribbon Kosher (Minnesota)



The Diamond K



The Kashruth Council of Canada



Kosher Supervision of America



Scroll K / Vaad Hakashrus of Denver



Star-K (Baltimore)



Star-D (Baltimore)



United Mehadrin Kosher (dairy/pareve/produce)



Vaad Harabonim of Massachusetts



Council of Orthodox Rabbis of Greater Detroit



THE HEART "K" (Los Angeles)



Kosher Check (Vancouver)



Kehillah Kosher (Los Angeles)

Appendix: Hebrew Glossary

Holidays

Shabbat—The seventh day of the week, marking the time God rested after creating the world

Yom Tov (often pronounced Yontif)—A collective term for the holiest holidays of the Jewish calendar: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Shavuot, and the first and last days of Sukkot and Pesach. These days are observed similarly to Shabbat

Hol Hamo'ed—The intermediate days of Sukkot and Pesach, full of holiday spirit, but without most of the restrictions of *Yom Tov*.

Rosh Hashanah—The Jewish new year, which occurs in September/October

Yom Kippur—"The Day of Atonement," the 10th day of the Jewish year, and the culmination of a ten-day period of self-examination, reconciliation, and personal change

Sukkot—Seven-day fall holiday, beginning five days after Yom Kippur, which commemorates the Israelites' time in the desert and the end of the harvest season. We eat in a temporary hut called a *sukkah*.

Shemini Atzeret—Penultimate day of the fall holidays; the day after Sukkot.

Simhat Torah—Final day of the fall holidays, on which we finish and then re-start the annual cycle of Torah readings

Hanukkah—Winter holiday commemorating the Maccabees' victory over the Seleucid Empire in ~165 BCE, and the rabbinic legend of a flask of oil that burned for eight days

Tu Bishvat—Late winter holiday marking the new year for trees

Purim—Early spring holiday commemorating the story told in *Megillat Esther* (the scroll of Esther) of the salvation of Persian Jewry ~2,500 years ago

Pesach—Eight-day spring holiday commemorating the Exodus from Egypt; primarily observed through a ritual meal called the Seder, and through avoiding consumption of bread or *hametz*

Sefirat Ha'Omer—the counting of the Omer, the seven-week period between Pesach and Shavuot. Due to tragic events which occurred many centuries ago, it has become a custom not to schedule joyous events or concerts during a portion of these seven weeks.

Lag Ba'Omer (the 33rd day of the Omer)—a minor, happy holiday, often spent outside.

Yom Hashoah—Holocaust Memorial Day

Yom Hazikaron—Israel's Memorial Day

Yom Ha'atzma'ut—Israel's Independence Day

Shavuot—Two-day spring holiday commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai

Prayers and Synagogue practice

Aron Hakodesh—the cabinet that contains the Torah

Bimah—The pulpit or stage on which services are lead and sermons delivered.

Aliyah—Being called up to the Torah; one “goes up” (*oleh*) for this honor. Also refers to the short portion of Torah read for the person called up.

Shaliah Tzibbur—The person who leads the congregation in prayer. The terms “cantor” or “*hazzan*” are also used.

Berakhah—Blessing recited to praise God, thank God, or ask for God’s help. Begins with “*Barukh atah, Adonai, Eloheinu, melekh ha’olam.*” Plural = *Berakhot*.

Parashah (often pronounced “*parshah*”)—The weekly *Torah* reading. In some synagogues the entire *parashah* is read, while in others, only ⅓ of it is read as part of a triennial cycle.

Siddur—Prayer book. Plural = *siddurim*. There are many different *siddurim* which have been edited by different schools, movements and synagogues.

Tallit—A prayer wrap; some are shawl-sized, while others cover much of the body. A *tallit* (prayer wrap) allows one to fulfill the Torah’s instruction to have *tzitzit* (special fringes) on four-cornered garment; the *tzitzit* remind us of the *mitzvot*.

Tefillin—Black leather boxes worn on the head and arm which contain four special passages from the Torah. *Tefillin* are worn every day except for *Shabbat* and Holidays. They highlight our special relationship to God, and our desire to bring that relationship to life through thought and action.

Meals and Kashrut

Kiddush—Literally, “sanctification” – usually referring to the blessing over wine at a *Shabbat* or holiday meal. A special cup (*kiddush cup*) is often used.

Netilat Yada’im—Washing the hands, with a *berakhah*, prior to eating a meal in which bread is served.

Hamotzi—The *berakhah* recited before eating bread. One performs the ritual of *netilat yada’im* prior to eating the bread.

Birkat HaMazon—Blessing after meals. Some call this birkat for short.

Fleishik—Yiddish for foods that contain meat, or are cooked with meat.

Milkhik—Yiddish for foods that contain dairy ingredients, or are cooked with them.

Pareve—Food that is neither milk nor meat, such as eggs, fruits and vegetables.

Hekhsher—A seal of rabbinic supervision, attesting to the fact that a particular food product meets the standards of *Kashrut* for that rabbi and his or her organization.

Kashrut—The system of Jewish dietary laws which permits certain meat and animal products and prohibits others, prohibits mixing of milk and meat foods and utensils, and regulates which packaged foods are permissible.

Greetings

Mazal tov—Congratulations!

Kol hakavod—Way to go, great job! (lit. “You deserve all of the honor!”)

Shabbat shalom—[May you have a] peaceful Shabbat!

Shanah tovah—[May you have a] good new year!

Hag sameah—[May you have a] joyous holiday!

Shavua tov—[May you have a] good week!

Boker tov—Good morning

Lehitra’ot—Goodbye (lit. “may we see each other again)

Barukh Dayan Ha’emet—said upon hearing of someone’s death (lit. “Blessed be the Judge of Truth”)

Shalom—hello, goodbye, peace

Miscellaneous

Mitzvah—An element of Jewish practice, understood as an instruction or commandment, rooted in the *Torah* and interpreted by the rabbis. Mitzvot can connect us to God and to each other, and help us become good, caring, responsible human beings.

Ruah—Spirit, in the sense of spirited praying, singing or cheering

Tanakh—Hebrew term for the Bible, and an acronym for its three sections: *Torah* (Five Books of Moses), *Nevi’im* (Prophets), *Ketuvim* (Writings).

Torah—Can refer to the first five books of the *Tanakh*, also called “The Five Books of Moses” or *Humash* (meaning five). “Torah” also has a more expansive meaning of “Jewish sacred texts,” including Talmud, *Midrash*, works of *halakhah* and more.

Tzedakah—Charity, but with the implication of economic justice