Temple Beth-El
Ithaca New York est 1924

Rabbi Felix Aber Religious School Financial Aid Policy

Approved by the '24-'25 Religious School Board on September 12, 2024

At Temple Beth-El, we are committed to ensuring that every child in our community has access to a quality Jewish education. We believe that finances should never be a barrier to participation in our religious school, and we are dedicated to supporting our families in a manner that upholds the dignity, privacy, and trust of all involved. Our approach to financial aid is rooted in the Jewish values of tzedakah (righteous giving) and kavod (respect), reflecting our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive community.

Temple Beth-El is committed to meeting the demonstrated financial needs of all families who seek assistance for their child's religious education. We recognize the sensitivity of financial matters and, therefore, do not require families to disclose financial documents such as tax returns or other sensitive personal information as part of the financial aid application process. Instead, we trust that the information provided by families in their requests will be sufficient for us to make informed decisions. Our aim is to make the financial aid process as accessible and respectful as possible, maintaining the highest standards of confidentiality and care.

Procedure

Requests and Initial Review

All financial aid requests should be directed to the Director of Education and Engagement. Families are encouraged to provide as much information as they are comfortable sharing to help us understand their situation and needs. The Director will review the request and arrange to have a private conversation with the family to gather additional information or clarify details.

The privacy of our families is of utmost importance. All information shared in the financial aid process will be treated with complete confidentiality. No details will be shared outside of the immediate financial aid review process unless absolutely necessary, and even then, only in an anonymized form.

Determination

The Director of Education and Engagement will make the initial determination regarding the financial aid to be awarded, ensuring that the demonstrated need is met in full. In cases that are particularly complex, or if the Director needs to recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest, the Director will involve the congregational rabbi in the decision-making process.

If further review is needed, the case may be presented to the school board for consideration. All identifying information will be removed, and families will have the opportunity to review any

information that will be shared to ensure that it is completely anonymous. The school board will serve as a committee to provide guidance and final approval where necessary.

Communication
Families will be promptly informed of the financial aid decision and any relevant details. Along with the decision, families will receive a clear and compassionate explanation of the aid granted, including any considerations or factors that were taken into account. Our goal is to ensure that families feel respected and fully informed throughout the process.

We understand that financial situations can change, or additional questions may arise. Families are encouraged to maintain an open dialogue with the Director of Education and Engagement if they need further assistance or have any concerns about the decision. Additionally, the Director will follow up with families throughout the year to ensure that the financial aid provided is meeting their needs and to offer any additional support or resources that may be helpful.

By following these procedures, Temple Beth-El reaffirms its commitment to providing a welcoming and supportive environment where every child can thrive in their Jewish education.