



aleph bet

CHILDREN'S CENTER

School Handbook
2017/2018
5777/5778

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A program of the



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A Tennessee Department of Health Gold Sneaker Facility

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GENERAL STATEMENT

This manual summarizes the general policies and procedures of Aleph Bet Children's Center at the Jewish Cultural Center of Chattanooga. Aleph Bet Children's Center serves children from ages two through pre-K.

We embrace a broad, interdisciplinary curriculum that is socially relevant, intellectually engaging, and personally meaningful to children. Through active, hands-on learning experiences, such as art, music, movement, math, science, literature, celebrations and more, children have fun while exploring and making sense of the world and people around them. The children also explore Judaism through singing, dancing, painting, cooking, storytelling, and imaginative play.

Our early childhood staff has created a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment in which children can feel safe to develop their own abilities. We encourage *independence* and allow children to make choices while fostering self-esteem by allowing children to learn and succeed at their own pace. We also facilitate cooperative learning whereby children work together with friends to reach their goals.

Our developmental philosophy emphasizes problem solving and conflict resolution, so that children are prepared for their future in school and in life. The program is centered on the philosophy that a young child develops best when parent, child and teacher work together as a team.

We believe that parents play an integral part in our early childhood program, and your involvement is always encouraged whenever possible. Throughout the year, parents are invited to a variety of special events, celebrations, holidays, and Shabbat (Sabbath) observance. Parent participation in the educational process is an important ingredient in your child's growth and development.

MISSION AND GOALS

Aleph Bet Children's Center aims to provide an educational, interactive and developmentally appropriate preschool program that is enriched by Jewish traditions and values and implemented by a trained, dedicated, and nurturing staff. To this end, the following goals have been set forth:

- To support the child's social and cultural identity through an experiential approach to Judaism, and to promote respect for cultural diversity within and outside Judaism
- To foster the child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development by organizing the child's learning experiences
- To nurture the child as an active learner
- To provide opportunities for language and literacy in both English and Hebrew
- To encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts
- To create an environment where the child feels safe and valued and where his/her physical needs are met.

ABSENCES

Aleph Bet provides a wonderful opportunity for children to build their skills and establish new relationships with other children and adults. These relationships thrive when children are consistently in school. In the event that your child will miss a day or more of school, please contact us at alephbet@jewishchattanooga.com or 893-5486 by 8:30 a.m., so that we can notify the teachers. Aleph Bet does not offer refunds for days a child is absent.

ALLERGIES

It is the highest priority that Aleph Bet keeps all of the children safe. Aleph Bet works hard to ensure that we can accommodate allergies or dietary requests and requires paperwork in order to do so including a permission to administer medication letter (if needed) and medical form which is included in the yearly enrollment application. If your child requires an EpiPen® on site, Aleph Bet needs a letter and action plan from your child's physician. Due to the increasing number of preschool children with severe, possibly anaphylactic allergies to peanut/tree nut and peanut/tree nut products, Aleph Bet Children's Center is a nut-sensitive zone (See Food Policy for detailed information). A picture of children with allergies or special dietary needs will be posted in the classroom. **Families must notify Aleph Bet in writing of all medical and food allergies.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The hours of operation for each day are fixed and determined by the classroom clock. No child will be accepted earlier than 7:30 a.m. and all children must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.

After closing time, a late pick-up fee of \$2.00 per minute/per child will be charged. Parents will be billed for late fees. Frequent tardiness will be addressed by the Director. **As a courtesy, please call Aleph Bet at 893-5486 if you expect to arrive after closing time.**

In order to give your child the best chance to fulfill his/her potential, we recommend the following transition times:

DROP-OFF

Children may be dropped off starting at 7:30 a.m. Snack time will begin at 8:45 a.m. All structured learning time begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. As not to disrupt classroom dynamics, we ask that you please try to be on time every day. We understand that tardiness will occur on occasion; we hope you will make every effort to keep lateness to a minimum. *Special exceptions should be arranged through the Director or your child's teacher (e.g. medical appointment).*

Some children and parents have difficulty separating at drop off. It is important to have a positive attitude about the school so that your child will too. It is helpful to direct your child to an activity in the room or to a teacher. When it is time to leave, give your child a hug and quick goodbye. The teachers are trained to engage your child and start developing a relationship of trust and security.

PICK-UP

In order not to interrupt sleeping children, we ask that children are picked up before or after rest time unless there is a special appointment (e.g. doctor). Red Room and Yellow Room rest times are approximately from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. daily. The Blue Room begins the school year following the same schedule, but may adjust according to needs of the children. **For the safety of each child, photo identification will be required of all persons listed on the student release form other than parents.**

SIGN IN/OUT

To ensure safety, all children must be walked to their classrooms and signed in with their teacher or the staff member in charge of Aleph Bet at that particular time. Aleph Bet does not accept legal responsibility for any child who is not signed in and personally placed in a staff member's care.

- **Sign in/out must include: child's name, signature of guardian/parent (not "mom" or "dad") and time of drop off and pickup.**
- Please write *and* communicate with your child's teacher any special information and/or pickup arrangements.

- Only those adults authorized by the parent/guardian in writing will be permitted to take the child from school. An adult is defined as any person 18 years of age or older. If the parent forgot to enclose such a written permission form for someone that is not on the Student's Authorization Pick up Form, the parent should email the Director to give written permission.
- Parents are asked to return to the classroom or designated location to pick up their children and sign out with a teacher or assigned staff member.
- Before your child is signed in and once your child is signed out, you are responsible for supervising your child **while on Aleph Bet property. For your child's safety, children are not allowed to wander unattended in the classrooms, hallways, or parking lot.**

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Aleph Bet offers birthday party options to celebrate your child's milestone. Leave the refreshments to us and take some of the stress out of planning for your child's special day. We will provide your choice of special treat, along with fruit and partyware. Please return the completed form to Meghan or place it in the gray drop box. Requests should be made at least a week in advance. This service is free of additional charge, but we do invite families to make a supply or monetary donation in honor of their child's birthday.

In order to include all of the children, Aleph Bet will not serve any outside food to the class/school. **According to state health laws, no food served to students or placed in mailboxes may be prepared at home.**

When planning a birthday party outside of school, we encourage you to schedule the party on a day other than Shabbat (Saturday), or a Jewish holiday. If a birthday is also to be celebrated away from school and the entire class is invited, families may place invitation in children's mailboxes. If the entire class is not invited, the invitations must be mailed. Addresses may be found in the school directory.

BITING

Biting is part of a natural development stage that some children go through. When a child hurts another child, we will first attend to the child who has been injured. We will then speak to the other child. In the case of a bite that breaks the skin, we will contact parents of both children. A written incident report will also be sent home. **Should there be a consistent pattern of biting, parent/guardian must meet with teacher and director to discuss the best way to help the child break the habit.**

CALENDAR

Aleph Bet Children's Center and the school offices are closed on the following days:

- Professional Development
- Conferences
- Labor Day
- Rosh Hashanah (up to two days)
- Yom Kippur (up to one day)
- Sukkot (up to two days)
- Shmini Atzeret (up to one day)
- Simchat Torah (up to one day)
- Winter Break (including Christmas Eve, Christmas, the day after Christmas, and New Year's Day)
- Thanksgiving (three days)
- Passover (first two and last two days)
- Memorial Day
- Shavuot (up to two days)
- Independence Day

If a National holiday falls on a Saturday then Aleph Bet will be closed the previous Friday. If a National holiday falls on a Sunday then Aleph Bet will be closed the following Monday.

CLASSROOM HELPERS

Classroom helpers are used in preschool programs to strengthen the relationship between home and school. Families have an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of their children's school experience and simultaneously assist the teachers. Families who are interested may sign up to assist in their child's classroom or with the Director.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

The staff uses positive guidance techniques, including logical or natural consequences applied in problem solving situations, redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement of appropriate behavior rather than competition, comparison, or criticism. In the event of excessive aggressive behavior that threatens the safety and security of our children and/or staff, other measures may be taken.

Prevention & Positive Reinforcement: Providing a daily routine, a sense of security and constantly praising and reinforcing appropriate and positive behaviors.

Setting Limits: Simple age-appropriate rules are established and consistently followed.

Problem Solving: We encourage the child and help them verbalize and use logical reasoning and consequences as the means of solving conflicts.

Remove Child from Situation: After all behavior management techniques have been utilized, the last alternative is to remove the child from the situation.

Aleph Bet strictly prohibits the following methods of discipline from staff and parents on the premise:

- Corporal punishment of any kind.
- Shaming, threatening, or verbal abuse.
- Withholding food or rest.
- Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the potty.
- Punitive isolation.

CUBBIES

Each child has a special place for his/her belongings. This cubby will hold a jacket, **small** naptime blanket and crib sheet and change of clothes. All bedding should fit in your child's naptime box. **Kindly limit the items in the cubby to true necessities.** Since most children share a cubby, **please do not leave backpacks at school.** Cubbies should be checked periodically to make certain that an appropriate change of clothes is available. Napping supplies should be taken home and washed weekly, and returned to school the following week.

CURRICULUM

Aleph Bet's curriculum is play-based. Each teacher tailors the class schedule and lesson plans according to the age group, interests, and goals of the class. Our curriculum is guided by the TN-ELDS (Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards) and thoughtfully planned by your child's teacher. Aleph Bet enrichment includes Hebrew language and Dance and Creative Movement for all children. The Blue Room children also participate in an Intergenerational Lunch several times throughout the year and are taught Karate and Self-Discipline approximately nine times a year.

DATA PRIVACY

All records concerning your child (enrollment forms, immunizations, observations, written reports, etc.) are confidential. Any and all information in the records will be accessible to you, Aleph Bet or Jewish Federation staff as needed, agencies related to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and person (s) or agencies designated by the state licensing boards to review our records for licensing purposes. The Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network may be called to assist with certain situations and will access records on a case-by-case basis. Relevant information may be shared with a collection agency, as per situations outlined in the Tuition section.

DIRECTORY

We hope that you will connect with other families during the year. All information listed in the Aleph Bet directory is for personal preschool use only. Please do not use this information to solicit business or share with outside sources.

DISMISSAL POLICY

A child may be dismissed from Aleph Bet Children's Center for the following:

- Non-payment of tuition after 45 days.
- Behavior-If after a reasonable amount of time, a child continues to have difficulty following the classroom rules, the classroom schedule, or is unable to adjust to the demands of the group, parents may choose or be asked to withdraw their child.
- Failure to provide or renew your child's immunization record can be cause for dismissal. A detailed letter is required for families who do not choose to immunize their child. This information is required for State licensing.
- Lack of cooperation with Aleph Bet's efforts to resolve differences or to address behavioral issues disruptive to normal class functioning.
- Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats toward children, staff, or other parents. All reasons for dismissal are at the discretion of the director.

DONATIONS

As a non-profit organization, Aleph Bet always appreciates donations, which are tax deductible. As your child develops physically and mentally, please consider whether outgrown books or toys that are in great condition may be appropriate for use at Aleph Bet. Monetary donations may also be made to Aleph Bet as a tribute, in honor of a person or occasion, or as a gift to purchase classroom equipment and supplies.

DRESS CODE

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and appropriate shoes (**no open-toed shoes**). Daily activities include active and messy play, and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Although we use washable paint, please do not send your child in clothing that would disappoint you if it gets dirty or stained. Hard-to-close snaps, belts and overalls that have buckles should be avoided especially during potty training. Shoes with built-in skates or spins are prohibited. Fashion boots, sandals, and crocs are strongly discouraged as they pose a safety hazard in the classroom and on the playground.

Children's names should be placed on all clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all possessions and clothes. Please dress your child for the weather. At least one set of extra clothing should be kept in each child's cubby or classroom. Update this extra set according to the season and your child's growth. Children in the process of potty learning should keep *at least* two sets of extra clothing (especially pants, underwear, and socks). An extra pair of shoes is also recommended during potty training stages.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

Families are required to sign an authorization on the emergency information form in the yearly enrollment application giving the Director and/or staff permission to act in a child's best interest for emergency medical treatment. It is Aleph Bet Children's Center policy to contact the parents/guardian first. If the parents/guardian cannot be reached, the school will attempt to reach the emergency contact persons listed on the emergency-medical authorization before staff assumes responsibility for medical care, other than administering first aid. In the event of an emergency, 911 services will be used. Children may be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency medical care (Park Ridge East). Parent/Guardian will assume financial responsibility for the emergency vehicle, doctor, and hospital fees.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, Aleph Bet and Jewish Federation staff will adhere to the multi-hazard emergency plan. It is the policy of the Jewish Cultural Center (Federation and Aleph Bet) that if there should be an emergency or disaster situation, all staff, visitors, and children will evacuate the building immediately and will report to B'nai Zion Congregation

(114 McBrien Road). A roll call of staff and children will take place to ensure everyone has safely left the building and reconvened at B'nai Zion. Aleph Bet families will be contacted once everyone is safe. Aleph Bet parents (authorized adult) may pick their children up at B'nai Zion. The First Church of the Nazarene (5455 North Terrace Road) will serve as a backup evacuation location should B'nai Zion not be an option.

In the event of fire or any other dangers, the children will be evacuated immediately to a safe distance away from the building. Fire evacuation routes are posted in the main school entrance as well as in each classroom.

As required by Tennessee Code relative to child care agencies (Title 71-Chapter 3-Part 5), Aleph Bet will conduct at least one (1) fire drill month and at least one (1) drill other than fire every six months and will maintain documentation for a minimum of one (1) year.

ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Consideration is given to applicants in the following order: current children in school-year program, siblings of current children in school-year program, children who are eligible for the Jewish Early Childhood Initiative, siblings or children of alumni of school-year program, children whose families are registered donors of the Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga (JFGC) for the past two out of five years, children of Aleph Bet teachers and Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga staff, and children in the community at large. Aleph Bet Children's Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or national origin. Children between the ages of two to pre-K, may be enrolled in the Aleph Bet Children's Center. A child must be the appropriate age by August 15 of the current school year to qualify for the new-school program. All children must be at least two years of age before starting at Aleph Bet. Children remain with the same classroom throughout the school-year.

A non-refundable registration fee (per family) of \$100 must accompany all applications before they can be processed. A yearly registration fee per family is due with preregistration forms. A \$75 holding fee will be charged for children who do not attend during the summer, but wish to return in the fall if space is available. **As of July 1, 2013, all child care agencies are required to put a child at the top of the agency's waiting list if the child has at least one (1) parent or legal guardian that serves on active duty in the armed forces of the United States.**

Paperwork to be completed prior to start date:

1. Online pre-registration form
2. Aleph Bet Children's Center Full Registration Packet
3. Sun Safe Form
4. Health History Checklist
5. New student enrollment form
6. Personal Safety Curriculum Notification Form
7. Preschool Tennessee Day Care Immunization Certificate (from your child's physician) or approved letter detailing why your child is not immunized.
8. **For children under 30 months of age, the guardian shall provide proof of a physical examination within three (3) months prior to admission, signed or stamped by a physician or health care provider.**
9. Additional paperwork may be required for children born outside of the U.S., Canada, and Japan.
10. (If applicable) Court documentation of divorce decree that outlines custody and visitation.
11. (If applicable) Forms relating to payment plans/schedules for families receiving outside assistance (scholarship, certificate, etc)

FUNDRAISING

To avoid charging higher tuition or additional fees, Aleph Bet relies on community fundraisers to help finance our operating budget. We encourage all families to participate in our fundraising efforts and ask family/friends to support our program.

THE GOLD SNEAKER PROGRAM

The Gold Sneaker Initiative was developed to enhance policy related to physical activity and nutrition within licensed child care facilities across Tennessee.

Physical Activity Policy

- **Policy 1.1:** Children ages 12 months or older attending a full day program shall be offered at least 60 minutes of **physical activity** per day, either indoors or outdoors. Children attending less than a full day program shall be offered a proportional amount of such activities. For children ages three and older, this physical activity must be a balance of free play, teacher-directed activities, and music and movement. This must be documented in the daily schedule and on lesson plan forms.
- **Policy 1.2:** Viewing of television, videos and other visual recordings shall be limited to no more than 60 minutes per day of educational programs or programs that actively engage child movement. Children attending less than a full day program shall be limited to a proportionate amount of such viewing. This shall be stated in the individual child care facility's policies.
- **Policy 1.3:** Children shall not be allowed to **remain sedentary or to sit passively** for more than 60 minutes continuously, except for scheduled rest or naptime. This shall be stated in the individual child care facility's policies.
- **Policy 1.4:** Child care facilities must ensure physical activity is a positive experience for children and is never used negatively or to control behavior. This shall be stated in the individual child care facility's policies.

Nutrition Policy

Nutrition standards will be enhanced by including additional nutrition policies that must be addressed in order to earn Gold Sneaker recognition:

- **Policy 1.5:** Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **breastfeeding**. Staff will be sensitive to breastfeeding mothers and infants, and their eating patterns. Each infant will have a feeding plan on file, which is completed by the parent/parents and facility as a team to address their unique feeding patterns.
- **Policy 1.6:** Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **adequate time for meal consumption**. Adequate time for meals and snacks will be allowed for all children, and will be included in classroom schedules.
- **Policy 1.7:** Ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including appropriate **portion sizes**. Appropriate portion sizes will be assured through staff training and adherence to portion sizes as found in child care licensing regulations.
- **Policy 1.8:** All eating opportunities should consist of a respect for the child and promoting a **positive attitude toward food**. Food shall never be used as rewards for children. This shall be stated in the individual child care facility's policies.

Tobacco Policy

In order to ensure a healthy environment for all children the following tobacco policy must be adopted by the facility to earn Gold Sneaker recognition:

- **Policy 1.9** Child care facility campus shall be tobacco free. This shall be stated in the individual child care facility's policies.

Enactment of Policy

Participation in the Gold Sneaker Initiative is voluntary and is open to any licensed child care facility in Tennessee. All policies shall be stated in the individual child care program's policies and a copy shall be provided to the Department of Health for maintenance of the Gold Sneaker recognition. Child care programs that implement these physical activity, nutrition and tobacco policies and include staff in training will earn a "Gold Sneaker" award which designates them as a "Gold Sneaker" child care program. Such designation can be used for marketing purposes for the child care program, and local organizations will encourage parents to select such programs.

Gold Sneaker Documentation

Programs desiring “Gold Sneaker” designation will provide to the Department of Health the following documentation annually:

- A copy of the program’s policies clearly stating Gold Sneaker policies 1.1-1.9.
- A copy of the daily schedule and a weekly lesson plan form for each classroom of children ages 12 months and older with documentation of 60 minutes per day of physical activity as stated in Gold Sneaker policy 1.1.
- A copy of the feeding plan form in use by the program demonstrating compliance with Gold Sneaker policy 1.5
- A copy of the daily schedule for all classrooms documenting adequate time for meals and snacks as stated in Gold Sneaker policy 1.6.
- Documentation that the director (if center-based program) and teaching staff have completed Gold Sneaker training. If the program is a family or group child care program, the provider must provide documentation of completion of training. Information on training for the Gold Sneaker initiative will be available at <http://health.state.tn.us/goldsneaker.htm>.

HEALTH POLICY

In order for us to admit a child into Aleph Bet Children’s Center each child is required to have a Tennessee Child Health Record and a Tennessee Certificate of Immunization completed by the child’s physician, or approved letter detailing why your child is not immunized, submitted to the school office. Furthermore, a medical emergency form must be in the school’s files before the child can be admitted. Only those children who are physically able to participate in the program without risk to themselves or others will be admitted.

For the protection of all children at Aleph Bet Children’s Center, children should not be sent to school sick. Children should be kept home if they develop any of the signs or symptoms of a contagious disease. This includes the following:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in preschool activities, including lethargy, behavioral changes, or difficulty breathing.
2. Illness that results in a greater need for care than our staff can provide.
3. Respiratory Illnesses & Colds: If mucus is profuse and cannot be controlled by normal wiping, the child will be excluded at Aleph Bet’s discretion. A child will also be excluded if the runny nose is associated with a fever, ear infections, infected throat or persistent cough.
4. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
5. Vomiting
6. **Diarrhea (one loose stool). If a child develops diarrhea at school, the child will be sent home immediately, as diarrhea diseases spread very easily among young children.**
7. Mouth sores not associated with drooling.
8. Rash, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
9. Purulent Conjunctivitis (pink eye) until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
10. Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment
11. Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment.
12. Head Lice until after proof of treatment and all live bugs are removed. Children will continued to be monitored by staff for nits and parents will be notified and children sent home if live bugs re-emerge.
13. Scabies until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
14. Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
15. Pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days of appropriate antibiotics.
16. Hepatitis A virus until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.
17. Meningitis, until doctor has approved child to return to school.
18. Food borne Outbreaks (food poisoning)
19. Haemophilus influenza Type B or H1N1

Children must be kept at home for a minimum of 24 hours (or as recommend by a physician) with the above symptoms/illnesses before returning to school. In the case of a suspected or confirmed contagious disease, rash or continuing symptoms, **a doctor's note may be required before you child is permitted to return to Aleph Bet.**

Additionally, families should consider keeping their children at home, under observation, if they exhibit any of the following unusual behavior:

- Child is crankier or cries more than usual
- Child is less active than usual
- Child feels general discomfort or seems unwell
- Child experiences a significant decrease of appetite

Children may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for a minimum of 24 hours **without the use of medication.**
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all school activities.

The final decision about whether a child must stay home or whether he/she can return to school is made by the Director or staff member in charge.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Holiday celebrations such as Chanukah, Purim, and Passover are held during the school year. *Families are always welcome to attend these celebrations, even if your child does not attend school when a celebration is scheduled.* Aleph Bet Children's Center does not celebrate Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas, or St. Patrick's Day.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Throughout the year, if your child receives any immunizations when he/she goes to the pediatrician for a wellness check-up, **please provide Aleph Bet office with the updated immunization information.** This information can also be faxed to 423.493.9997. **Per state regulations, our records must be maintained and up to date. The health department checks files on an annual basis for compliance.**

CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL OR RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION TO REQUIREMENTS

Medical – Physician (MD, DO) or department Public Health Nurse authorized to indicate specific vaccines medically exempted (because of risk of harm) on the new form. Other vaccines remain required. The medical reason for the exemption does not need to be provided.

Religious – This exemption requires a signed statement by the parent/guardian that vaccination conflicts with their religious tenets or practices. A health examination will still be required, and the exemption must be noted by the healthcare provider on the immunization certificate. In that case, the provider should check the box that the parent has sought a religious exemption to explain why immunization information is absent or incomplete.

JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER CHATTANOOGA

The Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga builds and fosters a strong unified Jewish community and strives to ensure its well-being and continuity locally, in Israel, and throughout the world. Aleph Bet Children's Center is a program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga. The Aleph Bet Children's Center Advisory Committee serves as a liaison between Aleph Bet and the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation. The committee oversees the operating budget, supports the work of the staff, attends Aleph Bet programs, and provides situational guidance as needed. The Jewish Federation Board of Directors reviews and approves the annual operating budget as well as policies that affect the community.

JUDAICS

Aleph Bet Children's Center •423.893.5486 •alephbet@jewishchattanooga.com•www.aleph-bet.com **11** | Page

Jewish learning is an integral part of Aleph Bet Children's Center program. Appropriate blessings are said before meals. Hebrew language is used in the classroom, as well as taught by the *shlichah* (Israeli emissary) weekly during the school-year. Hebrew is introduced through songs, numbers, letters, objects, games, and stories.

Commonly heard Hebrew words at Aleph Bet:

- Aleph Bet: The alphabet in Hebrew is comprised of 22 consonant letters.
- Brachah: Blessing. There are different blessing for food, candles, wine, etc.
- Challah: Braided bread usually eaten on Shabbat
- Havdalah: Literally meaning separation. Havdalah marks the symbolic end of Shabbat and holidays, and ushers in the new week (may be recited through Tuesday).
- Hamotzi: Blessing over bread. Recited before meals.
- Kiddush: Blessing over the wine (grape juice at Aleph Bet)
- Kosher: The Jewish dietary laws.
- Mitzvah: Good deed or commandment
- Shabbat-the Jewish Sabbath
- Tzedekah-charity (literally: Righteousness)

Judaic concepts are introduced through:

- Cooking
- Art
- Dramatic Play
- Stories
- Weekly Shabbat and Havdalah celebrations
- Holiday Games
- Music and singing
- Dance and movement

HaMotzi:

Weekday HaMotzi (recited before lunch)-HaMotzi lechem min ha-aretz. We give thanks to G-d for bread, our voices rise in song together as our joyful prayer is said. Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz. Amen.

Shabbat:

The Jewish Sabbath, or Shabbat, starts at sundown every Friday and lasts until nightfall on Saturday. Although the Jewish Sabbath starts Friday evening, all the children in our program join together on Friday mornings around 9:00 a.m. to celebrate the coming Shabbat. We invite members of the Jewish community to sing Shabbat songs or tell a story during this special time together.

MEDICATION:

Medication will be administered to children only with a signed authorization. Prescription medication for an individual child must be kept in the original container bearing the original pharmacy label, which shows the prescription number, date filled, doctor's name, directions for use, and child's name. Medication will be kept out of the reach of children. Expiration dates of medication must be current. We reserve the right to dispose of expired medications. **A medical action plan from your child's doctor will be required for all children with EpiPens,[®] emergency inhalers, or other emergency medications.** Over the counter (OTC) medications will not be administered with the exception of pain associated with teething, and topical creams/ointments for bug bites, diaper rash, or non-contagious skin conditions. Staff will administer no more than the dosage of medication printed on the label based on child's age/weight. Any noticeable adverse reaction to the medication will be reported to the family. **Do not medicate a child before school to mask a fever or other symptoms.**

NUTRITION POLICY

As a program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga, Aleph Bet adheres to the Jewish dietary laws and serves only vegetarian, pareve (non-dairy) or dairy foods for snacks. No meat (turkey, chicken, beef, pork or even kosher meat) or shellfish is allowed in the children's lunches.

Aleph Bet Children's Center will provide:

- A morning and an afternoon snack.
- Skim milk at lunch and soy milk for children allergic to skim milk.

We ask that children **not bring any food into the classroom except at lunchtime or if a special snack is needed. According to the state health laws, no food that is served to students or placed in mailboxes may be prepared at home.**

Families provide:

- A nut-free, healthy lunch that meets the recommended guidelines and packed in an insulated lunch box or Thermos. Teachers are happy to reheat food in the microwave, if sent in a microwave-safe container (no plastic bags or glass) and doesn't take longer than one minute to prepare. If your child requires different milk than served, it should be sent daily with your child's lunch.

Choosing **one** from each of the following columns will create a lunch that meets approximately 1/3 of the Recommended Daily Allowances for children. Keep in mind that even too much healthy food can encourage over-eating so when packing your child's lunch, think, "Is this how much food *they need*, or how much food *I need*?" It is not generally advisable to serve children "diet foods," such as those pre-packaged foods labeled as low-fat, or with sugar substitutes. We request that you leave sugary snacks, fruit juices and desserts at home. Children lay down for rest immediately following lunch and the extra sugar can make it difficult for their bodies to get the break they need. Please consult your pediatrician or visit www.choosemyplate.gov for additional information about your child's specific needs.

Protein	Grains	Fruits (½ cup)	Vegetables (½ cup)
Cottage cheese (6 oz)	Wheat bread (½ slice)	Apple slices	Frozen vegetables
Soy Butter (3Tbs)	Wheat thins (¼ cup)	Banana	Cucumber slices
Veggie Dog (1 ½ oz)	Goldfish (¼ cup)	Strawberries	Baby carrots
Veggie Nuggets (1 ½ oz)	Triscuits (¼ cup)	Mixed Berries	Sweet Potato
Veggie Burger(1 ½ oz)	Pita chips (¼ cup)	Applesauce	Bell Pepper
Cheese Cubes (1 ½ oz)	Wheat Tortilla (1 small)	Mandarin oranges	Edamame
Yogurt (6 oz)	Wheat Pita (½ loaf)	Cuties (mini oranges)	Beets
Beans (½ cup)	Whole-grain pasta (¼ cup)	Pineapple	Green beans
Eggs (1 egg)	Brown rice (¼ cup)	Grapes	Tomatoes
Fish (1 ½ oz)	Dry cereal (⅓ cup)	Kiwi	Squash
Hummus (3Tbs)		Dried fruit	Pasta sauce
Sun Butter (3Tbs)			Avocado

Aleph Bet may participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federal program that provides Aleph Bet reimbursement snacks served to children. According to the program guidelines, snacks provided by Aleph Bet will include servings from two or the four components: milk, fruits or vegetables, bread or grain product, or meat alternate. Parents/guardians must enroll in the program annually for Aleph Bet to receive credit.

Allergies/Dietary Restrictions:

See page for more information about allergies

ORIENTATION

Every August, Aleph Bet Children's Center offers a Family Welcome Night, an orientation/open house, for new and returning families to meet their friends' families and teachers. All families are encouraged to attend.

PACIFIERS

If your child requires a pacifier to nap please notify the teacher and place the pacifier in a labeled baggie each day (Red Room only). In order to prevent the transmission of germs and to promote language development and proper dental health, a child will not be allowed to use a pacifier during the learning portion of the day.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION

Open communication between the parent and teacher is essential. We rely on and provide a few different avenues of communication including email, direct mail, newsletters and memos. Parents/Guardians may contact Aleph Bet Children's Center at 893-5486 or 493-0270 ext 18 for the Director. Weekly emails, memos, yearly surveys, and monthly newsletters will keep you informed about curriculum or planned changes affecting children's routine care and changes in personnel. Updated schedules, calendars and information may be found on our website, www.aleph-bet.com. For immediate access to our school calendar, events, and important dates, contact the director to subscribe to our Google Calendar.

In an effort to reduce waste, Aleph Bet will minimize the use of paper communications. Aleph Bet will use email as our main source of communication to families. Weekly eblasts with information and reminders will be sent out on Fridays. Special announcements are sent as needed. All Aleph Bet families are to provide a current e-mail address. We ask that you read our emails in a timely manner.

In case of weather related emergencies or other situations requiring immediate attention, parents may be informed via phone call or mass text.

Teachers are pleased to exchange daily greetings or brief chats with parents. If additional time is needed, the teachers will gladly schedule a meeting time. The preschool and its employees will always maintain confidentiality of all information. Conferences are an opportunity for you and your child's teacher to discuss the development of your child. We encourage you to attend these yearly conferences.

During operating hours, parents shall be permitted immediate access to their children. Aleph Bet may place reasonable restrictions on access by any parents as needed to limit disruption of the children's routine.

PARENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

The Parent Group Association (PGA) meets a minimum of twice a year to discuss school events, fundraising, classroom learning environments, and more. There is no fee to join the PGA. Chair positions may include: Parent Group Association, Outreach, Fall Fundraiser, Spring Fling, and Teacher Appreciation. Additional Chair positions may be created if needed/recommended.

PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

Aleph Bet reserves the right to take photographs and videos of classrooms, children, and events. Videos and photographs may be used for education, promotional, archival, website, and fundraising purposes, with prior authorization.

REPORT ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Policies

Child abuse is defined by state law, but generally includes (1) non-accidental physical injury, (2) sexual contact or exploitation, (3) neglect, and (4) emotional distress. The state of Tennessee defines abuse as inflicted by an adult.

1. Prior to starting a paid position with Aleph Bet Children’s Center, a background check must be conducted on candidates. This background check includes but is not limited to civil and criminal checks. The background check is done by a private firm.
2. All employees and volunteers (those volunteering more than 36 hours a year in the classroom) must be finger printed and have a background check conducted through the State of Tennessee.
3. Adults who have been convicted of either child sexual abuse or physical abuse will not be employed nor serve in a volunteer capacity of any type.

Every person in Tennessee is a mandated reporter under state law. Any person with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected must, under the law, immediately report to the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services or to local law enforcement. The reporter can remain anonymous. - See more at: www.tn.gov/dcs/article/reporting-abuse-faq#sthash.rT6C1Y0v.dpuf

Aleph Bet is required to offer an annual abuse awareness program for children three and older.

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. See calendar for specific closings.

SCHOOL-YEAR PROGRAM (AUGUST-MAY)

All families in the Red and Yellow Rooms may choose to send their child two, three, or five-days a week. Children enrolled part-time must attend the same days weekly. Parents may choose specific days of the week they want their child to attend, pending availability.

Children enrolled in the pre-K program must attend five days a week.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Summer time options depend on the number of children enrolled in the school. Space permitting two, three, or five day programs are available to all children. Drop-in and weekly enrollment may also be available if space allows. Parents will be notified of all of the summer options during summer registration. Preference is given to children enrolled five days a week.

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSINGS

Severe weather conditions may result in delayed opening and/or closing. In the event of a delay or closure, Aleph Bet will update its Facebook™ page. An email or text may be sent out if the Director has remote access at the time. Parents picking up their children during inclement weather are strongly encouraged to remain in the building until it is safe to depart. Parents are required to stay on premises until after a tornado warning has expired. When the school is closed for inclement weather a notice will not be placed on the school doors. Aleph Bet is not part of the Hamilton County school district and does not follow the same closure/delay schedules.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

For the health and safety of the children and staff, the Jewish Cultural Center and Aleph Bet Children’s Center are smoke-free environments. This includes all tobacco, e-cig, and vape products. Smoking/vaping is prohibited while in the parking lot, and areas surrounding the playground.

SNACKS

A morning and afternoon snack are provided to your child daily. We ask that your child finish eating all food prior to arriving at Aleph Bet. If your child is still finishing their breakfast upon arrival, we ask that you take a few minutes and sit with them in the teacher workroom while she/he finishes eating any food brought from home (no nuts). Children arriving after snack has started may not be served.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We recommend that only photographs of **your** child should be placed on social media sites (including Facebook, Instagram, etc). For privacy reasons, we ask that you do not post group pictures taken at Aleph Bet events or programs, or that you receive permission from all families represented in said photos.

STAFF

Our early childhood staff is comprised of nurturing and caring individuals who receive continuous in-service training. All of our staff is carefully chosen based on the special qualities, experience and talents that they have to offer the children at Aleph Bet. They are responsible for ensuring children's healthy development and learning, while striving to achieve an optimal balance between children's self-initiated learning and adult guidance and support. Each classroom offers a low teacher-child ratio, which enables students to receive the individual attention they deserve.

At least one staff member in each class holds CPR certification and is First Aid trained. All staff members are fingerprinted, and a criminal background check is run on each employee prior to hiring.

STATE OF TENNESSEE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Aleph Bet Children's Center adheres to the regulations of the Tennessee Department of Human Services' Division of Child Care Licensing. Aleph Bet updates policies and practices when revised or approved by the State of Tennessee DHS. Under Tennessee's Child Care Report Card System, every licensed child care agency must undergo an annual evaluation and post a report card of the results. Agencies are required to post their report card with their renewal license where parents can clearly see them. The Report Card system is mandatory for all licensed providers. The Star-Quality Child Care Program is a voluntary program that recognizes child care agencies that exceed minimum licensing standards. These agencies can receive a rating of one, two, or three stars. Aleph Bet participates in the Star-Quality Child Care Program and is proud to have received a three star rating each year we've participated in the program.

TITLE VI

TITLE IV is a Federal law, which is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin in programs that receive Federal financial assistance. It is illegal for any division or contractor affiliated with the Tennessee Department of Human Services to withhold or refuse, benefits, services, or funding based on race, color, or national origin. House income level or resources may affect participation in some DHS benefit programs. Certain programs may also require evidence of citizenship for eligibility.

TOILET TRAINING

We understand that toilet training is an individualized process, and this is not a requirement to attend Aleph Bet Children's Center. When your child is ready, we work closely with the parent and child to toilet train in a consistent, encouraging and calm manner. A child may be ready to toilet train if he or she:

- Can sense that the bowels are full
- Can let you know he/she needs to use the potty
- Understands what is expected
- Cooperates with the request
- Verbalizes discomfort with wet or soiled diapers.

Reminders and encouragement to use the bathroom are provided throughout the day. We celebrate success and keep a positive attitude. Parents should follow a similar schedule at home. Children and parents need to understand that "accidents" will happen. Children are never reprimanded emotionally, physically or verbally for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Please provide at least two complete changes of clothing.

TOYS

Aleph Bet has wonderful educational and age appropriate toys for your child to play with throughout the day. Please leave toys including jewelry at home, as they can easily get broken or lost.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the families. All children must be escorted to and from the classroom by their families or adults (18 or older) authorized by their families. Should a child be left beyond 5:30 p.m. a late pick up fee of \$2.00 per minute/per child will be billed. If this becomes habitual, the fee may be increased.

TUITION

Tuition is due monthly and payable by direct debit, cash, check or money order. Checks should be made payable to Aleph Bet. Payment can be mailed to Aleph Bet, 5461 N. Terrace Road, Chattanooga, TN 37411 or placed in the silver payment box located near the teacher workroom. Please do not place tuition payments in your child's backpack or lunch box. Tuition should be paid the first of every month, in advance of the child's attendance. Payments received after the 5th of the month will be assessed a \$10 late fee unless prior arrangements have been made with the director. There is a \$20 charge for each returned check. Two returned checks will result in the account being placed on a "cash-only" status. Balances overdue by more than 30 days may result in the student being dismissed from the program and the account may be turned over to a collection agency for non-payment. A \$100.00 non-refundable deposit is required for new families enrolling in order to secure a child's spot at Aleph Bet. A small yearly fee is charged for returning families to secure a space for the summer and upcoming school-year. **No refunds or credits for illness, holidays (Jewish or secular), inclement weather days, family vacations, Center breaks or scheduled school closings.** Tuition for the 2017-2018 is priced as follows:

5 days per week	\$700/month
3 days per week	\$550/month
2 days per week	\$450/month

There is a **10% multi-child discount** applied to additional children's rate. If children in family do not enroll for the same number of days per week, the discount will apply to the lower rate.

Multi child, promotional, and other discounts are not available to any family with an account which is overdue by more than 30 days, regardless of payment plan. Those discounts may again become available if the account is brought into good standing.

All fees and tuition must be paid by May 15th or the child may not be able to participate in our Moving Up/Graduation ceremony.

A one-month written notice of withdrawal before the child's expected termination date is requested (i.e. notification by Oct.1 for Nov. 1 departure). A full month's tuition for the following month is required if Aleph Bet is not given proper notice (regardless of termination date). Once a child withdraws, a new application must be submitted and accompanied by the required registration fee for the child to re-enroll. Any deviation in payment requirements as set forth in this section requires the approval of the school Director. Failure to meet any previously agreed-upon payment schedule without prior arrangement will result in cancellation of registration or termination of services.

Tuition Assistance

Families who receive assistance on childcare tuition (state certificate, scholarships, foster family, etc), will be required to complete additional paperwork, outlining a payment schedule. All appropriate documentation from the assisting entity (state, outside corporation) must be on file by the child's start date.

TZEDEKAH

The Hebrew word tzedekah literally means righteousness and refers to giving charity. A tzedekah box is located in each classroom and the director's office. Children are invited to bring in a few coins from home to place in the tzedekah box. At the end of the year, Aleph Bet will choose an organization or cause to donate the money collected.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All visitors must check in at the school office. Due to state regulations concerning class size and teacher ratio, it is not possible for children to bring friends to class. **Volunteers do not count towards staff:child ratios.**

Siblings of children are allowed in classrooms during drop off and pick up only and *must* be accompanied by a parent/guardian at all times.

WEAPONS

Weapons including guns, firearms, knives, etc. are prohibited from school property.

Calendar*
2017-2018 School-Year

First Day of School-Year	Monday, August 7
Solar Eclipse (1/2 day)	Monday, August 21 (AB will close at 12:30)
Labor Day (Closed)	Monday, September 4
School Picture Day	Thursday, September 7
Rosh Hashanah (Closed)	Thursday, September 21 and Friday, September 22 (Jewish New Year)
Yom Kippur	Saturday, September 30 (Day of Atonement)
Sukkot (Closed)	Thursday, October 5 and Friday, October 6 (Feast of Booths)
Shmini Atzaret (Closed)	Thursday, October 12 (Eighth Day of Assembly)
Simchat Torah (Closed)	Friday, October 13 (Rejoicing with the Torah)
Fall Program and Luncheon	Thursday, November 16 at Noon
Thanksgiving (Closed)	Wednesday, November 22 - Friday, November 24
Christmas, Winter Break (Closed)	Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26
New Year's Day (Closed)	Monday, January 1
Professional Development (Closed)	Monday, January 15 (MLK Jr. Day)
Professional Development/ Parent/Teacher Conferences (Closed)	Monday, February 19 (President's Day)
Spring Fling Program and Breakfast	Friday, March 23 at 9:00am
Spring Break, Passover (Closed)	Friday, April 6
Shavuot (Closed)	Monday, May 21
Year-End Program	Thursday May 24 at 4:00pm
Last Day of School/Party	Friday, May 25
Memorial Day (Closed)	Monday, May 28
Professional Development/ Prepare for Camp (Closed)	Tuesday, May 29 and Wednesday, May 30
First Day of Camp Aleph Bet	Thursday, May 31