

Congregation Beth El, Temple Beth Sholom &  
Congregation Beth Tikvah High School Program



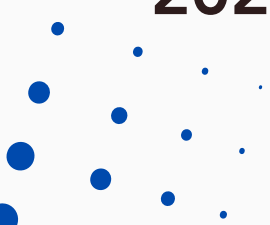
# KESHER HANDBOOK 2024-25/5785

 [www.keshersnj.org](http://www.keshersnj.org)

  
**Kesher**  
קשר

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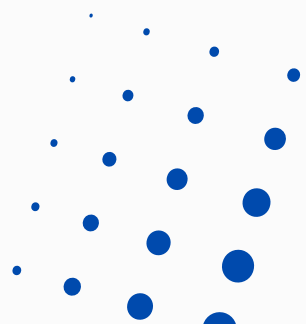


# THE KESHER PROGRAM

*Kesher* means connection. *Kesher* is where teens **CONNECT** to our Jewish community, to Jewish learning, to Israel and with one another. *Kesher* is a joint high school program which brings together teens from Congregation Beth El, Temple Beth Sholom & Congregation Beth Tikvah in grades 7th through 10th for weekly learning and communal growth. We seek to build connections amongst the students, faculty and the many facets of the South Jersey Jewish community. With a curriculum rooted in the foundation of Jewish tradition and culture, it is taught by our clergy and experienced faculty members. Here, Jewish teens will connect and immerse themselves in an environment that promotes a social, experiential and educational atmosphere. Let's not forget, it's so much fun!

Kesher sessions will take place on Tuesday evenings from **6:30PM-8:30PM** starting at Congregation Beth El and transferring to Temple Beth Sholom in the second half of the year.

In addition to *Kesher*, each Synagogue will have their own "Home Shul" programming which allows the teens to continuously engage with their home Synagogue. Please speak with the faculty and clergy of your respective synagogue for more information on shul-specific programming.



# A KESHER EVENING

## TUESDAY NIGHTS 6:30-8:30

### **Core Classes - 6:30-7:10**

Tuesday evenings will begin with core classes experienced with each student's home Synagogue. These classes are taught by faculty from the respective shuls and range in a variety of grade-based curricular topics.

### **Keshet Rotations - 7:35-8:15**

After dinner, TBS and Beth El students will be placed in class cohorts together (based on friend requests) and each week will learn about a different Jewish topic taught by our talented faculty. Students will rotate through each class over the duration of the semester.

Here are some of the interesting rotation topics we will cover in the first semester:

- Jewish Arts and Culture
- Jewish Law and Ethics
- Jewish Cooking
- Talmud
- Tikkun Olam: Healing the World
- Ask the Rabbi
- Jewish Diversity
- Exploring Israel
- Jewish Music
- Modern Hebrew

### **Dinner - 7:10-7:30**

After core classes, Keshet students will gather together for a short dinner where they will enjoy a yummy meal, hang out with their friends and play fun games.

## **CORE CLASSES**

### **Temple Beth Shalom Core Classes**

**7th Grade:** Humash: Making the Torah Text Come Alive Teacher: Alex Weinberg & Rabbi Nathan Weiner

**8th Grade:** Jewish Ethics in the 21st Century Teacher: Alex Lapushner

**9th Grade:** Hatred, History and Healing: Exploring the Holocaust and Modern Anti-Semitism Teacher: Jason Landau

**10th Grade:** Confirmation: G-d, Israel and Our Community Teacher: Rabbi Bryan Wexler

### **Congregation Beth El Core Classes**

**7th Grade:** Moving Traditions - Kulanu: Rabbi Nogah Marshall & Stacy Heyman

**8th Grade:** History of the Holocaust Teacher: Dr. Yonatan Yares

**9th Grade:**  
American Jewish History (First Semester): Jacob Boyd  
Heroes of Israel (Second Semester): Mira Aumiller

**10th Grade:** Confirmation Seminar - Exploring Ethical Issues/Pirkei Avot: Rabbi Sam Hollander

### **Congregation Beth Tikvah Core Class:**

**7th-10th Grade:** Hot Topics: Fred Bilofsky



# DINNER & BREAK TIME

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Kesher dinner and break time is a great opportunity for teens to bond with their friends, enjoy delicious treats and engage in fun activities and challenges. Each week, we will offer a full, catered dinner with dessert that will vary week to week. All food served at Kesher will be certified Kosher and nut sensitive. We also offer food options that are gluten free, vegetarian and dairy free (when applicable).

Past dinners have included hamburgers/hot dogs, chicken nuggets, baked ziti, mac & cheese, pizza, chinese food and much more. Meals are mainly catered via Beth El catering, Magical Sweet Shop and Giddy's Pizza.

Dinner and dessert menus are posted each week in our newsletter and can be found on the Kesher website.

Our dinner and snack times are planned out and facilitated by our Kesher program coordinator, Brooke Miron.

The extended break time will also give Kesher teens time to get involved with some more structured activities and programs planned and facilitated by our Kesher Teen Engagement Coordinator, John Imhof and Kesher Director, Jared Kaufman.



# HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS AND HESED PROGRAMS

A core component of Keshet is our holiday celebrations and Hesed service programs. Throughout the year we will celebrate Jewish holidays together as one Keshet community through special, fun evenings where students will participate in various engaging programs, games and learning which are related to the holiday.

Each holiday celebration will also have a Hesed component where students will participate in community service/social action projects to give back to the community both local and abroad.

Some examples of Hesed projects completed in the past are:

- Hanukkah Gift Bags and Messages for the Jewish Community of Uganda
- Passover Ceramic Seder plate decoration and vases for the residents of the Weinberg Commons
- Collecting Gifts/Money for children in need on Hanukkah at our Keshet gift auction
- Making Mishloah Manot packages at Purim for the residents of Lions Gate.
- and more.

## 2024-2025 Holiday Celebrations

October 22 - Sukkot Celebration  
December 17 - Hanukkah Celebration  
March 11 - Purim Celebration  
April 8 - Passover Celebration



# HIGH SCHOOL SUMMITS

We are thrilled to be continuing our High School Summits in the 2024-2025 Kesher year. These Summits are a cornerstone of our program, leading to it's inception after we hosted several successful virtual summits in 2020-2021.

Teen Summits are a community wide partnership that bring together teens from all enrolled South Jersey High School programs. Teen Summits are a collaborative effort between TBS, Beth El, Kol Ami and the Jewish Federation. Summits are made possible thanks to additional funding provided by the Jewish Community Foundation, Inc.

These summits are unique opportunities for our teens to meet and learn from influential figures in the Jewish world such as published authors, comedians, athletes and much more.

These professionals bring their personal journeys and Jewish experiences to our teens and share with them how their Jewish identities influenced their successes and achievements in life.

Some examples of past Teen Summit speakers have included:

- Josh Weiss, Author of *Beat the Devils*
- Dan Grunfeld, Professional Basketball Player & Author of *By the Grace of the Game*
- Pamela Rae Schuller, Comedian
- Rabbi Yael Buechler, Founder of *Midrash Manicures*
- Saul Blinkoff, Disney and Dreamworks Animator

## 2024-2025 Teen Summit & Community Program Dates

**September 24** - Emily Austin - Beth El  
**November 12** - Freedom Sing - Katz JCC  
**January 21** - Speaker TBD - Kol Ami

**February 25** - Community Hesed Project -  
1721 Springdale Rd.  
**March 25** - Speaker TBD - TBS



Teen Summits are made possible through a community wide partnership:



# FACULTY AND CLERGY



**RABBI BRYAN WEXLER**  
Associate Rabbi - Temple Beth Sholom  
[ravbryan@tbsonline.org](mailto:ravbryan@tbsonline.org)



**RABBI NOGAH MARSHALL**  
Educational Director - Congregation Beth El  
[nmarshall@bethelsnj.org](mailto:nmarshall@bethelsnj.org)



**JARED KAUFMAN**  
Keshet High School Director - Temple Beth Sholom  
[jaredk@tbsonline.org](mailto:jaredk@tbsonline.org)



**BROOKE MIRON**  
Keshet Program Coordinator - Congregation Beth El  
[brookeamiron@gmail.com](mailto:brookeamiron@gmail.com)



**JOHN IMHOF**  
Keshet Teen Engagement Coordinator - Temple Beth Sholom  
[johni@tbsonline.org](mailto:johni@tbsonline.org)

## **Our amazing team of Educators include:**

**Mira Aumiller (Second Semester): Congregation Beth El**

**Fred Bilofsky: Congregation Beth Tikvah**

**Jacob Boyd: Congregation Beth El**

**Ellen Fine: Congregation Beth El**

**Jennifer Fisher, Congregation Beth El Teen Advisor**

**Stacy Heyman: Congregation Beth El**

**Rabbi Sam Hollander, Congregation Beth El Associate Rabbi**

**Jason Landau: Temple Beth Sholom**

**Alex Lapushner: Temple Beth Sholom**

**Tameika Minor: Congregation Beth El**

**Tonia Respes: Congregation Beth El**

**Alex Weinberg: Temple Beth Sholom, Director of Congregational Learning**

**Rabbi Nathan Weiner: Temple Beth Sholom**

**Dr. Yonatan Yares, Congregation Beth El**



# EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOR

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To help foster a positive educational climate in our high school program and to create an environment in which everyone feels safe and welcome, we have developed a ***Brit Halihut*** - a behavior contract that affords each student the opportunity to accept responsibility for their own behavior. Everyone in the school community must play a role in contributing to an effective educational environment.

## The STUDENT will

- Accept responsibility for their own actions.
- Attend school regularly or make arrangements to complete any projects.
- Arrive on time for class and activities.
- Treat fellow students, teachers and staff with respect.
- Respect property of and both buildings.
- Only bring appropriate materials to school.
- Abide by our school's dress code and policies.
- Accept responsibility for completing all classroom requirements.

## The PARENT will

- Assure the student's regular attendance in school.
- Inform the school if extended absences occur and help to create a make-up plan
- Exemplify an enthusiastic and supportive attitude toward the program and Jewish education.
- Discuss behavioral responsibilities and expectations with the student.
- Be responsible for the Student's behavior, including paying for damaged books, property, etc

## The TEACHER will

- Promote a climate of mutual respect and dignity, hence strengthening each student's positive self-image.
- Discuss with students the behavioral guidelines, including individual interpretations and expectations, teacher to student, as well as student to teacher.
- Attend to minor behavioral problems in the classroom, always maintaining the student's dignity.
- Follow the guidelines set forth for inappropriate behavior.
- Keep parents, Rabbi Marshall, Rabbi Wexler and Jared Kaufman apprised of student's progress.

It is our number one priority that every student feels “at home” and safe while in the building. Our program is dedicated to providing a nurturing learning environment where Temple Beth Sholom, Beth El and CBT teens can explore their Jewish identities, make new friends, and grow into their best selves. Bullying and disrespect will not be tolerated and any issues will be communicated with parents immediately.

**Let's keep the lines of communication open between us.**

**Please don't hesitate to call should any problem arise. This is important for both parents and students.**

# Behavior Issues

Please note that all behavior issues, both inside and outside the classroom will be reported to our Keshet High School Director, Jared Kaufman, as well as the student's home shul rabbi/educator (either Rabbi Marshall, Rabbi Wexler or Michele Meyer). Significant behavior issues will warrant a call home from either Rabbi Marshall, Rabbi Wexler or Michele Meyer. If behavior issues persist after multiple discussions and warnings, it is possible that the Keshet Leadership Team may decide that the student has lost his/her privilege to attend Keshet. If such a determination is made, the student will be invited to continue his/her Jewish education for the year by participating in an independent study with a staff member of the student's home synagogue.

## Attendance Policy

- Regular and punctual attendance is required in all classes.
- If you know in advance that you will be missing a significant number of classes, please contact us.

## Lateness

Every moment of class time is precious, and it is inconsiderate to the teacher and fellow students to interrupt a class already in progress. **Students are asked to please report to class on time.**

## Dress Requirement

- Students entering the building must be clothed in a respectable and acceptable manner befitting a religious institution.
- **Kippot:** Students identifying as male are **required to wear Kippot at all times while in classes or Synagogue.**
- Each teacher is responsible for the teaching environment in their classroom. Therefore, an individual teacher may set additional rules.

## Cell Phones

We understand our students' reluctance to part with their cell phones and we understand the concern for their safety. However, cell phones are extremely disruptive to the high school program. Therefore, all cell phones must be turned off and out of site while in class and during teen summits and holiday programs.

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## BRIT HALIHUT- BEHAVIOR CONTRACT 2024-2025

Please sign and return this form to Rabbi Wexler, Rabbi Marshall or Jared Kaufman.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Synagogue: \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) have read the student and parent handbook and discussed with my (our) child the DISCIPLINE, ATTENDANCE, DRESS CODE as well as other policies in the handbook.

My child understands these policies.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

# SOCIAL EXPERIENCES AND YOUTH GROUP

This year we are excited to be expanding our program to include an additional branch of a Keshet Youth Group, which will provide teens with fun educational and social experiences. Several times throughout the year, we will bring together teens from Congregation Beth El, Temple Beth Shalom and Congregation Beth Tikvah for field trips, day/night outings, special programs and more.

Some examples of joint social and educational programs from the past:

- Keshet Trip to NYC to visit the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, explore Times Square and see a Broadway show.
- Keshet Night Out to Dave and Buster's Philadelphia
- Keshet Trip to Washington DC to visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
- Keshet Trip to Six Flags Great Adventure

For questions regarding social programming, please contact:



John Imhof, Keshet Teen Engagement Coordinator ([johndi@tbsonline.org](mailto:johndi@tbsonline.org))



Jennifer Fisher, Beth El Teen Advisor ([jfisher@bethelsnj.org](mailto:jfisher@bethelsnj.org))

## SOCIAL EXPERIENCES 2024-2025

**September 22** - Keshet Hangout Kickoff  
**November 7** - Keshet NYC Trip  
**December 7** - Keshet Saturday Night Out  
**January 26** - Keshet Hangout  
**February 8** - Keshet Hangout  
**February 16** - Keshet Hangout  
**March 2** - Keshet Trip to Washington D.C.  
**March 8** - Keshet Hangout  
**March 23** - Keshet Hangout  
**April 27** - Keshet Hangout  
**June 8** - Keshet End of Year Outing



# Connect with us!

Stay in touch and up to date with everything Keshar! Follow us on social media and keep in touch.



(856) 751-6663 (TBS)  
(856) 675-1166 (Beth El)

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@keshersnj

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[www.keshersnj.org](http://www.keshersnj.org)

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Rabbi Wexler- [ravbryan@tbsonline.org](mailto:ravbryan@tbsonline.org)  
Rabbi Marshall - [nmarshall@bethelsnj.org](mailto:nmarshall@bethelsnj.org)  
Jared Kaufman - [jaredk@tbsonline.org](mailto:jaredk@tbsonline.org)  
John Imhof - [johni@tbsonline.org](mailto:johni@tbsonline.org)  
Brooke Miron - [brooke.keshar@gmail.com](mailto:brooke.keshar@gmail.com)



# Keshher Calendar

## 2024 - 2025 | 5785

| September 10         | September 17            | September 24            |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Keshher Kickoff      | Keshher Classes         | Teen Summit             |
| 6:30 - 8PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El |

| October 1                                | October 8               | October 15              | October 22              | October 29              |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>NO CLASSES</b><br>(High Holiday Prep) | Keshher Classes         | Keshher Classes         | Sukkot Celebration      | Keshher Classes         |
|  | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El |

| November 5                  | November 12         | November 19             | November 26                         |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>NO CLASSES</b><br>(NJEA) | Freedom Sing        | Keshher Classes         | <b>NO CLASSES</b><br>(Thanksgiving) |
|                             | 6:30 - 8:30PM   JCC | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El |                                     |

| December 3              | December 10             | December 17             | December 24                      | December 31 |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Keshher Classes         | Keshher Classes         | Hanukkah Celebration    | <b>NO CLASSES (Winter Break)</b> |             |
| 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El |                                  |             |

| January 7               | January 14              | January 21              | January 28             |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Keshher Classes         | Keshher Classes         | Teen Summit             | First Day 2nd Semester |
| 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Beth El | 6:30 - 8:30PM   Kol Ami | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS    |

| February 4          | February 11         | February 18         | February 25                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Keshher Classes     | Keshher Classes     | Keshher Classes     | Community Heshed Project        |
| 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   1721 Springdale |

| March 4             | March 11            | March 18            | March 25            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Keshher Classes     | Purim Celebration   | Keshher Classes     | Teen Summit         |
| 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS |

| April 1             | April 8              | April 15                        | April 22            | April 29            |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Keshher Classes     | Passover Celebration | <b>NO CLASSES</b><br>(Passover) | Keshher Classes     | Keshher Classes     |
| 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS  |                                 | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS | 6:30 - 8:30PM   TBS |

| May 6                   |
|-------------------------|
| End of Year Celebration |
| 6:30 - 8:00PM   TBS     |

**Special Program**

**Regular Classes**

**No Classes**

\*Schedule is subject to change  
The Keshher calendar is available anytime online at [www.keshhersnj.org](http://www.keshhersnj.org)