



JQuest B'Yachad KI Family Handbook 2019-2020

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www://kenesethisrael.org/education-overview

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I. CONTACT INFORMATION

JQuest B'Yachad Contacts

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Sarah Morrison, Administrative Assistant admin@JQuest.org **215-887-8704**

The JQuest B'Yachad office is open:

Monday	9:00am-5:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00am-8:00pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	9:00am-5:00 pm
Friday	9:00am-4:00 pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	8:30am-12:15 pm when JQuest B'Yachad is in session.

JQuest B'Yachad staff does not check email on Shabbat.

II. Hours

A. *Sundays: Kindergarten through 6th grade*

9:15 am - 12:00 pm @ KI

B. *Tuesdays 2nd through 6th Grade*

Reform and Conservative Students 4:30-6:00 PM @ KI
(Early drop off at 4:00)

III. All About JQuest B'Yachad

Dear JQuest B'Yachad Families,

JQuest B'Yachad focuses on individual meaning, is based on creativity and movement, and seeks to engage every child in exploring what the Jewish tradition is all about. Envisioned as a journey of guided learning and personal exploration, JQuest B'Yachad is rooted in three areas, which together plant the seeds for Jewish life:

- Judaic Study: Students will work together, create learning experiences that generate individual meaning, explore their creative passions, and have experiential opportunities in the community to achieve grade-level curriculum goals with guidance from clergy and teachers.
- Prayer and Holiday Study: Students will explore the foundations of regular Jewish life through regular participation in T'fillot (prayer) exploring both the fixed nature and the spiritual expression, as well as the foundations of holiday rituals in the home and synagogue.
- Hebrew Study: Students will be introduced to the Hebrew language and Hebrew decoding (sounding out letters to form word sounds) based on age and stage of learning. They will focus on learning Hebrew from Sound to Print - gaining a strong aural basis, and then working in small groups to decode the Hebrew prayers.

We are committed to ensuring a positive experience for your family and encourage you to be in touch with teachers and our directors with feedback, ideas and suggestions as to how to make JQuest work best for our community.

Thank you for being our partner, for journeying alongside us as we work with your kids to bring Jewish learning to Life!

Warmly,
Rabbi Stacy Eskovitz Rigler

IV. Mission

JQuest B'Yachad engages students in meaningful, intentional Jewish learning while putting student voice and choice at the center.

V. Vision

Our Quest is for our learners to become Jewish adults with:

1. A joyful and loving connection to our Jewish community and history
2. Competence and confidence in decoding Hebrew and participating in synagogue worship
3. An ability to find inspiration & meaning in the study of Torah and the Jewish tradition
4. A dedication to Jewish actions (*mitzvot*) and a connection to Jewish rituals
5. An understanding of modern & cultural Hebrew words
6. A strong Jewish identity
7. A passion for *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) and *tzedek* (justice), both in and beyond the Jewish community
8. A relationship with God: noting God in their world, being thankful for blessings, and reaching out in times of need
9. A familiarity with Jewish arts and an ability to join in the songs and culture of our people
10. A commitment to *Am Yisrael* (People of Israel), *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel), and *Medinat Yisrael* (State of Israel)

VI. Who we serve and statement of inclusivity

JQuest B'Yachad is the elementary education program for families of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Adath Jeshurun and Beth Sholom. The combined program meets on Tuesdays, from 4:30-6:00 pm.

JQuest B'Yachad is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all families, respecting and welcoming equally all learning styles, races, sexual orientation, gender identities, family structures, and religious backgrounds. We *strive to meet the needs of all learners*. If at any time you feel that your family has not been warmly welcomed or we are not meeting your child's needs, please contact a director so we can address your concerns.

VII. JQUEST Student Conduct

Students are expected to behave in a way that allows others to learn and feel safe in order to be in the JQuest program. All JQuest students and families are expected to handle themselves according to Jewish values and a spirit of inclusiveness. Families will be asked to follow the *Brit* (behavior contract)

- Be *Talmidim Tovim* (active learners)
- Treat everyone with *Hesed* (Kindness)
- Help build our *Kehillah Kedosha* (Holy community)

Initial discussion: The first referral from a teacher will be handled by the director. The director will often contact the child's parents/guardians to seek guidance on what may be impacting the child's ability to participate positively in JQuest.

Parent Conference: The second referral from a teacher will require the parents/guardians to schedule a meeting with the director to work together to develop a plan of action to help support the child's positive behavior.

VIII. When to Come, What to Bring, and What to Leave at Home...

A. CALENDAR

To access the JQuest calendar, go to the KI website, go to Education and then school calendar.

B. DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Students in grades K-3 should be escorted into the building and picked up from their classrooms each Sunday. Children in grades 4-6 will be dismissed from their learning spaces. Families should arrange a meeting location. The director will stand at the main door whenever possible to supervise dismissal.

C. EARLY AND LATE PICK UP

If you need to pick your child up early, a note is requested for your child's teacher to have your child meet you at the office.

If, in an emergency, you are going to be late picking up your child, please notify the Office so that someone can be there until you arrive. Rabbi Rigler can be reached on her cell phone (**215-740-2244**) after hours for pick up related issues.

D. Weather Related JQuest Closing Information

If we are closed due to weather, our school closing number will be announced on KYW-Radio (1060 AM). Our closing number is **324**. On Tuesday, if the Abington

and/or Cheltenham schools are closed or close early, we will automatically be closed. You may check the JQuest B'Yachad Website for school closings, sign up with KYW for a text to be sent, or look for an email.

E. DRESS

Students are asked to dress in a way that is conducive to learning and reflects the fact that they will be entering the synagogue chapels and sanctuaries for T'fillot. Students wearing clothing with obscene language or other inappropriate content, or clothing that does not reflect modesty (covering stomachs and other private areas) will be given a JQuest t-shirt to wear.

F. TZEDAKAH

All students will be asked to bring in tzedakah (money for those that have less) each class session. They should contribute each time they come to JQuest B'Yachad – the amount does not matter.

G. ELECTRONICS

Students in grades K-4 should refrain from bringing electronics to JQuest unless specifically asked. All electronics should remain off and in bags.

Fifth and Sixth graders can bring devices to access the internet which may be used, at times, during JQuest for educational purposes. Electronics should remain off and in student bags until students are invited to use their electronics.

At no time is JQuest responsible for any electronic devices that students bring; any electronic devices brought to JQuest is at the students' own risk. Should a student be using electronics when not given permission, the teacher will store the device and a parent will be notified.

Students will have access to electronics during JQuest (computers and iPads). Students will be expected to follow the birt, treating them with care and using the electronic devices for the learning purposes intended.

H. FOOD

On Sundays, JQuest families will be asked to bring in challah on a rotating basis. On Tuesday there will be pretzels, cheese sticks, and apple chips for sale at JQuest B'Yachad before class begins. Due to allergy considerations, we ask that you do not bring food to JQuest including on birthdays and special occasions.

IX. Communication, Family Participation, Feedback

A. Website

1. Information about JQuest B'Yachad can be found on the KI website: <https://kenesethisrael.org/education-overview> and then click on *Learn more about JQuest B'Yachad here*. Information about curriculum for each grade, links to prayer and Hebrew study, and contact information can be found here.

B. Home Communication

1. Weekly Updates: Teachers of grade-level Quests will send weekly updates so that families will know what their students are doing in JQuest. There will also be a weekly email sent about family and JQuest events. Families can stay informed and see the work and experience of their children. If you do not receive our weekly "News you can use" email or an email from your teacher on Sunday afternoon (K-1) or Tuesday evening (2nd-6th) please contact the JQuest office.
2. Social Media: You can follow both Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel and JQuest on Facebook.
3. Progress Reports: At the end of each semester, teachers will share student progress reports containing reflections of the student learning.

C. Homework

Students in grades 4, 5 and 6 will be asked to review their Hebrew assignments through an online review weekly. This homework is essential to student success and should be completed weekly. The link is on the JQuest section on the KI website.

D. Family learning and programs

Several times a year JQuest will plan family events and parent learning opportunities. We encourage all JQuest parents to attend these events to meet other parents and connect with our clergy. If you have ideas for new events please contact Rabbi Rigler.

E. Feedback

If you have a suggestion, idea, concern, or question, do not hesitate to send an email or make a phone call. Rabbi Rigler is fully committed to ensure a positive experience for every child and to continually reflect on how our program can best fit your family's needs.

X. JQuest B'Yachad Lay Leadership

A. KI Education Committee:

The mission of the KI Education Committee is to support the continuous improvement of the JQuest program, as pertains specifically to the curriculum, instruction, assessment, standards, and outcomes. The committee will:

- Provides advice to the Director
- Report activity, findings, and recommendations to the JQuest B'Yachad Leadership Committee
- Identify issues that require attention and provide recommendations to address them
- Observe classrooms/learning environments and provide feedback to the JQuest Director

Members of this Committee include representatives from KI both with and without students enrolled in the program. They represent congregational stakeholders and members with a background in Education.

If you have concerns, please contact the JQuest Office.

B. JQuest B'Yachad Leadership Team:

The JQuest B'Yachad program is overseen by a leadership team made up of the Rabbis, select lay leaders, and education directors of the synagogues. Brian Rissinger, KI Executive Director, serves as the business manager. The leadership team is responsible for visionary and structural work of JQuest B'Yachad.