



# Quest Noar Family Handbook

Deborah Rosen, Director  
Lee Slobotkin, Administrative Assistant

215-887-8704

[www.kenesethisrael.org/quest-noar](http://www.kenesethisrael.org/quest-noar)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Quest Noar Contacts

Deborah Rosen, Director [DRosen@JQuest.org](mailto:DRosen@JQuest.org) **215-887-8704**

Lee Slobotkin, Administrative Assistant [admin@JQuest.org](mailto:admin@JQuest.org) **215-887-8704**

The Quest Noar 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 is in session.

Quest Noar staff does not check email on Shabbat or holy days.

Dear Quest Noar Families,

Our program focuses on individual meaning, is based on creativity, youth leadership, and student initiative. Envisioned as a journey of guided learning, peer collaboration and personal exploration, Quest Noar is also an important social and identity-forming resource for our developing teens.

Important highlights in the lives of our students bookend the Quest Noar experience: B. Mitzvah celebrations at age 13 on one end, and Confirmation in tenth grade on the other. Both mark milestones of spiritual, psychological, intellectual and social growth for our community's youngest adult members. Quest Noar celebrates these watershed moments for students. And, we also aim throughout these years of learning to embolden and enrich these life highlights with deep meaning and rich content, connected to the lived experiences of these 21<sup>st</sup> century teens.

It is especially meaningful and long-standing in the Reform tradition to celebrate the Confirmation of tenth grade students, marking their more mature acceptance of the mantle of Jewish life and learning. And all of our students' experiences leading to this "Sinai moment" prepares them to profoundly understand their developing role amongst their people and in our world.

We encourage our teen community's members to celebrate the b. mitzvah of peers by attending the Shabbat service at which the teen leads the community in prayer. We also hope that all 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> graders and their families will make it a priority to celebrate Confirmation, traditionally on the holiday of Shavuot, in their respective congregations. It is an important annual celebration in the life of our teen communities.

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 Quest Noar work best for our community.

Thank you for being our partner and for journeying alongside us as we work with your teens to bring Jewish learning to life!

Warmly,

Deborah Rosen

- **Mission**

Quest Noar engages students in meaningful and intentional Jewish learning while putting student voice and choice at the center.

- **Vision**

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

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

- **Who We Serve and Statement of Inclusivity**

Quest Noar is the teen education program for families of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel--in grades 7-10.

Quest Noar is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all families, respecting and welcoming equally all learning styles, races, sexual orientations, 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 the director, so we can address your concerns.

- **Quest Noar Student Conduct**

Students are expected to behave in a way that allows others to learn and feel safe in order to be in the Quest Noar program. All Quest Noar 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 *Studentim Chachamim* (thoughtful students)  
Treat everyone with *Hesed* (Kindness)  
Help build our *Kehillah Kedoshah* (Holy community)

Should an issue arise with regard to class conduct the following steps will be taken:

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 Quest Noar.

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 a more positive behavior.

- **When/If We Are Able to Have Regular, In-Person Classes:**

## **When to Come, What to Bring, and What to Leave at Home...**

### **Calendar:**

To access the Quest Noar Calendar, go to the KI website, go to LEARN, go to Quest Noar and then School Calendar –OR- These dates are also posted on the KI Website Calendar~ [www.KenesethIsrael.org/Calendar](http://www.KenesethIsrael.org/Calendar)

### **AT KI Facility (8339 Old York Road, Elkins Park):**

- **DROP OFF AND PICK UP**

Students 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. Students will be dismissed from the Mural entrance.

- **Weather Related Quest Noar Closing Information**

If we are closed due to weather, we will inform you via email, on Facebook and on our website if it is not the weekend. On Tuesday, if the Abington and/or Cheltenham schools are closed or close early, we will automatically be closed. You may check the JQuest page on the KI website for school closings, check Facebook, or look for an email.

### **FOR ALL STUDENTS:**

#### **EARLY AND LATE PICK UP**

- If you need to pick your child up early, a note is requested for the 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 facility office so that someone can be there until you arrive.
- Deb Rosen can be reached on her cell phone **(215-285-9076)** after hours for pick-up related issues.

#### **DRESS**

- Students are asked to dress in a way that is conducive to learning and reflects the fact that they will be entering synagogue chapels and sanctuaries for Tefillah. Students wearing clothing with obscene language or other inappropriate content, or clothing that does not reflect modesty

will be given a JQuest t-shirt to wear. If a student is dressed inappropriately for an on-line session, they will be asked to change.

- All students are encouraged (but not required) to wear head coverings, such as a kippah for their time engaged in sacred learning.

### **TZEDAKAH**

- All students will be asked to bring in tzedakah (money for those that have less) to each class session. They should contribute each time they come to learn – the amount does not matter. When we are not able to be in class in person, families are encouraged to collect funds on Shabbat and periodically decide on a recipient of these funds.
- If you have occasion to stop by your synagogue, please bring by some canned goods for those in our community struggling with food insecurity.

### **ELECTRONICS**

- Students can bring devices to access the internet which may be used, at times, during class sessions for educational purposes. Electronics should remain off and in student bags until they are invited to use their electronics.
- At no time is Quest Noar or any of its participating synagogues responsible for any electronic devices that students bring; any electronic devices brought to Quest Noar 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 Quest Noar (computers and iPads). Students will be expected to follow the *brit* (covenant of behavior), treating them with care and using the electronic devices for the learning purposes intended.

### **FOOD**

- On Tuesdays there will be pretzels, cheese sticks, and apple chips for sale at Quest Noar before class begins. Due to allergy considerations, we ask that you do not bring food to Quest Noar, including on birthdays and special occasions.

## **Communication, Family Participation, Feedback**

### **Website**

- Information about Quest Noar can be found on the KI website: <https://kenesethisrael.org/quest-noar>. On this page, you can find

information about curriculum for each grade, links to prayer and Hebrew study, and contact information.

### **Home Communication**

- Progress Reports: At the end of each semester, teachers will share student progress reports containing reflections of the students' learning.

**Hours** - For Students in grades 7-10

### **When Meeting In-Person**

	<b>Tuesdays - Weekly</b>
<b>6:15-6:30</b>	Dinner
<b>6:30-7:00</b>	Elective
<b>7:00-7:15</b>	Shuk (social games)
<b>7:15-7:45</b>	Core Class

### **Feedback**

- If you have a suggestion, idea, concern, or question, do not hesitate to send an email or make a phone call. Deb Rosen 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.

### **Quest Noar Lay Leadership**

#### **KI Education Committee:**

- The mission of the KI Education Committee is to support the continuous improvement of the JQuest and Quest Noar programs, and their curricula, instruction, assessment, standards, and outcomes. The committee will:
  - Provide advice to the Director
  - Report activity, findings, and recommendations
  - Identify issues that require attention and provide recommendations to address them
- 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 Education Office.