

## Day School Policies and Procedures

### Birthday Party-Bar/Bat Mitzvah Invitations

As a school we value community. One aspect of that is making people feel welcome, that they have a place, that they are included. This is not always easy for anyone of any age. Yet, if we are a community and one that sees the humanity and image of God in each person, then we know that even if we can't, or choose not to include everyone, we ought not do things that make them feel bad or excluded, we ought not rub it in their faces.

To that end, we have long had the following policy with regard to birthday and Bar/Bat mitzvah invitations

### Birthday Parties at School

Parents may plan to have a simple birthday celebration for their children at the school with cake (from a kosher bakery), kosher cookies, fruit or other simple healthy snacks. Any food other than fruit or vegetables brought in to school must have a hekshur (Kosher certification).

Parents can reinforce the goals of the school by planning a tzedakah project with their children in honor of birthdays. Parents may wish to use the opportunity to discuss with children where they would like to give the contribution (e.g. the Day School scholarship or library fund or a food shelf) and how they might save money to contribute to the gift.

### Birthday Parties at Home

When planning birthday parties at home, please be aware of the wide range of Jewish beliefs and practices of Talmud Torah students and their families. All children will be able to participate if birthday parties are not scheduled on Shabbat or holidays, (2 days of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, 2 days of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simhat Torah, the first 2 days and last 2 days of Pesah, and 2 days of Shavuot), and all children will be able to enjoy the celebrations if the food served is not specifically unkosher. If children are **not** planning to invite all members of the **class\***, they should send invitations in the mail and not discuss the party at school. Consider the values you are teaching your child in making out a guest list. When mailing invitations, please send two invitations to those children who live in two households.

\*Based on consultation with faculty members and Yad B'Yad parents, we are defining class as homeroom group and not as grade level group since in any given year this group represents a student's primary affiliation.

### Bnai/Bnot Mitzvah

During 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be celebrating their *Bnai Mitzvah*. We encourage each child to invite all of his/her classmates (in his/her grade) to celebrate with him/her. We would also encourage each family to consider the values of *tikkun olam* (repair of the world), *bal tashchit* (avoiding wastefulness), and *hachnassat orchim*

(welcoming guests) in planning *Bnai Mitzvah* celebrations, making them modest and joyful celebrations of each individual's entry into the adult Jewish community.

In the same spirit we ask that you consider the *Shabbat* and *kashrut* observance of all members of the TTSP community in planning any party including a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration for your TTSP student. Students who observe *Shabbat* or *kashrut* should not feel cut out of the social life at their Jewish school because parties are scheduled at times they cannot attend or serve food they cannot eat. Please plan parties that do not conflict with *Shabbat* and holiday observance and that serve food all students can eat.