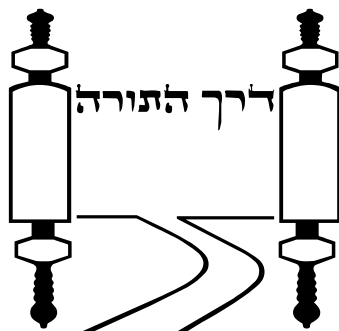


GUIDE FOR
STUDENTS
and
PARENTS



Derech HaTorah of Rochester

2024-2025

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I. About Our School

Derech HaTorah of Rochester (DHR) is committed to providing a Torah education for all Jewish children. A seamless fusion of curricula has been developed to educate the whole child. DHR teaches a superior, scholastic curriculum that meets and exceeds Next Generation standards. The intellectual and moral development of every student is maximized in a warm, nurturing learning environment. Each student is viewed as an individual, having multiple capacities, interests and intelligences. Thus, our educational philosophy reflects the wisdom of Proverbs: "*Chanoch L'naar Al Pi Darko*" (educate each child according to his nature).

II. Goals & Objectives

- Unequivocal commitment to excellence
- Implementation of congruent academic program
- Development of intellectually curious, critical thinkers
- Focus on *Derech Eretz*, including character development, integrity and respect for others
- Assessment of learning through multiple measures of academic achievement
- Fostering a learning environment that supports ethical and moral conduct
- Encouragement of creativity
- Motivate students to develop a positive self-image
- Enrich our educational product through a variety of creative and innovative programs and partnerships

III. Admissions Policy

Derech HaTorah of Rochester admits Jewish students whose parents desire a superior, balanced Judaic and general studies education for their children. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, scholarships or other school-sponsored programs.

IV. Location of School

Derech HaTorah is located at 71 Maiden Lane, Rochester, NY 14616 in the Town of Greece. Our main entrance is situated at the back of the parking lot and is designated by a Derech HaTorah sign. The facility is handicap-accessible and has provisions for students with physical disabilities. The Derech HaTorah office is located on the second floor. The kindergarten and first grade classrooms are at the front of the wing; the second through fourth grade classrooms are on the second floor; the middle school girls' classrooms are located in the wing; and the middle school boys' classrooms are on the 3rd floor. The 48,000+ square foot facility also has a gym, an art room, a game room, a computer lab, a lunchroom, a kitchen, special education and Title I classrooms, a library and a STEM lab.

V. Student Conduct & DHR's Philosophy and Approach to Establishing and Promoting a Positive & Joyful Learning Environment

Prominently exhibited in our school's goals and objectives, Derech HaTorah's primary focus is on *Derech Eretz*, including character development, integrity and respect for others. We emphasize the importance and necessity of showing respect to everyone. Kindness, thoughtfulness and courtesy are basic, fundamental expectations which all students, teachers and administrators will be expected to practice and display at all times.

The goals of our school's positive behavioral system are:

- To teach, train and counsel children to gradually acquire self-control, the ability to manage their emotions, and the aptitude to make constructive behavioral choices.
- To guide children to realize that their decisions, behaviors and actions have consequences, and that there is a connection between their behavior and the impact of their actions on other people.

Prominently exhibited in our school's mission and educational philosophy is the centrality of character development, integrity and social-emotional growth. We emphasize the importance and necessity of showing respect, kindness and connecting with others.

DHR's educators construct joyful, safe, engaging and stimulating classrooms where students thrive and develop lifelong social and academic skills. The additional inclusion of positive behavioral interventions and supports provide students with the essential skills to become successful people who learn from their experiences through positive, practical discipline. By providing clear expectations, delineated limits and boundaries, and gradually focusing on intrinsic motivation, teachers assist students in developing self-regulation and self-control.

At DHR, positively framed student expectations and rules are identified, attainable, shared, implemented school-wide, practiced, reinforced and modeled at both the classroom and school levels. Consistent expectations and boundaries train students to regulate their behavior, to differentiate between right and wrong, and to understand that there are consequences if they make poor choices. When students' decision-making is recognized as part of the educational process, children feel more secure, and they develop increased self-control and communication skills which enable them to successfully navigate their academic and social environments.

Our school's developmentally appropriate, school-wide positive behavioral approach includes consistent, clear school rules, teaching appropriate behavior, developing intervention plans, implementing natural/logical consequences as needed, establishing a framework of positive reinforcement for prosocial behavior, and teaching social skills.

Finally, DHR, in partnership with our families, plays an essential role in promoting and encouraging children's development of resilience, tolerance, self-discipline, collaboration, problem-solving, communication, taking responsibility, and conflict resolution.

VI. Uniforms

Derech HaTorah of Rochester requires all students to wear school uniforms. The uniform **MUST** be worn on all school days. Students should come to school in their clean uniforms, dressed neatly and appropriately. Please pay careful attention to the following details and help us avoid having to send a child home or call a parent to bring the proper clothing to school. Additionally, please be aware that all boys are required to wear their uniforms on Sunday during classes.

BOYS:

- Navy Blue Uniform Pants [regular fit, non-cargo, not tight-fitting]
- Light Blue, French Blue or White Long/Short Sleeve Oxford Shirt
- Light Blue or Navy Blue Long/Short Sleeve, 3 Button Polo Shirt
- Plain Navy Blue Sweatshirt [any brand - hooded or zippered - no decals, logos, or insignias]
- Navy Blue Sweatshirt with/without Hood w/DHR logo (available in office or via French Toast at www.frenchtoast.com/schoolbox/schools type in code:QS5FXTI)

Only the top button of shirts may be left opened (even with a shirt underneath). Additionally, all male students are required to wear a *yarmulka* (*kippah*) and *tzitzis*.

Students may not wear flip-flops, slippers or backless shoes to school and must wear sneakers on the days that they have physical education classes.

GIRLS:

- Light Blue, French Blue or White Oxford Shirt/Blouse
- Light Blue or Navy Blue Long Sleeve, 3 Button Polo Shirt [not tight-fitting]
- Navy Blue Pleated Skirt [Covering the knees or longer]
- Navy Blue Pleated Jumper [Covering the knees or longer]
- Plain Navy Blue Sweatshirt [any brand - regular, hooded or zippered - no decals, logos or insignias]
- Navy Blue Sweatshirt with/without Hood w/DHR logo (available in office or via French Toast at www.frenchtoast.com/schoolbox/schools type in code: QS5FXTI)

Only the top button of shirts may be left opened (even with a shirt underneath). Collars must be worn with sweatshirts and sweaters.

All girls (K-8) must wear knee socks or tights.

Students may not wear flip-flops, slippers or backless shoes to school and they must wear sneakers on days that they have physical education classes.

VII. Arrival, Attendance and Lateness

Punctuality and regular attendance are crucial for success. Please try to be on time and in the classroom when class starts. Upon arrival at school, all students should go directly to their first period classroom/Tefilla area. For safety reasons, if a student arrives late, a parent must accompany the student up to the office. If a student is absent, the parent should call

the school to inform the office and a note should be brought from home when the student returns to school explaining the absence. Attendance records, which are legal documents required by state law, will be kept by all first period teachers. If the absence is planned, please inform your teachers in advance to allow them sufficient time to prepare and send work to help the student keep up with class work and assignments.

VIII. Kashrus/Kosher Dietary Guidelines

All food served to students must be prepackaged and must have one of the following kosher certifications:



School policy does not allow any home-baked foods, however, baked goods can be purchased at Malek's Bakery, or can occasionally be ordered through Chabad Lubavitch (271-0330), BJ's Bakery (475-1180) which is under the kuf-K or through Mrs. Adina Dan (330-5828).

IX. Lunch & Snacks

Students should bring bagged, kosher dairy or parve lunches from home (with all necessary utensils). Drinks may be brought from home, or students can help themselves to fresh milk, which is served daily (whole, 2%, skim and Cholov Yisrael). If a student is lactose intolerant or allergic to milk and needs special accommodations for meat lunches, they should reach out to the office in advance.

During the K-3 lunchtime, teachers on lunch duty operate two student microwaves (one dairy and one Cholov Yisrael dairy) on a rotating schedule. Microwave schedules and rules are sent home and posted during the first week of school. Students in grades 4 - 8 have access to the microwaves daily during their scheduled lunches.

Lunchtime should be a pleasant and enjoyable break. Seats should not be reserved for other students. Proper, respectful behavior will be expected at all times and will also be enforced in the lunchroom. Students must clean up after themselves. The teachers supervising lunch periods will clarify any other rules or expectations.

X. Computers & the Internet

Due to our concern about our ability to guarantee the purity and kedusha of our children and the sanctity of our school, we have very stringent technology rules to protect our students. Numerous well-known studies detail the shocking and unacceptable levels of inappropriate exposure that even very young children routinely experience while using the internet.

In light of this danger and concerns expressed by our parent body and Rabbaim, and as a result of extensive input and a directive from Agudath Yisrael, we have a very carefully maintained whitelist for certain DHR computers (laptops in the STEM lab, the laptop cart and desktop computers in the Computer lab). Otherwise, students have absolutely no internet

access and are forbidden to use any personal electronic devices, INCLUDING SMARTPHONES, at school, or at TIUNY when middle school students are there for davening. We have informed students and parents numerous times that if a child has a smartphone or any other device, it cannot be taken out during school time, for any reason, or while in the DHR or TIUNY buildings. If it is taken out during any of those times, it will be confiscated until the end of the school year.

If a student needs to contact their parents during the school day, he/she may come to the school office and request to use an office phone to call their parents. For any questions about this policy, please feel free to call the school for clarification at 585-266-2920. May we all be zoche to see much nachas from our children, and be partners in the preservation of kedushas Yisrael.

Finally, when students are riding district buses to and from school, they may use their own parent-supplied devices (if they are non-internet capable devices and they don't have movies) to play games or listen - with headphones - to music.

XI. Report Cards & Parent Conferences

Report cards will be issued twice during the school year (usually in January and June). Parents are encouraged to review them carefully and discuss the grades and comments with their children. Parents should not hesitate to contact the school or teachers if they have any questions or concerns about their child's progress.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be scheduled twice during the school year (usually in November and March). Parents are strongly encouraged to attend all scheduled conferences. Additionally, our teachers are always ready and willing to address parents' questions and concerns whenever necessary. The educational process is a cooperative venture between home and school. The aim of Derech HaTorah's administration and faculty is to constantly strive to offer the best possible program and to meet the needs of each and every student.

XII. Homework & Study Skills

Students in most classes will be assigned homework on a nightly basis. Teachers will share with students (and parents) their exact philosophies and expectations, yet the primary purpose of homework will be to review what the student learned that day/week.

We are committed to helping students develop study skills, improve their executive functioning skills, learn time management techniques and develop responsibility for their academic progress. At the beginning of the school year, each student (in grades 3-8) will receive a personal *Yoman* (daily planner) and will be expected to record each assignment. The Yoman must travel to and from school with each student on a daily basis.

XIII. Academic Honesty

This section was written by a DHR student. Cheating is wrong because you're taking someone else's work and using it as your own (in other words, you're being a fraud). There are many types of academic cheating such as:

- Sharing your completed work with another student (unless the teacher allows it)
- Copying and pasting online articles or copying from a book or publication
- Stealing or using answer sheets for tests.
- Paying or convincing another to do the work for you.

Now, if you think that cheating will let you feel good about your grade, or that cheating is the only way to be successful in school, you are wrong! Think again! By cheating, all you're going to do to yourself is make yourself feel worse – and teachers won't know what you need help with. Finally, dishonesty is wrong – it's clear in the Torah!! There are much better ways to get a good grade than cheating, for example:

- Ask your teachers to explain the topic in more detail
- Ask your friends or parents for help
- Ask your parents to hire a tutor for you
- If, when you get home, you don't study but instead you play on a device, you should just chuck your device off a cliff. 🤪

XIV. Dismissal

Before leaving the classroom, students should make sure that all of their books and items are stored neatly in their desks, cubbies or lockers (this will vary by grade and teacher). Chair should be put on desks so the floors can be cleaned each night. Teachers will dismiss students when their classrooms are neat and their buses are called. It is imperative that all students partner with us to keep our school clean and neat.