



Bay Area Midrasha in Oakland

c/o Temple Sinai | 2808 Summit Street | Oakland CA 94609
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Dear Midrasha Family:

7/5/11

Welcome to a new year at Midrasha! As you can see from the enclosed brochure and registration forms for the 2011-2012 Oakland Midrasha school year, there are a few changes to our programs and policies from last year.

This year, for the first time, we will be offering an introduction to the retreat program to our 8th graders. On the Sunday of the Fall Retreat all 8th graders are invited to attend A Tasty Backwards Adventure: A Sneak-Peak at the Retreats with Burritos, Blindfolds, and The Beastie Boys. Our 8th graders are strongly encouraged to attend, as this program is designed to get them engaged with and excited about the retreat program, and give them a chance to meet and bond with 8th graders from the other three Midrasha campuses, before they are invited to begin attending the retreats in February. There is a small fee associated with this program, as you will see on the enclosed fee worksheet.

Urban Adamah is a new Jewish organization in Berkeley that has created a Jewish ecology and justice program on a real working farm. This year, all four Midrasha campuses are partnering with Urban Adamah to offer our students something new. Each campus will offer a class bringing together themes of food, the earth, and Jewish values to engage our students in creating positive change in the world they are inheriting. Then, once or twice a semester, all four campuses will bring the students from these classes to the Berkeley farm to do some hands-on tikkun olam while seeing their retreat friends. There will be a small fee associated with this class to cover student time on the farm.

For their ongoing and vital support for the Midrasha programs, we thank The Jewish Federation and The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay, and our sponsoring synagogues: Temples Beth Abraham, Beth Shalom, Israel and Sinai, and Kehilla Community Synagogue. Despite the deep commitment of these partners, Oakland Midrasha is in need of consistent community support as well, in order to assure its long term survival. Last year, in addition to sending out our annual appeal, Oakland Midrasha launched a very successful new annual fundraiser – Pouring for Passover. This pre-Passover wine tasting, silent auction and raffle, gave our families and supporters a chance to purchase Passover wine while supporting a valuable cause. The fundraiser was a great success, enjoyed by those who attended, and promises to be even more dynamic this year. However, it can only thrive with the support of our parent community. This year we are asking for your help with our fundraiser in a number of ways. First, we are looking for fundraising committee members for this year's fundraising committee. Please check the fundraising committee box on the attached volunteer form if you are able to help with the event planning this year. Second, we are offering you the option of buying raffle tickets for our 'Instant Wine Cellar' when you turn in your registration form. Please just check the number of tickets you'd like to buy on the enclosed fee worksheet. Finally, we are asking that all our families purchase a minimum of two tickets to our fundraiser. The support of all our current families for this event will have a significant positive impact on Oakland Midrasha's fiscal security. Midrasha strives to offer a dynamic and meaningful community for your teens and we thank you for helping to support that effort.

We are following the model of Midrasha in Berkeley this year in instituting a sliding scale for our tuition. We ask that families that have the capacity to pay at the middle or top of the scale do so, so as to allow us to continue to offer the lower end of the scale to those families who rely on our rates remaining in their current range.

We recognize that East Bay teens have countless other demands on their time, opportunities, and pressures in their lives, and appreciate the value that our students place on their Midrasha experience. We do not take their love of the program for granted, and work hard to assure a program of quality that offers a dynamic, meaningful community for its members, a place where they feel they really belong.

Looking forward to another great year,

Kendra Lubalin
Executive Director

Geoff Piller
President