

# ROCKWERN

# ACADEMY

*Give them the world....*

# *Family Handbook* *2009-2010*



Rockwern Academy is Greater Cincinnati's Jewish Community Day School, serving children and their families from across the spectrum of Jewish life. We integrate Jewish values, history, literacy, and culture into a rich General and Judaic curriculum which fosters a passion for life-long learning, a strong Jewish identity, and a connection to Israel. Our nurturing educational community creates opportunities for leaders to emerge. Rockwern students are intellectually engaged, spiritually aware, and socially responsible.

## **Core Values**

### **Zedek – Justice**

Rockwern Academy helps each student develop a powerful voice of change, sense of purpose, and passion for justice. By nurturing these qualities, we educate our students to develop empathy for others, energy for activism, and a life-long desire for improving the world. These qualities empower Rockwern students to make a difference in the world around them, both in their home community and afar.

### **Kavod - Respect**

At Rockwern Academy we develop the capacities of trust, honesty, and care between

An individual and him/herself (*bein adam l'atzmo*)

An individual and others (*bein adam l'chavero*)

An individual and G-d (*bein adam l'makom*)

An individual and the environment around him/her (*bein adam l'svivo*)

### **B'Tzelem Elohim – in the image of G-d**

There is within each person an eternal spark that has the potential to be ignited. At Rockwern, as we see the unique strengths of each child unfold, it is our responsibility to recognize and nurture those strengths; to stroke the fire so that each spark becomes a strong and steady flame. That flame in turn enables us to reach up and out.

### **Ahavat Yisrael - Love of Israel**

It is our goal to help form an inextricable bond with the Jewish people-past, present, and future, and to foster a sense of pride and commitment to the State of Israel – its people, its language, and its land.

### **Limud – Learning**

Our goal is for each child to love learning as a lifetime pursuit.

August 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of all of us at Rockwern --- faculty, staff, administration and lay leadership --- welcome to a new school year.

As a school founded on Jewish values, we embrace the importance of community while recognizing that our community consists of precious and unique human beings. It is in this spirit that we recognize, celebrate and nurture your child's individuality. And we realize that your child's individuality has many components, all of great importance --- academic, social and spiritual. You have our assurance that we will work tirelessly and in a spirit of partnership to see that all of these areas are addressed for each child. You also have our assurance that nothing less than excellence in all areas will be acceptable to us as a school.

Please take time to read this handbook. As always, there have been some changes since last year's version. While it is our hope that you will find this handbook as comprehensive as possible, please understand that changing circumstances can sometimes dictate changes in policies, and that the full scope of who we are as a school cannot be expressed in such a document.

Thank you for the faith, trust and support you show by entrusting your children to us.

L' shalom,



Peter Cline  
Head of School/CEO



## About this Handbook

---

The handbook is meant to provide a *clear* and *visible* framework of understanding for students, parents, and staff. It provides answers, however brief, to such questions as, “Whom do I call if I have a question or concern?” “What is the School’s approach to teaching and learning?” “What responsibilities must we all fulfill as members of a community?” In short, “*What is Rockwern all about?*”

All handbooks should be manageable and should serve as reliable resources. While this *Parent/Student Handbook* is a work in progress that will change and be revised as we find even better ways to move forward together, it still can help you understand “what we are about” currently. Please read the handbook thoroughly and with care. Then, keep it at home within arm’s reach for reference.

The administration and teaching staff sincerely seek your understanding and cooperation as we work together to provide an exemplary educational environment for your children, our students.

## Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| General Information.....                             | 1   |
| Administrative Team.....                             | 1   |
| Role of Responsive Classroom.....                    | 2   |
| School Closings.....                                 | 3   |
| FERPA (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act)..... | 3   |
| Visitors.....  | 4   |
| School Calendar.....                                 | 5-8 |
| Religious Practices.....                             | 9   |
| Tefillah.....  | 9   |
| Shabbat.....   | 9   |
| Kashrut.....   | 9   |
| Kippot.....  | 10  |
| Bar/Bat Mitzvah.....                                 | 10  |
| ..... Holidays                                       |     |
| .....  | 11  |
| Life-Cycle Events.....                               | 13  |
| Tzedakah.....  | 13  |
| Mitzvot.....   | 14  |
| Student Services.....                                | 15  |
| Guidance Counselor.....                              | 15  |
| Learning Lab.....                                    | 15  |
| Speech & Language.....                               | 15  |
| Library/Media Center.....                            | 16  |
| Early Morning Supervision.....                       | 16  |
| After-School Programs.....                           | 16  |
| Curriculum.....                                      | 18  |
| Philosophy.....                                      | 18  |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms.....             | 18  |
| Trips.....   | 19  |
| Assessing Student Progress.....                      | 20  |
| Diagnostic Tests.....                                | 20  |
| Timed Tests.....                                     | 20  |
| Trimester Exams.....                                 | 20  |
| Standardized Tests.....                              | 20  |
| Middle School Academic Probation.....                | 20  |
| Homework.....  | 21  |
| Reporting Student Progress.....                      | 22  |
| PowerSchool.....                                     | 22  |
| Conferences.....                                     | 22  |
| Report Cards.....                                    | 23  |

---

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Student Management and Safety.....        | 25 |
| Daily Schedule.....                       | 25 |
| Student Drop-off Procedures.....          | 25 |
| Student Pick-up Procedures.....           | 25 |
| Attendance.....                           | 26 |
| Absences.....                             | 26 |
| Tardiness.....                            | 27 |
| Early Dismissal.....                      | 27 |
| Make-up Work.....                         | 27 |
| Dress Code – Grades 5-8.....              | 27 |
| General Guidelines.....                   | 28 |
| Code of Conduct.....                      | 29 |
| Cheating.....                             | 31 |
| Horseplay.....                            | 32 |
| Internet Usage.....                       | 32 |
| Email.....                                | 33 |
| Safety Drills.....                        | 33 |
| Accidents.....                            | 34 |
| Asbestos.....                             | 34 |
| Food Service.....                         | 34 |
| Activities.....                           | 35 |
| Athletics.....                            | 35 |
| Bigs in School.....                       | 35 |
| Student Health.....                       | 36 |
| Medical Records.....                      | 36 |
| Illness.....                              | 36 |
| Emergency Medical Authorization Form..... | 38 |
| Administration of Medication.....         | 38 |
| Schedule II Medication Policy.....        | 38 |
| Parent Involvement.....                   | 39 |
| PTO.....                                  | 39 |
| Dor L’Dor Program.....                    | 39 |
| Birthday Book Club.....                   | 39 |
| Lost and Found.....                       | 39 |
| Box Tops for Education.....               | 39 |
| Tuition Assistance.....                   | 41 |
| Important Phone Numbers.....              | 42 |

---



|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Ed Lenz<br>Controller      | Tuition Assistance<br>Tuition Invoice<br>Accounts Payable/Receivables |
| Renee DeBorde<br>Registrar | Student Records   |

To obtain general information, i.e. the day of a field trip, when a program starts, the location of an athletic event, please refer to the school calendar or check the Daily Bulletin on PowerSchool.

### **The Role of Responsive Classroom**

The *Responsive Classroom*® is an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools, in kindergarten through eighth grade. Developed by classroom teachers, it consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day.

The teachers at Rockwern Academy were given the opportunity to be trained in the principles and strategies of Responsive Classroom (RC) during the summers of 1999 (RCI) and 2000 (RCII). Some teachers did a personal case study while taking RC III in 2001. A large portion of the staff participated in the initial training, and a small group of teachers were coached by RC consultants Carol Davis and Ruth Charney. We continue to offer RC training for our newly hired teachers. Carol and Ruth also worked with administrators and mentored Gail Sperling as she trained to become a certified Responsive Classroom consulting teacher.

The *Responsive Classroom*® approach is informed by the work of many great educational theorists as well as the experiences of exemplary classroom teachers. There are seven basic principles underlying this approach:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum
- How children learn is as important as what they learn; process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- There is a set of social skills children need in order to be successful academically and socially: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
- Knowing the children we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education.
- How the adults at school work together is as important as individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

The *Responsive Classroom*® approach includes the following main teaching strategies and elements:

- Morning Meeting: A daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning, and reinforces academic and social skills.
  - Rules and Logical Consequences: A clear and consistent approach to discipline that fosters responsibility and self-control.
-

- Guided Discovery: A format for introducing materials that encourages inquiry, heightens interest, and teaches care of the school environment.
- Academic Choice: An approach to giving children choices in their learning that helps them become invested, self-motivated learners.
- Classroom Organization: Strategies for arranging materials, furniture, and displays to encourage independence, promote caring, and maximize learning.

It is the expectation of the Administration of Rockwern Academy that all teachers see themselves as integral and integrated members of a culture of caring, respect, and personal responsibility and that they do all within their power to model and teach these cultural values to each of Rockwern's students.

### **School Closings**

On days when the school is closed or on a 90-minute delay due to inclement weather or other emergencies, parents can stay informed by local radio and television. The decision to close school is made early in the morning. Announcements usually start at about 5:45 a.m. A reliable "rule of thumb" is as follows: If Sycamore is closed, Rockwern is closed. If Sycamore is on a 90-minute delay, Rockwern will be on a 90-minute delay." Still, you are strongly encouraged to consult local media and/or the school's closing information line. At this time, we only use 3 scenarios:

- (1) We are open.
- (2) We are closed.
- (3) We are on a 90-minute delay. If we opt for a delay, there will be NO before-school childcare.

Once school is in session, it is the School's practice to continue to hold classes for the remainder of the school day. Only under extreme circumstances will school be closed once students have arrived. If we find it necessary to close during the day, the closing will be announced on the radio or television. We will also start a phone tree so parents, guardians, or those listed as Emergency Contacts will know to come and get their children. Rockwern Academy does not generally close early for weather emergencies (predicted snow, tornado watch, etc.). Please call the School's Closing Information line (513-766-3101) if you are in doubt. In all cases, students picked up early from school must be signed out by the parent or by someone the parent has designated on the School's Emergency Medical Authorization form.

### **(FERPA) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), states that schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, or telephone number. However, schools must inform parents about the release of directory information and allow parents a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose the information about them. Schools must notify parents annually of their rights under FERPA.

**If you wish to request that your name not be included in this year's directory, please contact Renee DeBorde at 513-984-3770 x 3182.**

---

Also, for the safety of our students and families, no staff member of Rockwern Academy is permitted to release phone numbers, class lists, addresses, or email addresses over the phone.

Finally, if for any reason, you do not want your child’s photograph to appear in the media, i.e. *The Enquirer* or the *American Israelite*, please call Renee DeBorde.

**Visitors**

For security reasons, upon arrival during the school day, all adults must register at the office and receive an identifying tag which must be worn at all times. We realize the minor inconvenience

this creates for parents who we hope will make numerous appearances in the school. However, the “open” nature of the Rockwern Academy campus makes this policy a necessity, for reasons of safety as well as security.

Rockwern Academy encourages all members of a child’s extended family to take an active part in the child’s life. Please schedule visits to the classroom with the classroom teacher in advance.

For the care and safety of all our students, Rockwern Academy will adhere to the following rule concerning visitation, custody, and communications:

*All communications generated by Rockwern Academy will be distributed to each parent having joint or full legal custody, and upon request of any parent with full legal custody, any other parent, or stepparent. Rockwern Academy reserves the right to require proof of a parent’s legal status.*

*No person shall visit a student on school grounds or during school sponsored trips without the permission of a parent with physical or legal custody.*

*No person shall remove a student from the school or the custody of the school without written authorization from a parent with legal custody. Without limitation, Rockwern Academy reserves the right to deny any person the right to visit or remove any student from school custody if Rockwern Academy reasonably fears for the safety or the proper custody of the child.*

School Calendar

**2009-2010**

**AUGUST**

- 17 ..... Teacher Breakfast sponsored by PTO
  - 17-20. .... Teacher Pre-Planning
  - 18 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm
  - 18 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm
-

- 19 ..... New Parent Wine and Coffee Social – 7:30 pm at Mr. & Mrs. Finestone’s
- 21 ..... Greet the Teacher Grades 1-8; 1-3 pm
- 24 ..... First Day Grade 1 –8**
- 24 ..... Lunch Order due for September
- 24 ..... Preschool **Parent** Orientation 6:00 pm
- 24 ..... Kindergarten **Parent** Orientation 7:00 pm
- 25 ..... Preschool **Student** Orientation 9-10 am
- 25 ..... PTO Preschool Orientation Social – Parents & Students 10-11:15 am – Rockwern Playground
- 25 ..... Kindergarten **Student** Orientation 10:15-11:15 am
- 26 ..... **First day for Preschool & Kindergarten**
- 29 ..... Bat Mitzvah – Danielle Caller at Adath Israel

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm
- 2 ..... PTO Fall Fundraiser Kick-off – Preschool Students & Parents 8:30 am;  
and K-8 2:30 pm Eden Hall
- 2 ..... PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm – playground
- 4 ..... 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Family Shabbat dinner at Swaim Park
- 7 ..... Labor Day—NO SCHOOL**
- 8 ..... **Parent** Orientation Grades 5-8 6:30 pm
- 9 ..... Picture Day
- 10 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom
- 10 ..... **Parent** Orientation Grade 1 & 2; 6:30 pm
- 14 ..... **Parent** Orientation Grade 3 & 4; 6:30 pm
- 16 ..... PTO Preschool Parent/Caregiver Coffee 8:30 am at Panera
- 16 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm
- 16 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm
- 17 ..... PTO Rosh Hashanah Apples & Honey tasting
- 18 ..... Erev Rosh Hashanah –NO SCHOOL**
- 19-20 ..... Rosh Hashanah**
- 21 ..... Lunch orders due for October
- 22 ..... PTO Fall Fundraiser Turn-in date
- 23 ..... PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm - playground
- 28 ..... Yom Kippur – NO SCHOOL**

## OCTOBER

- 1 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom
  - 6 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm
  - 8 ..... Breakfast in the Sukkah – Kindergarten Families
  - 14 ..... Mother’s Nature for 2’s and 3’s sponsored by PTO
  - 14 ..... PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm - playground
  - 17 ..... Bar Mitzvah – Josh Reichman at Chabad
  - 18 ..... PTO Family Event – The Amazing Race 4-6:30 pm
  - 19 ..... Preschool and Kindergarten Schoolhouse Symphony
-

sponsored by PTO

21 ..... Lunch orders due for November  
21 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm  
21 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm  
23 ..... PTO Preschool Parent/Caregiver Coffee 8:30 am at Panera  
24 ..... Bar Mitzvah – Sam Levitt at Adath Israel  
26 ..... Picture re-take day  
**29 ..... Parent/Teacher Conferences – 1 pm Early Dismissal**  
**30 ..... Parent/Teacher Conferences – NO CLASSES**

## NOVEMBER

3 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm  
4 ..... PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm - playground  
4 ..... PTO Preschool Families meet at Marx Bagels for dinner 5:30  
pm  
5 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom  
9-13 ..... Trimester Exam week for Middle School  
11 ..... Prospective Family Open House Coffee 9:30-11 am  
13 ..... Bagels & Boutiques Gift Show 8:15-10:30 am in Eden Hall  
16 ..... Teacher comments due  
17 ..... End of 1st Trimester  
17 ..... Prospective Families Open House 7-8:30 pm  
18 ..... All grades & comments posted  
18 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm  
18 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm  
21 ..... Lunch orders due for December  
24 ..... Grand People Day - 1 pm Grades K-8  
24 ..... Report cards home  
**25-27 ..... Thanksgiving Holiday—NO SCHOOL**  
30 ..... Mother's Nature 4 year olds sponsored by PTO

## DECEMBER

1 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm  
2 ..... PTO Preschool Parent/Caregiver Coffee 8:30 am at Panera  
3 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am – Boardroom  
5 ..... Havdalah – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade 7 pm  
10 ..... K-2 Chanukah Music Program 6:30 pm  
11 ..... Chanukah  
11 ..... PTO Tasting Traditional Chanukah Foods  
12 ..... Bat Mitzvah – Alison Fisher at Adath Israel  
12-18 ..... Chanukah  
14 ..... PTO Student Chanukah Party  
15 ..... Prospective Parent Kindergarten Preview Night 7-8:30 pm  
16 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm  
16 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm  
21 ..... Lunch orders due for January  
**23-31 ..... Winter Break—NO SCHOOL**

## JANUARY 2010

---

- 1 ..... **NEW YEAR'S DAY—NO SCHOOL**
- 4 ..... School resumes
- 5 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm
- 6 ..... Preschool and Kindergarten Schoolhouse Symphony  
sponsored by PTO
- 7 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom
- 10 ..... Sundays at Rockwern for Prospective and current Kindergarten  
parents and child from 3-4:30 pm
- 15 ..... PTO Preschool Parent/Caregiver Coffee 8:30 am at Panera
- 18 ..... **Martin Luther King Day—NO SCHOOL**
- 21 ..... Lunch orders due for February
- 20 ..... Kabbalat HaTorah Grade 2 at 7 pm
- 27 ..... 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Fair with All Saints School
- 27 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm
- 27 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm
- 28 ..... 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School
- 29 ..... Tu B'Shevat Celebration sponsored by PTO
- 31 ..... PTO Family Fun event

**FEBRUARY**

- 2 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm
- 4 ..... PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom
- 5 ..... Preschool Shabbat Breakfast 9-11 am – Early Dismissal for  
preschool only
- 7 ..... Sundays at Rockwern-Preschool Parent and child ages 3-5  
from 3-4:30 pm
- 11 ..... 3 & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Art and Music Program 6:30 pm
- 12 ..... PTO Spring Fundraiser – Mishloach Manot (Purim Care  
packages) turn-in
- 13 ..... Bat Mitzvah – Lila Englander at Adath Israel
- 15 ..... **Presidents' Day—NO SCHOOL**
- 17 ..... Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm
- 17 ..... Board Meeting 7 pm
- 21 ..... Lunch orders due for March
- 21 ..... Kindergarten Sh'ma Pillowcase Program 6:30 pm
- 22-25. .... Trimester Exam Week for Middle School
- 25 ..... PTO Mishloach Manot packing date
- 26 ..... End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester
- 26 ..... PTO Purim Carnival 10 am
- 26 ..... **EARLY DISMISSAL 1 PM**
- 28 ..... Purim

**MARCH**

- 1 ..... Teacher comments due
  - 1 ..... Spring Picture Day
  - 1 ..... Mother's Nature 4 year olds sponsored by PTO
  - 2 ..... Staff Meeting 3:45 pm
  - 3 ..... PTO Preschool Parents/Caregivers Coffee 8:30 am at Panera
  - 4 ..... 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Freedom Program – 6:30 pm
-

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 5 .....              | All grades & comments posted   |
| 10 .....             | Report cards home  |
| 11 .....             | PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom                                |
| <b>11 .....</b>      | <b>Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences – 1 pm Early</b>               |
| <b>Dismissal</b>     |  |
| <b>12 .....</b>      | <b>Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences – NO CLASSES</b>               |
| 17 .....             | PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm -<br>playground |
| 17 .....             | 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade States Program – 6:30 pm                       |
| 21 .....             | Lunch orders due for April   |
| 23-24 .....          | Model Seders PS – Grade 2  |
| 24 .....             | Seder Grades 4 & 5 – Cedar Village                                   |
| 24 .....             | Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm                                   |
| 24 .....             | Board Meeting 7 pm   |
| 25 .....             | Seder Grade 3 – The Seasons  |
| 26 .....             | Interfaith Seder Grades 6-8  |
| <b>29 - 31 .....</b> | <b>Pesach Break – NO SCHOOL</b>                                      |

#### APRIL

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>1-9 .....</b> | <b>Pesach Break- NO SCHOOL</b>                                       |
| 12 .....         | PTO Post-Passover Food Collection for the JFS Food Pantry            |
| 13 .....         | Staff Meeting 3:45 pm  |
| 14 .....         | PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm –<br>playground |
| 15 .....         | PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom                                |
| 19 .....         | Yom HaZikaron  |
| 20 .....         | Yom HaAtzma'ut   |
| 21 .....         | Lunch orders due for May   |
| 21 .....         | Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm                                   |
| 21 .....         | Board Meeting 7 pm   |
| 22 .....         | 5-8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Music and Art Showcase 6:30 pm               |
| 23 .....         | PTO Preschool Panera Coffee 8:30 am                                  |
| 16 .....         | PTO Preschool Parent Coffee 8:30 am at Panera                        |
| 26-29 .....      | 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade trip to New York City                          |
| 26-30 .....      | Exam week for 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                  |
| 26-30 .....      | 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade trip to Washington DC                          |

#### MAY

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| 2-16 ..... | 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade trip to Israel                                 |
| 4 .....    | Staff Meeting 3:45 pm  |
| 6 .....    | PTO Board Meeting 8:15 am - Boardroom                                |
| 10 .....   | Preschool and Kindergarten Schoolhouse Symphony<br>sponsored by PTO  |
| 11 .....   | Meet-and-Greet New and Host Parents 6:30 – 7:30 pm                   |
| 12 .....   | Yom Yerushalayim   |
| 12 .....   | PTO Preschool Playdate in the Park 12:15 and 3:15 pm -<br>playground |
| 12 .....   | Executive Board Meeting 5:30 – 7pm                                   |
| 12 .....   | Board Meeting 7 pm   |

---

- 19-20. . . . . Shavuot – NO SCHOOL**
- 21 . . . . . Lunch orders due for June
- 24 . . . . . Mother’s Nature 2’s and 3’s sponsored by PTO
- 28 . . . . . Maccabia
- 31 . . . . . Memorial Day—NO SCHOOL**

**JUNE**

- 1-4 . . . . . Exam week for Grades 6-7
- 2 . . . . . PTO End-of-Year Parent Coffee 8:15 am
- 3 . . . . . Graduation 7 pm
- 4 . . . . . Teacher comments due
- 8 . . . . . Trimester ends
- 8 . . . . . Last day of school PS – 7<sup>th</sup> Grades
- 9-11 . . . . . Staff Meetings
- 11 . . . . . All grades & comments posted
- 18 . . . . . Report cards home

Religious Practices

**Tefillah**

Rockwern students in grades 3—8 participate in prayer services geared to their developmental level. Girls are offered full privileges and are expected to participate fully in all services. While some students may choose to wear kippot throughout the day, boys will be required, and girls are welcome, to wear a kippah during times set aside for prayer, study of religious texts and meals. Seating is mixed.

Lunch and snacks are accompanied by the appropriate b’rakhot (blessings) i.e. hamotzi and birkat hamazon, which add to the sense of sanctity in the school. All students are expected to participate in these activities and to add to the atmosphere of kedushah (holiness) and joy.

**Shabbat**

Rockwern strives to create a sense of the sanctity of Shabbat and its place in Jewish tradition. In the classroom, preparations for Shabbat take on special meaning. Students participate in Kabbalat Shabbat services; special prayers are recited, Tzedakah is collected, and there is an added sense of joy that Shabbat will arrive soon.

---

## **Kashrut**

The laws of kashrut represent an important means of transforming the act of eating into a holy act and are unique to the Jewish religion. Jews have differing customs regarding kashrut, based upon their own religious traditions and beliefs, and it is Rockwern's aim to provide an environment that allows students to observe these customs. To that end, our kashrut policy has been created with the support and approval of a committee of rabbis from the Cincinnati community.

Rockwern provides lunches and other snacks which are prepared in our own kitchen. This kitchen is not under rabbinic supervision, but every effort is made to maintain the standards of kashrut. Please do not hesitate to ask the Food Service Manager if you have any questions regarding the policies of the kitchen.

While we recognize that many Rockwern families do not practice kashrut at home, we require that all members of the Rockwern community observe the kashrut policy at school events.

When students pack lunches, we require that they sit separately from other students eating the school lunch. If Pre-Schoolers stay for lunch, they must eat the school lunch.

When snacks are served outside the lunch room, either by teachers or students, the following policy applies:

- Raw, uncut fruits and vegetables are permissible (and encouraged!)
- Pre-packaged food must be unopened and have a heksher.
- No food may be brought into the school which was prepared in private homes, even if the providers keep kosher at home.
- Food purchased from businesses which are under reliable rabbinic supervision may be brought into the school, provided it is unopened before entering the school.
- No meat may be brought on to the premises—even kosher meat—by any parent or student, in order to avoid inadvertent mixing of meat and dairy.

Birthdays are very special days for students; therefore, simple celebrations are acceptable. Parents may send store-bought kosher treats to share with the class, if they so choose. No elaborate party favors are allowed. As a matter of courtesy and respect, however, we ask parents to speak to the teachers in advance of bringing any food to class. We also sincerely request (and strongly encourage) the parent body to be mindful of Shabbat when planning birthday parties and other social gatherings. Rockwern students are taught to be inclusive, and it is sometimes difficult and/or hurtful for a child to know that others are at a party and he/she cannot attend.

We encourage Rockwern families to reflect the shared mission of the school by remaining sensitive to the needs of all. When inviting school friends to meals or parties outside of school, please be aware that there may be children in your child's class who keep kosher or have other dietary needs. We encourage you to check with families regarding ways to accommodate children with such needs.

## **Kippot**

---

Rockwern adheres to the Jewish philosophy that learning is one of the most noble human endeavors. Traditionally, a Jew studying Torah wears a kippah to recognize the holy and special aspects of this sacred activity. Rockwern teaches students that all learning is Torah and therefore special. Consequently, Rockwern's policy is that boys wear kippot during tefillot, Judaic studies, and meals. Girls may do so if they desire.

Rockwern recommends that boys acquire a special personal kippah and that they also keep at least one spare kippah in their locker or back pack. Kippot are provided for Pre-School boys who wear them for snack, lunch or when attending any event in the synagogue.

We have found in the past some students routinely leave their kippot in their locker or classroom and come to the office for another due to the convenience. They have had little incentive to develop a sense of responsibility about their kippot.

To encourage a sense of responsibility, all boys grades K-8 will be given a book of two (2) kippot coupons at the beginning of the year. We encourage the students to keep these coupons in a safe convenient place to be used when they cannot locate their kippah.

If a student finds he does not have a kippah, he will need to present the main office with a kippah coupon to receive a new one. Students who use the 2 coupons, may purchase additional books of 10 coupons from the office for \$5.00.

A family may decide, in consultation with the Head of School, to opt out of this requirement.

### **Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

Rockwern is happy to recognize and celebrate our students' Bar and Bat Mitzvah. In addition to sending a book to their synagogue, we honor them at school. Please help us in this endeavor by letting us know your child's date and synagogue as soon as it has been decided.

### **Holidays**

#### ***Jewish Holidays***

The school year at Rockwern revolves around the Jewish calendar. All festivals and special periods of the year are noted and observed in the school setting. The entire building takes on the ambiance of the approaching holiday. All classes are involved in appropriate learning activities, observances and school assemblies. Classes and school activities are scheduled with deference to Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

#### ***Rosh Hashanah***

Rosh Hashanah marks the Jewish New Year and is best translated to mean "the beginning of the year". It is celebrated in Israel and throughout the world on the first two days of the Jewish month of Tishrei. Some of the more well known customs of this High Holiday are

---

the blowing of the Shofar and dipping apples or challah in honey as a symbol of hope for a sweet new year.

### **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)**

Yom Kippur is considered by Jews to be the most solemn day of the year, and falls about a week after Rosh Hashanah, on the tenth of Tishrei. The start of Yom Kippur is marked by the well-known Kol Nidrei prayer at the Erev Yom Kippur service in synagogues everywhere. Jews have traditionally observed this holiday with intensive prayer and fasting from sundown Erev Yom Kippur to the end of the concluding Neilah service at sundown the following day.

### **Sukkot**

Sukkot is one of the three “festivals” identified in the Torah. Sukkot begins at sundown, five days after Yom Kippur. Sukkot is the plural form of the Hebrew word for booth (Sukkah). During the 9 days that Sukkot is celebrated, traditionally, Jews are to spend their time in the sukkah, eating their meals, receiving guests, and sleeping. Many families build their sukkah at the end of Yom Kippur. The Sukkot synagogue service is noteworthy for the use of the Lulav and Etrog during morning prayers. The seventh day of Sukkot, known as Hoshanah Rabbah, is marked by a special procession in the synagogue known as Hakafot.

### **Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah**

The eighth day of Sukkot is referred to as Shemini Atzeret. Shemini Atzeret prayers include the Yizkor remembrance service and a special prayer for rain (“geshem” in Hebrew) to fall in Israel. The following day is Simchat Torah, when we read the very last portion of the fifth book of the Torah – Devarim (Deuteronomy), and then begin reading the Torah from the very first verse of Bereshit (Genesis). This is one of the most festive of Jewish holidays, marking both the completion and the start of the annual cycle of Torah reading. Simchat Torah services include dancing with the Torah scrolls in the synagogue and dancing with flags or degalim. In many congregations, during the morning service, all people over thirteen who are present are called to the Torah to read the blessings before the reading of the end of Devarim.

### **Hanukkah**

Hanukkah is an eight-day holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the great military victory of the Maccabees. The festival is observed by lighting candles placed on a menorah, called a Hanukkiah. On the first night, one candle is lit, and an additional candle is lit on each of the following nights. Traditionally, Hanukkah celebrations include eating potato pancakes called latkes and jelly doughnuts called sufganiyot. And of course, we spin the dreidel, or sevivon in Hebrew. The Hebrew letters on each of the four sides of the sevivon stand for the phrase “a great miracle happened there”.

### **Tu b'Shvat**

Tu b'Shvat is the new year for trees. Its name is derived from its date on the Jewish calendar – the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month Shevat. It can be thought of as the Jewish Arbor Day. The Torah teaches that trees may not be destroyed, even during wartime. The renowned passage, from Devarim, states that “you may eat off them, but you must not cut them

---

down". We celebrate Tu b'Shvat by eating various fruits and nuts associated with trees and Israel.

### **Purim**

Purim is a holiday of gift giving and great fun. It is celebrated on the Jewish calendar on the 14th day of the month of Adar. On Purim, we dress up in costumes, and we read the Megillah Esther (the Scroll of Esther). It is read in the synagogue on the evening of Purim.

### **Passover**

Passover (Pesach in Hebrew) is an eight-day celebration and commemoration of our exodus from slavery in Egypt and is another of the three festivals referenced in the Torah. There are many customs and traditions that mark the Passover period. We are prohibited from eating leavened food such as bread during the week of Passover. In its place, we eat unleavened matzah. The festive meal the first two nights, the Seder, reminds us each year of the exodus. The Seder is more than just a meal however; it is a complete service that follows a strict order (seder in Hebrew) around a table full of symbolism, like the seder plate and a cup of wine for the Prophet Elijah. During this meal, the story of the Exodus from Egypt is retold using a special text called the Haggadah. A highlight for children is the reading of the Four Questions and the search for the afikoman.

### **Lag Ba'Omer**

Lag Ba'Omer celebrates the counting of the days from the second day of Passover to the day that Moses received the Torah – Shavuot. Lag Ba'Omer commemorates the 33<sup>rd</sup> day of the counting of the Omer ("Lag" is the pronunciation of the Hebrew letters lamed and gimme that together mean 33). Although the counting of the Omer is a solemn and sad period on the Jewish calendar, Lag Ba'Omer is a break from that. The holiday is really a celebration that includes outdoor activities, like picnics and bonfires. Another tradition is for children to play with symbolic bows and arrows.

### **Yom HaShoah**

Yom HaShoah commemorates for the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

### **Yom Hazikaron**

Yom Hazikaron is Memorial Day in Israel. This holiday honors veterans and fallen military personnel of the Israel Defense Forces.

### **Yom Ha'atzmaut**

Yom Ha'atzmaut is Israeli Independence Day, commemorating the day in 1948 that David Ben-Gurion declared Israel an independent nation. It is a day of great celebration and pride.

### **Shavuot**

Shavuot is one of the three biblical festivals and celebrates three things. First is the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai; second is the harvest in Israel; third is ripening of the first fruits in Israel. The festival marks the end of the Omer count, and falls on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the second day of Passover. We read the Book of Ruth – Megillat Rut - in the synagogue on Shavuot. It is traditional to eat dairy foods during Shavuot, such as blintzes and cheesecake.

---

## ***Non-Jewish Holidays***

National holidays are marked by special programs and are taught as part of the integrated curriculum.

The School does not acknowledge or celebrate Halloween or Valentine's Day.

## **Life-cycle Events**

### ***Pre-School***

The Pre-School Shabbat Breakfast is a joyous occasion when students in Pre-School perform Hebrew songs and dances they have learned on stage in Eden Hall. Then they join family for breakfast, which is followed by classroom visits.

### ***First Grade***

Yom Hasiddur is a highlight of the school year for our first grade class at Rockwern Academy; this is the time when they receive their first prayer book. The students learn the importance of our prayers as a connection with K'lal Yisra'el. As the holiday of Shavuot approaches, the first graders are prepared to lead their families and friends in a Shachareit which takes place in Boymel Synagogue. During this ceremony, the students receive a new siddur with a cover specially and personally decorated by their parents.

### ***Second Grade***

The study of Torah at Rockwern Academy begins in second grade. This important milestone is marked by an evening event during which the students are presented with a copy of the Five Books of the Torah. The students and their teachers prepare a program for their families and friends reflecting their excitement and their new understanding as they begin a lifetime of the study of Torah.

### ***Third Grade***

In addition to their learning about Shabbat, the third grade students are taught the Havdallah service, a ceremony that separates Shabbat from the week ahead. Family and friends are invited to participate in a Saturday evening program during which the students lead us all in a Havdallah service; the ceremony includes grape juice, a braided candle and a beautiful ceramic spice box created individually by each student in art class.

### ***Fourth Grade***

The fourth grade class studies the Book of Exodus as part of the Judaic Studies program at Rockwern Academy. Together with their teachers, the fourth grade students prepare a program that celebrates freedom. This program reflects the students' understanding of and appreciation for the freedom gained by the Jewish people during the exodus from Egypt more than three thousand years ago. Integrated into this program are reflections and stories from the very recent struggle for freedom of the Black community in America.

## **Tzedakah**

*"Blessed be he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in his day of trouble."*

*Tehillim 41:2 (Psalms*

41:2)

---

The Jewish concept of Tzedakah (righteous giving to those less fortunate) is an essential element of Jewish life and an integral part of the curriculum. Many Tzedakah projects take place during the school year.

It is traditional to give a donation for Tzedakah on Erev Shabbat. Rockwern follows this custom by encouraging children to contribute to the Tzedakah fund on Fridays and prior to holidays. Of course, money for Tzedakah may be sent with your child at any time. The money collected is then distributed to a number of local, national and Israeli agencies.

### **Mitzvot**

Mitzvot are at the very core of Judaism and, as such, they are at the heart of the daily teaching at Rockwern Academy. Ethical, as well as ritual, Mitzvot are taught as students are challenged to “make the world a better place” through their behavior in the classroom, in their homes, and in our community. The process of studying, understanding and carrying out Mitzvot is integrated with our Wise Lives program, with the giving of Tzedakah, and by community service.

## **Student Services**

### **Guidance Counselor**

Rockwern Academy offers a full service, integrated guidance program. The guidance counselor will work with individual students, small groups of students, and classes. Also, the guidance counselor will serve as support for parents and classroom teachers, as well as creating programming to educate our stakeholders on a variety of developmental issues as they relate to school and social functioning. While a child’s primary adult contact at school will always be the classroom teacher, the guidance counselor is here to serve as the child’s advocate in a number of important ways.

### **Learning Lab**

Rockwern’s Learning Lab is staffed with an Academic Specialist and a Speech Pathologist. Each of these professionals provides both diagnostic and direct services to Rockwern students.

---

The Academic Specialist is available to support, remediate, or enrich qualifying students whose academic progress, in a particular subject, is determined to be best served in individual or very small group situations. A student may be deemed eligible after teachers consult with the Intervention Team and in-class accommodations have been utilized. No student is tested or served without the express permission and involvement of the parents/guardians and the Director of Education.

If testing and consultation indicate additional intervention could be helpful and appropriate, students may then be provided with the services of the Academic Specialist in addition to the classroom accommodations. If the student receives remediation or enrichment teaching from the Academic Specialist, monthly progress reports are usually provided. Progress of support services is described quarterly.

Parents may initiate this evaluation process by speaking to the child's teacher or to the Director of Education and will be kept fully informed as the process progresses.

### **Speech & Language**

The Speech & Language Pathologist (SLP) provides speech and language services to children who qualify for such services grades K-8. Therapy includes, but is not restricted to, articulation, language processing and expression, fluency, voice, and pragmatic therapy.

The referral process is initiated by the child's teacher who consults with the Intervention Team. The SLP then contacts the student's parents/guardians to discuss the team's concerns, as well as any parent/guardian concerns. A speech/language evaluation is performed only if the SLP, parents/guardians, and Director of Education agree a full evaluation is warranted.

Upon completion of the evaluation, a multi-disciplinary meeting involving the parents, the SLP, the child's teacher(s), Academic Specialist, and the Director of Education is held. Results of the evaluation and recommendations are discussed at that time. If the child has been diagnosed with only a mild articulation delay, then the parent may simply request a phone conference with the SLP.

Therapy is generally provided 1-2 days a week in 10-40 minute sessions, individually or in small groups, depending on the child's needs. The SLP remains in contact with the child's teachers and parents throughout the school year. An end-of-year summary is provided for each child.

Parents may initiate this process by discussing their concerns with the child's teacher or the Director of Education.

---

## **Library/Media Center**

The Rockwern Academy Library offers students and teachers a variety of resources. During open hours, students are encouraged to make full use of the library, whether it is looking for books, taking Accelerated Reader quizzes, conducting research, or reading quietly.

Students are responsible for returning books on time and in good condition. Overdue notices will be given to the students when a book has not been renewed or returned on schedule. If a book is lost, an invoice with the replacement cost will be sent home.

Students will receive a library card with their personal ID number to renew books from home. They can also search the library catalog from a home computer.

The goal of the Library/Media Center is to foster a love of reading, to provide a space to read alone and with others, and to nurture curiosity in research.

## **Early Morning Supervision**

As a service to our parent body, Rockwern provides free adult supervision of children who must arrive at school prior to 8:00 a.m. An adult is available daily, beginning at 7:00 a.m., in Eden Hall.

All students who arrive prior to 8:00 a.m. must sign in with the adult in charge in Eden Hall. Middle School students may then go to the Middle School hallway to study or socialize. Lower School students must remain in Eden Hall and will be dismissed to their classes at 8:00 a.m. Pre-school students are escorted to their classrooms.

## **After-School Programs**

Throughout the year various Rockwern Academy teachers offer after-school programs in their specialty. While these offerings may change from year to year, we have consistently offered art, piano, Israeli dance, and jump rope. Teachers determine dates, times and age groups, as well as fees.

In addition, the school offers after-school care for pre-school children. This program includes a kosher snack and supervised play. The program is designed for families whose children need to stay after school past the normal pick-up time.

Fees for the preschool program are payable monthly in advance and families are not eligible for refunds for unused days or credit toward future months for unused days in a given month. If the fee has not been paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the month, the child will not be allowed to continue in the program until the fee is paid.

### *Fee Structure*

\$144.00 per month for 3 days per week

\$240.00 per month for 5 days per week

Children who are on three day plans but require an extra day in the week will be billed \$15.00 for additional days. The fee structure reflects a daily cost and students who are picked up before 6 pm Monday through Thursday or 5 pm on Fridays are not eligible for

---

reductions. Parents who do not pick up children by the closing time for after care will be billed \$25.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$10.00 for each additional 15 minutes.

Other programs are offered at the JCC. Those children who participate in these programs will be picked up at Rockwern and taken by bus to the JCC.

## Curriculum

### **Philosophy**

In order to understand Rockwern Academy's approach to curriculum, you must begin with the school's mission. In that document we promise to "integrate Jewish values, history, literacy and culture into a rich general and Judaic curriculum which fosters a passion for life-long learning, a strong Jewish identity, and a connection to Israel." Our goal for each of our students is that they become and remain "intellectually engaged, spiritually aware and socially responsible."

Several key processes are employed to ensure we keep our promise.

All curricula are benchmarked against other excellent schools. We research both private and public schools for general studies guidelines; we use a variety of RAVSAK member schools when we design Judaic studies curriculum. Our goal is to exceed state standards and to look carefully at other Jewish day schools to determine their curricular scope and sequence.

We use a design process (*Understanding by Design*) in which we think critically about our

hopes and goals for Rockwern Academy graduates and identify enduring understandings we hope they have uncovered for themselves during the course of their studies, pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We never lose our focus on outcomes.

We deliberately partner with parents and students to help children create their own Jewish identity, one that has been forged in the fire of thinking critically within the constraints and expectations of Jewish values.

Through Mitzvot and Tikkun Olam activities we strive to make these values connect through real-world involvement and action.

Specific curricula are available on our website, but each should be seen as a dynamic work-in-progress.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms**

The Rockwern Academy currently has three (3) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms for the 2009 – 2010 school year. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century room will encompass children of all ages and contains the latest technology in desktop computing as well visual display for school. Each room consist of the following there will a 1:1 student-to-computer ratio. The second component of this room is the Promethean Active Classroom, which includes an ActiveBoard and twenty-five (25) wireless handheld devices. The board gives the teacher the ability to project anything on the computer screen to the whole class and still use the board like a traditional whiteboard. The handheld devices give the teacher the ability to have real time diagnostics of how students are doing. For example, if math is being taught, the teacher can project a quiz on the board, and the students can take the test using the handheld devices. The teacher sees the results of the students' quizzes as they are taken and immediately can see any areas that may need to be touched on again.

### **Trips**

During the school year, classes may participate in a variety of out-of-school activities and experiences. Parents will be provided with information for all trips and will know departure and return-to-school times, destination, and cost. Parents are encouraged to assist with these trips when asked to drive and/or chaperone.

As with all school activities, the comfort and safety of our students is of paramount importance. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that parents provide all required signed permission slips, medication, doctor's orders, etc. prior to these outings.

If, at any time, the school does not have a required form or medication to accompany a student on a field trip or other out-of-school experience, the student will **NOT** be permitted to go. **There can be no exceptions.**

It is the tradition of Rockwern Academy to provide an opportunity for our Middle School students to participate in unique educational and experiential learning. One of several avenues for this type of learning is a class trip. Washington, DC, New York City, and Israel have been the primary destinations for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders over the years. Still, we frequently rethink, not only the destination, but also the various venues within each

---

location that will have the most benefit and impact. These trips are important vehicles, not only for hands-on learning, but also for class building unity and strength.

While these trips are wonderful opportunities both educationally and socially, they are privileges—not rights. The School absolutely reserves the right to exclude any student who is failing a class, has been given a suspension (in-school or out-of-school), or whose behavior causes the administration to be concerned about his/her safety or the safety of others.

### *Assessing Student Progress*

You don't have to be a teacher to know that learning is essentially an exciting but messy enterprise. Each of us has our own unique set of interests and talents, as well as a variety of learning styles. Some of us are Big Picture thinkers who build frameworks that become the infrastructure for new understandings. Others of us need many specific instances of a certain concept in action before we are comfortable with the overarching generalization. And these preferences have nothing to do with whether we are auditory or visual or kinesthetic learners!

The educational reality, then, means that those of us who work in classrooms don't really teach. It is more accurate to say that we use all of our experience and expertise to facilitate learning. In order to be effective, we have to have many ways to assess the students to whom we feel such incredible responsibility. In addition to observation, class discussion, and one-on-one time with students, we also use a range of assessments to inform our understanding of what and how our students are progressing.

### **Diagnostic Tests**

---

Diagnostic tests assess student knowledge and are used primarily at the beginning of the year for placement purposes. They can also be used to help detect learning gaps that may be impeding student progress.

### **Timed Tests**

Timed tests are used by teachers, grades 1 through 5, as a supplement to their regular instruction in mathematics. In the early stages of learning mathematics, the basic facts are typically presented through concrete materials (counters, colored rods, and the like) with emphasis on understanding. Later the focus changes to rote and rapid recall so students won't stumble unnecessarily when they use the basic facts to find sums, differences, products, and quotients. Through systematic drill and practice on the number facts, students **really** learn their basic facts; they come to know them as well as they know their name.

### **Trimester Exams**

In the Middle School, comprehensive exams are given at the end of each trimester. Students in grade 6 take exams within their regular class schedule. For students in grades 7 and 8, each exam lasts 2 class periods. Exams are scheduled by Administration over a 3-day period during the last week of the term. Students take these exams in class during double periods. Exams for classes such as Latin, that do not have "doubles," will be scheduled by Administration.

### **Standardized Tests**

Standardized tests are given to students, starting in first grade. All students take the Terra Nova, which is a nationally-normed achievement test. Students in grades 2, 4 and 6 also take the OLSAT, which measures ability. Results of these tests are mailed to parents with final report cards in June. Administrators then study the school-wide results to determine if specific adjustments need to be made to Rockwern's curriculum.

### **Middle School Academic Probation**

Our academic probation policy is designed to provide motivation and support for students who are having significant academic difficulty, due to a lack of effort and or a failure to take advantage of available resources.

At the discretion of the Director of Education, students who fail 2 or more classes during a marking period will be placed on Academic Probation at the beginning of the subsequent marking period. While on Academic Probation, the student will be required to attend weekly tutorial with the teacher(s) whose class(es) they are failing. The student will also not be allowed to participate in additional school activities.

Attendance at any of these tutorials or study halls is mandatory. Academic probationary status will be maintained as long as the student continues to fail courses.

At the discretion of the Director of Education and Head of School, students who fail to remediate their probationary status after 2 marking periods may not be offered re-enrollment contracts for the following academic year.

### **Homework**

Certainly homework has been the topic of a great deal of discussion, debate, and research

---

in recent years. For instance, researchers from the University of Michigan compared the amount of homework assigned in 1981 to the amount assigned in 1997 and found the amount of homework assigned to students aged 6 to 9 had nearly tripled from 44 minutes a week to more than two hours. Homework for students aged 9 to 11 increased from 2 hours 50 minutes to over 3.5 hours.

These results obviously beg the question: "How much is too much?"

Rockwern Academy teachers take the National PTA and National Education Association guidelines seriously. We believe, for children in grades KG through 2, homework is most effective when it does not exceed 10-20 minutes a day. Students in grades 3-8 can handle 30-60 minutes daily.

If your child is routinely spending more time on homework than this recommendation, please contact the teacher. Parent feedback is the most useful data a teacher can receive, and all teachers appreciate knowing when a student is spending too much time on homework.

### Reporting Student Progress

Every member of the staff is committed to keeping parents informed, and each uses many methods of communication in order to share information. Types of written communication parents can expect to receive include back-and-forth folders in the Lower School, flyers, and a nearly-weekly summary of classroom activities for Pre-School. Middle School teachers (grades 5-8) use PowerSchool as their primary communication tool. All teachers also maintain blogs that are accessible, though password protected, via the Rockwern website.

Parents are also encouraged to attend Grade-level Parent Orientations, Parent/Teacher conferences, Life Cycle programs, Maccabiah, Fine Arts evenings, basketball games and other events.

Communication between the home and school helps students, parents, guardians, teachers, and administration work as a team toward a common goal. The following section explains some of the means by which the School attempts to report student progress.

### **PowerSchool**

---

PowerSchool is a web-based application that resides on a centralized server and is accessed through an Internet or intranet connection. As such, PowerSchool delivers real-time information. As soon as any information is added or changed, it's available to everyone. This allows administrators, teachers, parents and students to access the most up-to-the-minute information available.

We invested in PowerSchool because it increases communication from school to home with online parent and student access. Parents can access the School's Daily Bulletin and real-time student performance information, communicate with teachers, and track assignments and daily attendance. We expect teachers from grades 4—8 to post assignments and student grades to PowerSchool weekly. In this way parents and guardians can provide close supervision of their children's projects and progress. Staff, students, and parents have found the point-and-click technology in PowerSchool simple to use, and we encourage all parents to use this valuable tool. Even parents of Preschool children can log on and read the Daily Bulletin. This is a great source of information about field trips and other school events. Rockwern staff attempts to post field trips one week prior to the trip. Parent orientation and conference dates, as well as dates for concerts, Life Cycle events, and school-wide celebrations are posted for two weeks prior to the events.

### **Conferences**

Our approach to conferences has evolved over the past several years to become highly collaborative events that actively involve parents, teachers, and students. During the first set of conferences teachers will be prepared to "say what they have seen" during the initial weeks of school. They will highlight what they understand to be students' strengths, interests, social maturity, and challenges. Parents will also share their perceptions of their child's relationship to school, including specific subjects, friends, joys and challenges. Together, the teachers and parents will create a plan for moving forward as partners to best serve the needs of the student. They will also agree on the best communication strategy for staying in touch for the remainder of the year.

Students attend the second set of conferences, and, again, the goal is for students, parents, and teachers to work together to better understand how each student's educational experience can be optimized.

In order to have time to meet with everyone, we ask parents of Pre-school and Lower School children to set times with teachers that fit their schedule.

Parents of Middle School students are asked to sign up for one of the specific time periods embedded in a larger "rotation" schedule. Middle School teachers will have a designated area in Mayerson Activity Room. All parents assigned to a particular time period will enter the Mayerson Activity Room at the same time. Each parent will rotate throughout the room conferring with each teacher for 10 minutes. At the end of the time period, the room will be cleared for the next set of parents. This process will continue throughout all time periods.

### **Report Cards**

---

It is our firm belief that report cards should never contain surprising information. If a student in grades K—3 is having challenges, either academically or behaviorally, parents will be called. Parents of students in grades 4-8 can easily keep their fingers on their children’s academic pulse beat by logging on to PowerSchool. In fact, report cards are generated directly from PowerSchool and can be viewed at any time. If an older student is having trouble behaviorally, parents may receive phone calls, copies of demerits, or both.

Kindergarten students are given report cards twice a year. Report cards are sent home at the end of the second and third trimesters. First grade students do not receive report cards first trimester. They do, however, receive report cards at the end of trimesters 2 and 3. All other students are given report cards three times a year.

The last day of each trimester is marked on the Rockwern Academy Calendar. In general, parents can expect a report card to be brought home approximately one week later. End-of-year report cards are mailed home, usually with standardized test results.

The grade scale currently in use for grades 3-8 is as follows:

| Letter Grade Earned | Percentage Range |
|---------------------|------------------|
| A+                  | 98-100           |
| A                   | 94-97            |
| A-                  | 91-93            |
| B+                  | 88-90            |
| B                   | 85-87            |
| B-                  | 82-84            |
| C+                  | 79-81            |
| C                   | 76-78            |
| C-                  | 70-75            |
| F                   | 69 & below       |

The grade scale currently in use for grades 1 & 2 is as follows:

| Grade | Description       |
|-------|-------------------|
| E     | Excellent         |
| G+    | Good              |
| G     | Good              |
| -     | Good              |
| F+    | Satisfactory      |
| F     | Satisfactory      |
| -     | Satisfactory      |
| -     | Needs Improvement |
| -     | ing               |
| -     | grade             |
| -     | complete          |

ing a 3-category grading scale.

---

|   |
|---|
| S— Making satisfactory progress in acquiring the skill<br>P—In the process of acquiring the skill<br>I— Is beginning to acquire the skill |
|---|

In Pre-school, an End-of-Year Report is prepared and filed on each student.

## Student Management and Safety

### **Daily Schedule**

The official school day for all students except Pre-School is from 8:10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Attendance is taken at 8:10 a.m.; classes and prayers begin **promptly** at 8:15. We use these 5 minutes to make school-wide announcements and gather and share other important information regarding the students' day. It is essential that all children be present for their opening activities. Pre-School attendance is recorded at 9 a.m.

### **Student Drop-Off Procedures**

The goal for establishing student drop-off procedures is twofold: the first goal is to ensure a safe environment for all students, Pre-School through grade eight. The second goal is to preserve optimum conditions for instructional time for students and teachers. We ask that you abide by the following guideline: All children must enter through the main entrance. These doors will open at 7:00 a.m. Students who arrive before 8:00 a.m. will be expected to check in with the adult supervising early arrivers in Eden Hall. Pre—School students will be escorted to their classroom at 8 am. Middle School students may either remain in Eden Hall or gather in the Middle School hallway.

### **Student Pick-up Procedures**

School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. for the Kindergarten, Lower and Middle Schools. Bus students will be dismissed to their buses from Boymel Synagogue. Children who are picked up will be dismissed from Eden Hall.

---

There are three possible pick-up times for **Pre-School** children:

- **11:15 am** for children who only attend morning classes. Pick up by an adult must be in the child's classroom.
- **12:15 pm** for children who attend morning classes and stay for lunch and play. Cars line up in the Pre-School parking lot; children are escorted to their cars.
- **3:15 pm** for children who stay all day and attend EDP. Cars line up in the Pre-School parking lot; children are escorted to their cars.

Pre-School children staying for After-School Daycare are escorted to that program.

School buses line up in the Sturbridge Parking Lot; children are escorted to the buses through the main entrance.

Parents picking up their child(ren) may:

- Park their car and enter the building through the main entrance.
- Remain in their car and line up in the Pre-School parking lot; children are escorted to their cars through the Eden Hall exit.

The children's safety is of paramount concern to each of us. It is simply unsafe to allow students, even Middle Schoolers, to wait outside the building or to wander around inside unsupervised. Therefore, students will not be released to any person other than parents or an **authorized** designee.

If the person coming to pick up the child has not already been listed on designated Emergency Medical form, the identity of the new person must be confirmed by written authorization. Telephone authorization will be accepted **only** in the case of an emergency.

If a change needs to be made relative to a child's pick-up time or after-school plans, please inform the office **BY 11:00 a.m.** While this may seem like an arbitrary and unnecessary "rule," it is in place to ensure our students' comfort and safety.

Rockwern's internal attendance process includes accounting for every child, every day. Teachers take roll at 8:10 a.m. An Administrative Assistant then listens to voice mail, reads written notes, checks e-mail, verifies tardies, and calls parents to be sure the School knows the whereabouts of every student. She then creates the Afternoon Announcement bulletin for teachers and staff. This document contains critical information, not only about absences, but also about which student stays for an activity, which student goes home with a friend, which student rides the bus, etc.

We all rely on this document, which is distributed to teachers and staff prior to lunch, to know what students are to do.

Its effectiveness is compromised if it is inaccurate.

So, please, **do not call to change your child's after-school plans after 11 a.m. except in cases of emergency.**

**Attendance**

---

Rockwern Academy believes that regular class attendance by all students is an important part of the dynamics of learning. The school's expectations are high, and the faculty and students both need time to meet them. The school takes seriously its responsibility to students and parents to make every school day count. The following policies help to ensure regular attendance.

### **Absences**

Students will be excused from classes only for illness, emergencies, religious holidays, or very special family circumstances. A note from home, prior to a planned absence, is necessary.

If a student will be absent, unless a note was sent prior to the absence, parents must phone the school before 9:00 a.m. Such notice confirms our own attendance procedures and helps assure the safety of students.

When a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in any school functions that day. This policy applies to athletic competitions, play rehearsals and performances, parties, and other school activities. One-half day absence represents a day of school missed.

The school asks that families plan trips to coincide with scheduled vacation times. On those rare occasions on which absence cannot be avoided, parents need to discuss the absence with the Head of School at least two weeks in advance. Parents must not assume that individual assignments can be prepared and evaluated by teachers in these instances, and not all material covered can be made up. Students are responsible for meeting with the teacher to determine which of the missed assignments will need to be completed.

If students know in advance they will arrive late, leave school for an appointment and return, or leave early, they are to bring a note from their parents ahead of time. The note should be brought to the office before school begins.

### **Tardiness**

**School begins for all students except Pre-Schoolers at 8:10 a.m.** Being on time is a very important habit. If students arrive at school late in the morning, they should first sign in at the office and get a pass before going to their lockers or first class. Students will be considered **tardy** to class if they are not in their seat when class begins or the bell rings. Teachers may issue a warning or demerits to students in grades 4-8 who are frequently tardy.

Of all the many areas with which school administration deals, student tardiness is one of the most frustrating. As adults, we all know children can not learn if they aren't present. We understand our children can feel embarrassed to walk into a classroom in which everyone else is already actively engaged.

Children count on their parents to get them to school on time. Please, help us instill the proper values and a sense of responsibility. Do whatever is necessary to ensure your child is at school by 8:05 a.m.

---

## **Early Dismissal**

Students' scheduled appointments or early departures are put in the School's Afternoon Announcements. Parents must sign students out in the office when students leave during the school day. For safety's sake, parents must meet the child in the office. Students may not meet their parent at their vehicle.

## **Make-up Work**

Homework assignments will be available online through PowerSchool for Grades 4—8. Teachers often do not have time to respond to requests that comes in via e-mail or telephone. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with class work and homework missed during absences. Students will be given one day for each day they were absent to make up missed work without penalty.

## **Dress Code - Grades 5-8**

Modesty is an important Jewish value that has implications for both children and for the school environment. A student's choice of clothing affects his/her conduct and impacts the climate of the school. The guidelines for student dress are not meant to be oppressive or to stifle individual expression. Instead, they are designed to ensure that the students dress appropriately for the school setting. Loyalty to Rockwern Academy and pride in being a Rockwern student should be reflected in each student's choice of clothing. It is our hope that students will understand and respect the spirit, not simply the letter, of the Dress Code.

- Students should wear modest, neat, clean, comfortable clothing which is in good repair.
- Clothing may not be too tight, too revealing, or too short.
- Shorts and skirts may not fall more than 4 inches above knees when standing.
- Casual tank tops, halter tops, tubes, "muscle shirts," etc., are not acceptable. Sleeveless tops must be 3 inches or more at the shoulder and may not have oversized arm holes.
- Shirts must be long enough to cover the midriff and to extend below the top of the student's shorts, skirts or slacks when standing, sitting, raising their hand, and writing on the board.
- Tops may not contain inappropriate logos, advertising, language, or graphics that are not in keeping with school values.
- Shoes must allow for an active day at school. Gym shoes and shoes with no more than a one-inch heel are allowed. Hazardous foot wear is not allowed; this includes platform and thong-type shoes (no rubber flip flops). Shoes with wheels are absolutely **NOT** allowed in school.
- Boys should bring their own kippah to school and store it in a given location. Middle School students should have kippot in lockers.

If a student comes to school wearing inappropriate clothing, parents will be called to either take the student home and return him/her to school properly dressed or to bring a change of clothing to school.

## **General Guidelines**

---

*Book bags and coats:* Students may use book bags or small bags to bring books and contents to school. For safety reasons, bags must be stored in the lockers during the day. Book bags may be no larger than 9 x 10 ½ x 25 (K-2) and 9 x 10 ½ x 31 (3-8). Book bags with wheels are allowed as long as they fit in the student's locker.

Lower school students will use the hooks and shelves outside their classrooms.

Rockwern Academy reserves the right to inspect the content of students' book bags.

*Cell phones, iPods, cameras, and other electronics:* Rockwern staff understands the allure of electronics and the pressure children can exert when they attempt to convince their parents of the necessity of carrying a cell phone or having music or games at-the-ready for entertainment on the bus or while waiting for pick-up.

Even within this framework of understanding, however, none of the devices can be used, or even visible, during the school day. Rockwern absolutely cannot guarantee that electronics will be safe at school. Therefore, they are best left at home. However, if they are brought to school, all cell phones and other electronics are to be stored in book bags, purses, or lockers throughout the entire school day. The guiding principle for cameras is that they are allowed only for special events, such as trips or celebrations, and when specifically permitted by a teacher. If students disregard this rule, the electronics will be confiscated and held until the end of the day. If a student becomes a "repeat offender," the device will be held in the office until a parent comes to school to recover it.

*Coming into the office:* Students who come to the office during class time must have a note signed by the teacher stating the reason for the visit. Any student without specific permission to be in the office will be asked to return to the classroom.

*Lockers:* Students in grades 5-8 will be assigned at least one locker at the beginning of the year. Students are not permitted to switch lockers without permission of the administration. All lockers within the school building are considered school property and are subject to administrative search at any time a search is deemed reasonable and necessary for the safety and well being of the students.

*Middle School break:* Middle School students have a scheduled break during the school day. During these times, students may congregate in the upper atrium area, the gym (when it is not in use and proper supervision is present), or outside (weather permitting).

*Snacks:* Some teachers, especially in the Lower School, allow students to have kosher snacks during a designated class time. Healthy snacks are encouraged. All snacks must be consumed in designated areas. All Pre-School students are provided with a kosher morning and afternoon snack. Neither food nor drink is permitted in the hallways or gym.

**GUM IS NEVER ALLOWED.**

---

Solicitations: While we recognize the legitimacy of many worthy causes, students may not sell goods or solicit money or support for non-school organizations or events on school property without the express permission of the Head of School. Rockwern's past practice has allowed the sale of Girl Scout cookies and the posting and/or distribution of flyers describing Jewish agencies' events. Parents who wish Rockwern to assist with this sort of publicity must also have permission from the Head of School. This way, everyone is treated fairly, and children's bookbags don't end up stuffed with marketing materials.

## **Code of Conduct**

### Context

The Code of Conduct is the behavioral mainframe by which the School manages its day-to-day operations. The code reflects our commitment to academic standards and the right of every student to learn in a safe and productive educational environment. The administration and faculty encourage students to respect themselves and others, to be kind, and to have the courage to do what is right. Students are expected to follow behavioral guidelines during school hours, on school-sponsored trips, and during all other school activities.

Jewish values are reinforced through Rockwern's Judaic Studies curricula, our commitment to Responsive Classroom, and our approach to education. We specifically target the following:

- personal reflection, awareness, responsibility, and accountability
- kindness, caring, compassion, and charity
- appreciation and gratitude
- cooperation, fairness and justice
- respect for others and the environment
- honesty and integrity
- commitment to community
- being a life-long learner

Rockwern's administration and faculty strive to model these values and to use them as "touchstones" when speaking to students about inappropriate behavior.

### Goals

Our hope is to work with parents and students to

- guarantee the rights of all students and staff by establishing rules and regulations that define safe, non-disruptive speech and action
- guarantee fair and reasonable treatment of all members of the Rockwern community
- teach self-discipline
- comply with federal, state and local laws
- protect and maintain school property
- ensure that all students have the right to learn
- reduce the occurrence of discipline problems by providing an atmosphere of mutual respect and productive interdependence, as well as a support program to address issues of children at risk socially, emotionally and academically.

One overarching principle is that no student has the right to interfere with the education of another. Another is that Rockwern, along with parents, has the responsibility to prepare students to be socially appropriate.

---

### Expectations and Consequences

The Code of Conduct that appears below governs the most frequent, serious, and obvious types of student misconduct. In no way are these lists all-inclusive. Rather, they are provided in this handbook to act as benchmarks and to facilitate understanding:

#### Level I Behaviors

Students shall

- refrain from interfering with the education of another student, the orderly operation of the school, or a school function
- speak in a respectful way, one that does not tease, hurt or harass others
- follow all classroom rules
- leave electronic equipment at home or in lockers, purses, or back packs
- obey adult directions
- be on time to school or class
- dress in a manner that conforms to the school dress code
- use appropriate language
- eat inside the cafeteria (except in the area designated for breaks)
- use technology appropriately
- refrain from chewing gum
- walk, rather than run, in the building, at all times, including lunch, recess, and after-school activities

Consequences of misbehavior at this level may include:

- classroom warning or appropriate consequence
- a demerit
- classroom detention
- silent lunch
- parent notification/conference
- administrative warning or reprimand

If a student accumulates 3 demerits, he/she will be required to serve an after-school detention. Detentions last from 3:40—4:30 p.m. and are held in the main office conference room. Repeated Level I offenses can lead directly to 1-3 days of after-school detention.

#### Level II Behaviors

Students shall

- act in a respectful manner toward school personnel
  - speak and act honestly, in and outside of class
  - refrain from physical fights or harassment of another student
  - use school facilities or property only with permission and leave it in the same condition in which it was found
  - leave other people's belongings alone
  - refrain from any gambling activity
  - refrain from bringing dangerous objects to school
  - avoid endangering others
  - use appropriate language, avoiding profanity, as well as racial, ethnic, religious, or sexually derogatory terms
  - avoid all obscene gestures
-

- refrain from bullying

Regarding bullying, it is our firm conviction that each and every student who attends Rockwern Academy should feel he/she is attending a school that is a safe environment; one free of threats and harassment. Therefore, threats are taken seriously by this administration. A threat is defined as a verbal, physical or written statement of intent to harm another person. Bullying is further defined as any form of verbal, physical, or sexual harassment. Bullying will not be tolerated. Those students who are identified as engaging in bullying behavior will be held responsible and will be dealt with accordingly.

Consequences of misbehavior at this level or continued Level I misbehaviors always include parent notification and can also include 3-5 days of detention, a 1-3 day suspension, and/or restitution.

### **Level III Behaviors**

Students shall **NOT**

- threaten or strike a staff member or student
- endanger the safety of others with a bomb threat, threatening or illegal phone calls, or unauthorized use of fire alarm equipment
- vandalize school or personal property
- possess or use tobacco products on school grounds or at school functions
- possess or use controlled or illegal substances such as alcohol or other drugs on school grounds or at school functions
- perform or attempt to perform arson
- exhibit lewd behavior and/or indecent exposure
- break into the school building

In addition to parent notification, restitution and suspension, students who exhibit Level III behaviors may also be expelled and/or referred to law enforcement personnel.

### **Cheating**

Any of the following actions will be considered cheating:

1. Any form of plagiarism.
2. Use of someone else's work as your own.
3. Copying homework, quiz or test answers from someone else's paper.
4. Allowing someone else to copy your work.
5. Theft of an answer key for a test, quiz or assignment.
6. Use of cheat sheets.
7. Communicating to students the questions that were on a test, quiz or assignment that you have taken but they have not.
8. Allowing someone else to use your disk or password to access your work.

Consequences for cheating may include any of the following:

Parent contact by the teacher; failure on the assignment, test or quiz, and either after-school detention, In-school discipline, or suspension.

---

## **Horseplay**

Behavior with other students that is intended as fun but materially disrupts and interferes with the learning process or adversely affects the learning environment comprises horseplay. Physical misbehavior that originates as horseplay but causes injury to another can be interpreted as physical assault.

## **Internet Usage**

Through the school's Internet connection, students have an opportunity to participate in a global community of information and learning. The school's Internet connection is intended for educational purposes only, and access to the Internet is a privilege. With such opportunity and privilege comes responsibility. For a student to use the Internet at school, he/she must comply with the following rules and sign an agreement that will be distributed after school begins.

This agreement must also be signed by a parent or guardian. It is important to understand that inappropriate use not only reflects on the School, but may lead to penalties, including revocation of privileges, disciplinary action and, if warranted, legal action.

Inappropriate use shall include but not be limited to:

- use at school for non-school-related activities
- use in violation of federal, state or local laws, including sending or receiving copyrighted matter without permission
- commercial use
- sending patently harassing, intimidating, abusive or offensive material to or about others, in messages public or private
- sending chain letters or pyramid schemes, "broadcasting" inappropriate messages to lists or individuals, and any other kind of use that would congest the Internet or otherwise interfere with the work of others
- sending or receiving pornographic material, inappropriate text files or files dangerous to the integrity of the network
- vandalizing, defined as any deliberate attempt to change files not belonging to you or to harm or destroy the work, systems or data of another user, including uploading or creation of computer viruses
- engaging in the illegal distribution of software ("pirating")
- knowingly using another person's password, misrepresenting your identity, or giving your own password to others
- failing, when downloading information, to comply with any associated terms or conditions specified by the supplier of that information
- expressing views or opinions not clearly identified as your own and not those of the School
- circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks
- accessing the system in any manner inconsistent with the educational activities of Rockwern Academy

## **E-mail**

---

E-mail is not like a letter in an envelope; it is much more like a postcard. The contents are out in the open because there is no easy way to mark a message "confidential."

Messages may be

viewed during the mailing process, and, if inadequately addressed, may be read by a "postmaster" trying to redirect it correctly. Messages may be forwarded, printed, or stored indefinitely. For these and other reasons, all of the rules which apply to Internet usage also apply to the use of e-mail.

Although each student has an individual password to access the system, the system belongs to the School, and all e-mail messages are school records. No student should have any expectation of privacy relative to his/her use of the Internet or e-mail. The School reserves the right, for legitimate school purposes, to access and disclose the contents of students' electronic communications without regard to content, and to conduct periodic, unannounced inspections of e-mail communications.

- The School is not liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the Internet. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise, for their actions.
- The School takes no responsibility for any information or materials transferred through the Internet.
- The School makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection.
- The School is not liable for any loss or corruption of data while using the Internet.
- The School reserves the right to examine all data stored in the machines involved in the Internet link to ensure that all users are in compliance with these regulations.

### **Safety Drills**

One way to ensure the safety of the children and staff is to have well-thought-out and fully documented emergency procedures. The School has such procedures, and the manual in which they can be found is used to train teachers. The manual contains procedures for such emergencies as fire, tornado, earthquake, and unwanted intruder. Teachers are taught how to communicate difficulties without causing volatile situations to escalate.

In addition, staff and students practice the procedures that involve a change of location, such as fire and tornado drills, regularly.

In accordance with guidelines issued by the State of Ohio, Rockwern conducts the following safety drills each year:

- Tornado drills once a month during the months of April, May, and June
- Fire Exit drills twice during the first two weeks of the school year and eight additional times during the course of the school year.

To assure the continued safety of our children, Rockwern conducts the following additional drills each year:

- Lockdown drills typically occur twice a year. We teach children to get to a classroom and to be very quiet.
  - Earthquake drills typically occur twice a year. We teach children safe locations and what to do if inside or outside when an earthquake occurs.
-

## **Accidents**

Accidents and other school emergencies are governed by the *School-Centered Emergency Management and Recovery Guide for Rockwern Academy*. This guide is designed to assist the school administration to quickly and adequately restore the school climate to optimal learning

Accidents and other school emergencies are governed by the *School-Centered Emergency Management and Recovery Guide for Rockwern Academy*. This guide is designed to assist the school administration to quickly and adequately restore the school climate to optimal learning conditions in the event of an emergency. A copy of this guide is available for review in the main office.

## **Asbestos**

We are required to report that all classes and rooms have been cleared of all asbestos products since the 1999 build-out. All records are available to view in the Maintenance room.

## **Food Service**

The goal of the Rockwern Academy kitchen is to provide our students with a healthy school nutrition environment. This goal combines the commitment of food service personnel, parent volunteers, teachers and students. The kitchen aims to expose our students to a variety of healthy food options with an emphasis on whole grains, low saturated fats, fresh fruits and fresh vegetables. As a Team Nutrition school we will be promoting student consumption of healthy foods and healthy portion sizes based on the new food pyramid.

Rockwern Academy's lunch program has been improved for 2009 – 2010. The changes will provide Rockwern with the chance to better control the amount of food inventory and waste, ordering procedures, and will also ensure that the school is better able to meet the needs and wants of the students here at Rockwern Academy.

The lunch program is a "pay as you go" system with lunch being purchased for the entire month. Lunch charges will be billed monthly, quarterly, or yearly as directed by the parents in the amount of \$60 per month, \$600 for the entire 10-month school year.

Parents will receive a monthly menu no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Your orders need to be received by the 21<sup>st</sup> of the preceding month in order to receive lunch for the next month. For example, the September menu will be sent home via email on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Parents will be asked to reply with a yes or no answer for the lunch menu of September by August 21<sup>st</sup>. Once the orders have been received, a monthly master list will be created. Color coded lunch cards will be given to Home Room teachers at the first of each month to be handed out to the students. Students will present the lunch card upon entering the lunch line before being served. We will, of course, feed any child who does not participate in this program but has forgotten a lunch and will then bill parents.

Students choosing to bring their own lunch may do so provided it is dairy or parve and adheres to the guidelines of kashrut. For those students who have special dietary needs or food sensitivities, the kitchen will, to the best of its ability, accommodate them. A letter detailing those needs must be on file with the Food Service Director and the School Nurse.

---

## Activities

### **Athletics**

As part of the mission of providing an outstanding general and Judaic studies education, Rockwern offers a comprehensive set of after-school extra curricular activities. Athletics is an extra curricular opportunity for athletes of all ability levels—from novice to the most competitive.

The facilities at Rockwern are among the best in the area, offering a superb place for current and former Rockwern student athletes to practice and compete. Our facilities include a gorgeous multi-sport gymnasium with full-length bleachers, state-of-the art scoreboard, retractable baskets, Olympic volleyball net, and a well-stocked dairy concession stand. There is no question that Rockwern is committed to offering an unparalleled home court experience. Our other facilities include the Activity Center, perfect for cheerleading practice, and Bob Meyer Park, complete with baseball fields and ample room for other outdoor sports!

Rockwern currently offers boys' and girls' basketball and competes as "The Lions." Rockwern is always looking to add sports or find local teams and experiences at the JCC or other community agencies for our students and their sporting needs.

Rockwern athletes continue to set records and win championships. In 2006-2007 a record number of students played basketball for Rockwern, fielding eight teams! It was also the first year that second graders could play basketball on the third grade team. For the second time, Rockwern was host to part the league tournaments.

Anyone interested in learning more about these exciting sporting experiences, may contact Kevin Guess at 513-984-3770 x 3128.

Go, Lions!

### **Bigs in School**

Big Brothers/Big Sisters Association will again be offering the "Bigs in School" program to all Rockwern students as an after-school program. Participants will be matched to a carefully selected high school or college age volunteer. The "Big" provides friendship,

---

support, role modeling and academic support. Matched pairs enjoy working and playing together each week on a variety of activities including games, sports, arts and crafts, and homework. “Bigs in School” is fun and rewarding for both participants. Caring mentors will improve a child’s self-esteem, help them get along better with their peers, and enhance academic performance.

## Student Health

Moses Maimonides (Rambam) once wrote: *“By keeping the body in health and vigor one walks in the ways of Adonai. It is a person’s duty to avoid whatever is harmful to the body and cultivate habits conducive to health and vigor.”*

Rockwern Academy adheres to this philosophy, and we have kept this in mind while establishing policies regarding emergencies, illnesses and medication administration.

### **Medical Records**

The State of Ohio requires that all children K-8 have received the recommended immunizations. The school must receive proof of immunization within two weeks of the child’s matriculation. The State of Ohio also requires that all Pre-school students have the recommended immunizations, health history and physical exam upon entering the program. The physical exam must be updated every year on the anniversary of the first exam through age five. Failure to comply with these laws will result in school suspension until the requirements are met.

It is necessary for parents to fully disclose students’ medical conditions and treatments in order to provide the safest environment for them. Even if medications are administered outside of the school setting, the possibility of side effects, allergic reactions or drug interactions in an emergency situation makes full disclosure necessary. A health history must be completed on admission to school. This information needs to be updated on the Emergency Authorization form yearly. If a change occurs during the school year, it needs to be reflected on the Emergency Medical Authorization form in the nurse’s office.

### **Illness**

Children coming to school in the morning are assumed to be well. If a child feels sick during the day and is unable to continue in classroom activities, his/her teacher will give him/her a pass to see the nurse. The nurse will conduct an assessment, and appropriate measures will be taken. The following guidelines represent the more common childhood illnesses and the usual recommendations of the Hamilton County Health Department.

---

*Chicken Pox:* A skin rash consisting of small blisters, which leave scabs. A slight fever may or may not be present. There may be blisters and scabs present at the same time. Your child should remain home until all blisters have scabbed over, usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the first crop of blisters.

*Common Cold:* Irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes, sneezing, chilliness, and general body discomfort. Your child should remain home if symptoms are serious enough to interfere with your child's ability to learn. Medical care should be obtained if symptoms persist beyond 7-10 days or fever develops.

*Fever:* If your child's temperature is 100 degrees F or greater (or 1 or 2 degrees above the child's normal temperature), he/she should remain home until he/she has been without fever for a full 24 hours. Remember, fever is a symptom indicating the presence of an illness.

*Flu:* Abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache and sore muscles. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and is without fever for 24 hours.

*Head Lice:* Lice are small grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits are firmly attached to the hair shafts, close to the scalp. Nits are much easier to see and detect than lice. They are small white specks which are usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Following lice infestation, your child may return to school after receiving treatment with a pediculocide shampoo, **AND AFTER ALL NITS HAVE BEEN REMOVED.**

*Impetigo:* Blister-like lesions which later develop into crusted pus-like sores. Your child should remain home from school until he/she has received antibiotic therapy for 24 hours and sores are no longer draining.

*Pain:* If your child complains, or behavior indicates, that he/she is experiencing persistent pain, he/she should be evaluated by a physician before being sent to school.

*Pinkeye:* Redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching matter coming from one or both eyes or crusts on the eyelids. Your child should remain home from school until he/she has received 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and discharge from the eyes has stopped. Spread of infection can be minimized by keeping the hands away from the face, using good hand washing practice, using individual washcloths and towels, and **NOT** touching any part of the eyes with the tip of the medication applicator while administering the antibiotic ointment.

*Ringworm:* ***Scalp:*** Scaly patches of temporary baldness, with brittle infected hairs which break easily. ***Skin:*** flat, ring-like rash, inflamed, may itch or burn. ***Feet:*** scaling and cracking of skin especially between toes, blisters filled with watery fluid may be present. Children who have scalp or skin lesions must be kept home until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment has been completed.

*Skin Rashes:* Skin rashes of unknown origin should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school.

---

*Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever:* Strep throat begins with fever, sore and red throat, pus spots on the back of the throat, tender swollen glands of the neck. With scarlet fever there are all the symptoms of strep throat, as well as a strawberry appearance to the tongue and rash of the skin. High fever, nausea and vomiting may also occur. Your child should remain home from school until receiving a full 24 hours of antibiotic therapy, has been fever free for 24 hours, and has not vomited for 24 hours. Most physicians will advise rest at home 1-2 days with a strep infection.

Antibiotics ordered for strep infections are to be taken for 10 days or until all medication is gone. Only when these directions are followed correctly is the strep germ completely eliminated from the body, no matter how well the child feels after the first few days of receiving medication.

*Vomiting and Diarrhea (Intestinal Viral Infections):* Stomachache, cramping, nausea and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. Your child should remain at home until he/she is without vomiting, diarrhea or fever for a full 24 hours. If your child has had any of these symptoms during the night, he/she should not be sent to school the following day.

Rockwern Academy follows the policies of the Ohio Department of Health's guidelines for specific communicable diseases. Please contact the school if your child has anything that is contagious. Our policy asks that you keep a contagious child at home to recover until symptoms have subsided and the student is feeling better.

### **Emergency Medical Authorization Form**

We are required to have a yearly emergency form completed by the first day of school. All information should be accurate and current. If there are any changes during the school year, please come in and update the form. A complete form must be filled out for each individual child. In the event of a true emergency, 911 will be contacted, and the paramedics will assume authority upon arrival. The nurse or principal will accompany the child to the Emergency Department with his/her emergency medical form. Parents will be notified immediately.

### **Administration of Medication**

Only those medications necessary to maintain a student in school that must be given during school hours or school activities may be administered to a student. School policy requires consent of the parent/legal guardian and a written statement (order) from an Ohio licensed M.D., dentist, or advanced practice R.N. with prescription authority before school personnel can give prescription. An Administration of Medication form must be completed in full. This form can be obtained in the main office. Medication must come to school in the original container with the affixed label from the pharmacist. The label must show the student's name, name of medication, dosage directions and the licensed prescriber's name and RX number. The Administration of Medication Form is only good for one school year.

---

The parent or legal guardian must hand deliver the medication to the office. Students are not allowed to carry medications. All medications will be locked in a secure cabinet. Middle School students can obtain permission to carry their own inhalers. This permission is granted on an individual basis after completing a contract. (This can be obtained from the Nurse).

### **Schedule II Medication Policy:**

In addition to the above, Schedule II medications will be governed by these additional steps:

1. All medication must be delivered from the parent to the Nurse or the Registrar. No one else may accept it.
2. All medication will be counted immediately with the parent present and placed directly into a locked cabinet. The number will be recorded on the child's medication log.
3. A pill count will be conducted every day for all Schedule II medications. The number will be recorded on the student's individual log sheet.
4. The Nurse will contact the student's parent when more medication is needed.
5. The keys to the medication cabinet will be handled only by the Nurse or the Registrar during school hours.
6. The keys will be locked in a cabinet in the accountant's office. Only the Business Manager and the Accountant will have the keys to this cabinet.

The School Nurse is responsible for establishing the administration system and all communication with parents and physicians. The Nurse and designated employees appointed by the Head of School will administer the medication at school. On field trips, the staff member in charge will administer all medications. For trips involving an overnight stay, an Administration of Medication form must be submitted for all prescription medications.

### **Parent Involvement**

#### **PTO**

The Rockwern PTO seeks to enrich the school by developing and implementing educational, religious, and cultural programs that will enhance the students' educational experience and further their development of positive Jewish identities.

The PTO raises money for programs, materials, and equipment that further the school's educational and religious objectives. The organization also works to foster a sense of community within the school and among the Rockwern families.

Rockwern's PTO is always looking for volunteers. Help is needed for projects both big and small. For more information, please contact Ellen Finestone (513)891-2321, e-mail [efinestone@cinci.rr.com](mailto:efinestone@cinci.rr.com) or Renee Levy (513)231-0220, e-mail [rlevy@cinci.rr.com](mailto:rlevy@cinci.rr.com).

### **Dor L'Dor Program**

---

The Dor L'Dor (Generation to Generation) Program was started by Rockwern's PTO in 1999 and has since become a very important part of our children's education. Once a week, senior volunteers come into the classrooms and work with students. The Program teaches our children about the Jewish value of Respect for the Elderly (*Hidur P'nai Zaken*) and gives different generations the opportunity to enjoy each other's company.

Volunteers are needed to help with transportation and to spend lunch time with our seniors. Come and meet the people your children are talking about!

### **Birthday Book Club K-8**

Rockwern Academy is excited to announce the fourth year of the Library Birthday Book Club. Parents may honor their son/daughter's birthday by purchasing a book for \$18. This will enhance the library collection with recent and highly recommended titles. Students will be called to the library to choose a book. A bookplate with the child's name and birth date will be inserted, and the "birthday person" will be the first to check the book out. A party with kosher treats and a special gift from the library are part of this fun experience. Parties generally occur every three months. Call Marsha Witt, Chairperson, 513-774-9488, for details.

### **Lost and Found**

Rockwern Academy recommends the labeling of children's outdoor clothing, gym clothes, and other items that could be lost or misplaced during the course of a school day or extra-curricular activity.

All unlabeled items found in school or on the playground will be placed on the Lost and Found rack. Children and parents are encouraged to look there for missing articles. Unclaimed items are donated to a charitable organization several times a year.

### **Box Tops for Education**

Box Tops for Education, run by General Mills, Inc., is a fundraising program for schools across the United States. Rockwern Academy has a designated coordinator who manages the program.

Box Tops for Education has three separate program components—Clip, Shop and Charge. (1) The Clip program allows us to earn cash for our school by clipping Box Tops for Education coupons from hundreds of participating General Mills products. (2) The Shop program allows us to earn cash for our school by shopping online through the Box Tops for Education Marketplace accessed at [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com). (3) The Charge program allows us to earn cash for our school by using the Box Tops for Education Visa card issued by Chase.

Each participating school is eligible to earn up to, but not more than, \$20,000 cash per year (June 1—May 31) from each of the three separate Box Tops for Education program components—Clip, Shop and Charge—for a total maximum annual amount of \$60,000 per school.

---

The Box Tops for Education Booster Club offers great benefits to parents, educators and community members who want to make a difference for our school and our families. Joining is easy and membership is so rewarding! It takes only a few minutes to go online at [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) to become Booster Club members. Membership is free.

Booster Club members get exclusive access to over 200 of their favorite online stores. Every qualifying purchase earns a donation of up to 8% for our school at no additional cost. Booster Club members can stretch their family budget with money-saving coupons on Box Tops brands every month. Members just pick the coupons they want, download and print.

Additional benefits are the meal ideas, reading room for children, and movie night. **Our school earns bonus points for every parent that joins the Booster Club during the school year.**

Volunteers are always appreciated to help coordinate contests and generate school participation.

#### Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available for qualifying students in Kindergarten to grade 8. The Rockwern Academy Board has approved the formation of a small committee who will award and confidentially administer the tuition aid budget of the School. This Financial Aid Committee will use information from SSSFA during their allocation process. SSSFA is a third-party organization used by more than 2,400 K-12 schools across the country to help assess a family's ability to pay for independent education and to help families feel confident that their request for financial aid is being treated objectively and professionally. The process works as follows:

1. SSSFA application packets for tuition assistance will be mailed to families in early December. Or you can apply online at [www.anis.org/go/sss](http://www.anis.org/go/sss). The SSSFA application needs to be completed promptly and mailed directly to SSSFA.
  2. In order to allow adequate processing time (3-6 weeks), applications for tuition assistance must be received by SSSFA by **January 31**. Applications received after this date will be considered, providing funds are still available.
  3. The committee will meet to award tuition assistance in the month of March.
  4. Tuition assistance award letters will be mailed to students' families no later than March 15.
  5. Families may appeal the award that has been granted by the Financial Aid Committee. Any appeal must be requested, in writing, by March 31.
  6. Families must submit IRS records with W2's and all schedules by April 20.
-

Important Phone Numbers

The following is provided for your convenience:

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Main Office            | 984-3770 |
| Fax                    | 984-3787 |
| School Closings        | 766-3101 |
| Transportation/Absence | 766-3135 |
| PTO                    | 766-3104 |

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |