



Family Handbook

2024-2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW..... 6

- Program History
- Program Philosophy
- Mission Statement
- Diversity Statement
- BELC Oversight Committee

STAFF..... 8

- Director
- Program Supervisor/ Assistant Director
- Lead Teachers
- Support Staff
- New Staff

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM..... 9

- Curriculum
- Jewish Studies Curriculum
- Infants
- Woddlers
- Toddlers
- Preschool/PreK
- Daily Schedule
- Transitions
- Nap Time

OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS..... 12

- Screening- Ages and Stages
- Ongoing Assessment- Teaching Strategies Gold
- Parent/Teacher Conferences

Individualization

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT.....	13
Classroom Communication	
Family Resources	
Photography	
ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS.....	14
Enrollment	
Tuition	
Activity Fee	
Membership Policy	
Sibling Discount	
Payments	
Vacations	
Change of Schedule	
Extra Days	
Withdrawal	
Late Drop Off Policies	
Late Pick Up Policies	
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AND INFORMATION.....	20
Diapering and Toileting	
Release of Children from School	
Sign In/Out Policy	
Clothing	
Items from Home	
HOURS AND CLOSURES.....	22

Staff Trainings	
Severe Weather	
Late Starts	
Winter Break	
Holidays	
HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	23
Immunizations	
Illness and Exclusion Policy	
Medication Management	
Health Care Provider Consent	
Disaster Preparedness	
Fire Drills	
Earthquake Preparedness	
Poisoning	
Accidents	
No Smoking	
NUTRITION.....	29
Food from Home	
Infants	
Breakfast	
Lunch	
Milk	
Snacks	
Special Treats	
OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	31
Volunteer Policy	
Discipline Statement	
Behavioral Issue Procedure	

Non-Discrimination Policy
Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
Anti-Bias Curriculum and training
Religion and Holidays
Confidentiality of Records and Files
Grievance Procedures
Pesticides

CODE OF ETHICS.....	38
SIGNATURE PAGE.....	40
APPENDIX A: TALKING TO CHILDREN.....	41

OVERVIEW

Program History

The Brotman Early Learning Center (BELC) opened in the Fall of 2015, fulfilling a dream of the membership of Temple Beth El to build a high-quality early learning program reflecting Jewish values and traditions in Tacoma. The Center's development was over three years in the making and was made possible only through the hard work of many volunteers and a very generous gift from Jeff Brotman--a long time temple member and co-founder of Costco. BELC was founded to serve the needs of the Jewish community, to attract Jewish families who are not currently members of Temple Beth El, and to welcome all families who want quality care and education for their children.

Program Philosophy

The Brotman Early Learning Center (BELC) offers an excellent early childhood education program with a focus on nurturing and developing the whole child. Our developmentally appropriate program teaches Jewish values and incorporates Jewish traditions into the daily lives of the children. Our classrooms are guided by the principles of Emergent Curriculum. This means that we encourage learning activities that emerge out of each child's interests, actions, or life events.

BELC believes that all children are unique individuals who learn best through play and exploration. We provide a secure, nurturing, and creative environment where children build a foundation of self-confidence and a love of learning.

Mission Statement

The Brotman Early Learning Center values the child and community above all. We emphasize building a **cohesive learning environment among our children and staff and strive to be a place where families can seek support, knowledge, and camaraderie. We strive to meet the needs of our congregational community, the greater Jewish community, and all families who value an exceptional early educational experience.**

Diversity Statement

The Brotman Early Learning Center respects diversity, including race, ethnic background, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, and age. Our educational program incorporates elements of Jewish tradition and Reform Jewish values. We strive to be culturally sensitive and welcome families of all backgrounds to join us.

BELC Oversight Committee- The BELC Oversight Committee is a committee designated by and reporting to the Temple Beth El Board of Trustees. Its function is to provide support and general guidance to the Center Director on matters of Center policy and management, as well as to assist with planning social and community building events, family activities, presentations and fundraising events. The Committee consists of Christina Roppolo (BELC Director), Catherine Stevens (BELC Program Supervisor), Lindsay Owens (Former BELC Director and BELC Parent), Rabbi Keren Gorban, Jim Friedman (TBE's former Chair of Budget & Finance, Temple Member), Becca Motola-Barnes (TBE's Executive Director), Patti Steinfeld (Committee Chair, Temple Member and retired Special Education teacher), Lin Spellman (Temple Member involved in creation of BELC), Stacy Van Wagoner (Chair of TBE's Budget & Finance Committee), Megan Cooley (BELC parent and Temple Member) and Matt Mauer (BELC Parent and former member of Child Care Resources).

STAFF

Director – The Director oversees all programs, staff, and other aspects of the Brotman Early Learning Center, including all programs and staff. The Director will be on-site for the majority of the day to supervise the teachers and to meet with families in response to any questions, concerns, needs, and/or suggestions. This position reports to the Rabbi of Temple Beth El.

Program Supervisor- The Program Supervisor will assist the Director in the day-to-day running of the center, supporting the teachers in their roles, helping create curriculum and working alongside the teachers in doing child observations and assessments. The Program Supervisor reports to the Director.

Lead Teachers – Each Classroom at BELC has one Lead Teacher and two assistant teachers working as a cohesive teaching team in the care, safety, and education of our students. Lead Teachers are professionals who are trained to work and teach in early childhood environments. Each teacher is qualified through the Washington State MERIT system, is trained in Infant/Child/Adult CPR and First Aid, receives continuing education and training throughout the year, and has a passion for teaching young children. Their main focus is to create and support a consistently safe and nurturing environment where children can learn through play as they explore, investigate, observe, create, connect, discover, and build skills that prepare them for their future learning environments. Teachers create curriculum based on the needs and interests of the children in their classroom.

Support Staff – Our Support Staff includes our Chef, Floaters, Assistant Teachers, and Substitutes. They each play a vital role in supporting the classroom teams and the overall program. They cover teacher breaks, planning times, and absences. Our Support Staff have prior experience working with young children and many are looking to make Early Childhood Education their career.

New Staff- BELC understands that stability is important for young children and their families, and we do our best to maintain it throughout the center. However, we also know that sometimes transitions are necessary. In the event that a teacher needs to leave the BELC family, parents of the children in that classroom will be notified as soon as possible. When a new teacher is hired, parents will be notified and introduced to the new teacher. For more information on BELC's hiring practices, please contact the Center Director.

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

Curriculum

The Brotman Early Learning Center is a developmentally appropriate, play-based, and child directed early learning program. Teachers create weekly lesson plans that are aligned with the State of Washington Early Learning Guidelines and the Teaching Strategies Gold learning objectives. Additionally, we use the observations and assessments of the children to create meaningful learning activities that support the unique developmental needs of each child. Teachers also incorporate the Creative Curriculum program to enhance their emergent curriculum.

The room arrangement in each classroom is a part of the curriculum. We consider the learning environment to be an additional teacher in the classroom that provides the children with a space to discover and explore. The teachers arrange the room in an intentional manner with a focus on the current developmental needs and interest of the children to increase opportunities for learning and exploration. Each classroom is center- based with a variety of activities to provide a space for learning. These centers include but are not limited to free art, dramatic play, sensory, manipulative, blocks and cars, library, and a quiet/cozy corner. The teachers' role is that of learning facilitator and nurturer encouraging independence, choices, and discovery.

Jewish Studies

Jewish values, traditions, and content are seamlessly incorporated into the curriculum. Our program philosophy centers around three core values: kehillah (community), chochmah (wisdom/learning), and kavod (honor/respect). These are the guiding values that we seek to teach, share, and model with our children, families, and staff.

The Jewish traditions and content will be presented throughout the day in an organic and appropriate way. For example, children may make and eat Challah bread on Fridays for Shabbat, Hebrew will accompany English words when learning letters, numbers, colors, etc., and Jewish stories and songs will be sung along with secular stories and songs.

Dual-Language Learning

Brotman Early Learning Center is a dual language Spanish/English certified center through DCYF. We incorporate Spanish learning into our curriculum through books, songs, and natural spoken interactions with our teachers who are fluent in Spanish. Teachers are also encouraged to incorporate Spanish culture into their weekly plans.

Our Classrooms

Our classrooms are organized by chronological age, as determined by the Washington State Department of Early Learning.

INFANTS (1 Month - 1 Year): Our infant classroom provides a calm, nurturing environment where infants can develop at their own pace and on their own schedule. Feedings, rest, and play are up to each child's individual schedule. We welcome breastfeeding mothers and visits from

parents/guardians throughout the day. The ratio for this classroom is 1 teacher for every 4 children.

TODDLERS/WODDLERS (1 Year - 3 Years): Our Toddler classroom promotes children's independence and routine. Language development, sensory exploration, and motor skills are emphasized in this environment. The ratio for this age group is 1 teacher for every 7 children. The maximum number of children in the Woddler room is 10 and the maximum number of children in the Toddler room is 12.

PRESCHOOL/PRE-K (3 Years – 5 Years): Our Preschool/Pre-K program provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum where children learn social/emotional skills, pre-math, literacy, and other skills that will instill a lifelong love of learning that prepares them for kindergarten and beyond. The ratio for this age group is 1 teacher for every 10 children. The maximum number of children in the Pre- K room is 20

Transitions

Between Classrooms

General transitions occur twice a year, at the end of summer, and winter. This is so children move as a group and stay with their cohort through all transitions. All moves will have a transition period that is in the best interest of the individual child. Most children will begin to transition **two weeks** prior to their anticipated move-up date. They will start by visiting the new classroom for two half days the first week and then do three full days the second week, with drop off and pick up happening in the new classroom at least twice during the transition period. This will allow ample time for the child to get to know their new classroom routines and teachers before they move into their new class. Families will be notified in advance of days/ times spent in an alternative classroom and will be encouraged to have a meeting with the child's new teacher prior to the transition. Families will also receive updates from the new teacher during the time spent in that classroom. If a child needs a longer transition period, it will be discussed between the family, lead teacher, and director and accommodated.

Prior to Kindergarten

Going to kindergarten is an exciting and important milestone in a child's academic career and we are committed to help support both the children and their families during this time. At the beginning of the PreK- 4 school year, families will find information about kindergarten registration deadlines and open houses at local schools on the classroom's parent board. We encourage families to ask for support during this time and are happy to provide PreK developmental records and recommendations if needed. A few months prior to the transition to kindergarten the teachers will start talking to the children about the upcoming change, will encourage them to share their feelings and will engage with them in a variety of activities to support the processing of these feelings. These activities might include making a book about their feelings, sharing pictures of their new school, or having a kindergarten teacher visit from a local school to talk about what to expect. We also will host a PreK- 4 graduation ceremony to

celebrate the accomplishments of these students. More information can be provided upon request.

Nap/Rest Time

The Department of Early Learning requires that all children are given a rest period. If any child is not asleep after 20 minutes, they will be given quiet activities to play with while the other children sleep. Rest times vary in each classroom.

Infants

Infants will sleep on their own schedule. We follow Safe Sleep guidelines which include placing a child onto their back to sleep, not having any blankets, toys, bumpers, etc. in the crib with the child, and not allowing a child to sleep in a bouncer, swing, or car seat. If your child is dropped off asleep in their car seat, we will ask you to wake them, and they will be placed in a crib to sleep.

Sample Daily Schedule

Our Toddler and Preschool/Pre-K classrooms have a consistent daily schedule that allows for free play, small group time, large group time, outside play, gross motor activities, meals, and a rest period.

The following is a typical schedule for a classroom. Please check individual classroom schedules posted in each classroom.

7:00- 8:00 – Children arrive in their classroom for free choice time. Teachers will make activities available that spur the children’s interest. Children are free to choose from any activity in the classroom.

8:00- 9:00 – Children continue to arrive, and breakfast is brought to the classrooms at 8am. Family style dining with staff role modeling takes place at this and all meal/snack times. Table setting, self-serving, and clean-up are the children’s responsibility, as they are developmentally able to accept them.

9:00- 11:30 – During this time the classrooms schedule circle time, small group activities, outside time, and free choice time. Children are encouraged to participate in activities focused on the theme for the month and/or day. These may include stories, songs, finger plays, dancing, art, manipulatives, puzzles, fine and gross motor activities and social interaction.

11:30-12:30 – Lunch time. Family style dining is not to be rushed. Children are included in the preparation by helping to arrange the classroom and setting the table. Meals/snacks should be a pleasant experience for all with lots of conversation and time to practice manners.

12:30-2:30 – This is the rest/nap time.

2:30-3:00 – Children are given time to wake up and join their friends in play.

3:00-3:30 – Family style afternoon snack.

3:30- 6:00 – Teacher and child-initiated activities continue as children are picked up in their classrooms. Activities may include circle/story time, outside time, crafts, and games.

5:00 – A second snack is provided to the children. This snack is available to children as a choice and is ready if they choose to eat, not necessarily a family-style meal.

OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Screening- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)

We use the Ages and Stages questionnaire to screen children for developmental delays or concerns at enrollment in our program and then yearly thereafter. This questionnaire is completed at home by the caregiver within 30 days of enrollment and then is scored by the classroom teacher. This questionnaire helps to provide a holistic understanding of the child's development and provides a starting point for the classroom teacher as they are learning about the individual developmental growth for each child. It also helps to build a partnership between home and school by creating a mutual understanding of the developmental needs of the child.

The results are then shared with parents at either the next parent teacher conference or a parent/teacher meeting, whichever is closest to the completion date of the questionnaire. Children who are identified as having a developmental concern will be encouraged to reach out to their pediatrician for further testing and will be provided resources as needed.

Every attempt will be made to provide the Ages and Stages questionnaire to the families in their home language. If it is not available in the home language, then every attempt will be made to find an equitable solution for the completion of the questionnaire.

Ongoing Assessment- Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG)

We use the Teaching Strategies Gold program for our ongoing assessment of the developmental needs of children. In the TSG portal, there are 36 identified objectives for development and learning based that are divided into age ranged "color bands" that align with widely held knowledge of the developmental milestones for each age group.

Teachers maintain regular observations of the children in the classroom; these observations are documented online in the TSG portal. Teachers compare their observations of the children to these "colored bands" to help determine if a child is meeting their developmental milestones. There are three "checkpoints" during the year in which teachers examine all the observations and decide if the children are meeting or making progress towards all the objectives. After each of these three "checkpoints" teachers will share the results of their observations with families in writing and all families will be encouraged to attend a family conference to discuss the results. These results will be kept on file both online in the TSG portal and in each child's file and will be made available upon request.

Every effort will be made to share the results of these ongoing assessments with families in their home language.

Family/Teacher Conferences

Family/ Teacher conferences will be held three times a year. Conferences will typically be held in late November, mid-April, and the beginning of June. These conferences will correlate with the timing of the Teaching Strategies Gold Checkpoints. Conferences will be 30 minutes long and will provide an opportunity for families to discuss their child's development, concerns they might have, and progress in the classroom. Families will be provided with a copy of their child's Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Report and any other assessment results. Every effort will be made to provide families with assessment information in their home language as well as to provide an interpreter, if possible, for the conference. Conferences are not mandatory but are highly recommended for all families to attend at least twice a year.

Individualization

At Brotman Early Learning Center we believe in partnering with families to ensure the individual needs of every child in our care are met. To support that goal, we have families fill out a "getting to know you" questionnaire about the child upon enrollment and before every transition to a new classroom. We also encourage parents to attend regular family/teacher conferences and to provide information about their children through our ProCare app. Teachers also work to identify the developmental needs of each child and create learning opportunities to support those needs. Additionally, we have an open-door policy, and we encourage families to reach out with information or concerns about their children.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Classroom Communication- Families are welcome to take advantage of our open-door policy and stop by whenever they wish to visit their children. You are welcome to explore all areas of our school where your child plays.

Classroom teachers communicate through the Procure app. Teachers will post diaper changes, nap times, food, and pictures throughout the day as daily communication. They will also communicate with you through the messaging app on Procure. Parents should also communicate through the app with classroom teachers.

Please communicate with your classroom teacher about things pertaining to your child before you reach out to the administration.

Each classroom has a “Parent Board” to post items such as the weekly lesson plan, the current menu, the staff schedule, and other news.

Comments, questions, and suggestions are always welcomed. The Director and Program Supervisor have an open-door policy and welcome families to stop in to share their suggestions, and comments, and to ask questions.

If your child is going to be out, please first communicate that with your classroom teacher, then reach out to the office.

Family Resources- If you are looking for information on a particular topic related to any aspect of child development, please ask the classroom teachers or the Director. We can offer articles, direct you to community organizations, and/or help you find the answer you need.

Photography- The teachers take pictures of the children for parent communication, documentation, and to put up in the classroom. Each family signs a photo consent form to allow teachers to take photos.

ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Enrollment

The Brotman Early Learning Center requires a non-refundable Registration fee to reserve your spot on the waitlist.

Enrollment is based on availability of space in the age-appropriate classroom and is filled on a first-come, first-served basis. We give priority to families with a sibling already enrolled and to Temple Beth El members.

30 days prior to your start date a **full month's** tuition is due as a deposit. If you leave BELC before 6 months is over, we will keep the deposit. After 6 months you can then use the deposit for your last month's tuition at BELC or donate it to BELC.

After completing a tour of the Center, families who wish to enroll their child(ren) must first complete all enrollment paperwork. Once the paperwork is complete, two hour-long play dates are scheduled to give families more time to observe the classroom. This allows parents to get to know teachers and tell them about their children. It also allows the children to get to know their new environment with a trusted adult before getting dropped off alone. During this time, the Director ensures that all paperwork is complete and that the family has had the opportunity to ask any remaining questions. If appropriate, a transition plan may also be decided at this time.

Enrollment options for all classrooms are full-time (5 days per week) only. Families may choose to keep their children home at any time, but will still be required to pay full tuition. Please let teachers know when your child will not be at school.

Tuition

Tuition prices are set for a period of one year with any necessary increases taking effect at the beginning of the school year on September 1st or half way through the fiscal year on January 1st. Though BELC strives to keep to this schedule, tuition can be adjusted at any time. Families will be notified in writing at least one month in advance of a tuition increase.

Activity Fees

In February, each family is charged a yearly activity fee of \$100. Activity fees help pay for extra classroom activities (e.g. special cooking projects, and other activities planned by the teachers to complement their monthly programming.) This money also goes toward general classroom supplies, as well as staff appreciation.

Key Cards

Upon enrollment, families will be given two key cards that grant access to the building. If a card is lost notify the Director as soon as possible. The lost card will then be deactivated.

Replacement key cards are available for a \$25 fee per card. Key cards need to be returned immediately upon disenrollment. If keycards are not returned, there will be a \$25 charge for each missing card.

Temple Membership Policy

Temple Beth El offers a complimentary one- year membership to families with children enrolled in the center who are not currently members, but who are eligible for Temple membership as set forth in the Temple Beth El bylaws. Efforts will be made to engage families outside of preschool hours to build relationships among the families and with the clergy. Families will be referred to the Membership Committee once the child is eligible for kindergarten and the Temple Beth El Religious School.

Temple Member Discount

Families that are current members in good standing of Temple Beth El will receive a 10% discount on tuition for their children

Sibling Discount

If a family enrolls more than one child in the Center, they will receive a sibling discount. The discount is 10% off the older child's tuition each month. Temple members already receiving a 10% discount are not eligible for the sibling discount.

Payments

Childcare payments are payable in advance. We use Procure, an online payment system to collect tuition. The new month's tuition will be posted on the first of each month. Payments are due on the sixth of each month. On the 6th of each month, the banking information we have on file will be automatically charged if you have not already paid. Payments made by credit card will incur a 2.9% processing fee on next month's invoice.

Hours

Our operating hours are from 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. We do have an early closure of 5:00pm on the third Friday of every month for staff meetings mandated by licensing. We can occasionally accommodate an earlier or later drop off but only if it is scheduled in advance with both the classroom teacher and administration. This accommodation is only to be used if there is an emergency or a specific need for an earlier drop-off. Administration reserves the right to refuse any drop off/ pick up request outside of normal operating hours.

Vacations

BELC does not decrease tuition for vacation, holidays, or illness. Our expenses remain the same whether or not your child is in attendance. If a family chooses to withdraw their child for a vacation month, BELC cannot guarantee that your space will be available should you wish to re-enroll. Those families who return to the Brotman Early Learning Center after withdrawing will be subject to the same policies as new families, including the \$100.00 registration fee and the tuition deposit.

Summer Quarter/Quarter Off

As BELC operates on a 12-month basis, you are expected to maintain ongoing enrollment. If you take a quarter off and want to guarantee your spot for the following quarter, payment will be required for the quarter off. If you choose this option, drop-ins are permitted on a space-available basis, ratio permitting. Please call at least 24 hours in advance to ask staff whether the adult/child ratio will be suitable for drop-ins at that time.

Extra Days/ Drop in Days (Applies only to families enrolled before September 1, 2024)

To add an occasional extra day, arrangements must be made by messaging first the classroom teacher, then the director or assistant director/program supervisor. If space allows, we will accommodate your request. Payment for the extra day will be added to the next month's invoice or payment can be made separately that day. We do not allow you to just swap days, if you cannot come on your regular day, but need another day, you will be charged the drop-in fee.

We do not allow drop-in care. You must have set days per week, and then you may drop in on the days you are not normally scheduled for if there is space.

Late Drop Off

General Guideline

All children need to arrive by 9:30 for classrooms to meet the needs of all of the children in the classroom. If your child is an infant than the arrival time is extended to 12pm

Children and parents coming into the classroom disrupt the activity and the attention of the children and teachers. Additionally, teachers plan for instructional time to begin at 9:30 am and your child will miss out on that time if they are dropped off afterwards. We try to be flexible at times because we realize that things happen in the morning and have always said that if you give us a heads-up that you are running behind, it's ok to be a little late. However, when it happens more than once or twice a week, that is a pattern, not the exception. Therefore, even with a message, we will uphold a very strict 9:30am (clocked in and in the classroom) drop-off after the second late in a calendar week.

Special Circumstances

All children will need to be dropped off before 12:30pm (Infants 2pm).

This is for dropping off late after a doctor's appointment and for picking up for an appointment and then returning. If your child is dropped off after lunch is normally served, they should have already been fed and they must also not have napped before coming in/ back for the day. It is

incredibly disruptive to the other children and teachers when a child is dropped off after this time.

Late Pickup Charges

The Brotman Early Learning Center closes promptly at 6pm and children must be picked up before closing. There is a late pickup charge of \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes after the official closing time, and an additional \$1.00 per minute thereafter.

Please either message the classroom teachers over the ProCare app or call/text the director's cell phone in the event of any emergency that will prevent you from picking up your child on time. If we have not heard from a parent/guardian or been able to reach an emergency contact by 7:00pm, your child will be referred to Child Protective Services, as required by law for abandoned children.

Over 10-hours charge:

Tuition prices are based on an 8–10-hour workday. If your child is at school for over 10 hours, we will be charging \$5 for every 30 min they are here over those 10 hours.

Withdrawal

A written notice of withdrawal is required at least **30 days** prior to your child's last day. You are responsible for the 30 days your child is still enrolled, and we will prorate the following month if those last 30 days roll into the next month. Ex: if your last day is November 15, you will be prorated November's tuition for the days you attend. If you haven't given 30 days' notice before the beginning of the next month, you will be responsible for the full month's tuition. Please note that there will be no exceptions to this policy. This policy protects the fiscal welfare of BELC.

Release of Children

- Children will be released to their parent, guardian and/or those adults listed on the child's information form and Procare profile when requested.
 - You or your authorized adults may be asked for ID if the staff is unfamiliar with you.
 - Written permission must be given to release a child to someone other than those on the designated pick-up list, and the person picking up must bring photo identification.
 - Children will not be released to an unauthorized person.
- In the case of an emergency, a parent or authorized adult may call the administration to request that a child be released to a specific adult. Please remind the person to bring photo I.D.
 - If a person attempts to pick up a child and is not on the child's approved pick-up list, we will contact parent/guardian for approval. After confirming with parent/guardian,

Administration will verify identification and add the new pick-up person to the child's Procure Profile.

- If an unapproved person attempts to pick up a child, administration will contact the parent/guardians. If parent/guardians do not approve the release of a child to this person, staff will not release the child. If needed, local authorities will be contacted to assist in the situation.
- If a parent/guardian/designated pick up person is visibly intoxicated and/or unable to bring the child home safely, Brotman Early Learning Center reserves the right to refuse release of child to that individual.
 - In this case the administration will:
 - Contact primary and secondary contacts for safe release
 - Should the need for further action arise, the administration will contact local authorities.

Custody

- Brotman Early Learning Center understands that there are sometimes changes in family structure that require alterations to pick up schedules and the addition/ removal of authorized pickups. Unless there is a court ordered parenting plan in place, both parents have equal decision-making authority to pick up their child and to authorize pick-ups. Our goal is to always support the families and children as they adjust to a new normal. To that end, we will require any changes to be requested in writing to the Director.
 - In the case of court ordered custody, we will follow any stipulations that are part of a court ordered parenting plan. We will require that a copy of the parenting plan be on file with the office.
 - In the event of a custody dispute, we will require that both parties be involved in the creation of an agreement for pickups, access to Procure, emergency contact, and administration of medication. This agreement is not to be legally binding but will help to maintain the best interest of the child.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AND INFORMATION

Diapering and Toileting

Infants and children that are not toilet trained will have their diapers checked regularly throughout the day. Families need to provide their own diapers to use for their child. The Brotman Early Learning Center will provide diaper wipes.

Sanitary precautions are used by the staff, including the use of gloves and disinfectants as prescribed by the Health Department.

Toilet training is a process that involves the efforts of all parties. Teachers and families will discuss toilet training when the child is showing signs of readiness.

On-going communication, verbal reinforcement, and the child's readiness and desire to be toilet trained are all considerations in making this decision.

Teachers will also help any of the toilet trained children with wiping after a bowel movement.

Release of Children from School

It is the policy of the Brotman Early Learning Center to only release a child to their parents or guardians. Parents can authorize other people to pick up their child. Under no circumstances will a child be released to someone not specifically designated by the parent/guardian. We will not release a child to anyone under the age of 16. We will require the authorized person to show photo ID before the child is released to their care.

Sign In/Out Policy

Families need to sign their children in and out every day through the Procure app. There are QR codes posted throughout the building for you to use to sign them in and out. Your sign in is our official record of attendance, and it is the list the teachers rely on in case of emergency.

If someone other than a parent or guardian will be picking up your child, written permission must be given on your child's emergency contact section of the enrollment paperwork, through messaging on the Procure app or by telephone. Please inform staff daily of any changes in who will be picking up your child. Your child will not be released to someone unfamiliar to us without prior notification and photo ID. Children will not be released to any adult who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

BELC is open 7:00a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please be respectful of your children's schedule as well as our staff's and allow for enough time to organize your child (children) and be **out the door** by the 6:00 pm close. Please call if you have an emergency and are going to be late, or if someone else will be picking up your child so the staff can prepare themselves and your child. Families are expected to have completed picking up their children and be out the door by 6:00 p.m.

Parents picking children up after 6:00 p.m. will be fined \$1.00 every minute they are in the building after closing time. This amount will be added to your next month's tuition bill.

Clothing

Children will be busy exploring and experiencing sensory materials such as paint, dirt, and other messy (and fun!) items. Please do not send your children to school wearing things you care about- they might get ruined. We will go outside to play when it is drizzling and wet, so send your child with the appropriate clothing to keep them dry. It is necessary to send your child in clothes that you do not mind getting dirty. All children should have at least one complete change of clothes to be left in their cubby.

Labeling

Please be sure to label **all** of your child's personal belongings. It is particularly important to label clothes, socks, shoes, and jackets/coats. We recommend using a permanent laundry marker, which can be purchased at variety stores for around a dollar.

Items from Home

If your child has a special comfort item, he/she is welcome to bring that to school for rest time only. All other toys should stay at home. If a special comfort item is brought, parents should discuss with their child the possibility of the toy getting lost or broken. BELC is not responsible for taking care of toys brought from home. **The Brotman Early Learning Center is a weapon free school, which includes toys. Please do not bring toys with weapons. If they are brought to school, the toy will stay in the office until pick up.**

HOURS AND CLOSURES

Normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 6:00PM. A schedule of closures for the year is emailed to parents and posted at the beginning of the calendar year. (Emergency hours based on staffing may be in effect at any time. Parents will be given as much notice as possible in these situations).

Staff Trainings

We close 4 times per year for staff training and in service days. These dates will be provided to the families when our yearly calendar is published each November.

Severe Weather

The Brotman Early Learning Center will follow the Tacoma Public Schools in the event of snow or other weather closures and delays. However, when necessary, the Director does reserve the right to make a decision different than Tacoma Public Schools. Refunds are not given for closures due to severe weather. Parents will be notified of closures through the Procure app and an emergency text sent by Procure.

Late Starts

Brotman Early Learning Center will open at 10:00am in the event of a late start.

Winter Break

The Brotman Early Learning Center closes every year for a winter break from December 24 to January 1. BELC will reopen on January 2 depending on what day January 1 lands on. Please see yearly calendar for exact dates.

Holidays

The Brotman Early Learning Center is closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Thanksgiving (and the day after)
- Winter Break – Dec 24– Jan. 2 (can vary depending on when Jan. 1 falls)
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Juneteenth

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Your child's health and safety are our top priority. Your family can contribute to the health of your child, and all of the children, in the following ways:

- Please let us know if your child has a new injury, rash, etc when you drop them off.
- The office must be notified about any illness your child has. We will notify families when/if a communicable illness has been reported, and children have been exposed.
- For the health and well-being of the children and staff, do not medicate your ill child prior to bringing them to school. The medicine will wear off, and we will have to call you and ask that the child returns home. Children and staff would then be exposed to the illness unnecessarily. BELC strives to make sure everyone stays as healthy as possible.

We will follow the guidelines below when determining when a child needs to be picked up. A child who is ill will be separated from the other children either in a separate area of the classroom or in the office. Parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible.

In the event of State, United States, or Global issues or illnesses, the Director will send out a separate document outlining the new guidelines that BELC will be following.

Illness and Exclusion Policy

The Brotman Early Learning Center follows the King County Public Health Department recommendations as directed by the Tacoma/Pierce County Public Health Department and the Department of Early Learning. If all families keep sick children at home, everyone's children will be healthier. We know that all children get runny noses, coughs, and sneezes, therefore children with mild symptoms will not be excluded from care.

Please keep your child at home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- ***Fever-** Fevers- 100.4 and above (100.4 oral or rectal reading, 99.4 under the armpit or temporal reading). Children must be fever-free for 24 hours, without fever-reducing medications before returning to school.
 - Examples: If they ran a fever on a Sunday afternoon but woke up on Monday with no fever, they may not come in until Tuesday. If your child was sent home for a fever on Wednesday afternoon but was fine by bedtime, they may not return until Friday.
 - We understand that the thermometers we have may not be the most accurate in the world and that there is room for some error. To combat any potential for error, each classroom has a brand-new temporal thermometer. If that thermometer reads a low-grade fever, the teachers will wait 20 minutes and re-check. If that thermometer still reads a low-grade fever, we can double check it with a Welch Allyn SureTemp Plus thermometer which will be kept locked up in the director's office for the purpose of verifying whether we are dealing with a true fever or a false alarm due to error or faulty equipment. This is the same thermometer many

doctor's offices and clinics use. Once a true fever is verified, we will strictly hold to that 24hr timeline, no exceptions.

***Diarrhea-** 2 or more watery stools in a 24-hour period.

***Vomiting-** 2 or more times within the past 24 hours.

***Rash-** body rash, especially with fever or itching.

***Sore Throat-** with fever or swollen glands.

***Eye Discharge-** thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye.

***Not Feeling Well-** unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused, irritable, and unable to participate in routines and activities.

***Head Lice-** Children may return to school after they have been treated, and when there are no more lice or nits found on their head.

***Oral Thrush-** Common in infants and toddlers. If it is a bad case, the child may be asked to stay home until it is mostly clear. Infants and young toddlers drool a lot and chew on toys. Every effort is made to immediately transfer a toy to a sanitizing bath, but it is not always successful. Oral thrush can be passed on to another child via the saliva that gets on toys, the child's hands and consequently anything they touch, and anything else that the child may put their mouth on.

- ***** If your child is not participating at school, they are lethargic, not acting like themselves, etc. They are too sick to be at school, and we will send them home as well.**
- ***** If your child has been tested for a contagious illness (covid, RSV, etc.) you must wait for the test result and it must be negative before coming back to school. We reserve the right to have confirmation from a doctor for a negative test prior to your child's return to school.**

Staff will follow these same guidelines.

Immunizations

Immunizations are required for attendance at the Brotman Early Learning Center, and they must be kept current. A Certificate of Immunization Status form (CIS) is required. Printouts from your doctor's office are accepted, along with a signed CIS form, as long as the printout has your child's name and birthdate. Parents/guardians must complete and sign this form before the child starts.

The Brotman Early Learning Center may accept a child who is not current on their immunizations due to a medical exemption. To protect our young children, we will not accept

children whose immunizations are not current due to religious, philosophical, or personal exemptions.

BELC follows the requirements set forth by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) for immunization schedules in childcare. We have information about these schedules in the BELC office.

Medication Management

Rule of thumb: if your child needs a pain reliever, keep them at home. If it is something that we can do at specific times due to a doctors' recommendation, that is ok.

Parent/Guardian Consent

1. Medication will only be given with prior written consent of the child's parent/legal guardian. The Medication Authorization form will include the child's name, the name of the medication, the reason for the medication, the dosage, and the duration to be given, and a list of any side effects.
2. The child's parent/legal guardian will have the sole consent to medications being given, without the consent of a healthcare provider, IF AND ONLY IF the medication meets the following criteria:
 - *The medication is over the counter and is one of the following types of Parent-Consent Medications:
 - *Antihistamine
 - *Non-aspirin fever reducer/pain reliever
 - *Non-narcotic cough suppressant
 - *Decongestant
 - *Ointments or lotions intended specifically to relieve itching
 - *Diaper ointments or powders intended for use with "diaper rash"
 - *Sunscreen for children over 6 months of age
 - *Medications must also be in the original container and labeled with the child's name AND
 - *The medication must have instructions and dosage recommendations for the child's weight and age AND
 - *The medication must not be expired AND
 - *The medication duration, dosage, and the amount to be given does not exceed label-specific recommendations for how often or how long it is to be given.

Health Care Provider Consent

1. A healthcare provider’s consent, along with parent/guardian consent, will be required for prescription medications and over-the-counter medications that do not meet the above criteria.

2. A healthcare provider’s consent may be given in 3 different ways:
 - *The provider’s name is on the original pharmacist’s label (along with the child’s name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the duration, and the expiration date)
OR

 - *The provider signs a note or prescription that includes the information required on the pharmacist’s label OR

 - *The provider signs a completed Medication Authorization Form.

3. Medications for chronic conditions such as Asthma or allergies can be given when the above requirements are met and:
 - *Symptoms that would require the medication are documented AND

 - *The length of time the medication is to be given (ex. 1 week) is documented
AND

 - *The maximum amount of medication that can be given in a 24-hour period is documented.

All medications that need to be mixed with food or drinks require a health care provider’s consent.

All medications require a specific dosage amount AND a specific time to be given. No medication will be given “as needed.”

All medication forms, including diaper ointment, expire after 6 months. At that time, you will be asked to fill out a new Medication Authorization form.

Communicable Diseases

The following communicable diseases will be reported to all parents and to Seattle King County Public Health Department, Communicable Disease Section:

German measles (Rubella, Three day Measles)	Hepatitis
Measles (Rubella, Ten day Measles)	Mumps
Meningitis (bacterial and viral)	Salmonella
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Tuberculosis

Parents will also be notified of cases of:

Chicken Pox	Scarlet Fever
Strep Throat	Impetigo
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Scabies
Lice	Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

(and any other illness where four or more children are out in a classroom)

Disaster Preparedness

The Brotman Early Learning Center has developed a disaster preparedness plan/policy. Our plan includes responses to the different disasters that our site could be vulnerable to, as well as procedures for on and off-site evacuation and shelter-in-place. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Our disaster plan/policy is located in our policy notebook in the BELC office.

Staff is oriented to the disaster plan annually and at the time of hire.

Necessary and immediate steps will be taken and you will be informed of a disaster situation as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached, a call to your emergency contact person will be made.

It is critical that you keep current your emergency contacts and numbers on file. Inform the office of any changes immediately.

Fire Drills

Monthly fire drills conducted by the Director are held at unspecified and unannounced times. The plan and a log of fire drills are maintained and scrutinized by the local and the state Fire Marshal during their annual inspection of the building.

Earthquake Preparedness

In the event of an earthquake or other disaster, our staff will follow the recommendations of the Red Cross. We will stay on site until notified that it is safe to leave and/or all children are picked up. We are equipped with earthquake disaster kits and food and water for at least 72 hours. First Aid kits are on site and quarterly earthquake drills are practiced and documented.

Poisoning

In the event of poisoning, we will immediately call Poison Control and follow their recommendations. The parent will be contacted and informed of the incident, the actions taken, and the recommended procedures. In the school, all potential hazardous and dangerous materials are kept in locked cupboards out of the classrooms.

Accidents

Sometimes accidents occur in the school environment. The staff make every attempt to keep the areas where children play free from all dangers. Staff are trained in Infant, Child, and Adult CPR and First Aid. It is our policy that the person who witnessed the accident fill out the

Incident/Injury form. A copy of the report is given to the Director who investigates, if necessary. The Director signs the form and copies are made for the parent and the child's file. In a case where outside medical attention is needed, emergency procedures will be followed and parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If we cannot contact the child's parents, we will call their emergency contacts. If outside medical attention is needed, we are also required to inform our licensor at the Washington State Department of Early Learning.

No Smoking

The Brotman Early Learning Center, Temple Beth El and its grounds are strict non-smoking areas. This includes vaping.

NUTRITION

THE BROTMAN EARLY LEARNING CENTER IS A PEANUT FREE FACILITY

.....

- The Brotman Early Learning Center welcomes children and staff with food allergies. In order to maintain a safe and healthy environment, it is imperative that no peanuts be brought into the center.

The Brotman Early Learning Center is a vegetarian program. We do use dairy, including eggs, cheese, and yogurt. We also accommodate those that do not eat certain things, based on a case-by-case basis.

The Washington State Department of Early Learning, our licensing agency, ensures that all children in childcare are served healthy and nutritious food throughout the day. BELC will ensure these standards are met at breakfast, lunch, and at snack time.

The Washington State Department of Early Learning oversees the meals and snacks that are served in licensed programs. Our goal is to make sure that growing children get the necessary vitamins, protein, and grains they need.

All our meals are served family style. We want children to enjoy mealtimes, and to use these times for social interaction, positive conversation, and working on manners. Children are given age-appropriate responsibilities such as setting the table, serving themselves, and cleaning up.

Dietary Restrictions

If your child has dietary restrictions, we will work together to develop a plan for them.

Infants

Parents are responsible for sending in formula or breastmilk and clean bottles daily. Enough extra bottles for the day and a container of formula or breastmilk must also be provided. All bottles must be labeled with the child’s full name and date. Clean bottles are to be placed in the cabinet under the counter in the child’s basket. Dirty bottles are placed in the child’s basket in the cabinet to take home. It is the parents’ responsibility to take dirty bottles home every day and bring clean ones the next day.

Infants are held by their teachers during feedings and bottles are not propped. Other foods may be brought from home. BELC will not give your infant any food that you have not first given them at home. Once your Infant is able to eat everything on our menu, we will provide food from the kitchen. Infant room teachers and parents will communicate regarding schedules, foods, and feeding.

All infants will eat and nap on their own schedules.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served from 8:00AM to 9:00AM. Breakfast is a choice, and all children are welcome to eat. Each breakfast will contain a fruit or vegetable, and a grain product along with milk.

Lunch

Lunch is served from 12:00 to 1:00. Lunch is served family style, and all the children participate. Every lunch will include a protein, dairy, vegetable, fruit, and grain product.

Milk

Licensing mandates that children under the age of 12 months be served formula or breast milk. Children between 12 and 24 months must be served whole milk or breast milk. It is recommended that children over the age of 24 months drink lower fat milk which is provided by the Center. BELC will also provide one milk substitute for those that cannot drink cow's milk.

Snacks

We provide one morning snack and two afternoon snacks. The first snack is offered at 10:00AM. Afternoon snacks are at 3pm after the children wake up from their nap, and the other is at 5pm. The 5pm snack is more casual and helps satisfy children until they are at home and ready for dinner.

Special Treats on Special Occasions

Special occasions are often celebrated in many cultures with special food. We welcome families to bring food for their child's classroom if it is store-bought and nut-free. Unfortunately, we are not allowed to serve home baked food. We recommend checking with your child's teacher to see if there are any other food allergies when considering a store-bought treat.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteer Policy

The Brotman Early Learning Center welcomes volunteers to help with a variety of needs in the Center. Regular volunteers are required to meet several requirements before they spend time in the program:

- Proof of a negative TB test taken within the calendar year
- Provide a copy of a valid photo ID
- Sign a confidentiality form
- Complete a volunteer orientation with the Director

The Brotman Early Learning Center limits the number of volunteers in the classrooms. This ensures consistency, predictability, and high-quality care for the children. Classroom volunteers must commit for a certain length of time. If this requirement cannot be met, the volunteer may be asked to volunteer their services in a different way. BELC will keep a wait list of volunteers interested in working in the classrooms only.

Volunteers are never left alone with a child or group of children.

Volunteers do not assist with diaper changing or toileting activities.

Volunteers are expected to be positive role models.

Volunteers report to the Director, but frequently work under the supervision and direction of the classroom teachers. Teachers will direct and inform the volunteers of their classroom expectations.

Parent volunteers are welcome and are expected to follow the same requirements and expectations as community volunteers. Parents may not bring siblings along with them and may not remove their child from the program unless they have signed their child out for the remainder of the day. Parents must stick to the classroom's rules and routines.

Field Trips:

Teachers may decide to take your children on field trips: You will need to sign a permission slip. If it is going to be somewhere we go regularly (Hunt Middle School grounds) the permission slip can be good for up to 6 months.

Field Trip Protocol: Continuously counting the children. Before they leave the building, as they leave the doors to the building, before they walk off campus, when they get to their destination, many times throughout the trip. Before they leave the field trip destination, as they get back to TBE campus, as count before entering the building.

Discipline Policy

The word discipline comes from disciple, meaning to teach. At Brotman Early Learning Center, the practices regarding discipline and behavior management are based on accepted early

childhood theories and principles, namely that the child learns and copes best when motivation and behaviors are internal and self-imposed, rather than external and imposed by adults. The role of the adult is to assist the child in learning self-control and making positive choices. Some common practices would be positive approach redirection of the activity and diversion of a child from a less desired activity.

Corporal Punishment is not allowed at the Brotman Early Learning Center. No physical punishment (for example: spanking, hitting, shaking, slapping hands, biting, or pinching back) is ever allowed under any circumstances. In addition, no verbal or emotional punishment is ever allowed. Withholding food and drink as a punishment is also never allowed. Each need for behavior management is handled individually and according to the child's developmental level, behavior, skill and cognitive/emotional level. Individual behavior plans may be developed with the assistance of the Director when the teacher feels special assistance is required. The plan will be developed in collaboration with the parents.

Physical restraint of a child would only be used in an extreme situation where a child is in danger of seriously hurting him/herself or others and then only by a staff member trained in the appropriate use of a basket hold. Any time a restraint is required, the parent/guardian would receive written documentation.

A more thorough version of our Behavior/Discipline Policy can be found in the Policy binder located in the Director's office.

The environment at BELC is designed to foster appropriate behavior in children. We provide a stimulating, inviting environment in which children want to play and explore. We provide adult interactions that are positive and empowering for the children. We always begin by modeling appropriate behavior. Adults respect themselves, property, and other adults. Because we acknowledge differences and disagreements as a normal part of daily living, we work them out respectfully and openly. We give children positive feedback about their positive behaviors, giving clear and consistent information about what behaviors are acceptable. When children receive clear instructions about what is expected in a particular space, at a particular time, they usually act appropriately.

We expect children at BELC to respect themselves, property, and others. Generally, this means that no one and nothing is allowed to be hurt either physically or emotionally. Children at this age, however, are just beginning to understand what "hurts" others and things, as well as how to express their feelings appropriately. When children come into conflict with each other, our goal as childcare providers (contract staff and parents) is to guide them in exploring the appropriate ways to communicate their feelings.

- We explain to children what about their behavior is inappropriate, i.e. "It is not o.k. to hit someone." We then acknowledge their feelings, i.e. "You seem angry at her." We then ask the children to express their feelings appropriately, i.e. "Can you tell _____ you are angry?" or say "I did not like that!"

- In all classrooms, when children are not following directions, are hurting property, or are behaving in unsafe ways, their behavior is most easily changed by redirection, i.e. "How about going to the gym to jump and climb, because we use couches for sitting, not for jumping." If a child is unable or unwilling to respond to redirection, we remind that child of what is appropriate and give them a choice about the next step, i.e. "Do you want to walk out of this area and chose another activity yourself or should I help you?"
- If the behavior in which a child is engaging is immediately dangerous to herself or other children (i.e.: hitting, biting, pushing, etc.), we expect the adult to intervene immediately, and remove the child from endangering themselves or others. We then expect the adult to work with the child, helping them to understand why the situation is dangerous and what choices are appropriate.

Creating a Plan for Consistent Behavior Issues:

*Each child is on a 90 day “trial” period. If during this time there has not been disclosure from parents that there has been consistent behavioral problems, we can dismiss the child from our care.

When an individual child is consistently behaving inappropriately, is consistently acting in a way that is dangerous to others and themselves and is unresponsive to redirection or "choices" given, the following process and timeline will be followed:

1. The staff will ask the child's parents to join with them in setting up a plan of action that includes setting goals for improved behavior and setting aside a time to evaluate those goals on a weekly basis (meeting with lead teacher, parents, and director). Parents will receive both verbal and written feedback about their child's behavior and any decisions made regarding the child's placement at BELC.
2. The parents of the child will be made aware that their child is being evaluated and that if improvements are not made, they may be told to find a more suitable environment for their child.
3. The lead teacher and/or director will obtain parental permission to have the child observed by the public health nurse (or other appropriate persons) in an attempt to gain additional insight about the child.
4. During this time of evaluation, staff will document all instances of inappropriate behavior, citing the time of day, circumstances, brief description of the behavior and how the situation was handled.
5. This evaluation time will generally last thirty days. In extreme cases the time of evaluation will be shortened to a two-week period.

6. If problems persist after the thirty-day period, and every effort to help a child change inappropriate behavior has been exhausted, and it becomes clear that the environment and structure of BELC is not working for a particular child, the BELC director reserves the right to require a family to find a different environment for their child.
7. The parents of the child will be notified of this decision during a meeting with the director during which time they will receive a written notice of the decision.
8. The director will help the family gain contact with appropriate community resources to help the parents find a more appropriate environment for their child. The director will assist, as possible, with recommendations concerning the type of environment that would be most suitable for their child.

Child Abuse Reporting Law Requirements

The BELC Director, staff, and parents are required by Washington State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services any instance where there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual or emotional child abuse, or child neglect, or exploitation. All calls made by staff are confidential. In order to protect our staff and the child, all mandated reporter calls are kept anonymous to parents. Parents will not be notified if a call has been made. This is done to insure the safety of our staff and the integrity of the report.

Non-Discrimination Policy

At the Brotman Early Learning Center we honor diversity of all kinds including race, ethnic background, ability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and age. We strive to be culturally sensitive to families and staff, respecting their values and sharing the diverse population we serve. No person shall be discriminated against based on race, color, national origin, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or HIV/AIDS status.

Anti Bias Policy

Anti-Bias Curriculum and Training

BELC is dedicated to providing an anti-bias environment for children and adults. An anti-bias environment is one that encourages an active approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, and bias.

An anti-bias attitude values and celebrates diversity among different genders, races, lifestyles, physical abilities, religions, and cultures. Research has shown that children notice differences at a very early age.

Their self-concepts and attitudes about others are directly affected by social bias. Therefore, BELC believes it is imperative to encourage children and their families to recognize and actively challenge bias.

The goals of our anti-bias curriculum (as defined by Louise Derman-Sparks in her book, *The Anti-Bias Curriculum*) are as follows:

- 1) To foster each child's construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity.
- 2) To foster each child's comfortable, empathetic interaction with diversity among people.
- 3) To foster each child's critical thinking about bias.
- 4) To foster each child's ability to stand up for her/himself and for others in the face of bias.

What You Can Do

1. In order to encourage an anti-bias attitude in children, each of us needs to understand for ourselves the importance of this value. Spend some time exploring your own reasons for wanting to see a world where there is no discrimination, prejudice, power-over, stereotyping, etc. Examine your biases, prejudices and stereotypes. Many people are unaware of their own subtle prejudices. Take an active role in your own growth. Attend thought provoking lectures and discussions on the topic. Take time each week getting to know someone better who is different from you. Subscribe to a women's gay and lesbian, or ethnic magazine or newspaper. Attend culturally awakening events in the community, etc.

2. Use positive language with children and help them feel good about themselves. Accepting and celebrating the experiences of all the children is the most important step in the anti-bias curriculum. Never discount someone's experience or pretend story. Listen to children's stories about the dad who they have never met, saying, "Some children don't have a dad. Some children don't have a mom. Everyone's family is a little different." When a child tells you their momma is up in the sky with God, say, "How did your momma get up in the sky with God?" exploring the child's experience rather than shrugging it off or laughing at the statement.

3. Point out stereotypes you see and hear in the classroom, in books, or in the media. When reading a "prince saves the princess" book to the children, encourage the children to think about how often the men in their lives save the women, and talk about how the women often save the men too. When reading a holiday book, point out that some people celebrate Solstice, and some people celebrate Chanukah, Christmas, or Kwanzaa during mid-winter. When in the dramatic play area, encourage different kinds of family groups, e.g., have a grandmother, aunt, friend, or partner in the family.

4. Look for prejudice in language and point it out. For example: Do not assume that all animals (real or pretend) are male. Many of us unconsciously call objects or animals "he," encouraging the typical invisibility of the female in our world. Challenge a child when she/he assumes something is a "he."

Another example is in our songs. For instance, change "One little, two little, three little Indians..." to "One little, two little, three little fingers. . ." Change the words of a song to positively reflect people of the real world. "The Farmer and the Dell" is an old favorite that can be rewritten with words that reflect our real family relationships, for example: "The Farmer loved his wife..." rather than "takes."

5. As with any name calling or derogatory comments the children make, directly address children's negative comments about differences. Explain that feelings get hurt. Point out that we are all different in many ways: we have a variety of skin colors, of body and facial shapes, and of people in our families, and we enjoy doing different things. Children at this age are noticing differences. Differences are real. It's the values associated with differences that can be harmful.

We have designed BELC environment with our anti-bias goals in mind. Around the classrooms, there are various images that challenge the stereotypes of gender, race, physical abilities, religion, and family configuration. Our books reflect a diversity of gender roles, racial and cultural backgrounds, lifestyles, abilities, etc. We have dolls that reflect different racial groups. Various languages are used in labeling the environment for the children, and the languages of the children in our center are used daily. The props in the dramatic play area are from different cultures and reflect different lifestyles. All these materials are provided to reflect all the children at BELC and their families in a positive way and expose them to the reality of diversity in their world.

During parent meetings and staff trainings, we provide staff and families the opportunity to focus on a specific issue surrounding our anti-bias philosophy.

Religion and Holidays

The Brotman Early Learning Center's educational program incorporates elements of Jewish tradition and Reform Jewish values with well-researched secular early childhood education curricula. The Brotman Early Learning Center is part of the Temple Beth El community. Both our program and the Temple Beth El office will close for several Jewish holidays throughout the year. We welcome children and families of all faiths. We will celebrate all holidays except for Christmas and Easter.

Confidentiality of Records and Files

Your child's files are private, confidential, and protected from unnecessary scrutiny from any unwarranted party. Information will be released ONLY after our program staff have a signed and dated "release of information" statement provided by the parent or guardian.

Grievance Procedures

Families have the right and responsibility to help ensure a safe, fun, and nurturing environment for their children. If at any time a family member has a question or concern their child's classroom or individual child, we recommend it first be addressed to the child's teacher. If the concern persists or is not addressed in a way that meets your needs, the family and/or the teacher should include the Director in the resolution. In the event that the concern is still not addressed to your satisfaction, the Executive Director of Temple Beth El, BELC's director supervisor should be contacted.

The Director shall address all concerns in regard to schedules, financial responsibilities, and health.

Pesticides

No chemical application will be applied without written notice to parents 48 hours prior to any intended application of pesticides. Written notification will include details about the chemicals to be used and the application procedures. A complete Pesticide Policy is available in our policy notebook located in the Director's office.

CODE OF ETHICS

As part of your contract with BELC, we reserve the right to withdraw or deny services if the needs of your child or family cannot be appropriately met. The decision for suspension and/or withdrawal will be based on the following types of incidents.

- Failure to pay fees, including late fees, by the designated time.
- Failure to comply with the parental/guardian responsibilities outlined in the contract and policies of the Center, including reading, signing, and returning all required documents and policies within the requested time frame.
- Repeated late pick up of child, as per late policy.
- Gossip and public criticism which are malicious in nature are unacceptable. The privacy and confidentiality of our parents, guardians, teachers, volunteers, and students is important to us. All concerns and comments should be addressed with the director.
- Inappropriate behavior or harassment of any kind towards a student, parent/guardian, or teacher. This type of behavior includes but is not limited to harassment, sexual advancement, and/or intimidation by written note, email, words, gestures and/or body language. Also included are verbal attacks on other children and/or Staff, which include the use of threats, name-calling, as well as repeated profane or degrading language. Individuals engaging in such behavior will be asked to leave the premises immediately.
- Confrontational interactions with employees, other parents or other associates of the Brotman Early Learning Center: While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Brotman Early Learning Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements will be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.
- Non-compliance of Staff direction.
- Theft of personal or center property.
- Conduct that is injurious to the moral tone of the Center.
- No weapons are allowed on Center property or at Center functions.
- Alcohol and illicit drugs are not allowed on Center property or events.
- Smoking is prohibited everywhere on Temple Beth El property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot. Parents who are smoking in their cars, must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.
- All staff members and families at the BELC are to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or any other grounds.

- Not being respectful of the decisions made by the Director and Staff. While you do not need to agree with everything we do here, please be kind and discuss your concerns with the Director.

BELC operates on a two strike policy. We will let you know if you violated our parent code of conduct, and document the violation in your child's file.

Contact info:

Christina Roppolo

704-620-7281 cell phone

Office.belctacoma@gmail.com

director@belctacoma.org

BELC Phone: 253-564-4686

Appendix A
Talking to Children

Talking to Children

- 1) Talk about what the child is doing, seeing or experiencing. Add to what he says; elaborate and describe.
- 2) Listen to the children. Show excitement about what they are telling you.
- 3) As the child shows fear, anger, joy, and other feelings, give the child words for what he/she is feeling.
- 4) Be aware when a child tries to talk to another child with gestures. (Hitting, biting, and pushing). Give the child the words you think he/she is trying to say if they don't have a large vocabulary. Acknowledge that they are trying to communicate something.
- 5) When you talk to children, get down on their level, face them and look at them while you are talking.

Focus on contributions, assets, appreciation:

- Thanks that helped a lot.
- It was thoughtful of you to _____.
- Thanks, I really appreciate _____, because it makes my job easier.
- I really enjoyed doing that with you.
- I need your help with _____.

Recognize effort or accomplishment:

- You worked really hard on that.
- You spent a lot of time thinking that through.

Use reflective listening (give open responses reflecting the child's feelings and meanings, make factual, nonjudgmental statements):

- You're extremely angry with Robert.
- You're especially excited about that camping trip.
- You're very sad that your parent is leaving.
- Looks like you're really upset.
- Want to talk about it?

Open vs. Closed Ended Responses:

Child: I'm never going to play with her again!

- Closed response: Why not forget it; she probably didn't mean it.
- Open response: You're really angry with her.

Child: I can't do it

- Closed response: Now don't say that, you just got started.
- Open response: It seems very difficult to you.

Child: Look at my block tower!

- Closed response: That's nice...now go finish building.
- Open response: You're pleased with your work

Child: You are the meanest mom in the whole world!

- Closed response: Don't talk to me like that!
- Open response: You're very angry about _____.

Words for Reflection Feelings: (what is the child feeling):

Upset Feelings:	Happy Feelings:
accused	accepted
angry	appreciated
anxious	better
bored	capable
defeated	comfortable
difficult	confident
disappointed	encouraged
discouraged	excited
disrespected	glad
doubtful	good
embarrassed	great
frightened	happy
guilty	love
hurt	pleased

left out	proud
miserable	relieved
sad	satisfied
unfair	
unhappy	
worried	

Positive vs. Negative Directions/Suggestions:

A positive suggestion tells the child what the adult expects from them rather than pointing out what they are not to do. By focusing on giving positive directions to children they will build intrinsic motivation to do positive actions. Children are also more likely to follow directions that are phrased in the positive then the negative because it provides them with information about what “to do”.

Instead of saying:	Say:
Don't stand up on the slide.	Sit down when you slide.
Don't throw the sand.	Dig in the sand.
Don't stand up in the swing.	Sit in the swing.
You'll fall if you don't watch out.	Use both hands when you climb.
Don't jump off the climber.	Climb down the ladder.
Don't play with the stick	Throw the stick over the fence.
Don't dump the puzzle pieces on the floor.	Keep the puzzle on the table.
Don't tear the book.	Turn the pages carefully.
Don't shout.	Talk in a quiet voice.
Don't put your dirty hands on that	Wipe your hands on the paper towel.
Don't rock on your chair.	Sit on your chair.

Don't drop paint on the floor.	Wipe your brush on the container.
Don't you want to go outside?	Time to go outside.
Don't you want to drink the milk?	Drink your milk.

Demonstrate acceptance:

- I like the way you handled that.
- It looks as if you enjoyed that.
- How do you feel about that?
- Show confidence:

You'll make it!

I have confidence in your judgment. You'll figure it out.

Great idea!

Discard from your vocabulary: Good, Bad, Nice:

Instead of "good" or "nice," say: "You have learned how to _____. " Praise the act, not the child.

Instead of "Now, be a good boy," say: "Have a good time."

Instead of "bad" or "naughty," say: "I don't like when you. . ." Disapprove of the act, not the child