

BS"D

# Student / Parent Handbook



5781 – 2020/2021

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### **CGA MISSION STATEMENT**

Chabad Girls Academy (CGA) is a middle school with a Chassidic ideology. At CGA, we believe in engaging our students on all levels. We set a strong emphasis on creative learning that is interactive, hands-on and artistic. We develop understanding through thinking skills and take a genuine interest in our students' questions. We coach our students in interpersonal growth, self-assessment and in learning to work harmoniously within the CGA team. We love each girl as a unique individual whom we have the good fortune to guide and nurture into independent learners, models of good character and empowered G-d-fearing Jews.



**CGA CALENDAR FOR 2020-21 / 5780-81**

**Regular School Hours:** Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 4 pm, Friday: 9 am - 12:30 pm  
Cocoa Club (supervision) from 8:45 am

The school calendar for 2020-21  
will be sent out to parents  
with the school supplies list  
during the summer of 2020, BE"H.



## CGA UNIFORM FROM HEAD TO TOE

As each student is a Bas Melech, a princess of the King of Kings, Chabad Girls Academy requires that each girl dresses according to halachic standards in public and private.

**Hair** Hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back. (This also prevents the spreading of lice).

**Earrings** Only small studs or small hoops are permitted.

**Sweater** Only School sweaters purchased from landsend.com may be worn.

Please use school code **900171687** when placing the order-  
**hunter green school sweater**

**<https://www.landsend.com/shop/school/S-ytp-xe8?schoolStoreNum=900171687&grade=7&gender=1>**

No sweatshirts or hoodies may be worn in school.

**Shirt** A white oxford shirt or white polo shirt that covers the collarbone and elbows is to be worn. Shirts can be purchased at Engelic\* (if not, office will provide a rentable shirt)

**Skirt** A grey pleated skirt which covers the knees at all times is to be worn. Skirts can be purchased at Engelic\* (skirt must be 4 inches below the knee)

**Nails** Only light pastel or clear nail polish may be worn.

**Tights** Tights are required. No short socks, knee socks or leggings are allowed.

If a student doesn't comply with the above dress code, she will be required to rent the item from the office for \$5 and return it laundered.

\*Please complete a Engelic Purchase Order Form for the school shirt and skirt. Ask for one at the Office.



## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

CGA starts supervision of students at 8:45 am with our daily Cocoa Club. Students who arrive before 9:00 am go down to the lunch room and learn and have cocoa, eat breakfast cereal and socialize. All students are expected to arrive by 9:00 am, when Davening starts.

Students who commute from another town are given a 15 minute grace period if occasionally traffic prevents prompt arrival. However, if a student does not arrive with parents, parental awareness of arrival times must be maintained daily for safety (see "Tardiness and Absences" section below).

The school day ends at 4:00 pm from Monday to Thursday and at 12:30 pm on Friday. There are also days during the year, such as Jewish fast days, when there is early dismissal at 12:15pm. These are noted on the calendar and reminders are sent the week beforehand.

If a new arrival or dismissal time is scheduled for a special occasion or event, parents and students will be notified at the earliest opportunity.

Students who arrive after 9:00 am or leave before dismissal must go to the Office to check in before entering class with a late note and / or check out before leaving the school.

A student may also need a late note from the Office to be admitted to class if she dawdled and did not get to class on time.

Students need to make up the late minutes accumulated by unexcused tardiness (see "Monday Make Up Minutes" section below.)

## TARDINESS AND ABSENCES

CGA is responsible for the whereabouts of each student during school hours. We take this responsibility very seriously because it is an essential aspect of our Duty of Care, protecting the safety of each student. (For further details, please ask the Office for the CGA Child Protection Policy.)

If a student arrives unusually late without a note, the school will be concerned. The parent might think the student arrived on time and the school might think the student was in the parent's care. This unsupervised time poses a danger, since each party (the parents and the school) assume that the student is in the care of the other, leaving a gap that could, *chas v'shalom*, present an opportunity for harm.

Protecting each student fully means making sure there is *never* an opportunity for harm in these handover times between parent and school and back. Therefore, we are very strict in the following matters and we ask for parents to partner with us in this area to keep their child safe:



1. If a student will be:
  - absent or
  - late or
  - needs to leave during school hours for an appointment,
 then the school must have parental confirmation in written form. Please provide a note each time. If she does not have a note, the school will need parental confirmation to let the student leave school - a note or email or text message. In some cases a verbal notification to the Office is sufficient.
2. In the case of absence or excused lateness, parents should call the school Office on **(718) 484-9021** by 9:15 am.
3. We do not allow students to leave campus unsupervised during school hours. Therefore, if a student forgot lunch / another item and wants to run home / off campus to get something, in most cases we will not allow her to leave without supervision.
4. If a student will be away from school for an extended time (overseas or interstate trip, etc), prior school permission is needed and the prospective dates of absence must be provided in writing. The school has an obligation to ensure that each student attends the requisite days of schooling each school year to be promoted to the next grade level. All missed homework, class work, quizzes or tests must be made up upon or before returning to school.
5. A record of the time a student arrives late (or any time off campus during school hours) will be kept by the Office.
6. Parents need to be prompt in picking up their daughter when the Duty of Care transfers back to them (at 4:00 pm, 12:15, 12:30 or any other dismissal time).
7. In the event of a family simcha, students have an extension of up to one hour to arrive at school the next day. However, a note will be required from parents to excuse the lateness.
8. Appointments (doctor, dentist, etc) should be scheduled after school hours whenever possible.
9. Our students are expected to daven daily. If a student is late, she should daven at home. (If a student does not daven during davening time, she may be asked to daven during recess).

## MONDAY MAKE UP MINUTES

When a student is late to school or to any class, the minutes are computed by the Office. A student can also earn minutes by being in the wrong place at the wrong time (ie if she did not go out to recess or down to lunch or did not return to class in a timely manner). Parents will get a weekly email indicating the minutes the student "owes".

Students are required to stay after school for up to an hour on Mondays to make up these minutes. Sometimes the time will be used to help around the school with organizing or tidying. Other times the student will be given set work. If time mounts up, she may need to make up the minutes on Sunday mornings.

The purpose of Make Up Minutes is to encourage the students to be responsible for their time.



## CGA BEHAVIORAL POLICY

At CGA, we apply the advice of the Frierdiker Rebbe's maamer, Klalei HaChinuch vey HaHadracha. In practice, this means:

- We see each student as an individual with many talents which we help her express.
- We assess her habits and guide her to improve them.
- Each girl has her own unique way of understanding the world. We increase her awareness of the perceptions of those around her.
- We teach her to take responsibility for her own choices of thought, speech and action.
- When a student misbehaves, we recognize this as a call for guidance. We use the incident to help the student understand her own motivation for the choices she made and to work to discover more peaceful / appropriate ways to achieve her aims.
- We coach each student to be responsible for conflict resolution.
- We let the student know that we are on her team in regard to the making of resolutions to improve and grow. We figure out a plan with her (a chart, a system, an incentive, etc) so that she can be successful in improving.
- We often partner with parents / guardians via WhatsApp to monitor the plan (see "Parents WhatsApp Group" below).

Rather than using a punitive system, CGA staff focuses on building strong supportive relationships with each student. We guide and coach her in kindness and respect. The students are expected to learn the skills we coach them in, to develop honest and dignified relationships with all staff and with peers.

Coupled with our weekly points system (see "Weekly Point System" below), this relationship focus allows our students to feel encouraged to choose good behaviors.

## DEPT OF EDUCATION (DOE) SPECIAL SERVICES

The Department of Education (DOE) offers professional, paraprofessional and counselling help for students. In order to access this governmental assistance, parents need to consent to DOE testing so that an IEP (Individualized Education Program) can be made to determine what help the student needs and is eligible for. When this assessment process is done, the student is allocated hours for the various services. The school uses the IEP to hire support staff to provide the services to each student.

If your daughter could benefit from these services, please email our Services Coordinator, Mrs Yael Rosenberger to take full advantage of the DOE services available. Her email address is: [yrosenberger@chabadgirlsacademy.com](mailto:yrosenberger@chabadgirlsacademy.com).

IEP reports are supposed to be renewed every three years. If your daughter's report is due for renewal, please contact Mrs Rosenberger. Our school must be given the updated IEP to hire the providers for your daughter.





From time to time, the school will ask parents to sign various forms regarding upgrading our school's access to services as new options arise. Please consider each one and help our school where you are able.

To use the services of our school counselor, a parental permission form is required. Even if your daughter may not choose to meet privately with our counselor, please sign the form and return it to the Office when it is emailed, in order to permit the counselor to run Social Skills classes within the classroom.

## **A NEED FOR DIAGNOSIS**

The physical, emotional and social welfare of our students plays a large role in each one's success at school. We are always on the lookout to make sure that each girl is thriving emotionally and spiritually and is physically well. On occasion, we will invite specialists to the school to check eyes, ears, teeth, etc.

From time to time, a student will raise concerns which require external expertise. At these times, parents will need to get professional diagnoses (for eyesight, hearing ADHD, etc) and / or for psychological assessment and counseling outside of school. A parent may need to employ a Behavioral Specialist (ABA or BCBA services) who can assess the student and recommend behaviors for her and accommodations for those around her to be aware of, which suit the needs of the student. Parents should ensure providers are covered by their health insurance.

The results of all professional diagnoses need to be fully shared with the school so that we can work in partnership and interact in the best ways.

## **HEALTH, ILLNESS AND MEDICATION**

As per recent NY law, immunizations need to be current for children enrolled in the school.

A student who has any sign of illness should be kept at home to recover. Please call to inform the Office on **(718) 484-9021**. Students must be 24-hour fever free before they can return to school.

Any contagious or communicable illness (ex: strep, lice, pink eye, chicken pox) should be reported to the school secretary as a courtesy towards the other parents of the class.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the parent will be contacted to take the child home from school.

Parents need to give permission before the school can give a student Tylenol or other pain relief medications for aches during the school day. If we have your permission on file then we can administer these over-the-counter medicines even if we cannot reach you by phone when your daughter is in pain.



## FOOD POLICY

It is well documented that unhealthy foods are detrimental to learning in school children. In addition, we have students with allergies to nuts, milk products and gluten. With these ideas in mind, we have set forth the following rules about food at CGA:

1. Students are not to bring nosh to school. This includes candy, chocolate, soda, sweet pastries, etc.
2. Potato chips are also not allowed because they have been linked to obesity and heart failure when eaten regularly - even in children.
3. Teachers are not to provide nosh to students other than for rare occasions with the permission of the Honhola. These occasions might include a siyum, a birthday, a Chassidishe Yom Tov, as part of a class lesson, etc. In such a case, all food must be parve, nut free and store bought. (Only the Principal and Director can bake items for school use).
4. All milchik items brought to school for snacks or lunch must be cholov Yisroel.
5. Any deliveries of food for a student must arrive promptly in time for lunch at 12:15pm.
6. Because of the various allergies, it is best that students do not share food with each other.
7. In a related note, the entire class must be invited to a student's birthday party if they are giving out invitations in school. In such a case, the food must be cholov Yisroel and / or of the highest level of kashrus. The activities at the party must also be suitable for the most religious girl attending (this could prohibit videos, etc).

We are eager to have a sponsor for healthy, hot daily lunches for our students to nurture their good functioning during their studies. If you are able to sponsor or partially sponsor or suggest a sponsor, please contact Mrs Angyalfi.

## WEEKLY POINTS SYSTEM, HONOR ROLL

CGA students receive a personalized Progress Report weekly at Friday assemblies and by email. Teachers grade each student in effort, behavior and participation in each class and the total points earned are reflected on the weekly report.

When parents take an interest in the report and discuss the results with their daughter, it encourages her to aim to maximize her success in these essential and good learning habits.

Students who earn 100 points or more in a week are listed on the Honor Roll in the School Newsletter and are sometimes entered into a raffle for a prize.

The point system runs per CGA school term. At the start of each quarter of the year (see school calendar for exact dates) the points start fresh. Students who have earned high enough scores (the exact amount of points depends on the amount of school days in each particular term)



become eligible to participate in that term's Honor Roll school trip. On the day of the trip, school supervision is provided for girls who do not earn a place on the trip and they are expected to attend CGA in school uniform as usual.

## **PARENT WHATSAPP GROUP**

In a parent survey, parents indicated that WhatsApp is the preferred way for parents to get information. Therefore, we use the CGA parental WhatsApp group for school notifications and reminders.

CGA also uses WhatsApp groups when students need personalized focus in conjunction with parents. The WhatsApp group can consist of the Principal, the Director and the parents / guardians of the student. Sometimes a teacher or teachers will be added. Sometimes the group can be directly between parents and teachers. The personalized success group allows parents to raise concerns or notifications about the student and lets the school communicate regularly about progress or lack thereof in real time. These personalized WhatsApp groups have been extremely successful in encouraging students to improve in areas of concern.

## **KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP**

Our CGA weekly newsletter, Keeping You In The Loop is given out at Friday assemblies and emailed to parents each full week of school. The agenda of our newsletter is to give parents dates and information about events and engage parents in our school community. In the newsletter, the CGA extra-curricular activities are explained (such as the criteria for hachona programs, contests, etc). Events in the school are reported on weekly. We often share a picture page with a collage of photos from the week's events. Sometimes students are involved in production of newsletter material.

We hope parents will read it weekly to stay informed and involved in our partnership between school and home.

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

In a case where a student is disrupting class in a severe way or in a chronic way or a way which is threatening to a peer or teacher, the student might need to be removed from class until it is clear she understands the problem and intends to rectify her previous behavior and make better choices.

In such instances, the Honhola will determine whether an in-school suspension will serve to teach the lesson. In-school suspension is usually the result of disrespectful behavior towards a particular teacher and the student would be excluded from that teacher's class for a time. The student is asked to complete the work packet from her class in another classroom until such



time as the offended teacher feels sure she can return with a new attitude. Sometimes a student will need this exclusion from several teachers' classes.

In the case that in-school interventions with a student's behavior are not producing the desired results, a student may be sent home from school for an out-of-school suspension. Parents will be contacted and informed of the factors at play. The student will be sent home for a time and will be welcomed back only after agreeing to a contract in which she commits to improving in the required areas. Sometimes the contract will require support from parents. Sometimes the contract will require regular psychological counseling and/or professional diagnoses of various kinds. The contract may need to be formulated in conjunction with professionals, experts in education and consulting Rabbis for advice. In such a case, the CGA Board is informed without mentioning the family name of the student.

A suspended student will need to do all assigned work at home during the suspension.

In severe cases where both in-school and out-of-school intervention are not succeeding to guide the student to be successful in school, CGA might need to expel a student because we are clearly unable to meet her needs.

## **CELL PHONES AND DEVICES**

Student cell phones are handed in at the Office upon arrival at school daily. Each student who has a phone has a pocket in the Office labelled with her name. Phones must be brought to school so we can see that they are turned in daily.

Phones are not to be used in school. In the case that an app or camera or recorder is needed for a class, students need explicit permission each time to access their phone for educational use from Administration. Students who need to make an urgent call to parents / a doctor etc, may ask permission to use the Office phone during breaks.

Students are responsible to remember to collect their phones from the Office at dismissal time.

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing any other electronic devices to school in case of loss or damage or confiscation. If a student is seen using any electronic device without permission (including a cell phone) in school it will be confiscated. A first confiscation is for one day, a second time is for one week, a third time means that the device can only be returned in conjunction with a parental meeting.

The TikTok app has been deemed detrimental by the religious world. It is addictive, competitive and encourages ever more outrageous moves. Therefore, we do not allow our students to have access to it or to do TikTok dances. We rely on parents to help us make sure their daughters get rid of the app.



## **INTERNET DEVICES AND LIBRARY BOOKS**

CGA IPADS - Students may not use the school iPads. These are exclusively for staff use to take attendance and the like.

CGA CHROMEBOOKS - Our Chromebooks are to be used by students only with permission and supervision of CGA staff. A teacher or tutor must permit the use and supervise the entire time. No student can access a chromebook during recesses or lunch. Students must sign out the Chromebook they are using and take care to prevent damage while using them. (Students are liable to repair or replace a Chromebook which they damaged). After use, the laptop must be returned, signed off and plugged into the charging station. Our school internet system is filtered to protect our students, thanks to the donation of a devoted parent.

If a book is being read without permission during class it will be confiscated. All books at school must be screened for appropriate content. A first book confiscation is for one day, a second time (even with a different book) lasts for one week. The third time, the book can only be returned in conjunction with a parental meeting.

The school has a library of book sets which are used for English. Each student signs out her copy of that term's novel. She is responsible to keep it in usable condition. She must replace it if it is damaged or lost.

Soon CGA will house the Bob Citron Library, a collection of Jewish novels for teens. We also were presented with the donation of the extensive Jewish Library from the Jewish Children's Museum. When students will have access to these books, they will need to sign them out for borrowing and be responsible for replacement if damaged or lost.

## **NYSED LOAN PROGRAM**

As a school with a BEDS#, we are eligible for books and supplies sponsored by the NYSTL grants for schools. We are able to buy workbooks and textbooks and many other resources for CGA.

The resources we get from this program belong to NY State and are graciously loaned to us. The conditions for this program are that we use the resources only for teaching NYSED studies, that we label the items and that we have parents sign an annual request form for the loan of these items. Please sign this form and return it to the Office when you get it by email from the school.

## **CGA CURRICULUM**

For a full overview of all courses offered at CGA, please refer to our Course Descriptors document which outlines the content and learning pace for each subject.

CGA follows the Constructionist model of learning, where students are able to practice (hands



on) the ideas as much as possible and to explore ideas themselves. Frontal teaching is kept to a minimum and group work, projects and hands-on work is our aim. This aligns perfectly with our emphasis on Thinking Skills. Teachers use a variety of Thinking Routines which prompt students to think for themselves and to learn to puzzle out dilemmas of all kinds.

All teachers aim to fill in gaps in learning. Instead of plodding forward without regard to prior knowledge, our teachers assess the state of knowledge and skills of each student to make sure each has the required foundational basis upon which to build the new understandings.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

Research has shown that good feedback is a powerful tool in helping students progress in their learning. At CGA, we therefore train our teachers in excellent feedback techniques.

In addition, the CGA Assessment Policy (see document) requires teachers to use a host of assessment techniques rather than just formal written tests. There is pre-testing (to determine what students need to learn), assessing during a unit (to see how the process is succeeding and/or needs tweaking) and assessments after a unit (to analyse what needs to be learned next).

Assessments are geared to guide the teacher (since they provide evidence) about the learning needs of the class and of individual students. In addition, they give students practice at a variety of evaluation processes.

At CGA we also value self-assessment and coach the students (and teachers) in this highly valuable skill. Students are called upon to assess their learning progress, their skills and their behavior.

## **STUDENT LED CONFERENCES**

At CGA, we use Student Led Conferences (SLCs) for Parent Teacher nights. This method has many advantages:

- Students take responsibility for their own learning and self-assessment
- Teachers coach and encourage from the side, rather than judging
- Parent attendance rises to 100%
- After their presentations, students feel proud of their work and are inspired to set goals to improve
- Parents learn what their daughter is learning, how she is progressing and what they can do to support her
- Teachers gain insight into the student's home life and are able to relate to her on new levels



## **HOMEWORK**

We encourage our students to go over their Torah learning at home. Review of Torah studies is beneficial for all students since it is a mitzvah in and of itself as well as a review.

Students who present a Dvar Torah at the Shabbos table (or another time over the weekend to a parent) and return a signed note from a parent on Monday (or the next school day) receive 5 bonus Parasha points on the Weekly Progress Report.

CGA is affiliated with a call-in practice reading (both Hebrew and English) program in which each student calls in nightly to record reading for appraisal. Practice is the greatest indicator of fluency, whether the practice is accurate each time or not!

CGA teachers set homework, project work, test study and other tasks for students. Parents can support the learning by encouraging their daughter to fulfil her obligations and by helping to train her to have a time and a quiet place to do this work as required.

## **PASS SYSTEM**

At CGA we have a pass (laminated card) system. She needs a pass to be out of class. She can only use the passes with teacher permission. There are two personalized passes per day to go with a 2-minute timer to the bathroom, to get water or to take a short break. There are passes to go to the office, to go to a tutor, to go on an errand, to go talk to Administration, etc.

Girls who do not want to waste their personal passes on a bathroom visit are encouraged to visit the bathroom during breaks.

This system encourages each student to be held responsible for her time. It has greatly reduced the incidences of students out in the halls or elsewhere during class.

## **RECESS AND LUNCH BREAKS**

Students are expected to use the two recess breaks to get fresh air and have some social time with friends. The afternoon recess can be used to daven mincha. There is a recess monitor who is responsible for supervision where recess is being held. There are recess bathroom passes which the monitor gives out to two girls at a time.

Girls are not permitted to stay inside the classroom during recess or lunch because there is no supervision. Classrooms and hallways are out of bounds because staff cannot be responsible for students, as they are on their own break between classes.

## **CLEANING ROSTER**

All students are expected to help maintain a clean and tidy environment. There is a cleaning



roster in each class and students have a rotating responsibility for tasks to keep the area clean for learning well.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Our Program Director creates in-school activities for a variety of occasions as well as extra curricular events (Farbrengens, hachona programs, etc). She coordinates the Tzivos HaShem activities of grades 5 and 6 and the Chidon activities of grades 7 and 8.

She emails and WhatsApps parents about the activities and related costs. She can be emailed directly with any concerns at her staff email address (see "CGA Email Addresses" below).

## **CGA PTA - PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

To build our CGA Community, parents are encouraged to join the PTA.

CLASS MOTHERS - We have one PTA mother per class. Each class mother hosts her grade's Whatsapp parent chat, which is used to coordinate various events (parties, class arrangements) or projects (Chanukah and end-of-year presents for teachers), etc.

The PTA as a whole group has other functions, such as scheduling fundraising events, carnivals, special social activities (trivia nights), promoting lectures (on parenting or education), and other community-building projects. PTA Fundraising is usually pinpointed for a particular purpose based on the school's needs.

The PTA can be a tremendous support for the staff and students of the school. The more dynamic the involvement of parents, the better for the school climate.

## **PUSHKA CAMPAIGN**

CGA students get involved annually in our CGA Pushka campaign. Each girl gets 10 CGA pushkas (or more, if she needs) which she is responsible to distribute for use. She must register the name and address of each recipient at school so we know where they all are. Then, every three months, she collects the coins and bills and leaves the emptied pushka with the person for refilling. There is a contest among students about who will collect the most money.

## **PROTOCOL FOR CONCERNS**

Parents are encouraged to maintain an open dialogue with their child's teachers regarding any concerns/confusion about student assignments and programs or social and behavioral issues. If your child is having a problem in a particular class, please try to resolve the problem directly with that teacher. If you feel that after speaking to the teacher, the problem is continuing, please contact the school administration.





Parents are asked to use discretion when discussing school issues, especially in front of their children. It is very important to help our children have a positive attitude toward their school and their education. Modeling a positive attitude while quietly pursuing solutions lets children know that their parents and teachers are working together for their benefit and shows that there is mutual trust between school and home.

Please use staff email addresses for all concerns so as to avoid contacting school staff on their private phones.

### CGA EMAIL ADDRESSES

ALL Email Address are [@chabadgirlsacademy.com](mailto:@chabadgirlsacademy.com)

### CGA STAFF EMAIL ADDRESSES

#### Administrative Staff

Mrs Devorah Leah Angyalfi	director@	Mrs Mushky Pinson	office@
Mrs Gavriella Aber	principal@	Mrs Shaina Gourarie	finances@

**Staff email addresses for 2020-2021 will be distributed at the start for the school year.**

To make an appointment with the Principal or Director, please email the Office at [office@chabadgirlsacademy.com](mailto:office@chabadgirlsacademy.com) or call the office at **(718) 484-9021**.

### CGA STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESSES

All students have a student email address. First initial last name @ ... Each student is given her individually assigned password. These email accounts can access the many features of Google Suite for Schools for her school work.

