



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

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Job Description Director of Youth Education

Background

About Our Community

Congregation Shearith Israel is a vibrant community in Morningside, one of the most exciting neighborhoods in the city of Atlanta. Our synagogue is located close to Emory University, Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, and the CDC. We are blessed with an active and engaged congregation, partnering to achieve a vision for our future.

Shearith Israel is seeking a dynamic, committed and experienced Jewish educator to grow our vision of supplemental Jewish education.

Shearith Israel's mission is: "We connect people to meaningful living through Judaism." We believe that Jewish tradition, practices, and, most importantly, relationships, provide our children and adults with the tools for a meaningful life.

Shearith Israel is a thriving and developing Jewish community that is internationally recognized for our innovation. Shearith Israel often initiates broad collaborations to achieve our communal goals. In recent years, we have grown in numbers, and we've grown younger. Our educational program has tremendous potential, just waiting to be activated.

Our Educational Culture Today

The ideal candidate for this position will have the opportunity to work with an engaged community of students and families who are eager to learn and grow in their Judaism.

Our religious school program is inspired by our vision statement: "We educate children and adults in Jewish values, Hebrew language, and the continuing story of our people." A successful student in our program will be able to name and give examples of particular Jewish values and the nuances of how those values are rooted in Judaism. They will be able to read and decode written Hebrew, with an emphasis on prayer book language. They will be able to relate the broad arc of Jewish history with a focus on Torah stories and seeing themselves as a part of those stories.

The Director of Youth Education is primarily focused on our youth/school-aged educational programs, and supporting community forming among all of our children and their families.

Our K-7 religious school, currently called Machaneh Shai, meets on Sunday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. We use the "[Shalom Learning](#)" Jewish values curriculum and partner with

the [Atlanta Hebrew Connection](#) for virtual Hebrew language for some of our students. We use the "[Chai](#)" curriculum to teach the continuing story of our people.

Our well-attended 8th grade program, Geshet, meets once a month on Sunday afternoons with a customized curriculum that focuses on selections from *Mishnah* and *Gemara*.

Our 9th-11th graders also meet once a month as part of a new program called Shai High started this year. Year "A" focuses on the application of Jewish values in a non-Jewish world; Year "B" focuses on understanding Jewish diversity; and Year "C" features modern Jewish history with an emphasis on Zionism and understanding the current affairs of the State of Israel. The intention is that each year, this group takes an experiential field trip with the Director of Youth Education and a member of the rabbinic team.

Along with our education programs, we have active Kadima and USY chapters with incredible student leadership that appreciates and needs good guidance. The Director of Youth Education will be responsible for recruiting, hiring and supervising dynamic advisors and lay leadership.

What We Are Seeking

Our Future Educational Culture

Our new Director of Youth Education will be encouraged to dream and supported to implement new ways to best accomplish our educational goals. The successful candidate will be energized by the big questions of Jewish education: What is the role of Hebrew language? How much emphasis in our program should be placed on Jewish values, and how much on the continuing story of our people? What are educational experiences that will energize, engage and "stick" with our children all their years? How will we spark curiosity to learn and share our meaningful tradition?

Responsibilities

Building a Dynamic and Talented Educational Team

The ideal candidate for this position knows how to create the energetic, experienced, reliable team of educators that our students deserve. This includes:

- Recruiting, hiring and retaining knowledgeable and effective teachers;
- Providing the teaching staff with ongoing supervision and training, including setting clear expectations and goals for them, along with resources to achieve the goals.
- Supervising our teen *madrichim* (teacher assistants) and offering mentoring and continuing education opportunities for them; and
- Hiring and managing staff to guide and direct our thriving Kadima and USY chapters.

Making Program and Curriculum Decisions

Our community is energized by innovation and open to new ideas to achieve our educational goals with the maximum number of students in our congregation.

The new Director will have primary responsibility, in consultation with the senior rabbi and synagogue's Jewish Learning Committee, to determine the religious school curriculum and how the program will maximize value for the limited time parents are able to devote to their children's Jewish education.

Family programming, retreats, and other experiential education opportunities are all part of the toolkit of our Director of Youth Education.

Assessing and Communicating our Strengths and Challenges

The Director of Youth Education will be aware of and continuously work to celebrate our program's successes and address our challenges. They will achieve this by:

- Crafting and tracking annual objectives and indicators, in collaboration with the Jewish Learning Committee and rabbinic team
- Communicating regularly with parents, teachers and the rabbinic team; and
- Regularly reporting to our Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the Jewish Learning Committee

We strive to include every student in our educational mission. The Director is responsible for working to meet the needs of every student, regardless of background or ability to help them reach their highest potential.

Preparing an Annual Budget

The Director of Youth Education collaborates with the Executive Director, Jewish Learning Committee and Finance Committee in planning and managing a substantial portion of our congregation's annual budget.

Managing the B'nai Mitzvah Experience

We want each of our b'nai mitzvah students to be successful in accomplishing their individual goals. The new Director will help reimagine the process of b'nai mitzvah education at Shearith Israel to be as inclusive and supportive as possible for all students and parents from the time the date for the mitzvah is set. The goal is for each child to understand the value of Judaism in their lives and see themselves as part of its continuing story.

While the Director does not participate in b'nai mitzvah tutoring, they recruit and collaborate with a cadre of tutors hired directly by individual families. Tutors are expected to follow Shearith's

educational philosophies around b'nai mitzvah, and therefore regularly stay in touch with the Director of Youth Education to ensure individual success for every student.

Shabbat Services

On Shabbat, the Director will:

- Collaborate with the rabbinic team and Spiritual Music Innovator to provide age-appropriate experiences for our preschoolers and their families (via Tot Shabbat), school age children (via Minyan Shelanu) and other groups of youth not yet reached, such as our teenagers.
- Attend and participate in Shabbat morning services with our community, and ensure there are quality educational opportunities for children of all ages.

Requirements

The Director of Youth Education at Shearith Israel is a member of the senior staff and reports to the Senior Rabbi. The professionals of Shearith Israel are mission-driven, respected by the community and given significant professional flexibility.

The ideal candidate will have:

- Demonstrated experience building and growing a dynamic Hebrew/religious school education program for children;
- A master's degree in Jewish education or related field, or comparable experience;
- The ability to be "on the dance floor" and "on the balcony," ie. both able to *do* and to *manage*;
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal;
- Excellent organizational and administrative skills;
- Experience in synagogues or Jewish summer camps (preferred);
- Proficiency with the Google Suite, Shulcloud, and Zoom (preferred).

Details

Compensation

- \$70,000-\$90,000, commensurate with experience;
- Health, dental, and vacation benefits;
- Flexible working hours, including a day off during the week, and half days on Fridays and Saturdays, or some other arrangement as negotiated;
- Synagogue membership.

Process

- Please send a cover letter, resume, and references to search@shearithisrael.com.
- Someone will be in touch shortly to discuss next steps.
- Preferred June start date, which can be flexible for the right candidate if need be.