

May 3, 2014

Religious School Committee Report

The school year has been successful and fun-filled thanks to our devoted staff. Debra Levasseur leads with humor and strength. Our teachers are dedicated, creative, and strong supporters of our positive school culture. Rabbi Korinow teaches, adds his insights to our Committee meetings, and counsels us all when times get difficult. Mindy Harris adds her talents as our music instructor and Bar and Bat Mitzvah tutor. Cheryl Hill provides organizational help and produces many mailings and e-mails to keep our entire Religious School community informed. Our janitor, Don Kumis, not only keeps our classrooms clean but also sets up for all our special events. In the office, Nancy Lafleur works her magic for us as she does for our entire Temple community to keep things running smoothly.

One of my goals for this year was to increase the size of the Religious School Committee. I am happy to say that we have added three new members this year. I am grateful to the entire Committee for their help and support. Some members need to be thanked for their special efforts. Lisa Desberg I thank for chairing the Book Fair and Co-chairing the Basket Auction committee. Marie Katzen I thank for Co-chairing the Basket Auction. Thanks to Marie and Lisa, the Adeline B. Watnick Religious School Children's Fund will continue for another year to provide enrichment activities for our students. Larry Cann has joined our Committee and brought with him a wonderful program to challenge our students to think and write about the Holocaust.

Along with increasing the size of the Committee, it is my goal to encourage more participation by the parents of our students in school activities. My success has been limited, but I will continue my efforts. Children know we value a Jewish education when we make it a priority in our lives.

One job of the Committee is to oversee the curriculum of the school. Again, I need to acknowledge the efforts of our Director, Debra Levasseur. She has instituted a comprehensive prayer curriculum. Obviously, prayer has always been a part of the curriculum. Now, we have a scope and sequence of learning that guarantees that our student will be familiar with the necessary prayers before they reach the age of Bar and Bat Mitzvah.

When I agreed to be the Interim Chair of the Religious School Committee over a year ago, I did not expect to be here today speaking, once again, as chairperson. I will gladly step aside if any of you would like the job! I will continue, however, until I am sure that the Committee is in good hands. In the meantime, my limited efforts succeed only because of the support I receive from Rabbi Korinow, from Temple president, Lynn Martin, and from the entire Committee with special thanks to the faculty representative, Trudy Zakin. Most of all, it is Debra Levasseur, the heart and soul of the school, who makes my job easy by doing her job so well.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Harris

Interim Religious School Committee Chair