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Dear Religious School Families,

Welcome to the 2017-18 / 5778 Religious School Year!

We are so happy to have you as a part of our community! We have an exciting year ahead that will include many Temple Sholom traditions and some exciting programmatic changes. This letter provides some highlights of the year to come.

We are inviting the whole family to our first Religious School session!

Please join us on Sunday September 10th at 9:15 am for our Community Meet and Greet.

There will be snacks, opportunities to meet teachers, friends, and the new Chavarim m'Israel! You will participate in class with your children and learn more about the year ahead. Please join us.

We have some exciting additions to our curriculum:

- **Yoga** Our Sunday mornings will start by opening our hearts and minds with Yoga and Jewish Meditation led by Yogi Dick Stone.
- **Inquiry-based Learning** Bryna Bass, brings her extensive experience in project-based/inquiry-based learning to our Religious School! Using open-ended questions we encourage students to follow their curiosity, connect with, and personalize their Jewish learning during weekly "My Big Idea" project time.
- **Religious School at Grailville** We are bringing religious school to "camp" to enjoy nature in each of her seasons! Religious School will be held at the beautiful camp-like retreat of Grailville in Loveland Ohio (932 O'Bannonville Road) on September 17, 2017; October 29, 2017; February 11, 2018; and April 29, 2018.

Our Programmatic Theme for the year is "Identity"

Hillel said, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"

But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?" (Pirkei Avot 1:14)

We are interpreting Hillel's words as three aspects of Identity.

- **My personal Jewish Identity** *"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"*
We invite all family members to join us at our first Religious School Session on **September 10th** when we will create art representing our Jewish Identities as inspired by Hillel's first question!
- **My relationship with the Jewish Community and other Faith Communities**
"But if I am only for myself, who am I?"
We are planning a community-wide field trip to the Skirball Museum and the American Jewish Archives in early December to gain insight into our relationships with our own and other communities. More details on this, and programming with other faith communities, will be provided as the year progresses.
- **My actions**
"If not now, when?"
Please join us on **Monday January 15, 2018**, when we participate with the entire Temple Sholom community in the 41st annual Martin Luther King Day celebration. More details on this, and other opportunities to express our Jewish Identity through action will be provided as the year progresses!

The core of our school is built on meaningful relationships and community. We have four dynamite teachers, five eager madrichim, an intervention specialist, a resident Jewish Yogi, our Rabbi, Julie Solomon, and myself all dedicated to building these relationships and nurturing our community as we facilitate Jewish learning. We can't wait to see you on September 10th!

L'Shalom,
Laura