

Dear Parents,

WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR!

It is our goal that home and school work together as true partners in the sacred job of educating our young children. It is for that reason that we share with you the thinking behind our curricular choices.

As we greet our children this new school year, we find ourselves faced with two big ideas:

- The beginning of the scholastic new year
- The beginning of the Jewish new year, Rosh Hashanah.

Although, in spirit, all beginnings offer us the same gift - the opportunity for fresh starts (based on the lessons of the past) - practically, these two beginnings bring with them distinct messages.

And, the children need the space for *both* concepts to unfold. Neither process can be rushed, as each is so important.

SCHOLASTIC YEAR: How a child begins the new year, and adjusts to his new environment, has a direct impact on the rest of the year. It is in this time that the children build their basic trust and sense of safety in their new classroom (or new school); they gain comfort with new teachers, new classmates and friends, new toys and supplies and new procedures.

We cannot underestimate the importance of giving the children the time and 'space' for this process of transitioning. Think of this time period as the foundation of the rest of the year - the more secure and confident the child feels now, the more 'at home' the child will feel at school.

JEWISH NEW YEAR: Rosh Hashanah is the first Jewish holiday of the year. It is an empowering holiday with a potent message and colorful customs, foods and rituals. It is our objective that the children feel a sense of connection and joy towards this holiday. Since the reality of this year's calendar is that we have only a few days to explore this with the children - and so much of that time is dedicated towards the children's comfortable transition into school - we have used a variety of ways (beyond just circle-time) to help the children connect with the holiday.

Each teacher will approach these concepts in her own unique way, meeting the developmental needs of each respective age group. You will receive details in bi-weekly newsletters.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy new year,
Malkie Herson



ZIMMER SCHOOL