

## Circle Coordinator Guidelines

Coordinating a Hebrew Learning Circle is simple and fairly intuitive. The guidelines however, will help the starting coordinator shorten the learning curve. The suggestions below are lessons culled from Circle coordinators' past experiences, and are meant to assure that your task is efficient, easy, and fulfilling. Please treat the guidelines as principles and useful tips not as strict steps to follow.

Lets begin by understanding how a Learning Circle works. A Learning Circle can be described as a parent run Little-Hebrew-Schoolhouse. The Circle contracts with the HLC office to provide it with instruction and guidance, while parents handle basic organizing and provide essential logistical needs.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing required materials and supplies (see supplies list).
- Minding specific needs of the space, such as set up, clean up, etc. (making sure the host family does not end up overburdened).
- Facilitating keep-in-touch, keep-informed, and be-reminded communications by e-mail and phone.
- Organizing periodic parent led educational trips and activities (see semester schedule).
- Maintaining a Circle petty cash box.
- Clarifying Circle membership and corresponding tuition rates with the HLC office. Delivering tuition checks in a timely manner.

As coordinator, you serve as the Little-Hebrew-Schoolhouse's chairperson. Your overall contribution is through leadership and representation. The coordinator serves in three main roles:

- Parent group facilitator
- First responder to arising Circle needs
- Liaison with the teacher, the HLC office, and the HLC community

**Your first and foremost task is to help your group delegate chores among its members.** Before (or at) the first learning session you may facilitate a parent orientation meeting (or electronic conversation). At the meeting you review the list of Circle-parent responsibilities (above) and ask who would like to be in charge of which task. Jobs may be defined as: treasurer, shopper, calendar-alert person, field trip captain, cleanup rotation keeper, etc. Once responsibilities are delegated, you become free to tend to your other roles as first responder, and as liaison.

In addition to delegating, representing, and first responding, you are likely to be the group's communications manager, creating and maintaining an e-mail group list and a phone list. You assure that all your group's parents remain informed and connected.

Occasionally you may be asked by the office to deliver hard copy notices at pickup or drop-off, such as event flyers, feedback forms and the like.

It has been our experience that the coordinator remains unburdened and most effective when she or he thinks of the big picture, while allowing others to handle chores and details. Some coordinators had initially felt that it was easier to do small tasks “myself” rather than delegate. They later discovered that small undelegated tasks accumulated exponentially to quickly become an unnecessary burden.

One important big-picture item is anticipating scheduled Circle events, such as holiday celebrations, the semester field trip, Circle meeting with the teacher, etc. You remind parents about events and initiate discussions in preparation when needed. It is good courtesy to remind parents about off weeks as well.

You will be invited to represent your Circle at the Parents Advisory Board that meets twice or three times a year (see schedule for meeting dates). Some coordinators ask other parents to replace them or alternately to join them.

Some Circles have successfully changed coordinators during the course of the learning year. You may arrange in advance to have someone replace you after a period of time. You may also consider asking someone to collaborate with you as a coordinating team. In that case we ask that only one coordinator serves as liaison with the HLC office in order to avoid miscommunications.

As coordinator you work closely with the office and the Rabbi. Your leadership role is highly valued. The Rabbi and office manager make it a priority to provide you with practical assistance as well as guidance and support. We at the office look forward to working with you to create a high quality Jewish educational experience for your students. We also look forward to helping make your experience as coordinator a deeply satisfying one.