212°
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The Boiling Point
Shalhevet High School
910 S Fairfax Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90036

Magazine 2019-20 Editor-in-Chief
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Magazine Creative Director
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2020-21 Editor-in-Chief
Molly Litvak

Faculty Adviser
Ms. Joelle Keene

Cover drawing by Keira Beller

None of us are the same people
we were in March. The past months have been
a period of incalculable tragedy and upheaval.
More than 800,000 people have died, 180,000 in
the U.S. alone, and that does not even begin to
describe the
devastating impact of the Covid-19
pandemic on families, businesses and
communities around the world.

At the Boiling Point,
we seek to bring our readership the latest information in a clear and concise fashion. Here, however, we are trying something new. After months of continuous coverage, we returned to the start and have compiled our earliest stories into the inaugural issue of our new magazine, titled 212° for the boiling point of water.

Like everything else this year, it was planned before we'd heard of the virus and took a completely different shape. From the initial transmission of the Covid-19 into the United States to the gradual cancellation of everything we took for granted, this issue hopes to serve as a recounting of the journey each of us endured over the past months -- ending with a jump ahead into April, and the beginning of a new 'normal.'

-- Jacob Joseph Lefkowitz Brooks,
August 2020

SAR, two other day schools and Young Israel congregation closed by coronavirus case in NY

By Liad Machmali, March 3

Three Jewish day schools located in the New York area — Salanter Akiba Riverdale (SAR) Academy High School, Westchester Torah Academy, and Westchester Day School — announced yesterday that they would be closed temporarily, after the state's third case of coronavirus was confirmed in the father of a student who attends SAR High School and her brother, a male undergraduate at Yeshiva University.

"School will be closed today, March 3, for precautionary measures," said an email sent out by the SAR administration this morning at 7 a.m., New York time.

In addition, Young Israel of New Rochelle — about seven miles away from Riverdale — has cancelled services for now, because the SAR father attended a bat mitzvah there two weeks ago.

The homepage of the shul website says in red letters, "YINR is closed through Sunday, March 8."

Anyone present at that shul during the past two Saturdays has been advised to self-quarantine — that is, to stay home and not mix with others.

Leila Haller, an SAR senior, told the Boiling Point they would most likely be at home until March 8, two weeks after the bat mitzvah and the same date Young Israel plans to reopen.

According to the New York Times and other media reports, the father who has coronavirus lives in New Rochelle is in his 50s, and works as an attorney in Manhattan. He had not traveled to China, Italy, South Korea or Seattle and how he contracted the illness is not known.

He has the second reported case of the coronavirus — known officially as COVID-19 — in New York. A statement published on the Yeshiva University website states that the man's son is currently in quarantine with the rest of the family. It said the YU campus is being disinfected, but so far not closed.

"We have learned that one of the children of the Westchester attorney identified as New York's second case of COVID-19 is an undergraduate male student at Yeshiva University," it says. It also gave the parent's Hebrew name — Eliezer Yitzchok ben Shifra — and urged the YU community to pray for his full recovery.

Leila Haller, the SAR senior, said she woke up at 7 a.m. Tuesday to text messages from her classmates saying they were not going to have school today, due to a newly found coronavirus case in the community.

Shortly after, students and parents received an email from the principal of the school, urging students and parents to "remain calm and please continue following the preventative measures."

Students were told they would not have school today or tomorrow. In the meantime, Leila said, students will be taking classes via Zoom, a website used for conferences and professional video chats.

Today, Leila and her mom went grocery shopping to stock up on food, just in case the situation worsens and the family is told — or decides — to stay at home.

The scariest factor, she said, is that there are many unknown facts surrounding the situation.

"Nobody really knows what's going on and that's the scariest part," said Leila. "We don't know how long our lives will be impacted by this or if it's serious. Everyone's assuming the worst at the moment."

11 confirmed Coronavirus cases in New York on March 4th

Trial run for online classes

By Jacob Joseph Lefkowitz Brooks and Sam Rubanowitz, March 5

School on Monday will be held via Google Hangouts as a test for a possible future school shutdown over the coronavirus outbreak, administration announced in an email to all students, parents and faculty late this morning.

Associate Head of School Rabbi David Block and Principal Mr. Daniel Weslow both signed the email, which announced what officials are calling a "preparedness drill" as schools around the world are closing their doors to protect students from the new virus, also known as COVID-19.

"In case it's not wise for students to be in the building..., we want to make sure we have the system set up to have the most efficient learning," Rabbi Block said in an interview. "And we have technology in the world that can help us do this, but there's always a learning curve."

Sarachek Tournament cancelled

By Alex Rubel, March 4



Next week's Red Sarachek Basketball Tournament at Yeshiva University has been cancelled due to fears of the coronavirus, Shalhevet Head of School Rabbi Ari Segal announced this morning on Schoology.

The annual tournament, which hosts 20 teams from Jewish high schools around the U.S. and Canada, was supposed to take place March 12 – 16 at Yeshiva University in Manhattan.

These and other stories continue at shalhevetboilingpoint.com/coronavirus.

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