



The Reform Jewish Youth Movement

**Elections Packet
2021-2022 | 5781-5782
NFTY North American Board**

This elections packet includes:

- General Expectations of NFTY North American Board Members
- 5781-5782 NFTY North American Board Elections Procedures
- NFTY Board Election Guidelines
- Candidate Contract
- 2020-2021 NFTY Board Contact Information
- Synagogue Professional Certification
- NFTY Staff Certification
- Parent/Guardian Certification
- North American Board Counterpart and/or Alum Certification
- Summer Roles and Responsibilities

Online you will find:

[NFTY's Constitution](#) - Please be sure to read Articles 10 and 11 for information pertaining to the election process and job descriptions.

[NFTY's Brit Kehillah – Code of Conduct](#) - There is an expectation that all North American Board members will follow and uphold our NFTY Brit Kehillah.

**The following items must be completed no
later than
February 9, 2021**

Questions should be directed to NABCandidate@urj.org

Other important dates

Video speeches are due February 18, 2021
Elections will be held virtually on March 7, 2021

Further guidelines for candidates, including details about recording speeches, will be emailed to all candidates after their initial materials are submitted.

A confirmation email will be sent within 24-48 hours to confirm that all the following forms and files have been received and are legible:

CANDIDATE CHECKLIST:

[Candidate Information Form and Contract and NAB Certification](#)

Before you begin this form, please have the documents below ready to upload.

- Letter of Intent - Please see Page 7 for more information about Letters of Intent.
- Brief Bio – 75 words or less
- Digital photo of yourself - 1” wide by 2” high 150 dpi

[Parent/Guardian Certification – email link to parent or guardian](#)

[Synagogue Professional Certification – email link to synagogue professional](#)

[NFTY Staff Certification – email link to your area manager](#)

Contact Information for 2020-2021 NFTY Board

President	Fletcher Block	nftypres@urj.org
Programming VP	Josh Rosenblum	nftypvp@urj.org
Social Action VP	Liana Friedman	nftysavp@urj.org
Religious & Cultural VP	Madison Rosenfield	nftycvp@urj.org
Membership VP	Cat Orange	nftymvp@urj.org
Communications VP	Hannah Finkelstein	nftycvp@urj.org

Shevat 5781 / January 2021

Dear NFTY leader,

Thank you for your interest in running for 2020-2021 NFTY North American Board! We are looking for partners to help navigate our path forward during this time of great change. Leaders who will find success on NFTY North American Board are those who are open to dreaming, brainstorming, and nurturing the dreams of others, and who will help gather information about what teens are looking for and what will be the next chapter of NFTY.

The decision to run for NFTY North American Board is challenging. Before you commit to becoming a candidate, read this packet fully, connect with past and current NAB members, be sure you understand the expectations of the position, and think through your ability and desire to accept this responsibility.

“It is not the position that honors the person, but rather the person that honors the position.”

Serving as a NFTY Board member requires a significant amount of time, dedication, flexibility, patience, and commitment – as well as a sense of vision and time-management. It is important that you fully understand the duties and obligations associated with the six North American Board positions and the elections process. Being on the NFTY Board is a team effort and partnership, both with your fellow board members as well as the professional staff of NFTY and the URJ. Please read through this packet of information with your parent/guardian, a synagogue professional, and your NFTY Staff.

Open Minded – This year has been a time of unprecedented change for NFTY. As we continue to navigate the changes brought on by COVID-19 NFTY NAB members must be open to change and unexpected situations. We will need your help as agents of change. Throughout the year priorities may change as you continue to learn about the structure of the URJ and adapt to any changes or transitions that may occur during the term. Board members will be most successful if they are open to the challenges that come their way and allow themselves to grow with challenges rather than be held back by them.

Model Exemplary Leadership - To inspire the leaders of our movement to pursue change and growth, NFTY NAB members must be ready to model positive leadership.

Build Relationships and Partnership - NFTY Board Members should be approachable and accessible to all NFTYites, adult partners, youth stakeholders as a resource and partner. They should be ready to reach out and establish connections, as partnership and relationship building is the key to productivity.

[NFTY's 13 Principles](#) - As a NFTY leader, NAB members must uphold the values NFTY stands for and educate others to ensure that these principles are the foundation of our programming.

Communication - NAB members are expected to be in regular contact with their board, their network, the NFTY Director, and any other partners in their work. This is a weekly, and sometimes daily, expectation. They must also be able to communicate when they need support.

Initiative - NFTY North American Board members must hold themselves accountable to ensure that their work, as well as any work they oversee, is completed. If a project is not progressing (whether they are working with teens or adults), they have a responsibility to communicate with their team and ensure that their priorities are moving forward.

Prioritize - By running for North American Board, you committing to NFTY as your primary extracurricular activity throughout the year. This may mean delaying participation in other experiences such as Greek life, performance groups, and other clubs if they prevent you from completing your NFTY responsibilities.

Be Present - NAB members are expected to attend all designated NFTY events, weekly board meetings, position specific meetings, and URJ related meetings (when applicable). Being present extends beyond meetings and events. It especially includes staying focused and involved in your work and the projects you take on throughout the year.

Time Commitment – To be successful, board members must be willing and able to put in, on average, two hours of work into your position each day. This includes weekly NAB meetings, advisor check-ins, network meetings, task force meetings, email, and any work that goes into furthering your priorities for the year.

Dependability - Much of the work board members do is as part of a team, therefore they be dependable and accountable to their partners in this work. When everyone's work is connected, board members must uphold their end of the work and be transparent if they are unable to complete a task.

Serving as a North American Board member is a considerable responsibility. If you have hesitations about serving on the board while starting your first year of college, please consider the possibility of taking a gap year. While this also seems like an intense decision, there is great value in allowing yourself to focus fully on driving our movement forward. We recommend you read the letter on page 10 to further understand the commitment and merit of taking a year off.

Your signatures and the submission of the online documents state that you understand the expectations for a North American Board member and are ready and able to fulfill the duties of the position.

Again, thank you for your helping ensure the future of NFTY. This is an exciting decision, and we want to ensure you have the information to make the right choice for you, and to set yourself up for success. Please feel free to be in touch with any questions or concerns that you have regarding running for NFTY Board.

L'shalom,

Fletcher Block
NFTY President | 2020-2021
NFTYPres@urj.org

Lynne Butner
Director of NFTY Engagement
Lbutner@urj.org

Events for all NFTY Board Members

As we continue to evaluate the safety of traveling due to COVID-19 these event dates are subject to change.

NFTY Mifgash Hafifah 2021 <i>Old Board/New Board Transition Weekend</i>	April 2021 TBD <i>Will be held virtually</i>
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NFTY North American Board Summer
As of January 1, 2021, we cannot plan for in-person travel for NFTY NAB this summer. We will continue to evaluate and make plans as we are able. In the meantime, if you are committing to a job at camp or an internship, please discuss with the NFTY Director of Engagement.

NFTY Mid-Year Event	February 14-17, 2022
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NFTY Mifgash Hafifah 2022	TBD
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URJ May 2022 Event	May 1-3, 2022
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Other meetings that you may be asked to attend (based on Board Position held):

URJ North American Board of Trustees Meetings, Netzer Veida Olamit, Commission on Social Action Meetings, NFTY Convention Meetings, Task Force meetings and/or a NFTY Mid-year board meeting.

Expenses– If elected, and if we can travel, approved NFTY related expenses will be covered by NFTY. At times, you may need to front your own money to cover pre-approved expenses such as the cost of travel to and from the airport when traveling for NFTY. More information will be provided later.

NFTY North American Board Election Procedures

Campaigning

- As per the NFTY Constitution, campaigning is not allowed prior to or during the elections weekend. Any candidate that participates in campaigning will be disqualified.

Getting to Know the Candidates

- Each candidate will have a letter of intent, speech, short biography (75 words or less), and photo, posted on the NFTY website (nfty.org) prior to elections.
- NFTY General Board members will have the opportunity to learn more about candidates during a “Meet the Candidates” forum on March 7, 2021. Details about this forum will be provided to candidates two weeks prior to elections.
- Each candidate can create a position paper to be virtually distributed during the “Meet the Candidates” session. **Position papers must be limited to one page, single-sided for all candidates and must be sent as a .pdf file.**

Letters of Intent

- Each candidate will write a letter stating their intent to run for NFTY Board.
- Letters of Intent for candidates for President must be no longer than two pages. Letters of Intent should be no longer than one page for those running for PVP, SAVP, RCVP, MVP, and CVP.
- All letters should have one-inch margins on each side and be written in size 11 Arial font ONLY.
 - Set one-inch margins all around the page.
 - Save the file as a Microsoft Word file.
- A candidate’s Letter of Intent should include a basic summary of what you intend to do in the upcoming year, why it is important to NFTY, and any other relevant information. You are submitting a condensed version of your platform.
 - We recommend that this letter focus on the values your candidacy and term will encompass, not only ideas and projects you hope to accomplish. You should be thinking about the value you will add to the movement and the work you will do.
- After all letters have been submitted, the Director of NFTY Engagement will set up a meeting with you to review your platform before letters are published.
- Letters of Intent will be posted online within 2 weeks of being received by the North American office. If there is any information you would like kept confidential until your speech, do not include it in your letter. Since your Letter of Intent will become public domain, please do not use any personal information such as personal emails, social media accounts, screen names, or phone numbers.
- Example Letters of Intent can be found [here](#). Please only use these for format and structural inspiration, as you should be creating your own platform and ideas for your candidacy.

Speeches

- All speeches will be pre-recorded and published online prior to elections. Candidates will receive technical information on submitting a video speech within one week of the video speech deadline.

Speeches must be submitted by February 18, 2021. Candidates may start working on the content of their speech at any time.

- Candidates for any Vice President position are limited to a speech no longer than **four minutes**. Candidates for President are limited to a speech no longer than **five minutes**.

Elections

- Elections will proceed in gavel order during Asefah on Sunday, March 7, 2021
- We are researching the best online voting process that will work for our elections process. More information will be provided prior to elections.
- The NFTY Constitution requires a simple majority to elect. (Please familiarize yourself with election procedures outlined in the NFTY Constitution and the outcomes of each option.)
- Ballots will be processed by the current NFTY President and the Director of NFTY Engagement.
- Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the election by the current NFTY President before results are announced to the NFTY General Board. Results will be announced to the NFTY General Board via email in the evening on Sunday, March 7.

NFTY BOARD ELECTION GUIDELINES

Each of the following guidelines is subject to the discretion of the NFTY Board. We offer these guidelines to provide candidates with a clear understanding of what is and is not permissible. If you have a question about the appropriateness of any of your actions or materials – i.e., a potentially “gray area” – consult the NFTY President or NFTY Director of Engagement.

What a Candidate Cannot Do (At Risk of Disqualification)

- Distribute material to any NFTYite that discusses the voting procedure to sway/affect that person's vote. (Material may educate about the candidate's platform, but may not say, for example, “vote for me,” “I am the best candidate”).
- Distribute or share inappropriate or negative material about any candidates.
- Contact – including by telephone, email, text messaging, social media, etc. – delegates or other NFTYites (including other candidates) to initiate conversation about the election and its process.
- Visit regions other than the candidate's home region between the time that letters of intent are due and the time of elections. **This includes virtual events.**
- Distribute material outside of the event during which elections are held (e.g., email delegates, post material pertaining to the election on blogs, social networking sites, snail mail material, etc.).
- Distribute material that is not paper based/written. Platform papers are allowed, but pins and other promotional material are not. Materials are meant to educate, not advertise. The **ONLY** permissible material to be shared is the platform paper, which may be shared during Meet the Candidates.
- Use network email threads, social media, or text groups as a forum for campaigning in any way.
- Contact delegates from other regions in an attempt to block vote. You represent the constituents of your region. During the elections weekend, all Asefah participants (including candidates) are involved with their regional caucus. Your vote should be reflective of what your region wants.

January 2021

Dear NFTY North American Board Candidates and Families,

I am extremely grateful to serve as NFTY President on the NFTY North American Board. My term and service to NFTY would be nowhere near as fulfilling, however, if I had not deferred my college enrollment a year to commit myself to NFTY. I am thankful to dedicate my time and energy to NFTY and NFTYites.

When I first decided to defer, before we knew that this year would look so different than any year before, I was nervous and hesitant about making this decision. After some deep thought, research, and conversations with friends, family, and some of my now-predecessors who also decided to defer, I felt more comfortable. With a deferral, I will still be able to go to college next year, and in the meantime, I have had the opportunity to enjoy my passions, live and work through embodying Jewish values, spend more time with family, and of course, dedicate a substantial amount of time to NFTY. The time I have to dedicate to NFTY has enabled me to form important connections and partnerships, support NFTYites, and to empower NFTY with my vision and ideas.

The tangible benefits of taking a gap year far outweigh any of the worries I had. A study conducted by the [American Gap Year Association](#) found that 98% of students who chose to take a gap year said their year had helped them develop as a person, 96% found it increased their self-confidence, and 93% agreed that it had increased their communications skills. Gap years are not only becoming a more popular decision, they are also proven to be a more practical decision.

Deferring college enrollment to serve as a NFTY Board member is a very personal decision to make. It is undoubtedly a decision that should be made after serious thought and consideration. Taking a gap year involves careful planning, firm commitment, and immense self-discipline (things I'm still learning about). Considering a gap year is not a mandatory step to running for NFTY Board, but it has recently become a norm for the NFTY President. Taking a gap year does not mean that NFTY can or will fill all your time for the whole year. Those who have decided to take a gap year have also looked for employment, taken classes, volunteered, and explored other passions to make their year fulfilling.

I encourage you to consider this option, and would be happy to share more specifics about my experience this year. There are many people who are happy to be resources for you as you think about this decision as well. Madison Rosenfield, Cat Orange, and I are all currently taking a gap year, and we each have used this year in different ways. NFTY's Director of Engagement, Lynne Butner, (lbutner@nfty.org) can also provide more details on what this decision might look like for you and your family.

No matter which decision you make, it is important that your choice is fulfilling, exciting, meaningful, and the best decision for you. I am here to support you throughout this process, so please don't hesitate to reach out!

B'ahavah,
Fletcher Block, NFTY President | 2020-2021
NFTYPres@URJ.org