



Rabbi
KENNETH SCHIOWITZ

May 15, 2009

Dear Shaare Tefillah Community,

We have all been reading, talking and thinking about the current tuition crisis. One thing that we know is that the challenges that confront the community are severe and imminent and there are no easy solutions. Nevertheless, there is no question that our first response must be to raise this cause to be a top priority. We are accustomed to giving *tzedakah* to the poor, to Israel, to the *mikvah*, to *shuls*, etc. but we do not think about *yeshiva* education in this way. And this must change, both on the communal level as well as for the individual.

It was with this in mind that I dedicated this year's *maos chitim / mechiras chametz tzedakah* drive towards the cause of *yeshiva* day school tuition. There are a number of ways in which we might prioritize this type of fundraising, such as focusing on scholarships vs. lowering all tuitions. I believe that we need to work on both. This particular fund will be focused on the latter.

I collected approximately \$1,800 before *Pesach*. Clearly this is a modest amount. Nevertheless, my goal is to reinforce the value of *yeshiva* tuition fundraising, as well as the value in making this cause community-wide, as this was funded by tuition-paying parents as well as non-tuition paying parents. I would like to thank all of those who have contributed this year.

This fund will be supplemented by additional monies that have been raised over the years in the Rabbi's Discretionary Account. I will be paying \$100 for every student in grades 1-12 whose families are full members of Shaare Tefillah in good standing, as of June 15, 2009. In addition, anyone who attends SINAI will receive a \$200 credit (as SINAI tuition is more than double the rest of the schools). I intend to distribute these monies directly to the schools, who will (hopefully) indicate this credit on your tuition accounts for the 2009-2010 school year. I have been in touch with some of the schools, and so far they have all expressed great willingness to accommodate this program.

This credit will be available to all member families. If there is anyone who does not need this credit, please let me know and I will leave the money in my charity fund.

I hope that this will be the first of many positive steps taken by our community to address this critical challenge. Jewish education has and will continue to be one of our most sacred values, as *Chazal* teach, *Talmud Torah keneged kulam*, the study of Torah is equal in value to all of the rest. I hope and pray that we will be able to continue to maintain the quantity and quality of the total education of our children.

Thank You & *Tizku LeMitzvos*

Sincerely,

Rabbi Kenny Schiowitz