

Dear Scheck Hillel Parents,

In my commitment to transparent communication, I want to share details of what happened on campus this morning.

A little after 9:30 AM, Miami-Dade Police and Fire Rescue alerted us of a potential threat. In partnership with authorities, in under 3 minutes, we swiftly evacuated all 1,275 students and nearly 300 employees onto our field. We kept the situation calm and comforted your children, reassuring them that they were safe, while authorities started to sweep through our 14-acre campus, building by building, to make sure that our home was secure. Once our athletic complex was given the all-clear, we moved our students, faculty and staff into our air-conditioned gym.

As we moved into the gym, we shifted from a challenging moment into one of bonding and ruach. [Naturally, Rabbi Sprung, Rav Oded, and I led our student body into song.](#) “Kol Ha'Olam Kulo” which translates to “The whole world is a very narrow bridge, but the important thing is not to fear at all.”

I want to share with you what I saw today:

- [Teachers keeping children calm and comfortable.](#)
- Employees schoolwide helping with our ECE toddlers.
- Parents dropping off countless cases of water.
- Our community uniting around trust and support in the school administration.

Thank you to our security team, maintenance team, front office staff, administration, and, of course, ALL of our wonderful teachers!

Thank you to our HIP/PTA and the 45 moms who were on campus during this time, who stepped up and showed our students what it really means to be a community leader.

Thank YOU for trusting us with your children every day. Student safety and security will always be our top priority.

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel Families,

In light of the recent events in Israel, I wanted to take a moment to express our solidarity and support for the people of Israel during these horrific times.

Our hearts go out to the families who have lost loved ones. We extend our deepest condolences and express our concern and support for everyone affected by the recent events, including both civilians and soldiers. We fervently hope for their safe return to their families.

We continue to be vigilant about and prioritize security. Additional police will be present on our campus. We are in constant communication with local authorities and the police department.

Tomorrow, age appropriately, we will be gathering for special *tefilot* and discussions in classes about this weekend's events, and how we, as a Jewish people, can do our part to support our Homeland. More information will come from your directors regarding tomorrow's programming.

In these moments of distress and uncertainty, it is important that we come together as a community to pray for peace in the region. Join me in sharing in a prayer for the state of Israel:

אָבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם	Avinu she-ba-shamayim
צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֵל	tzur Yisrael v'goalo
בֵּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל	barekh na et medinat Yisrael
רֵאשִׁית תְּצַמִּיחַת גְּאֻלָּתֵנוּ	reyshit tz'mihat g'ulateynu.

Please join us in keeping Israel and its people in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Parents, if you need support about how to discuss this weekend's tragic events, please reach out to our school counselors.

In partnership with the greater Miami Jewish community, there are several ways you can show your support. There are two rallies you may attend:

- Community Gathering and Prayer for Israel: Monday, October 9, at 6 PM, Waterways Shoppes 3575 NE 207th Street, Aventura
- Greater Miami Jewish Federation: Israel Solidarity Rally on Tuesday, October 10, from 6-7 PM, at the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach
- You may also consider making a donation to the Greater Miami Jewish Federation Israel Emergency Fund by [clicking here](#).

Together, as a community, we hope for a brighter and more peaceful future for all. We will continue to communicate with you about our plans and campus activities in the coming days. Now and always, we stand with the State of Israel.

Dear Scheck Hillel Parents,

Limit, Monitor, or Delete your child's social media apps on phones, tablets, and computers.

News coming from the war in Israel is difficult to read, even harder to watch, and for our children - depending upon age - **should not be watched**.

We have learned, through reputable news sources, that one Tel-Aviv school's parent association is advising its parents to remove social media, Tik-Tok in particular, from students' devices because Hamas is planning to send videos of hostages.

Lower School Parents:

Please limit or delete social media apps. Social media is detrimental to young children because they do not have their brains and hearts are not ready (cognitive nor the emotional maturity) to process information shared in bite-sized pieces without context or understanding of the truth.

Middle and High School Parents:

Please minimize access to these sites by limiting screen time, deleting certain apps, and having daily conversations about what they have received and seen. Sharing and forwarding messages needs to be limited to adults that your children trust, so you can process them together for veracity, and emotional impact.

What your children "may see"...they will not be able to "unsee".

Social media has many positive benefits, and these do not outweigh the potential negative impact of graphic, violent videos sent from people who intend to harm the Jewish people and those who support them. Let our small act of social media vigilance be an act of resistance and a clear message that this kind of terrorism will not be subjected to our children.

Our Division Directors and school counselors are here to help guide you through this process if needed.

Thank you,

Dear Scheck Hillel Parents,

Security update: First and foremost, I want to share with you that I am constantly in touch with local authorities, national agencies, and the Israeli Consulate on a daily basis. While there are **currently no threats** to our area or school, I have authorized full-day police presence on campus through next week. Finally, I am aware of the news reports of Friday's Hamas global 'mobilization' and we are taking the necessary precautions.

Ongoing events in Israel may have left many of you feeling concerned and saddened. In times like these, it's essential to channel our emotions into **positive actions that can make a difference** G'milut Hasadim (Acts of Loving Kindness).

Here are three ways you can take action and support Israel:

- **Donate to Increase Campus Security:** Your donation will help further **increase police presence and security enhancements on our Scheck Hillel campus** for the safety of our students and staff.
- **Donate to our Drafted Faculty and Staff, War Compensation Fund:**
Thank you HIP/PTA for your lead gift!
Your donation will **support our Scheck Hillel faculty and staff** who have been drafted to serve. We have a duty to continue our academic excellence in the classrooms by hiring new teachers while Scheck Hillel continues to support those who have been drafted to serve.
- **Donate to an organization of your choice:** There are many organizations that are supporting the State of Israel at this time. Consider donating to one that is meaningful to you.
 - Donate to the [Greater Miami Jewish Federation's Israel Emergency Fund](#).
- **Zoom Parent Webinar: Emotional Resilience, The War in Israel:** Presented by HIP/PTA
Join Rabbi Ari Leubitz and Dr. Norman Blumenthal, Thursday, October 12 @ 8 PM
Dr. Blumenthal is the Director of Trauma and Crisis Intervention for Ohel Children's Home and Family Services in New York. (Zoom link will be sent via Whatsapp Chats)
- Social media platforms offer a wide-reaching means to advocate for Israel.
- Share accurate information, personal stories, and resources related to the conflict.
- Engaging in constructive discussions can help counter misinformation and promote understanding.

Your actions, no matter how small, contribute to a collective effort to support Israel during these challenging times. We encourage you to choose one or more of these avenues for taking

action, as every effort counts. Together, we can make a positive impact and stand by Israel as a united community.

Thank you for your commitment to making a difference and for being a part of our caring and engaged Scheck Hillel community and all that you have already done to support Medinat Yisrael. Thank you, and your children, for supporting local synagogues, community fundraisers, attending rallies, or partnerships with other Jewish and humanitarian organizations. We are all connected.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me directly at leubitz@ehillel.org.

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel Parents,

I cannot express enough gratitude for the people who kept Scheck Hillel open and safe on Friday. Inside the school, we found comfort: we learned, we sang, and we celebrated our freedom. In times like these, it is crucial to come together and fight back against the attacks on our community.

I send a special thanks to our Scheck Hillel security team, the Israeli Consulate, Governor Ron DeSantis, and local and state officials who consulted with me all week and sent a commanding law enforcement presence to our school.

THIS WEEK

The heinous atrocities of last week have changed our reality for the foreseeable future. With the heightened tension in the United States following the Hamas attack in Israel, Scheck Hillel will be **keeping a police presence on campus** for at least an additional week. I am committed to keeping this community safe and will continue to spend unbudgeted dollars to implement additional security measures for as long as necessary. To help defray these unplanned expenses, please consider donating to [Hillel's Security Fund here](#).

LOOKING AHEAD

Though security measures are increased, and the situation in Israel is difficult, we do not have to sit back. Living with sadness will be part of our reality for some time to come, but it is important that **we move forward together as a community**, loud, proud, and strong in our support for Israel and each other.

ISRAEL EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, AND CHESSED

While our emotions remain raw, **we will increase our Israel advocacy**. Please expect an email from our Chief Academic Officer, Craig Carpentieri, who will outline some of the age-appropriate educational components and acts of giving that Scheck Hillel will be conducting over the next few weeks. We are committed to **increasing, beyond the normal curriculum, our student's knowledge of Israel, giving them tools for Israel advocacy**, and touching their hearts as they find ways to **meaningfully connect through acts of chessed (generosity)**.

SERVING THE IDF

Today, our programming continued with [a rally for Israel](#). Our very own **Oded Karavani**, High School Student Life Director and faculty member, was called up to serve and fight for Israel. We sent him off with love, hope, and a lot of ruach.

To support Hillel faculty who have been drafted, please consider donating to [Hillel's Drafted Faculty and Staff War Compensation Fund](#). The IDF Drafted Faculty and Staff War Compensation Fund goes toward ensuring that each faculty/staff member is financially supported as they fulfill the duty of serving in the IDF. Scheck Hillel is committed to continue paying and supporting our faculty/staff while they serve in the IDF, as replacement teachers must be hired.

SHARE WITH US!

It is our responsibility to both teach our students about the history of conflict in the Middle East and encourage them to stay positive and cope during times of war. We must stand together for our brothers and sisters in Israel and, of course, for our chayalim (Israeli Soldiers) defending our homeland. **We want to show the world the impact of our school and the strength of our community.**

[Send us photos of YOU](#) attending a rally, participating in a service project, volunteering, waving an Israeli flag, a video of you saying Am Yisrael Chai or anything else that shows your support. **We are proud of our community members, students, parents, alumni in Israel and around the world,, and grandparents for stepping up** in this scary moment in history, and thank you all for your perseverance in the face of evil.

Am Yisrael Chai!

Dear Scheck Hillel Parents,

As part of our Israel advocacy and support, we were honored with an impromptu visit from First Lady of Florida Casey DeSantis to our campus this afternoon. She briefly stopped by your child's classroom to show her support for our Jewish community while they wrote letters together to IDF soldiers. This visit was a great show of solidarity towards the Jewish people from the State. Please reach out if you have any questions about this event or other Israel advocacy on campus.

Shabbat Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families and alumni,

I offer my deepest gratitude to the many of you who have reached out to me to show your support during these trying times.

As we approach our fourth week of conflict in the Middle East, we are seeing the effects in our country more than ever. Though the entire globe is seeing increases in antisemitic behavior, the United States has suddenly become a hub for these behaviors, particularly on college campuses. **For the first time in many years, the Jewish community feels less than safe, and I feel unsettled.**

In our own backyards, we've seen incidents of a Scheck Hillel family in Aventura receiving death threats posted on their door, people being caught ripping down posters of the hostages, and hateful graffiti written in a Cooper City neighborhood.

During times like these, it is so important to continue being there for each other: to provide comfort, strength, community, and a shoulder to cry on. We need to keep standing up to antisemitism and anti-Zionist rhetoric — especially at colleges and universities. My heart is heavy for seniors who are applying to schools, struggling to decide if their dream school is even safe.

Scheck Hillel prepares students to become advocates for Israel by providing a solid foundation on the Zionist movement and the history of the region, specifically working with our Grades 11 and 12 students, teaching them strategies to combat antisemitism on college campuses. I think about our newest classes of alumni navigating through this challenging moment, likely far away from their family and Lion community. Please stay tuned, as shortly we will share our plans to support our alumni currently attending universities throughout the country. If your child is attending a university and needs support, please let me know. Hillel is home, and we are here for them.

It's okay to be scared — but let's use that fear to drive change. **The Anti-Defamation League has created a form to help individuals urge the U.S. Department of Education to make colleges safe from antisemitism.**

[COMPLETE THE ADL FORM HERE](#)

Parents and alumni, if you attended an Ivy League university, please consider filling out an additional form. A petition has been created, condemning the Hamas attack on October 7 and asking Ivy League institutions to increase security and safety measures for their Jewish students.

[COMPLETE THE IVY LEAGUE FORM HERE](#)

L'shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

It has officially been over a month since the horrible, shocking attack on Israel by Hamas. On this anniversary, I pray for the war to come to an end, and for the safe return of the hostages.

I am so proud of the way the Scheck Hillel community has stepped up to help the affected families, both in Israel and in America. As a school, the administration is working hard to support families who have been displaced following the attack. Many Israeli families are now coming to Miami, and we are doing everything in our power to make their acclimation to Florida as easy as possible.

So far, we have heard from, and helped, one way or another, almost 50 families. In order to best support them, we are connecting them with local Jewish organizations who can provide specific, hands-on care.

We are blessed with a full campus, yet on a limited, temporary, unprecedented basis, Scheck Hillel is working to enroll students of the displaced families in select grade levels. It is our duty and honor to assist in any way we can. Hillel's own admissions team, ESOL teachers, school counselors, faculty, and staff are helping facilitate this process, while our students acclimate to a new environment. The crisis in Israel is an emergency situation that no one could have anticipated. These families have all lived through something unimaginable, and it is our responsibility as leaders of the Jewish community to provide and connect them to resources.

Each week, I have been encouraging you to contact your representatives to voice support for Israel and the American Jewish community. Thanks to your help, Florida legislators have unanimously approved a bill today that will provide an additional \$25 million in security funding to Jewish day schools! This has huge implications for our school.

On a national scale, Jewish Federations of North America are calling for a march in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, November 14. We encourage you to spread the word, and attend if you are able. If you have relatives or friends in the area, please urge them to go to the rally. **Please let us know if you are planning to attend the march by emailing us at info@ehillel.org. I would love to facilitate a meeting place and time for our Lions at the rally, so our community can march together.**

From Washington, D.C. to our alumni around the country to Scheck Hillel Community School, we are all united. A few new students have already started at Hillel this week. We ask our amazing Hillel community to welcome these families to our home.

Am Yisrael Chai!

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

Am echad, lev echad — one people, one heart.

Wow. There is nothing more surreal than **marching alongside hundreds of thousands** of people, **united together to show support for the people of Israel** and the Jewish community. Even more rewarding, was the opportunity to do so alongside so many proud members of our Scheck Hillel family and thousands of other families from our Miami community.

During the rally, I carried a “Scheck Hillel Stands with Israel” banner, displaying Lion pride for the world to see. **It is a clear message: we are here, we are proud, and we will not back down.** To me, the banner was a reminder of why I attended this rally. Not only was I doing this for myself as a Jewish individual, but I was also there to represent the thousands of Scheck Hillel parents, students, faculty, staff, and alumni back at home in South Florida and all across the world.

That sense of responsibility guided me through the day as I spent time getting to know the amazing, brave individuals at the march. **Despite being surrounded by over two hundred thousand people, I felt a connection among us all: we are one family.**

Nobody had working phones, so I just started introducing myself and meeting my people. The most powerful moment happened to me by the grace of Hashem. I stumbled on 15-20 people on the outskirts of the crowd, sitting quietly and holding pictures of hostages. I leaned over to one of the women and asked her if she knew the person on her placard. She responded, “It’s my niece.” When she looked at me, every piece of rabbinic training and counseling left me: I cried. We never spoke further, but words were not needed. It was enough to just be.

A few minutes later, the family members of the hostages started waking again. I didn’t know where they were headed, but I knew I needed to walk with them. In those moments, I felt like I was marching with them, not just for them. Marching with such sadness, yet such pride. **As I walked with these people I did not know, that I would likely never see again, I have never felt closer to the Jewish people — one people, one heart.**

This has been a scary and even isolating month. We’ve all seen the global cries for the destruction of Israel on the news — we may have even heard these sentiments from our friends. Being at the march and hearing the voices all around me, feeling the strength of their cries down in my bones, I felt the vastness of Israel solidarity and the Jewish community. Nothing can ever take that away.

This is for me, for you, for the people in Israel, for the future generations of Jews. **Am Yisrael Chai!**

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

Chanukah begins tomorrow night, and I am greatly looking forward to the holiday! Celebrations have already begun on campus — with Lower School students participating in their annual olive oil factory, students in PK4 crafting their own menorahs and decorations, bringing the festive spirit to the entire campus.

Every year, the menorah shines brightly as a beacon of light and hope on our windowsills. But this year, more than ever, our Scheck Hillel students shine just as bright.

Perhaps most miraculous is our students' unwavering faith in Israel. No one could have anticipated the tragedy of October 7 nor the long-lasting effects of that day. **Similar to the oil that burned in the original miracle of Chanukah, Scheck Hillel's love for Israel is long-lasting and shining brightly.** Last Friday, our faculty and staff honored Israel by wearing custom "Scheck Hillel Loves Israel" shirts. Everywhere I looked, it was a sea of blue and white pride.

I am so proud of the students of Scheck Hillel and the ways they continue to amaze me. **Together, our students are both a beacon of light and hope for our school and the state of Israel.**

As we come together for Chanukah, let us be thankful for the hostages that have been returned home, that they can light the menorah with their loved ones tomorrow evening. We must continue to pray that the hostages still in captivity can come home soon — that they will be able to celebrate the holiday with their families too.

As Chanukah approaches, we are reminded that **the end of 2023 is almost here.** In the spirit of the holidays, I ask you to think of our community, tzedakah (charity), and giving back to the place we call home.

Please consider making your annual gift to our Lion Fund before December ends.

[Giving is easy:](#) You can pay by credit card, check, [Venmo](#), or transferring stock, and you can also make your pledge over time. **Gifts to the annual fund help support our enhanced security and scholarships and embrace Israel as a part of our daily curriculum.**

I hope to see all of you on Monday for Scheck Hillel's Community [Chanukah in the Shuk](#), hosted by the HIP/PTA from 4-6 PM at the Scheck Hillel Athletic Complex. Join us for games, food, fun, and community candle lighting by an IDF soldier!

Chag Chanukah Sameach,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

The war in Israel has been going on for over two months. Your resilience in the face of adversity has moved me deeply, and I am proud of how our community has responded.

After two months of no potential threats, I am pleased to announce that we are tapering off the additional police presence, and now returning to our standard, already robust, safety measures. This decision does not come lightly, and was made in conjunction with the Hillel security team, the Miami-Dade police department, and the Florida Highway Patrol. Thank you to Security Manager Sharon Rabinovitz and his team for keeping our school safe.

I understand that we live in a world where the cultural climate is rapidly changing. Should the need arise, and at a moment's notice, I will reinstate additional security measures as needed.

While our own campus is safe, the same cannot be said for many college campuses across the nation. Leaders from Harvard, MIT, and UPenn testified last week in Congress, and I was horrified by their blatant disregard of antisemitism and antisemitic speech. To help keep our students in Florida safe, [I wrote a letter to Governor Ron DeSantis, asking him to step up in our time of need.](#)

Governor DeSantis has so far been a proud supporter of the Jewish community, so I am hopeful he will respond positively. We are in this together, always. We were honored to welcome home Moreh Ishai yesterday for a break, and pray for the return of the rest of the soldiers and hostages soon.

Am Yisrael Chai.

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel Families,

As this past Sunday marked the 100th day since the war in Israel began, **our hearts go out** to those affected by the recent terror attack in Israel and the ongoing war.

We pray for the hostages, those injured, those who have lost loved ones during this excruciating time, and the entire state of Israel.

We stand united in condemning violence and express our **solidarity with Israel today, always,** and especially during these challenging times. We will continue to pray each day at school for the safe release of the hostages and for their families.

Am Yisrael Chai,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

As a parent of a Scheck Hillel Lion, I know how crucial student safety is to our families. Your children are your entire world, and you would do anything to keep them protected. School is where you send your children to be safe, happy, and cared for — **their home away from home**. The special environment that they create with their friends and teachers is directly related to the strong sense of safety they feel when driving through these gates.

Last week, we had a lockdown drill to ensure that students and faculty are aware of procedures in case of a real emergency. I am pleased to say that the drill went very well, with all students and staff following procedure.

In the spirit of keeping our campus safe, we ask that parents:

- Follow all carpool procedures.
- Update (in the [eHillel.org portal](https://ehillel.org/portal)) emergency contact and authorized pickup information.
- Register vehicles with our security team; if you purchase a new car, please meet with our security team — available daily between morning and afternoon carpool — to receive a new decal.
- Have Hillel Parent IDs ready and front windows down when arriving to campus, so security can easily identify who is entering the school.
- Do not use cell phones in the carpool line, in compliance with [the Wireless Communications While Driving Law](#).

Though we have no present threats, we are constantly looking for ways to check and update our security. There is always more to learn, to explore, to improve upon. Having this opportunity to pick the brains of other great institutions in the area only provides us with a better understanding of operations. In order to continue our due diligence and ensure we are upholding the highest safety standards, I invited the security teams from four local Jewish organizations and asked them to visit our campus in order to review and check the safety of our school, as well as collaborate on best practices. I want to be clear: This is a purely proactive measure. **I am proud to announce that all the outside teams that visited were amazed at how advanced our security measures are!**

There is nothing more important than the security of our campus, and I am grateful for everyone doing their part to keep us safe.

L'Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

In an unprecedented showcase of solidarity with Israel, **I am so proud that Scheck Hillel will be hosting a [first-of-its-kind basketball tournament](#) tomorrow!** I hope you will join me at the Chai Five Basketball Tournament, a truly special occasion for the Jewish community.

Sponsored by Project Twenty Four, the **Hapoel Hof Ashkelon Travel Team from Southern Israel is visiting Miami to compete** against our Varsity Boys Basketball team, as well as teams from Posnack Jewish Day School, Katz Yeshiva High School of South Florida, and Hebrew Academy Miami. **The event, this Thursday, February 1, starts at 6 PM and is free for everyone.** Kosher food and parking will be available.

This is such an important competition for the Hapoel Hof Ashkelon Team, as they can no longer compete together in Israel. Due to the war, the students have been left displaced, all living in separate parts of the country. Coming here to play basketball gives them a rare sense of normalcy and even rarer escape from the war zone.

Since October 7, I have seen our community step up to support Israel. In countless emails, I have expressed my pride in seeing the Scheck Hillel community standing up for the Jewish state.

Now, we have the opportunity to make a direct impact on the lives of 24 young Israelis; I ask you to please come watch the game and provide them with joy, warmth, and a friendly competitive spirit. [Please RSVP here for the event.](#)

Our Varsity Boys Basketball team has been incredible this season, and I look forward to seeing them play tomorrow at the tournament.

In fact, our entire athletic program has had an unbelievable month!

- Our Varsity Girls Basketball team just returned from a trip to Toronto, where they competed in the TanenbaumCHAT Tournament against Jewish schools from across North America. Tara C. '24 was named Tournament MVP, scoring 58 points and 85 assists during the competition.
- **Tonight, our Varsity Girls Soccer team competes in District Finals against Posnack at Bandford Park.**
- **Tomorrow, our Varsity Boys Soccer team will compete against SLAM! Academy in their District Finals at 3 PM in Little Haiti Soccer Park.**

I wish both teams the best of luck, and know they'll make us proud!

I hope to see packed stands at ALL of these events this week as we show pride for both our Lions and showing unity with our Israeli students. Am Yisrael Chai.

L'Shalom,

Dear Parents and Families of Scheck Hillel Community School,

As we approach Passover, we embrace the spirit of "Am Yisrael Chai"—a testament to our enduring strength and unity. This season is a profound opportunity to not only recount the miraculous story of Exodus but also to reflect on the values it teaches us, particularly as they resonate with the current challenges faced by our families and friends in Israel.

During these times of heightened tensions, our solidarity with Israel becomes even more poignant. We stand with those, like Ishai Taieb, our Grade 2 and 3 Hebrew/Judaics Teacher, as he answers the Israeli Army's call to serve in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) once again. He embodies the courage and commitment that define our community. We extend our support to Moreh Ishai's family and to all our community members whose loved ones are in Israel, praying for their safety and peace.

This Passover season also brought us the inspiring words of Nehoray Levy, a survivor of the Nova festival massacre whose story of turning personal tragedy into advocacy reminds us of the power of resilience and the importance of fighting against misinformation and antisemitism. His message underscores the themes of hope and justice that are crucial today.

In this reflective season, I encourage each of you to sit with your children and delve deeper with your family into the stories and traditions of Passover. Discuss what "Am Yisrael Chai" means today and explore how we can all contribute to a legacy of peace and justice. These conversations are the foundations upon which we build a strong, informed, and compassionate next generation.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance during this season. Our community is here to support you in fostering these important discussions and in strengthening our collective bond.

Wishing you and your family a Passover filled with meaningful reflection, joy, and the warmth of togetherness. As we stand united with Israel, may we continue to live out the promise of "Am Yisrael Chai" with strength and conviction.

Warm regards,

Dear Scheck Hillel Families,

As we celebrate Yom HaAtzma'ut, reflecting on Israel's 76 years of independence and resilience, we are inspired to strengthen our own community's foundation here at Scheck Hillel. This Giving Day, coinciding with our celebration of Israel's freedom, invites each of us to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our young leaders.

We are on the brink of achieving something extraordinary—with less than \$200,000 needed to reach our \$1.4 million goal for the Annual Lion Fund. Your generosity can help us cross this threshold, ensuring that our students continue to receive a robust Jewish education, grounded in the values that have sustained our people through generations.

Your contributions are crucial, especially when the Jewish community's challenges are significant—from security needs to bolstering our educational programs. Every dollar raised goes directly toward scholarships, enhanced safety measures, and the overall enrichment of our exceptional learning environment.

In honor of Israel's 76th birthday, consider a gift of \$76 or more to make a lasting impact. We are grateful to HIP/PTA for their generous commitment to match the donation amounts made to the Lion Fund during Giving Day. HIP/PTA-matched funds will support various Israel-related Scheck Hillel school initiatives.

Hillel is a home where future generations are nurtured, where leadership is cultivated, and where Jewish values are lived. Today, let's ensure that this home continues to thrive and that our children can grow into the leaders who will carry our community forward.

Join us in this critical mission by contributing in any of the following ways:

- Online: www.eHillel.org/LionFund
- Venmo: @SupportScheckHillel — see QR code below for easy access
- Stock Transfer: Consider transferring appreciated stock
- Mail a Check:
Addressed to Scheck Hillel Community School, Attn: Development Team,
19000 NE 25th Avenue, North Miami Beach, FL 33180

Let's reach our goal together and ensure our students have a robust and vibrant future. Thank you for your steadfast support and commitment.

Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel Families,

Over recent weeks, we have observed Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom HaAtzma'ut with solemnity and celebration, reflective of our shared tradition and values. These holidays on campus were so powerful, and they left me exceptionally proud to be the Head of School at Scheck Hillel. Moments like these are exclusive to the Jewish community and will forever leave an indelible mark on our students, faculty, and staff.

During [Yom HaShoah \(Holocaust Remembrance Day\)](#), our community engaged in heartfelt tributes and educational initiatives. Our younger students expressed their remembrance through poignant artwork, depicting symbols of resilience and the imperative to “never forget.” Our middle school students participated in assemblies that not only complemented their year-long studies but were also spearheaded by their peers, showcasing a deep engagement with this critical history. Our high schoolers had the invaluable opportunity to hear directly from Holocaust survivors, a profound experience that brought essential personal narratives to the forefront of Holocaust education.

[Yom HaZikaron \(Israel's Day of Remembrance\)](#) was marked by a campus-wide moment of silence, honoring those who sacrificed their lives for Israeli independence. The echo of sirens, mirroring those heard across Israel, filled our school, prompting a collective reflection. This solemn observance was enhanced by our students' expressions of solidarity, with many donning IDF apparel or other symbols of Israeli pride.

In contrast, [Yom HaAtzma'ut \(Israel Independence Day\)](#) brought a burst of joy and celebration to our campus. The day was filled with vibrant activities—from t-shirt making to bounce houses and rock climbing, each moment crafted to foster joy and communal spirit. Our youngest in the ECE delighted everyone with their parade, embodying the hope of our future generations. This day was a shining demonstration of our school's ruach, and it was underlined by our [first-ever Giving Day](#), which raised over \$20,000 for our Lion Fund. We are grateful to HIP/PTA for their generous commitment to match the donation amounts made to the Lion Fund during Giving Day. HIP/PTA-matched funds will support various Israel-related Scheck Hillel school initiatives.

I am personally grateful for every single donation — from the donors who gave for the very first time to our donors who continually give, I thank you! I am so proud to have reached 100% Board participation on Giving Day!

As we approach the culmination of this academic year, the significance of these community moments cannot be overstated. Despite the challenges faced by the broader Jewish community, our resolve has never wavered; **our commitment to one another and to Israel remains as steadfast as ever.**

Looking ahead, I am filled with anticipation for our upcoming celebrations, including the **Commencement of our Class of 2024** this Sunday—a truly momentous occasion followed by **Lag B'Omer** just one week away! Additionally, we are preparing to welcome families for the **Kindergarten and Grade 5 moving up ceremonies**, eager to share in these joyous milestones.

Together, we continue to embody "Am Yisrael Chai" and pray for the safe release of our hostages.

Shabbat Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel families,

Last week, we extended a heartfelt send-off to one of our beloved staff members, Aylon, as he prepared to serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). This moment, imbued with **kavod** and affection, epitomizes the spirit and **values** that make Hillel a sacred home for so many. [Our Middle and High schools came together to send him off](#) with **ruach**. After Rabbi Sprung led us in a blessing for the welfare of our soldiers, students stopped to personally wish Aylon good luck and share their favorite memories with him. Let's pray for his safe and speedy return.

This overwhelming support has been instrumental in fortifying Aylon's resolve. [I encourage you to view this video](#), where he shares an update from the field shortly after his arrival. We are, indeed, his Hillel family. **Am Yisrael Chai!**

Simultaneously, we rejoiced in welcoming Ishai back on Monday, following his latest term of service. [Lower School students were thrilled to see him again](#) and waved their Israeli flags if they weren't already high-fiving Ishai as he ran through the breezeway and a sudden South Florida downpour. This was the second time Ishai has traveled to serve in the IDF, so we are doubly grateful to have him back. Ishai's experiences and steadfast commitment to our shared values continue to inspire us all.

In response to October 7, we opened the IDF War Compensation Fund, enabling our staff to serve with the security of their total salaries while ensuring their absence does not affect our school's operations. The contributions from our community are a testament to our collective commitment to the principles of service and solidarity. The initiative served its purpose this year, yet we are persistently raising funds to support Israel-based initiatives for the 2024-25 academic year. We already have great news: HIP/PTA generously donated \$10,000 towards **Israel-related** programs on Scheck Hillel Giving Day earlier this month.

Rest assured that Aylon's responsibilities are managed during his service. **We remain resolute in maintaining the exemplary education, security, and community engagement standards that define Scheck Hillel.** Additionally, we are investing in campus security to provide our students and faculty with amplified safety.

As we stand in solidarity with Aylon during his service and celebrate Ishai's return, I urge our entire community to keep them in your prayers.

Todah Rabah and Shalom,

Dear Scheck Hillel Community,

As we conclude another remarkable year at Scheck Hillel Community School, I am delighted to share some extraordinary news. Our staff member, Aylon, has safely returned to his base in Israel after participating in the heroic rescue of hostages with the IDF's Battalion 532 over the weekend. We are so proud of his bravery and commitment and continue to pray for his safe return after his service.

This year has been marked by incredible achievements and a deepened sense of purpose within our school. Nearly a quarter of our graduates will head to Israel for further studies, cultural immersion, or to serve in the IDF, and the Class of 2024 has earned over \$3.5 million in merit-based scholarships.

Our community's response to recent global events has been inspiring. After October 7, we wrote letters to Israeli soldiers and their families and our Senators and Representatives, sharing gratitude for their support of Israel. We refreshed our community's education about Israel's history through sessions hosted by HIP/PTA and held daily community-wide Tefilah sessions through January to express our solidarity and spiritual strength.

In addition to these efforts, our Advancement team, led by our Chief Institutional Advancement Officer Ilana Gilat, is preparing for the future and has achieved remarkable success in fundraising through your generous support. We raised over \$1.4 million for the Lion Fund and Kulanu, marking a 19% increase year-over-year, with 57% of these contributions coming from new donors. The funds raised for Kulanu supported over 115 families with financial aid. Furthermore, we secured \$158,000 for our fund for Israel and \$83,000 for critical safety improvements. These funds will support our ongoing mission to provide students with a safe and enriching environment.

Meanwhile, our operations team, led by COO Cheryl Camp, has worked tirelessly to improve campus facilities and security. From updating health and wellness policies to securing a \$1M security grant, these efforts demonstrate our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. Our focus on safety and infrastructure ensures our students can thrive in a secure setting.

So much happens behind the scenes of Scheck Hillel that might go unnoticed. We welcomed 1,796 visitors through our front desk. We closed over 3,380 IT tickets and 6,100 facilities tickets. Reception swiftly processed 6,818 late arrivals, and our Wellness Office cared for 11,480+ patients. More than 180,000 cars were ushered through the carpool, and our food service team served 256,800+ warm meals with a smile.

In the realm of arts and athletics, our students have achieved top ratings in state performance programs and numerous victories in athletic tournaments. These accomplishments reflect our faculty's dedication and our students' incredible talent, fostering a vibrant school spirit. The strength of our arts and athletics programs enhances our students' overall educational experience.

As we look to the future, our admissions team, led by Sandra Levy, reports that our attrition rate is below 5%, with over 1,300 students enrolled for '24-25. The demand for high-quality Jewish

education at Scheck Hillel is at an all-time high. This growth is a testament to our strong community and the outstanding education we provide.

As we head into the summer season, thank you sincerely for your ongoing support and involvement. Let's continue to improve, contribute, and engage tirelessly. Together, we will ensure a bright and successful future for Scheck Hillel Community School.

Today and Shabbat Shalom,