

# Intention

ISSUE Nº 004

SHARING OUR GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS

AUTUMN 5784/2023 T"01



Prayers for  
Peace in Israel



Our Teacher's  
Unique Comeback



School Bus  
Fleet Update



Message from  
Montana



Countless Smiles  
Countless Memories

## EMPOWERING THE CHILDREN IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL

As the students of Oholei Torah were celebrating the holiday of Simchas Torah with their families, news trickled in of the terrorist attack in Israel. Without clearly understanding the depth of the attack and what the following days would bring, the administration knew that immediate action was needed on all fronts.

Within hours after the holiday ended, a children's rally of prayer and charity was organized for the following day, even though traditionally it was a day off from school. The school administration understood the need to facilitate a gathering of children, both for their pure prayers and mitzvahs as a merit for our brothers and sisters in Israel, and also for an age-appropriate outlet for them to express their concern and fear of the unknown situation.

As the famous saying, "Out of the mouth of babes..." the strength and unique power that children have in their prayer and actions have stood at our side during such difficult times throughout our history, going back to the times in Egypt, the holidays of Chanukah and Purim, and many more times when the Jewish people needed salvation.

As many of our students have close family in Israel and with the rampant news spread everywhere, the Oholei Torah Student Support and Wellness Department together with the school administration launched a crisis intervention plan. They began with communication for the parents, offering guidelines and suggestions to alleviate the anxiety the children may have. Teachers were given directives and therapists were available to help deal with individual students.

Yanky Raskin, LCSW, Director of the Student Support and Wellness Department explained, "It is critically important that no student feels alone. Our actions were designed to provide support on two fronts. The first was providing a safe and open environment for those students who had fears and anxiety, imparting guidance on how to deal with and process their emotions. The second was to create a positive outlet that would empower the students. These children needed to know that they could make a difference. The understanding that their positive actions could help the soldiers, bring comfort to families, and on a whole, unify the Jewish nation, was extremely powerful for each student—each on their own level.

Oholei Torah published informative booklets and made this material readily accessible to many schools in the tri-state area who did not have the resources available.

School-wide events, collecting charity earmarked for Israel, spreading Jewish pride to fellow Jews outside of our community, and increasing mitzvahs were just some of the activities that have been going on since the beginning of the war. Each teacher with his class, designated a time for a project or activity that they chose and worked on together. In the Junior High Division, classes started a pen pal project writing to soldiers, which was facilitated through the 100 Oholei Torah alumni who serve as Chabad Shluchim in Israel. The Talmudical Seminary students have



been adding in extra prayers and psalms.

Those students who have prior connections with business people through their Friday tefillin visits and holiday awareness outreach programs, added in extra efforts to offer additional tefillin opportunities and share Shabbat candles with those interested in showing support for Israel. Alumnus **Yehuda Friedman, '23** explained, "Right now, everyone wants to feel connected, and this is a way to come together and bring light to a dark world. Extra mitzvahs, like giving charity, men laying tefillin (phylacteries) and women lighting Shabbos candles can bring miracles, and that is what we need right now."

Entrusting the students and encouraging them to stand strong in the face of antisemitism and to be proud of their Judaism has helped tremendously by taking them out of despair and fear and putting them in the front seat of action and empowerment.

Truth be told, this is not something foreign to our students, for these morals and values have been emphasized in our school for all ages over the years. This empowerment has served as a base to build on during these challenging times.



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A challenging, even tragic, episode should not drag us down. Rather, it should compel us to dig deeper and summon up reserves of faith. —THE REBBE



The Lubavitcher Rebbe on the Way to Combat Terrorism



LEVRETTEN, JEM

# Greetings

Dear Friends,

As I write to you, my thoughts and prayers are with our brothers and sisters in Israel.

Never in my lifetime did I think the Jewish Nation would ever be attacked on so many fronts around the world! October 7th, Simchas Torah, didn't just affect Israel as a country, it hit Klal Yisroel, every single Jew across the globe. It was a blow that made mankind search within themselves to find strength and offer support to those directly affected. On a personal note, it has given me even more reason and furthers my convictions to value and take pride in the education that Oholei Torah provides. Now, more than ever we need to be proud of who we are, stand strong with each other, and be a beacon of light for all mankind.

My father, Rabbi Joseph Rosenfeld, obm, was the executive director of Oholei Torah for over six decades and built the school into what it is today. In 1956, as a young yeshiva student studying in 770, the headquarters of Chabad-Lubavitch, he was chosen by the Rebbe to be an emissary along with 12 other students for an urgent assignment. They were sent to Kfar Chabad, a small fledgling village in Israel, which was going through a horrific nightmare. The community members there and people all over Israel were reeling after a terrorist massacre. A group of Arab terrorists had entered a Jewish vocational school and murdered 5 students and their counselor during the evening prayers.

The attack was brutal and left the villagers in despair and at a loss of how to continue. Many of them even gave thought to leaving the Holy Land. The Rebbe sent my father and his classmates on a solidarity mission to give support and encouragement to the village residents, giving them the strength to continue, renew, and restore.

My father carried the message that through building stronger and bigger, the community would find comfort and strength to go on and hope for the future.

Today, 70 years later, that small village is a flourishing city that spreads an impact and spirit throughout the entire Israel.

This lesson is the cornerstone of the education in Oholei Torah. To stand strong, to unite, and to build Am Yisroel.

I am proud of our alumni who rank amongst the 5000 Chabad Shluchim, emissaries around the world, who, during today's difficult times are guiding, comforting, and inspiring their communities with messages of light and hope of a peaceful world.

My sincere prayers for a complete victory in Israel and everlasting peace throughout the world.

Wishing you a most happy Chanukah,



Rabbi Sholom Rosenfeld,  
Director

RABBI SHOLOM ROSENFELD, '86, is an alumnus of Oholei Torah and for over 30 years has taken an active role in the administration. Today he is the director of the school and is well respected by the faculty and parents.

He is married to Gitty Rosenfeld (née Minkowitz), who is an outstanding educational principal in Bais Rivkah in Crown Heights, the largest Chabad-Lubavitch girls' school in America.

Unique to Rabbi Rosenfeld is that his entire

life has been connected with Oholei Torah, as a student who has graduated from all the divisions, as a member of the faculty, and being brought up in a home where Oholei Torah always came first. The dedication was part and parcel of his upbringing.

As a Board member, Rabbi Rosenfeld carries his father's vision and is instrumental in the constant growth and expansion of Oholei Torah.

Rabbi Rosenfeld is proud to have three generations amongst the students of Oholei Torah.



Each issue of Intention will carry a greeting from various administration and faculty members.

## OHOLEI TORAH TEACHERS

# *Make a Unique Comeback*

In today's world of education, across the board, both in private and public schools, a top concern is the lack of good, professional, and devoted teachers. The economic situation and, more so, the lack of dedication that is found in today's generation undeniably brought about this serious issue. In reality, who suffers the most? The students.

However, at Oholei Torah, the teachers have made a surprisingly great comeback. As our teachers and faculty members walk the halls of our campus, there is a feeling of familiarity, closeness, and many great memories. This is because over 70% of our teachers are themselves alumni of our school. It is an amazing phenomenon. So many of our alumni return to give Oholei Torah students the education and spirit of learning that they experienced in their youth. It is also a testimony to the belief and conviction of the distinctive pedagogy, and even more so, the spirit and direction that Oholei Torah gives its students, that value of education.

**Rabbi Moshe Pape, '07**, has been part of the educational team for over 10 years and is now a 2nd-grade teacher. "Young students are taught the basic tools in education which inevitably is the foundation that will carry them through all the years of school. In addition, I try to instill the same passion for learning, excitement, and pride in Jewish traditions that I was taught. This, I know from experience, will carry them far, far past their graduation year."

In our Junior High School Department, **Rabbi Levi Feldman, '04**, recalls, "My students are in their Bar Mitzvah year, and the direction they need for that transition is so important that it can literally change a student's perspective. I learned this from my teachers when I was a student in Oholei Torah".

Rabbi Feldman educates beyond his classroom. He is the founder of a dynamic teacher training course called Art of Chinuch ([artofchinuch.com](http://artofchinuch.com)). It is a program that explores impressionable education and leadership methodology and provides tools for being an effective teacher to bring out the best of their students.



Rabbi Moshe Pape with his second-grade students



Rabbi Levi Feldman studies with an eighth-grader



"I try to instill the same passion for learning, excitement, and pride in Jewish traditions that I was taught. This—I know from experience—will carry them far, far past their graduation year."

In recent years, The Board of Oholei Torah has put tremendous effort into emphasizing the high regard that they hold for the staff. They have been investing in the teachers in various ways: substantial increases in salaries, housing subsidies, staff appreciation events, and holiday bonuses. The most recent initiative was the starting of a staff simcha fund for bar mitzvahs and weddings which help alleviate some of the costs for

these milestone celebrations.

**Rabbi Mendel Blau, '04**, Dean of Oholei Torah feels that the uniqueness of having teachers who themselves are products of the school gives stability and carries an important message to the students. The knowledge that their teacher believes in Oholei Torah because he was a student himself is profound. The impact it carries is priceless in today's age of education.

# THE WHEELS ON THE BUS GO ROUND AND ROUND

**W**ith excitement and anticipation, Oholei Torah students wake up in the morning and look forward to the big yellow school bus driving up the street, to see if the one they see is **their** bus.

We all have memories of sitting on those big yellow school buses, with tall leather seats, and the excitement building up as we drove through the neighborhood. Which friend would sit next to us, who had the latest news and which snacks would we share? We would take in the daily scenes around us on our way to and from school and back home and were energized as we started and even ended our days.

Some things didn't change, and others have improved greatly. With the cranked opening of the tall folding doors and those steep steps, the young students hop in and are greeted with a smile by their favorite bus driver (seemingly all 13 drivers are the students' favorite ones) and then start the adventure of the day—with music, stories, a loving bus monitor and the giggles and chatter with a friend next to you.

As big as our school is, with 2000 students

in five divisions sprawling over three campuses, the Transportation Department is a whole institution in itself.

There are over 40 staff members and 43 bus routes every day. The schedule fits in students of all ages including the young toddlers in their very first year of school. A late evening route is the last run of the day ensuring that the older high school students get home safely.

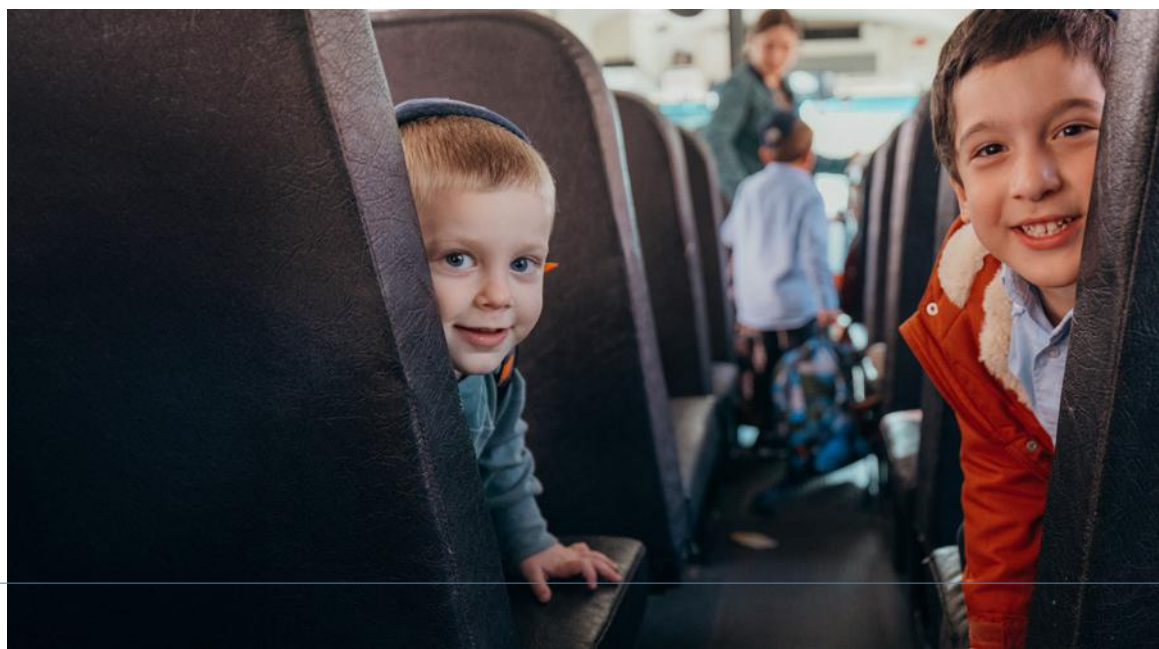
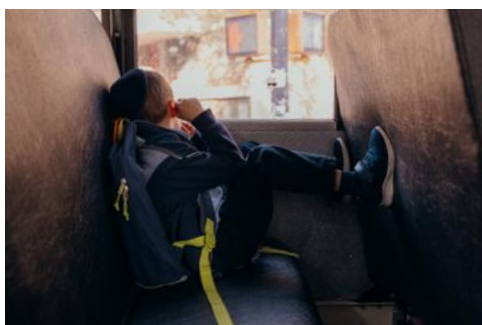
As the community has expanded greatly

over the last few years, spreading out to farther areas, Oholei Torah has increased the number of routes. Now there is bus transportation covering all the neighborhoods near Crown Heights, our central campus location.

The school bus isn't just about transportation. As the ride is how the students begin and end each day, it is an opportunity to have a positive impact on children's lives. The bus ride helps them socialize, interact, and create life-long memories and lasting friendships.



"Hop on a bus with me!"





## “What will the mothers say?”

In the 1970s, Oholei Torah was looking to purchase a school bus. There was a noticeably used yellow school bus for sale parked on Brooklyn Avenue for some time. One day Reb Yossi, the bus driver, was seen inquiring about the details of the bus, and of course, some curious young kids were crowded around him. The Rebbe was walking down Brooklyn Avenue on his way to his office at 770 Eastern Parkway.

The Rebbe approached Reb Yossi and asked about the “tumult” (excitement). The driver showed the Rebbe the bus that the school was interested in buying. The Rebbe then took his time and walked around the worn bus with Reb Yossi, pointing out “this problem and that issue”. After the detailed inspection, the Rebbe asked “What will the mothers say if this is the bus that picks up their beloved children? A school like Oholei Torah should only have the best and you should purchase a brand-new bus.”

Ever since then, Oholei Torah has been investing in new buses when necessary, making sure that our precious students are transported daily to and from school in a safe, clean, and reliable bus.

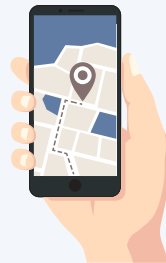
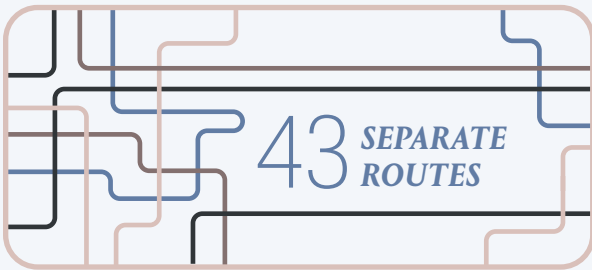


# notes and news



12

BUS DRIVERS, 23 MONITORS,  
AND 6 OFFICE STAFF



Parents are equipped with GPS apps to track busses

School Bus Enhancements

**\$130,000**

above local government transportation grants



Countless smiles, stories, and memories on every bus ride



Dear members of Montana's Jewish community,

It's been three weeks of hell. None of us have been able to internalize what occurred to our people, as endless tears roll down our faces and barbaric images are stuck in our minds. We watched hundreds of our brothers and sisters being murdered in cold blood. We are watching a world that is partially apathetic to our plight and partially fully supportive of the Hamas nazis. We are asking ourselves the question we never thought we'd have to ask, is there a place for us in the United States? Does "Never Again" actually mean something?

It's 5:55 AM on Monday morning, October 30, and 239 hostages are still being held by the terrorists in Gaza. The nation of Israel will need years to repair; the physical destruction, the emotional trauma, the families shattered to pieces, and the collective feeling of betrayal that most Israelis feel towards their government and military leadership, it will take time. Here in America, we will discover what France, England, Sweden, and Germany have been trying to figure out for three decades, learning to live side by side with those who want us dead and declare their intentions publicly.

Montana has shown incredible support for Israel and has lent their heart to the Jewish people during these trying times. Yet, as we look around our beautiful country, from Detroit to Los Angeles, DC to New York, Boston to Houston, the far left has joined together with Muslim students to proclaim Jihad against Israel and Jewish students on college campuses. For over a decade, our concern was centered on White Nationalism, today our greatest fear is from those carrying the 1964-invented Palestinian flag while seeking an end to the Jewish problem. Some of the very same students who complain about microaggressions twice a week are now macro-aggressive against the Jewish student who has the Chutzpah to wear a



To learn more about yet another one of our alumni, and Rabbi Bruk's fascinating family, please visit [chabad.org/5678551](http://chabad.org/5678551)

An important message from

# Rabbi Chaim Bruk, '01

Rabbi Chaim Bruk leads the Chabad centers in the State of Montana and is a world-renowned lecturer. He shares a meaningful message for his community which has lessons that we can all take from today's challenging times.

Yarmulke, Star of David, or have a Mezuzah on their dorm room door. The far right and the far-left share one common goal, to eradicate the world of the Jew.

Since that dreadful Simchas Torah morning, many Jews have come to realize that the people whom they thought were mutual allies are not, and while they enjoyed their Jewish friends' support when they needed it, they have now spit them out in a heartbeat because their allegiance is with Hamas over their respect for the Jewish people. Don't be fooled: like the Nazis, Hamas makes no difference between a religious Jew and a secular Jew, between democrats and republicans, between conservatives and progressives, they want Jewish blood spilled, any Jewish blood,

### So how do we respond to this new reality?

**PRAY** First and foremost, we pray. It's our most ancient vocation, when in distress we turn to G-d and ask for His intervention. As we express at the end of the Amidah prayer "As for all those who plot evil against me, hasten to annul their counsel and frustrate their design. Let them be as chaff before the wind; let the angel of the L-rd thrust them away. That Your beloved ones may be delivered, help with Your right hand and answer me"

Take out a Book of Psalms (if you don't have one, we will send you one) and talk to G-d. Psalm 20, 42, 121, 142, are just a few examples of King David's heartfelt words that we can use in our prayers as we pray for the hostages to be released, for the wounded to be healed, and for peace to reign on earth.

**CONNECT** There is no better place than home and there is no better feeling than when we are in the embrace of our fellow Jews. Come to Shul, come to a Torah class, a holiday celebration, a Shabbos dinner; the time spent in brotherhood and sisterhood will feel really good and serve as a good source of moral support. If your child is on a college campus, get them connected with their

local Chabad on Campus where they will find Jewish pride and connection (and awesome Kosher food): [chabadoncampus.org](http://chabadoncampus.org).

**IDENTIFY** One of the prime goals of Jew haters is to scare Jews into hiding, demanding Jewish silence. We won't let that happen. It's more vital today than ever before to publicly identify as Jews. Wear a Yarmulke, a Chai necklace, put a Mezuzah on your door, a bumper sticker on your car, keep a Torah book on your office desk, and when you have the opportunity to make your Jewish identity known, don't shy away. The world needs to know that Jews don't cower and apologize. We are joyous to have been around for 4,000 years despite the myriad of times they've tried to get rid of us.

**BELIEVE** During September and October of 1980, the world seemed to be going to hell. Libya and Syria signed a pact to become one nation, war games were taking place in east and west Germany, the Turkish government was overthrown, the former Nicaraguan president was assassinated in Paraguay, the Iraq/Iran war commenced, Bob Marley was diagnosed with brain cancer, the Rue Copernic synagogue was bombed in Paris, Brezhnev and Assad signed a treaty in Moscow, Somalia declared a state of emergency, in Ortuella, Spain 50 schoolchildren were killed in an explosion, the SS Poet en-route from Delaware to Egypt went missing with 33 officers on board and was never found, a bomb blasted a Beijing railway station, and of course, Iran was still holding American hostages.

Amid this terrifying time, the Rebbe of blessed memory addressed the Chassidim on the 20th of Cheshvan, October 29, 1980, and started by quoting the verse in Isaiah "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a gross darkness the kingdoms". The Rebbe spoke at great length about how one would think that darkness was challenging enough, but we get the extra "gross darkness", a darkness upon darkness, and how does one proceed under such tough realities? How

can a Jew live joyously when it's so dark?

He then went on to passionately quote Psalm 121 "A song for ascents. I shall raise my eyes to the mountains, from where will my help come?" The word "from where" or in Hebrew "M'Ayin", can also be read as a statement, not as a question. I raise my eyes to the mountains and my help will come "M'Ayin", from the essence of G-d, which is "from where", a place of nothingness, purity, and oneness; a place where nature doesn't play a role. A Jew must always remember that we don't operate on normal frequencies of survival, we have the Ayin, the essence of G-d who is determined to keep us going and that's why the Psalm continues "He will not allow your foot to falter; Your Guardian will not slumber... The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from now and to eternity."

So, my dear friends, be uplifted. Be inspired. Be upbeat. The Jewish people's beauty and love for life have been shining since Simchas Torah greater than ever before in my lifetime and will continue to shine. Don't despair, don't give up, don't surrender; Am Yisroel Chai isn't just a song, it's a fact. We are alive and more alive than ever before.

We will get through this together. Our brightest days are ahead. We await the time of Mashiach when "nation will not lift sword up against nation", when there will be no more war, bloodshed, animosity, or strife, instead, we will merit a world of peace and tranquility. Amen.

With love to our amazing community,  
Rabbi Chaim Bruk

**RABBI BRUK**, together with his wife, Chavie, are an energetic couple, who are raising the level of Yiddishkeit in the "Big Sky State" both for the Jewish residents and the many tourists who visit. Today, Montana boasts 5 full-time Chabad centers. In addition, the Bruks are influencers reaching tens of thousands on social media.



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*Ensuring our Jewish Future*  
**EACH AND EVERY DAY**

