

The Teacher Learning Partnership
Resource: Example from a Partner School
Topic: Summer and Orientation

An Exercise used at New Teacher Orientation
The Rashi School, August 2010

- Please read the following passage with the person next to you and think about its application to 'Great beginnings at Rashi'

Rabbi Yechezkel Sarna, another sage of the 20th century, taught his disciples: "If a person appreciates the fact that the human being is created in the Divine image, he will deem it a privilege to greet his fellows" (cited in "Love Your Neighbor" by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin). *Greeting another person is therefore not only an act of lovingkindness; it is an act of respect which the other person is entitled to!*

We not only have an obligation to greet each person in a cheerful and pleasant manner; we also have the obligation try to initiate the greeting, as the Talmud states in the name of Rabbi Masya ben Charash: "Initiate a greeting to every human being" (Pirkei Avot 4:20).

- As you probably know at Rashi we **value** strong connected relationships with our entire community, be it students, parents as well as other faculty and staff. Our parent community is a rich and wonderful resource both to us as well as to the children. They are deeply invested in their children's learning.

In many ways, it is the **outward concrete actions** and words that are so essential to a strong beginning

- **Connect** with all students and parents. Greet them *all* warmly Our tone is really important, because this is how the parent and student respond to whether you will "hold" them and their child. Our goal is to show them that we 'own' their child.
 - It is essential to establish **classroom routines** in the early weeks and to reinforce them. We often overlook these, yet they are essential and contribute strongly to classroom management. Our goal is to help our students to feel that they are in a safe environment so that they can learn and take risks.
 - The appearance of your **classroom environment** is important to the students as well as the parents. We all appreciate a well-organized, welcoming environment and as soon as possible, one where students can see themselves in the room. Always be careful to see that all students are represented in the room. Our goal here is that we believe in and value each and every student
 - The worksheets, email as well as the way you manage the students work and respond to it, needs to be careful and thorough. Do not hesitate to have a peer or division director 'eyeball' a document before it goes home. These pieces of work represent you and **the high standards** that we uphold at Rashi.