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Rabbi Shmuel Jablon will go to bat in Philadelphia

BY: *ARLENE FINE* Senior Staff Reporter

In the parlance of the all-American sport he enjoys so much, Rabbi Shmuel Jablon has been "traded."



Rebecca and Shmuel Jablon with their children, from left, Akiva, Mordechai, Shira and Leah will move to Philadelphia.

The head of Lower School at Fuchs Mizrahi School for eight years, Jablon will become the menahel (principal) of the Torah Academy of Greater Philadelphia's Lower School.

As he rounded third and headed for his new home, the St. Louis native spoke about his game plan and contributions.

Q. What were your major contributions here?

A. I strongly believe as an Orthodox rabbi and educator, I was part of the wider Jewish community. I did not grow up Orthodox, so I realize how important it is for members of the non-Orthodox community to see us as approachable, friendly and caring. That is why I am proud to have served on the board of the Cleveland Jewish News and for co-chairing the Religious and Academic Division of the Jewish Community Federation's annual campaign.

Q. What was your biggest challenge when you arrived here?

A. Anyone working in Jewish institutional life knows that there is never enough funding for everything you want to accomplish. When I first began my job, my challenge was implementing change.

Q. What lessons will you take with you in your new

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position?

A. A clear focus is critical to achieve goals. At Fuchs Mizrahi, our teachers, students and parents are aware of our mission and assist each other as we pull in the same direction to accomplish the primary objectives of our school.

Q. Have you seen a change in your students over the years?

A. Our students seem happier, and their parents take a greater part in their children's education. I believe when teachers and families work together as a team we can meet children's needs and make them more connected to Torah learning.

Q. What is your favorite subject?

A. I like teaching Mishnah. It is the core text of the oral Torah, and when I teach it, I open up many avenues of discussion. This also gives children their first introduction to the world of Talmud.

Q. What will you miss about Cleveland?

A. Over the years, my wife and four children have developed ongoing, close relationships with a number of Fuchs Mizrahi families. We'll miss those families very much.

Q. Will you remain an Indians fan?

A. Yes, they are my favorite American League team, but I told my new school community that the Phillies will become my favorite National League team.

Q. Do you have a religious quote that guides your life?

A. I like the quote by Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook: "True faith, Torah and light and clear love of all Jews."

Q. How does your family feel about your move?

A. They understand this is part of what often happens in Jewish education. People in my position want to eventually run their own schools, and I am grateful for the opportunity that will enable me to use all my abilities and energy to serve Hashem and His people and to help develop a new generation of committed, educated and



observant Jews.

afine@cjn.org

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