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Kabbalah Center Closure of Children's Charity unrelated to Tax Investigation

The Kabbalah Center, a spiritual organization focusing on ancient Jewish texts said to hold the secrets of the universe, will be closing its children's charity, Success for Kids (SFK). SFK, a 10 year-old nonprofit organization for children, will shut its program in American schools at the end of the present school term. According to Michal Berg, the SFK President, this is due to larger than expected overhead costs associated with translating the religious organization's lessons into a nondenominational curriculum.

In a letter to supporters explaining the impending closure, Berg stated, "The reality is that the current public school expansion strategy is not cost-effective and it is difficult to scale the program to impact more children." However, the letter made no mention of the federal grand jury investigation into Kabbalah Center's alleged tax evasion.

Recently, a federal grand jury in New York issued a subpoena seeking information about the Center, the charity and the Berg family that runs the center. Kabbalah Center spokesman Mark Fabiani denied there was any connection between the closure of SFK and the grand jury subpoena to the Center.

SFK was formerly known as Spirituality for Kids and runs classes in about 40 schools across the nation. It encountered objections from parents who accused it of being quasi-religious. Berg's letter said instead of running classes, SFK would set up a free website and continue sharing its curriculum from it.

SFK began as a Kabbalah-focused private grade school housed next to the Center's Robertson Boulevard headquarters in Los Angeles. It eventually grew to include other programs, including a charity for African children called Raising Malawi, headed by Madonna, the center's most famous follower. Raising Malawi is also presently under IRS investigation.

Besides Madonna, other celebrities who have donated to Kabbalah Center's activities include Babra Streisand, Donna Karan, Ashton Kutcher and Demi