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College of Jewish Studies [Milwaukee, Wis.]. 1953.

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March 23, 1953

Rabbi Harold Baumrind
Cong. Beth Israel
2432 N. Tautonia Ave.
Milwaukee, Wis.

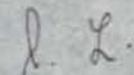
Dear Rabbi Baumrind:

It is time to start planning for the College of Jewish Studies for next year.

As a first step it would be good if you could get your board to pass a resolution that all Sunday school teachers to be engaged by you for next year shall be committed through a contractual obligation to attend the sessions of the College of Jewish Studies twice a month (most probably every second and fourth Tuesday evening, about 14 sessions). Your board will most probably also have to agree to compensate the teachers in an appropriate manner for the additional work they will be required to do.

May we hear from you in writing as to the action taken by your institution before the end of April? Early in May a meeting will be called to make plans for the College for next year. A memorandum on the major problems of the College is enclosed.

Sincerely yours,



Isaac Levitats
Director

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encl.

MILWAUKEE BUREAU OF JEWISH EDUCATION

COLLEGE OF JEWISH STUDIES

Plans for 1953-54

Memorandum by Dr. Isaac Levitats

A. THE SCHOOLS.

1. Contractual Obligation to Attend College.

This year's experience has shown that unless the teachers are obligated by contract to take in-service training, they do not avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the community. Only the teachers of Temple Emenu-El B'ne Jeshurun attended the College regularly this year.

2. Need for In-Service Training.

Meetings of Sunday school teachers, rabbis and lay leaders this year went on record as to the need for giving Jewish background information to Sunday school teachers. The experience of the College this year has further confirmed the woeful lack of Jewish background by a large majority of teachers. Since 80% of the Jewish children who get a Jewish education in Milwaukee are taught by Sunday school teachers, the need for in-service training becomes imperative.

3. In-Service Training Outside of College.

There is a small number of desirable teachers who for certain valid reasons cannot attend the College in the evening. A program of planned study should be devised for these teachers under the guidance of the authorities of the College.

4. Questionnaire.

For intelligent planning of courses for next year it is desirable to have all teachers fill out questionnaires on their training and experience.

5. Certification.

As a first step, all schools should this year agree in principle on certification. In order to give a clear picture of what certification involves, a tentative draft of regulations for teacher certification for the one-day-a-week Jewish religious school will soon be forwarded to you. We cannot rush things unnecessarily; nor can we afford to let a year pass without some progress being made.

6. Affiliation.

In order that the Bureau of Jewish Education be enabled better to perform its teacher training work, it is desirable that a closer contact be established between the schools and the Bureau. By an exchange of information, visitation and provision of program materials much benefit would accrue to all schools. The simplest method to achieve this would be for the Sunday schools to become affiliated with the Bureau of Jewish Education and thus obtain representation on its board of directors.

B. THE COLLEGE OF JEWISH STUDIES.

1. Housing.

A decision must be made on where to house the College next year. The East Side Hebrew School served the purpose this year. It has, however, some disadvantages: inadequate furniture, lack of a library and other facilities. The solution might perhaps be found in annually rotating the locale to the cooperating temples.

2. Courses.

Careful study should be given to the type of courses to be offered. A major share in the decision should be had by the Sunday school teachers themselves.

3. Staff.

Instructional personnel should be engaged soon. This year only two rabbis taught. The work should be shared by more rabbis next year.

4. Equipment.

Library, audio-visual and other needed equipment should be purchased during the summer.

5. Budget.

The Bureau must have a clear picture of pecuniary needs of the College in order to submit a valid budget to the Jewish Welfare Fund.

6. Publications.

If plans were laid now, the Bureau would undertake to prepare certain teaching aids for all Sunday schools. Possible suggestions: a. a resource book on holidays; b. a textbook and workbook on the Jewish Welfare Fund.

7. Pre-service Training.

The feasibility of holding a two-week seminar in May or June for teachers who wish to enter Sunday school teaching next year, should be explored. It would alleviate the shortage of teachers.