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Jewish Community Day School Network. 1988, 1994-1996.

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American Jewish Archives website.

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# JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL NETWORK (JCDSN)

רשת בתי ספר קהילתיים רבם ק

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November 27, 1994

Mr. Herbert Friedman  
Wexner Heritage Fund  
551 Madison Avenue  
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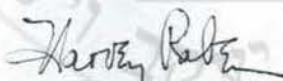
Dear Mr. Friedman:

I was informed by our organization chairman, Susan Cook, of your interest in knowing more about the Jewish Community Day School Network — RAVSAK.

Enclosed are a variety of materials that should provide you with an overview of the organization's activities.

If you would like further information or have any questions, please feel free to contact Susan or myself. We will be glad to assist you in any way that we can.

Sincerely,



Harvey A. Raben, Ed.D.

HAR:mjr  
Enc.

*Affiliated with the Jewish Education Service of North America*

MAILING ADDRESS: JESNA

730 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY 10003 (212) 529-2000 FAX 529-2009



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Wilmington, DE 19803

September, 1994  
Tishri 5755

Dear Friends:

How do you handle scholarships in families where there has been a divorce? Have you found a computer program that can manage the complexities of a day school schedule? At what point do your Russian students start learning Hebrew? Do you have a confidentiality clause in your teacher's contract? These are only a sample of the questions I am currently addressing as I launch a new school year at B'nai Shalom. Heading a Jewish community day school can be a lonely job without the support of colleagues. Luckily, my support is only a phone call away.

Membership in JCDSN has provided me with a ready source of outstanding professionals whose brains are there for the picking. Those of us who have chosen to become active in JCDSN rely on each other for advice and counsel... and we are eager to count you among us.

Membership has many benefits beyond the opportunity to build close professional ties. We are in the midst of refining our K-8 Shabbat curriculum, developed with a grant from the Jim Joseph Foundation. Our annual conference in Tampa, March 12-15, should be an exciting one, featuring leading educator, Joyce Swartzman. There will be time to learn, to share and to enjoy the city.

Enclosed in this membership packet is our Network's annual survey. True to our mission to facilitate communication, we see this survey as a direct and immediate way to exchange information. Upon joining the Network and completing the survey, you will receive a useful directory of member schools and a comprehensive summary of the survey information. If this is the full extent of your participation in the Network, the cost of membership will have been well spent.

(over)

*Affiliated with the Jewish Education Service of North America*

MAILING ADDRESS: JESNA

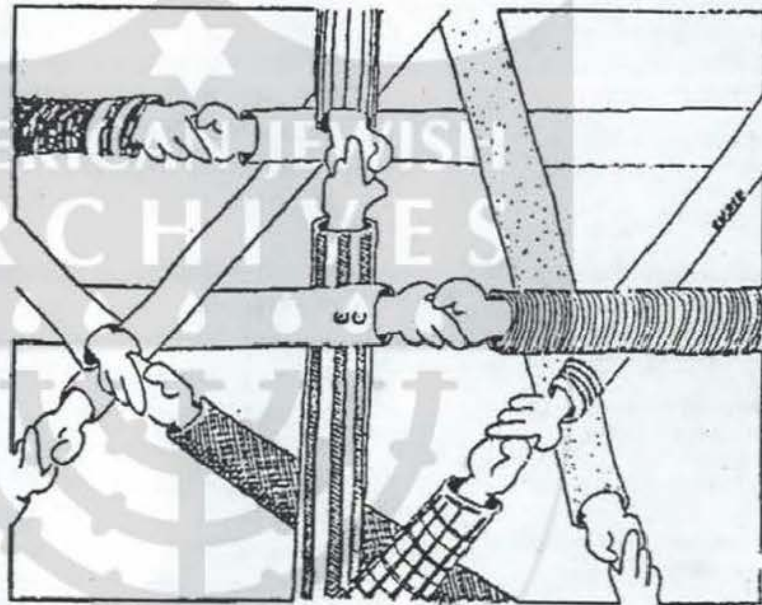
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The schools we head are really microcosms of the Jewish community at large, with all the attendant challenges and rewards. We bring together families of diverse levels of education and observance and attempt to create a school culture that reflects and respects that diversity, while being true to the traditions and values that bind us all. This is a difficult task, but made more difficult without the support of colleagues. So join with us. We will strengthen each other as we seek to strengthen our schools and our communities.

Sincerely,

*Susan Cook*

Susan Cook  
Chairman, JCDSN



PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED  
MEMBERSHIP FORM AND SURVEY FORM  
BY  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1994



PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION  
OF REFORM DAY SCHOOLS



An affiliate of UAHC

The Leo Baeck Day School  
Toronto, Ontario

Baltimore Hebrew Day School  
Baltimore, MD

Beth Am Day School  
Miami, FL

Beth Breira Day School  
Miami, FL

Beth Elohim Day School  
Brooklyn, NY

Beth Hillel Day School  
Valley Village, CA

Beth Israel Day School  
San Diego, CA

The Davis Academy  
Atlanta, GA

Temple Emanuel Day School  
Beverly Hills, CA

Temple Isaiah Day School  
Los Angeles, CA

Kol Ami Day School  
Plantation, FL

Temple Israel Day School  
Los Angeles, CA

Rashi School  
Needham, MA

Rodeph Shalom Day School  
New York, NY

Rosenwald School  
Chicago, IL

Shlenker School  
Congregation Beth Israel  
Houston, TX

Sinai Academy  
of Temple Sinai  
North Miami Beach, FL

The Solel School  
Paradise Valley, AZ

Stephen S. Wise Temple  
Day School  
Los Angeles, CA

Dear Friends of PARDeS,

I am pleased to tell you that PARDeS has expanded its activities in many ways during the past year, and we are planning a full agenda of projects and programs for the future. Our meeting in February was well attended by directors, teachers and lay leaders. The stimulating programs and dialogues generated significant ideas for us to consider as we move forward in developing the Reform Day School movement.

The interest in starting a Reform Day School has greatly increased, especially since the article in Reform Judaism appeared (winter 94). There are three new schools starting in September, and three others that are in the initial planning stages.

PARDeS will co-sponsor with UAHC and WZO a conference on Teaching Hebrew in Reform Day Schools, Nov. 4-5, in New York.

PARDeS will co-sponsor with HUC-JIR and UAHC a teacher institute with Dr. Howard Kirschenbaum on Character and Moral Values Education, Feb. 23, in Miami. This is a pre-conference day.

PARDeS conference, Feb. 24-26, 1996 will be in Miami. The theme of the conference is **Reform Day Schools: Making A Difference for the Jewish Future**. We especially want to invite those who want to explore the idea of starting a Day School.

PARDeS has been instrumental in bringing a Day School Resolution to the UAHC biennial which will strengthen advocacy for Day Schools in the Reform Movement.

PARDeS is in the process of publishing a brochure for the biennial, and a guidebook for starting a Day School. We have also developed an interschool network newsletter.

I invite you to become a member, or renew your membership in PARDeS for the school year 1995-96, and join us in the vision of intensifying Jewish education for the 21st century.

B'shalom,

*Lenore C. Kipper*  
Lenore C. Kipper, R.J.E., President

305-665-6228

Lenore C. Kipper, President  
Sue Klau, Vice President  
Irwin Shlachter, Vice President  
Jan Goldmann, Treasurer

Roberta Krolick, Chairperson  
Jacqueline Gilbert, Vice President  
Nira Eloul, Vice President  
Esther Santzky, Secretary

REFORM JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS  
PARDeS

1. The Davis Academy  
460 Abernathy Road  
Atlanta, GA 30328  
Director/Principal: Molly Aczel  
(404) 303-0347
2. The Leo Baeck Day School  
1950 Bathurst  
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3P9 Canada  
Director/Principal: Vita Gardner  
(416) 222-9220
3. Beth Am Day School  
5950 North Kendall Drive  
Miami, FL 33156  
Director/Principal: Lenore Kipper  
(305) 665-6228
4. Beth Israel Day School  
2512 Third Avenue at Laurel  
San Diego, CA 92103  
Director/Principal: Jill Green  
(619) 239-2157
5. Temple Emanuel Day School  
8844 Burton Way  
Beverly Hills, CA 90211  
Director/Principal: Nira Eloul  
(310) 288-3737
6. Baltimore Hebrew Day School  
7401 Park Heights Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21208  
Director/Principal: Barbara Barr  
(410) 764-1587
7. Rashi School  
77 Ferndale Road  
Needham, MA 02192  
Director/Principal: Jennifer Miller  
(617) 449-6049



8. Temple Israel Day School  
7300 Hollywood Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
Director/Principal: Madelyn Katz  
(213) 876-8330
9. Rodeph Sholom Day School  
10 West 84th Street  
New York, NY 10024  
Director/Principal: Irwin Shlachter  
(212) 362-8769
10. Rosenwald School  
5959 North Sheridan Road  
Chicago, IL 60660  
Director/Principal: Jacqueline Gilbert  
(312) 878-5828
11. Shlenker Day School  
Congregation Beth Israel  
5600 North Braeswood Boulevard  
Houston, TX 77096  
Director/Principal: Patricia Tonkin  
(713) 270-6127
12. Sinai Academy of North Dade  
18801 NE 22nd Avenue  
North Miami Beach, FL 33180  
Director/Principal: Jan Goldmann  
(305) 932-9010
13. Stephen S. Wise Temple Day School  
15500 Stephen S. Wise Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90077  
Director/Principal: Metuka Benjamin  
(310) 476-8561
14. Temple Isaiah Day School  
10345 West Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
Director/Principal: Lisa Rosenstein  
(310) 277-1041

15. The Solel School  
Early Childhood Learning Center  
6805 East McDonald Drive  
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253  
Director/Principal: Bonnie Morris  
(602) 991-7414
16. Beth Hillel Day School  
12326 Riverside Drive  
North Hollywood, CA 91607  
Director/Principal: Melanie Goldberg  
(818) 763-9148
17. Congregation Beth Elohim Day School  
8th Avenue & Garfield Place  
Brooklyn, NY 11215  
Director/Principal: Joan Warner  
(718) 768-3814
18. Bet Breira Day School  
Miami, FL
19. Kol Ami Day School  
Plantation, FL





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# Jewish Community Day School Network

Summer 1994

Editor: Harvey A. Rabin, Ed.D. Communications Chair

## RAVSAK Conference - 1994

Last March I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the annual RAVSAK conference in Las Vegas. I was motivated to participate when I learned that Jewish Family Education was included as a topic. I debated whether our Jewish Family Education co-ordinator or a faculty member should also participate but, from the publicity I had, I could not get a clear picture of how beneficial this would be. (More detailed conference information should be sent out earlier.)

I made the decision to attend alone and "check you all out!" When I made this commitment to attend I called my good friend, Karen Feller in Tampa, and encouraged her to join the Jewish Community Day School Network and attend the conference. (Next year why doesn't every member school bring a representative from another school?) We both agreed that it would be wonderful for us to meet together once a year, (not only socially but on a professional level).

I am now glad I made the decision to attend. Professional development is not new to me. I have been involved in a community day school as a teacher and administrator for the past fifteen

years. I had attended many secular educational institutes and conferences, but I wasn't sure how professional and challenging a Jewish Community Network would be. It was wonderful! Not only did I learn from the presenters, but the participants as well (I'm still quoting Daniel Khan.) You all are terrific! I enjoyed meeting with you and sharing ideas. I am now on the bandwagon to encourage JCDSN to improve communications and let all community day schools know what you have to offer! The sense of mispucha is wonderful. (I felt as if I was reunited with old friends when Susan Fish and I met at a HUC symposium.) It was wonderful to be with peers and to commiserate and share ideas.

I look forward to seeing you all next March. I wouldn't miss it for the world!

Karen Rund  
Principal  
San Diego Jewish Academy

## Viva Las Vegas

I was fortunate to attend the annual RAVSAK conference in Las Vegas this past March, as president-elect of the Minneapolis Jewish Day School.

Although no board representative from our school had previously attended this conference, I was particularly attracted by the board development workshops on the conference agenda. Those workshops turned out to be invaluable to me, and in addition, I discovered that the RAVSAK conference has a lot to offer the lay leadership of the Jewish community day schools.

The board development workshops, led by Dr. Daniel Khan of the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools, were highly informative, well organized, and concise, and Dr. Khan was an effective, compelling speaker. The governance model he outlined, along with the suggested structures and strategies for building and developing a strong, effective board of directors, were precisely the tools I had hoped to acquire in preparation for my upcoming leadership role. The opportunity to meet and talk with Dr. Khan was an added benefit, since he can serve as a resource to explore fu-

Letters  
on  
RAVSAK

### Ravsak Board

Meets  
July 24 & 25  
in Pittsburgh

### Save The Date

March 12-15  
1995 Conference  
Tampa, Florida

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# Heroes, Holidays & History

## What is 'Developmentally Appropriate'?

By Deborah Schein

Four-year-old Adam was recently humming a Pesach song about the Israelites leaving Egypt. Suddenly he stopped and tilted his head. "Are these people real? Did they really live? Did this story really happen? What about the Maccabees? Were they real? Is this story the same as the Hannukah story?" Adam is at an awakening stage of learning about history. For him the light bulb went on in the context of a song and makes sense because of the richness of his learning environment. But how do we best teach history to young children who are not yet capable of understanding abstract concepts?

I first heard the term "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" (DAP) in 1991 at an Early Childhood Educators conference. It has since become an educational buzz word. The practice of teaching only that which is thought to be age appropriate is being considered in relation to aspects of education and must certainly be a part of curriculum development for young Jewish children. Applying this principle, however, can be particularly problematic when developing programs for children under six.

Most early childhood educators agree that teaching abstract concepts such as symbols, time, holidays, and history is developmentally inappropriate. These concepts do not become coherent, understood or appreciated until a child becomes a conscious learner, somewhere around the age of seven or eight. However, in spite of the fact that Jewish holidays are based on symbols, history, seasonal changes and time, Jewish educators agree that young children need to be taught about the

holidays. *How then do we resolve this apparently fundamental educational conflict?*

### • CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT

At Agnon we begin by looking at human development in general. By the age of two most healthy children have taught themselves to walk and talk. How do human children accomplish this? First, there is an internal desire inherent in humans to learn. Secondly, a child needs to be in an environment which is conducive to learning so that learning can ultimately occur. The same requirements are necessary for learning about everything including one's Jewishness. *At Agnon we create a Jewish environment in which holidays are celebrated, symbols are used, seasons are recognized and an awareness of time inundate the child.* This permits Jewish learning to be absorbed by the child in much the same way that all other knowledge is.

Examples of Jewish learning occurring as a result of the proper environment can be seen by observing children both at home and at school. My son Benjamin, at the age of one, already knew that on Erev Shabbat we lit Shabbat candles. He associated candles with Challah, and he began to ask for Lala (his word for Challah). He was learning about the existence of Shabbat symbols as he recognized the candles and the Challah. He was also developing an understanding of time. He knew that Shabbat was a different time of the week because it was treated differently by his family. He was learning that a week is the time from one Shabbat to the next. And he was becoming aware

of the specialness of Shabbat.

At school, four year-old Joshua learned that on Hanukkah we light many candles. From the stories he heard us read he now knows that Judah Maccabee won a war, even though he doesn't know which war was fought. He knows that it was a real war that happened long ago and that the Jews won. He also heard us tell the story about how the Jews went to the Temple after the war to light the oil. He is still too young to understand "rededication," but he knows that the oil burned longer than anyone expected. Joshua is also attracted to the idea of good guys vs. bad guys, which according to child psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim, is certainly an appropriate reaction for a four-year-old. *But Joshua does not know he is having an age appropriate reaction; he only knows that he is learning about Hannukah.*

One of the ways we prepare for Pesach at Agnon is to have the children "clean house" and learn more about "order." The children try to remove all hametz from the classroom. They observe the order of the universe by witnessing the emergence of spring, and they learn about the order of the seder. When Jessica goes home, she helps her mother clean house for Pesach. She continues to build upon her understanding of the meaning of the word "order." Dishes are sorted; foods are sorted. The world is full of order. Jessica, thus, learns about traditions associated with Pesach.

### • OFFERING STRUCTURE

While creating the proper envi-

Continued on page 3



## 'Developmentally Appropriate'?

Continued from page 2

Environment is essential, giving structure to that environment is also necessary. *At Agnon structure does not mean rigid routine or teacher directed lessons. Instead it requires that things be done purposefully and regularly.* What brings Jewishness to children beyond simply being born into the religion is repetition: a repetition of the beauty and appreciation of Judaism from those who bestow it on them.

Children in Agnon's early childhood program experience the repetition of holiday observances week after week and year after year. The children light the Shabbat candles and recite the blessing over the wine and challah every Friday. Every autumn they visit the sukkas of their friends and design their own sukkas. Our four and five-year-old children even build their own sukkah out of wood, and they nail it together using the tools from their woodworking corner. In addition at the beginning of each month, one of the pre-kindergarten classes at Agnon takes a walk to observe the seasonal changes. This in itself is not a Jewish act, but rather part of an ongoing science project. *Yet, because of the regularity of the activity, the Jewish environment created in the school, and the guided questions of the teacher, it is not uncommon to hear a child whisper, "This all happens because of God."*

### • ACHIEVING A BALANCE

We all know that children learn and retain certain concepts more easily at certain ages. As an educator, I would agree that young children under the age of seven do not consciously understand the concepts of symbols, holidays, seasons and time. Yet as a Jewish early childhood educator, I have observed that children glean much more from experiences than we could ever imagine. I suggest that there is something else involved in the learning process of young children, something that is there in adults. This "other" type of learning is best described in the words of Maria Montessori, in *The Absorbent Mind*. *Young children have a special ability to take from their environment that which makes sense to them. Each child is therefore capable of creating appropriate learning out of incomprehensible information.* Trusting in the child's ability to absorb concepts, without requiring formal proof of comprehension, allows children to reach their own level of understanding. Our job as parents and educators is to create an environment that is rich, exciting, and safe, as well as structured and ordered. This will enable our children to learn, through absorption, as much as they are ready and able to learn.

*Reprinted with permission of Agnon School, Cleveland.*

## Viva Las Vegas

Continued from page 1

ture issues as the year progresses.

Equally as valuable was the opportunity to meet and talk with representatives from community day schools around the country. The RAVSAK network provides a valuable forum to share ideas as well as problems, and to

find support for working out the many issues we all face as community day schools. I look forward to drawing on that support in the future, and to attending next year's conference!

*Ellen Sue Parker  
President, Board of Directors  
Minneapolis Jewish Day School*

## From The Chairman

Dear Friends,

Every year I get so many great ideas from our annual conference. This year was no exception. Dr. Dan Khan inspired me to look at B'nai Shalom's organizational structure and work toward a leaner and more efficient model. His suggestions that the Board Members, and Boards should be evaluated regularly was a welcome one. The instruments to conduct such evaluations were a bonus.

Sharing with other school heads and many lay people from the Las Vegas area was both fruitful and validating. I got to pick people's brains on admissions policies, scholarships, hiring and firing employees, and recruiting and dismissing students. I soaked up the creativity and enthusiasm of others and, I hope, contributed in return.

Our organization is my link to Jewish Community Day School educators all over the country and it can be yours. Join, if you haven't! Participate on the annual survey and receive valuable information about the inner workings of our schools. Use the directory to share ideas and talk through sticky issues. Plan on attending our next conference tentatively scheduled for March 12-15 in Tampa, Florida.

We have a lot to learn from each other!!

*Sincerely,  
Susan Cook, Chairman  
Jewish Community Day  
School Network*



# Reflections on the March of the Living & Jewish Day School Education

Harvey Raben - Hebrew Academy of Toledo

This April I had the experience of a lifetime. I, along with nearly 6,000 Jewish young people, participated in the March of the Living. A two week trip to Poland and Israel coincided with Yom Ha-Shoah and Yom Ha-Atzmaut. Were I to participate again, I cannot imagine the intensity of the events of this trip being the same. No doubt many of you have listened to impassioned descriptions by participants of the March and how it has affected them "forever."

In my role as madrich to a group of 34 participants from the "greater Midwest," I had an opportunity to interact with youth from a variety of Jewish educational backgrounds. I wondered whether a Jewish day school education had any significant impact on the experiences these young people were having. Most of the students had some Jewish education, usually in an afternoon Hebrew School. Day school graduates from Toledo, Detroit, and Kansas City showed different reactions to the March from their peers without day school. Here are several impressions from the trip.

Hebrew language for most of the group was more foreign than Spanish or French. The day school grads showed

greater facility and comfort with major parts of the program that required Hebrew. Two particular instances stand out: a day school grad conducting an interview for Israeli TV-*ha-kol b'ivrit* entirely in Hebrew. The other was a discussion between a young Lithuanian Jew and a current day school student from Kansas City entirely in Hebrew each using a second language. These snapshots and others remind me of the vital role of Hebrew in our curriculum and the importance of extending our schools, at least through eighth grade.

*Tefillah* and familiarity with the order of prayer were a major part of the "March of the Living" experience. Day school students were far more comfortable in services and were usually the one able to lead morning prayer. It was no surprise since the vast majority of the young people in our group had no experience with daily *tefillah*. Day school people seemed far more comfortable with the Jewish rhythms. *Tefillah* was also a form of communication across language and national boundaries. The ability to recite Birkat Ha-mazon, Shma/V'ahavta, and kaddish together with an international

group was an affective way of bridging the gaps of national cultures. (Those with multiple years of Jewish camping also fared well in this regard.)

Jewish History was everywhere one looked during this trip. Many of the participants had been prepared with a smattering of Holocaust and Israel materials. The day school students and graduates were far more knowledgeable and therefore comfortable with the many facts and figures thrown their way. Although only a few of them had actually experienced formal Jewish history classes, their breadth of knowledge was superior to others without day school education. The tour of Israel rang with special historical importance for these students.

Overall, the March of the Living is a pivotal life experience for all who participate. For day school grads the experience has, I believe, a different impact. It puts in order what they have been taught for 6, 8, or more years. Jewish living becomes a higher priority. Jewish continuity, Jewish survival, Jewish identity, are not slogans for them. It will be a natural by-product of their increased commitment to Jewish living.

## Research Confirms Day School Impact

"Jewish day schools are the best vehicle for implementing Jewish involvement and are the only type of Jewish education that stands against the very rapidly growing rate of intermarriage," so states the recent report from the Avi Chai Foundation on Jewish Involvement of the Baby Boom Generation of 1993.

With each succeeding year, new research points to the import and impact of Jewish day school education. This particular report can be very effective:

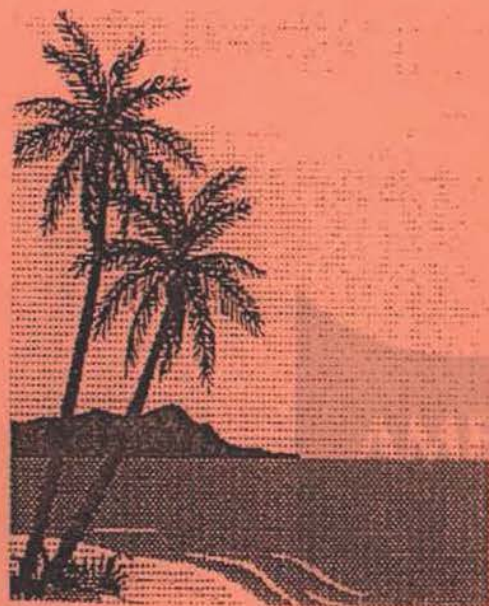
- a) supporting arguments for enhanced funding to Jewish day schools by Federations.
- b) convincing prospective parents of the effect of intensive Jewish education on later Jewish identity patterns.
- c) supporting the idea of extending Jewish day school education to at least eighth grade.
- d) in identifying target groups most likely to enroll their children in Jewish day schools.
- e) developing lay board awareness of national trends.

The full report is available through Avi Chai—A Philanthropic Foundation, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017.



**1995 CONFERENCE  
JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL NETWORK  
MARCH 12 - MARCH 15**

**"Maximizing the Effectiveness of the School Environment:  
Improving your Effectiveness as a School Leader"**



**THE HILLEL SCHOOL OF TAMPA  
INVITES YOU TO  
COME TO BEAUTIFUL TAMPA BAY!!**

- \*Enhance your skills as a Jewish  
Community leader & day school  
educator/principal**
- \*Exchange ideas with your peers**
- \*Enjoy networking and break-out  
sessions**

**FEATURED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:**

**BARRY A. KOSMIN, PH.D**

University of London, England

McMaster University, Canada

Demographer, Social Historian; Director of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey; Director of the Mandell L. Berman Institute - North American Jewish Data Bank Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York; Director of Research for the Council of Jewish Federations.

**JOYCE BURRICK SWARZMAN, ED.D**

Teachers' College, Columbia University; Ohio State University

Director, Sun Coast Area Teacher Training Honors Program, University of South Florida; Associate Director of Clinical Education at the University of South Florida College of Education; trainer of over 5,000 teachers and education students in communication and effective teaching skills since 1981.

**KOSHER MEALS AND MORNING MINYAN WILL BE PROVIDED. YOUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON  
CONTINUED GROWTH! TREAT YOURSELF TO AN ENERGIZING, EXCITING TIME WITH OTHER  
PROFESSIONALS IN YOUR FIELD!**



**JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL NETWORK  
SCHOOL SURVEY - 1994/95**

SCHOOL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_ FAX # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

SIZE OF JEWISH COMMUNITY \_\_\_\_\_

IS YOUR SCHOOL ACCREDITED BY ANY NATIONAL ACCREDITING AGENCY? (circle) Yes No

If yes, by which agency? \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 1992/93 \_\_\_\_\_ 1993/94 \_\_\_\_\_ 1994/95 \_\_\_\_\_ Grades \_\_\_\_\_

Instructional Hours: General Studies \_\_\_\_\_ Judaic/Hebraic \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL BUDGET \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL TUITION ASSISTANCE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Include tuition assistance policy & application, if available)

TUITION: If varies, give range \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach a tuition fee schedule, if available)

Do you offer: Sibling discount? YES NO Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Professional Worker \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Staff discount? YES NO Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you receive Federation subsidy? YES NO How much \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FUNDRAISING AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_ By what means? \_\_\_\_\_

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: # \_\_\_\_\_ (include secretaries, bookkeeper, etc.)

List positions: \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHING STAFF: # \_\_\_\_\_ Full Time # \_\_\_\_\_ Part Time # \_\_\_\_\_

Policy on class size? YES NO Maximum Size \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have multi-grade classes (combination)? \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPORT TEACHING STAFF: (indicate F (full time) or P (part time))

Guidance Counselor \_\_\_\_\_ Art \_\_\_\_\_ Library/Media \_\_\_\_\_

Music \_\_\_\_\_ Physical Education \_\_\_\_\_ Computer \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

SALARIES: Director/Principal (circle one)

\$0...20,000 30,000...40,000 50,000...60,000 70,000...80,000

20,000...30,000 40,000...50,000 60,000...70,000 80,000...up

Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_



(over)



**TEACHER'S SALARIES:** Beginning (B.A. 1st Year) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach salary schedule, if available)

Benefits: (include amounts or %) Health Insurance \_\_\_\_\_ # Sick Days \_\_\_\_\_

Life Insurance \_\_\_\_\_ # Personal Days \_\_\_\_\_ Merit Pay \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Do teachers have prep time during the day? YES NO How much? \_\_\_\_\_

Daily? YES NO How many days a week? \_\_\_\_\_

Do teachers have an organization which negotiates salary, etc.? YES NO

**DOES YOUR SCHOOL PROVIDE:** Transportation? YES NO Parent Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch program? YES NO Parent Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Special services for learning difficulties YES NO Parent Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Do you allow outside tutoring during the school day? YES NO How much? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you handle remedial Hebrew language instruction for new students entering at levels beyond kindergarten? \_\_\_\_\_

ESL for New Americans? \_\_\_\_\_

Extra-curricular Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

When \_\_\_\_\_ Is cost covered by: (circle) School? YES NO Parent? YES NO

**FACILITIES:** Do you own or rent? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have plans for expansion? (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Use: Do outside groups use your facilities after hours? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you provide before / after school care? \_\_\_\_\_ Cost \_\_\_\_\_

**ADMISSIONS:** Do you require pre-admission assessment? YES NO

What instruments do you use? \_\_\_\_\_

Who determines admission? Director/principal? \_\_\_\_\_ Admission Committee? \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT TESTING?** YES NO What test? \_\_\_\_\_

**FUTURE NETWORK SURVEYS:** What questions would you like included? \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**



# JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL NETWORK (JCDSN)

## MISSION STATEMENT

*This network is comprised of Jewish community day schools which are not affiliated with a particular Jewish denominational movement, and which are committed to the following:*

*...acknowledgement of the validity of all major streams of Jewish thought, and the incorporation of this principle into their curricula. This acknowledgement implies that there exist many possible options for the expression of Judaism.*

*...appreciation and advocacy for the value concept of K'lal Yisrael.*

*...promotion of participation in Jewish community life.*

*...dialogue and exchange of ideas, and a willingness to learn from each other.*

*...development of a program which fosters appreciation of the commonalities and differences in Jewish life.*

## MEMBERSHIP STATEMENT

- Please Type or Print -

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher Liaison \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Director \_\_\_\_\_ Board President \_\_\_\_\_

A representative, generally the school director or Judaic studies director, must be appointed as representative to the Network. Please indicate the name of the representative below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School Representative  
to JCDSN

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\$50 one-time registration fee  
for **NEW MEMBERS**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Current dues assessment is enclosed  
(\$1.25 per student - \$500 max.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students \_\_\_\_\_ Grades \_\_\_\_\_

A donation to JCDSN is enclosed.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Return Membership Statement and check  
to:*

*Dr. Harvey A. Raben, Treasurer  
Jewish Community Day School Network  
6465 Sylvania Avenue  
Sylvania OH 43560*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## ***BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP***

We provide the following resources for our member schools:

- Newsletter    • Latest Information by Fax (bi-monthly)
- Shabbat Curriculum    • InterNet E-Mail Communication
- Teacher Representation    • Annual Conference
- Networking - Administration, Faculty & Staff
- School Survey

The purpose of the JCDSN is to improve the effectiveness of Jewish community day school by:

- defining, clarifying and advocating common areas of interest
- facilitating the professional growth of our administrators and staffs.
- providing professional and personal support for our administrators and staffs.
- facilitating the development of lay leadership



# A Community Day School Network

By Daniel W. Bennett

*The newly-formed Jewish Community Day School Network encourages a philosophy of Jewish pluralism which advocates the concept of K'lal Yisrael and promotes dialogue and an exchange of ideas*

**I**n Genesis 6:14 God told Noah to build an ark, but Rashi says that God could have saved Noah without an ark," Avi explained one Fall afternoon. "Wait," said Karen, his classmate, "but without an ark God couldn't have saved all the different kinds of animals. There were so many different types. That's what Nachmanides tells us about verse nineteen." "I don't know," Shoshana chimed in as she often did, "I don't even think the story's true. The Bible just teaches us lessons! That stuff didn't really happen." "Of course it did," David countered, "the Torah is the word of God. It was given to Moshe on Har Sinai and it's all true..."

It was a typical Bible class discussion, that could have taken place in almost any sixth grade Day School Class. However, in this case, the teacher did not try to resolve the debate. Neither was the goal to explain that the Bible is of Divine authorship, or to convince students that people wrote the Bible. Rather, the teacher's task was to make sure students were aware of various viewpoints and respected and understood their rationales, could support their own arguments, and appreciated the validity of their neighbor's opinion—even if it was diametrically opposed to their own. This discussion took place in a Jewish community Day School.

## The Jewish Community Day School Network

There are now about thirty Jewish Community Day Schools in North America affiliated with the newly-formed Jewish Community Day School Network (JCDSN). What entitles these schools to their "community" label is not that they have a constituency comprised of Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, Orthodox and un-

affiliated Jews, many UAHC, Solomon Schechter, and Torah U'Mesorah Day Schools also attract students from all branches of American Judaism. Nor does their label come from the source of their funding, for some denominational day schools receive as much or more Federation support as JCDSN schools in the same city. Neither the nature of the constituency nor the source of the funding makes a school "community." Rather, a Jewish community Day School is "community" because it adheres to a unique philosophy of Jewish pluralism.

Jewish pluralism means that no one Judaic philosophy is more valid than another, that each philosophy of Judaism has distinct beauty and validity, and that one group's Jewish practices are as authentic as another's. It's an approach to Jewish education which Dr. David Shluker, Director of JESNA's Department of Community Consultation and planning, calls "transideological," and which Dr. Barry Chazan, Professor of Education at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, predicts is well on its way to becoming a new ideology in its own right. And it is a philosophy of teaching Judaism which has been the cornerstone of Community Day Schools since they began in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

"At my shul we end the Gevurot-prayer with the words mehayeh metim," David explained patiently, "for God restores life to the dead." "At the temple we say mehayeh hakol," Karen responded, "and I think that's because God restores our strength when we're weary, God restores everything." Which version of the Gevurot prayer is the correct version? Which interpretation makes the most sense? The JCDSN educator will not answer that question. Instead, students learn the origin of each version, analyze the history and mean-

Daniel W. Bennett is Director of Jewish Studies, Theodor Herzl Jewish Day School, Denver, Colorado.



Jewish pluralism means that no one Judaic philosophy is more valid than another, that each philosophy of Judaism has distinct beauty and validity, and that one group's Jewish practices are as authentic as another's.

ing of both endings, and discuss with each other various interpretations.

Whether Avi and Shoshana agree with the liturgy at David's shul or at Karen's temple is not important; the excitement and the learning take place when the teacher and students discuss the theology. They come to understand why different Jews pray as they do, to appreciate and respect differences. They also begin to build a Jewish world-view which will enable them to feel comfortable in many different types of synagogues. Orthodox liturgy becomes less alien to the Reform Jewish child, and Reconstructionist practices less foreign to the Conservative child. JCDSN children are easily able both to preserve their own family's customs, and

to learn and respect the customs of others.

Until recently, there existed no national organization for Community Day Schools, no formal vehicle for sharing common philosophies, ideas, curricula, problems. This began to change with the encouragement of Dr. Shluker when several Jewish Day School educators from unaffiliated schools organized a one-day mini-conference at the national CAJE Conference in College Park, Maryland, in August, 1986. There we shared ideas, educational goals, approaches to teaching Judaism, methodologies, textbook lists and curricula, staffing problems and successes, community involvement in our schools, and our schools' unique histories. Most importantly, we united in our resolve to continue the process, to establish a network of schools committed to teaching Judaism from a pluralistic standpoint. Toward that end, the group appointed Ilana Sebo, then the director of the Jewish Day School of Metropolitan Seattle, and myself, to serve as co-chairpersons of our first national conference.

Representatives from more than two dozen schools participated in the two-and-a-half day conference in West Palm Beach, Florida, in January, 1987, in conjunction with the Council for Jewish Education's annual conference. Dr. Chazan, then JESNA's Distinguished Educator-in-Service, participated and, in his keynote address, forcefully articulated philosophical rationales for community Jewish day schools. As they had for our initial meeting in College Park, Dr. Shluker and Fradle Freidenreich, JESNA's Associate Director, offered both their experience as educators and the resources of JESNA.

Many of the educators who came to the West Palm Beach conference were surprised to see how many other schools also approached the teaching of Judaism pluralistically. Schools in existence for ten, twelve, even eighteen years, had not been aware that other

schools shared their philosophy, that Jews in many communities had sensed the need to establish community Day Schools! As we met together, our feeling of isolation dissolved, and we began to find support for what many of us had been doing by ourselves for years.

Encouraged by one another, and guided by what we sensed was an historic event, we established a network of Day Schools not affiliated with a particular denominational movement, and which are committed to:

1. The acknowledgment of the validity of all major streams of Jewish thought, and the incorporation of this principle into their curricula. This acknowledgment implies that there exist many possible options for the expression of Judaism.
2. An appreciation and advocacy for the value concept of *K'lai Yisrael*.
3. The promotion of participation in Jewish community life.
4. A dialogue and exchange of ideas, and a willingness to learn from each other.
5. Striving to develop a program which fosters appreciation of the commonalities and differences in Jewish life. (Taken from the "Palm Beach Working Paper," which formally established our network in January 1987.)

We called our organization, "The Jewish Community Day School Network" (JCDSN), and we refer to it also by its Hebrew equivalent, "Reshet Batai Sefer K'hilati'im" (RAVSAK). Our goals are: to define, clarify, and advocate common areas of interest; to facilitate the professional growth of our administrators and staff and provide them with professional and personal support; and to facilitate the development of lay leadership. One venture intended to meet our goals, an eight-page newsletter, appeared in May, 1987. It publi-



cizes our history as an organization, explains our goals, highlights a few of our founding schools, and shares several philosophies and perspectives. Planning for the second annual RAVSAK Conference is well underway. It will be held in Boston in March, 1988, preceding the national conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). The theme will be "Supervision and Evaluation." Several noted scholars will join us for plenary sessions and multi-track programming, and over eighty professional and lay leaders are expected to attend.

The RAVSAK Executive Committee, elected in West Palm Beach, recently concluded a very successful two-day meeting in San Francisco. Attending were Chairperson Barbara Steinberg, Jewish Community Day School of Palm Beach County; Secretary/Treasurer Natalie Berman, Community Day School in Pittsburgh; Resources Coordinator Jay Weiner, Heritage Academy in Tulsa; Outreach Chairperson Rabbi Jim Rogozen, Shalom Day School in Sacramento; Events and 1988 Conference Chairperson Fred Nathan, Brandeis/Hillel Day School in San Francisco; 1988 Conference Co-Chairperson Mira Fraenkel, North Peninsula Jewish Community Day School in San Mateo; and myself, Theodore Herzl Jewish Day School in Denver. Communications Chairperson and Editor of the RAVSAK Newsletter, Executive Committee members, the sixteen educators who signed "The Palm Beach Working Paper," and RAVSAK school representatives come to Jewish education with varied backgrounds, interests and strengths. But we are united in the vision of the importance of our movement: to provide Jewish children from diverse backgrounds and beliefs the opportunity to study together, to learn about and respect each other and to acquire the ability to make informed choices about their own Jewish beliefs and practices.

While the vision is shared by all RAVSAK schools, each is free to implement it in its own way. RAVSAK does not intend to set policy for its member schools; each school retains autonomy in all matters of practice and curriculum. RAVSAK is a network of schools which share a philosophy of Jewish pluralism. True to that philosophy, our practices may differ. One RAVSAK school may require boys to wear kippot at all times, while another may make the practice optional. Levels of kashrut observance may differ from school to school. One school may have a full Shacharit service every morning and read Torah on Mondays and Thursdays, while another may start each day with a short, abbreviated prayer service. Schools teach Jewish practices in the way they decide that best fulfills the Jewish Community Day School philosophy.

#### A Middle-of-the Road Approach

Despite the potential for limitless variety, most RAVSAK schools have chosen a middle-of-the-road approach to practices which enables both liberal and traditional Jews to feel equally comfortable, and broadens the base of families who feel at home in the school. It exposes students to the widest range of Jewish practices and teaches them the language of Jewish life, while enabling them to see value in diverse interpretations of the customs.

A middle-of-the-road approach to practices could mean that the school may require the children to say the Birkat Ha-Mazon after meals, but in an abbreviated form. It means that both boys and girls are offered equal access to the mitzvot, and at the same time are taught how traditional Judaism differentiates between the roles of men and women in religious life. It means that a school's choice of textbooks and of educational materials draws on wide range of Jewish publishers.

The students belonged to different synagogues; their parents practiced Judaism in different ways. But to each other, they were not Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox Jews. They were simply Jews, and they were friends. And they sang L'khah Dodi together.

"Which siddur are we using this week?" Avi asked one Monday morning before Shacharit. In Avi's school, students switch prayerbooks every few weeks, alternating between the Reform Gates of Prayer and Siddur Or Yisrael, a traditional all-Hebrew prayerbook published by KTAV. Avi's class studies the Bible using a Hebrew text complete with Rashi's commentaries, and his teacher also utilizes Melton materials to teach Tanakh. A visitor to Avi's classroom will notice educational charts and posters on the wall from both Torah U'Mesorah and the National Federation of Temple Youth.

Despite this middle-of-the-road approach to practices, Jewish Community Day Schools do not attempt to be all



things to all people. A school must define itself in terms of goals and practices; it must clearly publicize what it stands for and how it fulfills its stated goals; it must be proud of what it is attempting to accomplish; it must hold true to its charter.

Herein lies one of the challenges facing RAVSAK schools. From the school's initial contact with a prospective family, through the time when the family enrolls its child in the school, and throughout the child's years in the school, the school must remind the parents of its purpose and goals. If Shoshana's parents know what her school stands for, and if they agree with the school's goals, they can be partners with the school in their daughter's Jewish education. But if they believe that Shoshana will best understand Torah if she is exposed to only one perspective, if they believe that a pluralistic approach will confuse Shoshana—and many parents say that it will—then Shoshana should not attend a RAVSAK school. It is the school's responsibility, shared by the professional and lay leadership, to communicate its purpose and goals accurately to the parent body. Only then can the parents be supportive of the school and its approach.

Another challenge facing our schools involves setting policy. How does each school set its goals, define its purpose, develop a curriculum, select its textbooks and decide difficult questions of Jewish practice? Our new organization may be able to help, for now schools can face these tough questions in consultation with others who have grappled with the same questions. RAVSAK, in its short life, already has enabled schools to feel that they do not need to reinvent the wheel at every juncture. But because each school is unique, each must come to its own decisions. The process is much more difficult for RAVSAK schools than for schools affiliated with a denominational movement. Unlike those schools, RAV-

SAK schools have no institutional authority to consult, no accepted guidelines to adopt. With the guidance of their professionals and, often, with community participation, each school must go through the difficult and painstaking—yet often rewarding—process of defining its purpose, goals, practices, and curriculum.

A third challenge lies in defining our relationship to the synagogues. Certainly RAVSAK schools are partners with the synagogues; a school can do only so much to educate its children to be literate in the language of the Jewish community. Our goal is to educate David to feel comfortable in any synagogue in our city, but he must attend a synagogue to use and reinforce what he has learned. The home, synagogue, and school are partners in David's Jewish education, and his Jewish identity will come from all three. The school must be sensitive, as well to support the synagogues and publicize their functions equally, and to welcome families from them all.

Our schools must define their place in the Jewish community. How can we ensure that the school truly reflects the flavor of its community? To what extent should our children participate in community events, and how important is it for us to bring community leaders to our schools to visit? Finally, what responsibility does the community have to fund RAVSAK schools? Each school must work within its community to answer these difficult questions.

A fifth challenge facing RAVSAK schools is finding qualified staff. Our teachers must have the same qualities all schools expect: they should be knowledgeable and proficient in the subjects they teach; they should be able to transmit that knowledge in exciting and stimulating ways. In addition, our teachers must believe in our philosophy of Judaism: they must be able to teach Judaism pluralistically; they must be able to help the students in their

search for their Jewish identities; they must be role models who feel comfortable with their own expression of Judaism. It is wonderful for children to be exposed to varied role models. RAVSAK schools must strive to find teachers who are both comfortable with their own choices as Jews, and who believe that there are many authentic and valid expressions for Jewish living.

"We honor the Shabbat with a special family dinner each Friday night. I love watching the candles," Karen told her classmates. "Sometimes after dinner we go to services. Then we spend Saturday together as a family. We always do something fun, like going to the zoo or park. It's special." The Friday afternoon discussion focused on how different Jewish families observe Shabbat, and why. It was almost time for Kabbalat Shabbat services when Avi finished explaining: "... so we spend most of Saturday at synagogue. I get to see all my friends at the Oneg after services. We try never to drive on Shabbat unless the weather's real bad. Our Shabbat is so different from the rest of the week. I like it!"

The students picked up their siddurim and headed for the door. Perhaps they could explain what Jewish pluralism was all about; maybe they could talk about the benefit of studying Judaism alongside children whose Jewish practices and philosophies are very different from their own. But as they walked down the hall, and joined with other classes to welcome Shabbat as a school, the strongest statement they could make contained no words. None were needed. The students belonged to different synagogues; their parents practiced Judaism in different ways. But to each other, they were not Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Orthodox Jews. They were simply Jews, and they were friends. And they sang L'kha Dodi together. ■