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23 October 1989 Meeting. Minutes and "Action Plan",
October 1989.

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MINUTES
COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA
OCTOBER 23, 1989
AT UJA/FEDERATION OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES
NEW YORK CITY
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Attendance

Commissioners: Morton L. Mandel, Chair, David Arnow, Jack Bieler, Charles Bronfman, John Colman, Maurice Corson, Lester Crown, David Dubin, Joshua Elkin, Eli Evans, Arthur Green, Robert Hiller, David Hirschhorn, Carol Ingall, Norman Lamm, Sara Lee, Matthew Maryles, Florence Melton, Lester Pollack, Esther Leah Ritz, Harriet Rosenthal, Alvin Schiff, Ismar Schorsch, Bennett Yanowitz

Policy Advisors and Staff: Seymour Fox, Mark Gurvis, Annette Hochstein, Stephen Hoffman, Martin Kraar, Virginia Levi, Ken Myers, Joseph Reimer, Arthur Rotman, Herman Stein, Jonathan Woocher, Henry Zucker

Guests: Susan Crown, Kathleen Hat

I. Introductory Remarks

Mr. Mandel called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. He welcomed participants and introduced first-time attendees and guests: Susan Crown, President, The Arie and Ida Crown Memorial; Mark Gurvis, Assistant Planning Director of Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland; Kathleen Hat, Administrator of Charitable Contributions of the Riklis Family Foundation; Martin Kraar, CJF Executive Director-elect; Ken Myers, public relations consultant.

Mr. Mandel reported that the purpose of this fourth Commission meeting was to review a proposed action plan and to elicit reactions and commissioner recommendations regarding implementation. An action plan and a final report reflecting Commission findings and recommendations are the two anticipated major outcomes of the Commission. Hopefully, this will help set the agenda for Jewish education in the next decade.

Mr. Mandel reported that a plan for outreach to the significant constituencies is under way. Commission representatives have met with planners and executives of key community federations and are scheduled to meet with federation presidents and executives at the November meetings of the CJF's General Assembly. Mr. Mandel addressed hundreds of Jewish educators at the National CAJE Conference in Seattle in August. Meetings have been held with the presidents of three seminaries as a first step in establishing a fuller dialogue with the denominations.

Mr. Mandel stated that implementation of the recommendations of the Commission will require considerable additional funding. It is anticipated that federations will be a significant long-term source of funding. A major potential source of early support can be private foundations. Meetings will be held with representatives of several foundations to ascertain their willingness to participate and their areas of interest.

II. Review of Proposed Action Plan

Annette Hochstein, consultant to the Commission, briefly summarized the proposed action plan. The proposed plan for action includes seven elements.

- A. Mobilize the community for implementation and change by recruiting more top leadership to work for Jewish education, improving community structures, and generating significant additional funding.
- B. Develop strategies for building the profession of Jewish education, including increasing the capacity of training programs and finding improved methods of recruitment and retention.
- C. Establish Community Action Sites in which to implement new ideas, test practices which have been identified as effective, and explore innovations in personnel and community support.
- D. Initiate continental strategies to deal with issues such as training, salaries, research and recruitment to complement local efforts.
- E. Develop an agenda for dealing with the programmatic options by offering a general overview of the needs, problems, scope, and key opportunities for intervention.
- F. Build a research capability to support informed decisions for Jewish education in North America.
- G. Design a mechanism for implementation to accomplish the following:
 1. Facilitate the establishment of Community Action Sites,
 2. Serve as a broker between continental and local expertise,
 3. Encourage foundations to support innovation and experimentation,
 4. Facilitate the implementation of continental strategies,
 5. Assist in developing approaches to the programmatic options,
 6. Develop a research capability,
 7. Report annually on the progress of the mechanism.

III. General Discussion

The group was asked to comment on the proposed action plan and whether the elements identified should be the major components of the plan.

Initial discussion centered on the issue of best practices and how they could be introduced into the action plan. Several suggestions were considered.

There was an extensive discussion on research and its importance to the action plan and the implementation mechanism. In a special presentation to the group in which he shared his ideas about research, David Hirschhorn emphasized the need for research and evaluation and their importance in helping the North American community decide how to invest its energy and resources more effectively. It was noted that Community Action Sites provide us with an opportunity to experiment with current practices and, through evaluation and assessment, to improve upon them.

Representatives of JWB, CJF, and JESNA, three organizations with which we are cooperating and collaborating, were asked to comment on the extent of their involvement in the work of the Commission.

- A. CJF is finding that Jewish education is rising on the agenda of many communities. Already, 13 local communities are engaged in serious efforts to study and upgrade Jewish education. Jewish community center leaders and other local community leaders are working together in varying degrees in conducting these studies. For CJF the Commission has come along at the right time and is a source of major encouragement to local federations.
- B. JWB has been working closely with local JCC's to develop programs and to train staff and lay leadership for new intensive approaches to Jewish education and Jewish continuity. JWB expects to be very involved in Commission implementation activities.
- C. JESNA, as the continental educational arm of the organized Jewish community, helps to implement local Jewish education agendas. It works directly with federations and often serves as a bridge between federations and local educational organizations within a community. Its goal is to provide continental leadership. JESNA also expects to be very involved in implementing Commission recommendations.

Implementation Mechanism

The Commission itself is envisioned as a major step in an ongoing process. What has emerged is the need for a mechanism to carry out the recommendations of the Commission.

It was suggested that this mechanism would play an important role in facilitating and encouraging communities to participate in the implementation of the Commission's findings. It was reported that the Commission has already been approached by several communities which have expressed an interest in participating in our work as possible Community Action Sites.

It was suggested that activities undertaken in Community Action Sites should be carefully monitored and evaluated in order to permit adaptation and replication in other communities.

It was suggested that at the next meeting of the Commission we review several potential models for the mechanism for implementation and Community Action Sites.

Discussion Groups

Discussion continued in three smaller groups. Reports of these group discussions were presented to the full Commission.

A. Group A - Charles R. Bronfman, Chair; Bennett Yanowitz, Co-Chair

Mr. Bronfman reported the following points in summarizing the discussion of Group A.

1. In order to attract more talented educators to the field, they need to be assured of a career path and a sense of empowerment and impact.
2. Ideas often will be generated and action initiated at the local level. Implementation and dissemination should be the responsibility of continental bodies.
3. One role of the implementation mechanism might be to develop and promote an annotated bibliography on curriculum and methods for Jewish education.
4. The Commission should consider projects initiated by denominations, some of which might be used by other denominations.
5. We need a clear definition of Community Action Sites. A process for evaluating Community Action Sites will be important and should be in place from the beginning.
6. Implementation might be handled by more than one organization. Whether the Commission or some other organization should be responsible for raising additional funds remains an open question.

B. Group B - Lester Crown, Chair; Lester Pollack, Co-Chair

Henry L. Zucker was asked to report for this group and reported that there was agreement on the need for an implementation mechanism--a small new organization with a high degree of autonomy. This organization would work with Community Action Sites on problems of personnel and community/financing, and would also work with other continental bodies. It would help communities and funding organizations to decide what to do with appropriate programmatic options and help create conditions within each community where leadership believes that Jewish education is a major issue.

Financing could be developed through the support of family foundations during the first five to ten years and could be sought from federations for the long-term. The group expressed optimism about attracting substantial sums for creative new work.

C. Group C - Ester Leah Ritz, Chair; John Colman, Co-Chair

Mrs. Ritz reported that the seven elements of the action plan need not be ranked, but together represent a systematic approach. The Community Action Site concept offers the opportunity to mobilize leadership to develop programs for other communities, and to undertake evaluative research. Interaction with continental bodies is essential.

Reference was made to a concern voiced about creating a new mechanism and about the validity of the Community Action Site as the appropriate approach. However, the group favored both of these concepts. It was suggested that the Community Action Site might take on a different character in each community, appropriate to that community's needs.

The implementation mechanism should work on the continental level for the recruitment of senior personnel, to carry resources from one community to another, to take advantage of training opportunities in Israel, and to provide resources and evaluation.

Jewish education does not now attract enough top leadership. An outcome of this Commission will be to convey a sense of importance which will encourage more top leaders to become active in the field.

Jewish educators are not presently dealing effectively enough with lay leadership. This should be addressed as we work to build the profession.

D. General Discussion

It was suggested that the time has come to move from the theoretical to the specific. It was suggested that the implementation mechanism must balance continental and local interests. A continental body can

help to support local programs and organizations by providing supplemental funding and guidance. Local communities should be consulted on what a continental body should provide for them.

In an effort to involve top lay leadership, it was suggested that an ongoing forum be established for continuous education and upgrading of lay leaders.

In summarizing, the chair noted that research is an important element of the implementation mechanism, reflecting our concern for measurement, evaluation, and accountability. He noted further that careful planning must be balanced with learning through experience and suggested that it is time to prepare final recommendations for action.

IV. D'var Torah

The meeting concluded with an inspirational D'var Torah delivered by Rabbi Arthur Green, President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

10/20/89

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

OCTOBER 23, 1989

- I. 10:00 to 10:30 A.M.: PLENARY I, INTRODUCTORY REMARKS - MLM
 - A. Welcome participants and guests. First time attendees include:
 - Susan Crown - guest (ask Lester Crown to introduce her)
 - Mark Gurvis - assistant planning director of Cleveland Federation;
deeply involved in Cleveland's Commission on Jewish Education,
and on loan to Commission staff part-time
 - Kathleen Hat - Executive of Riklis Foundation program
 - Martin Kraar - CJF executive director-elect; new senior policy
advisor
 - Ken Myers - freelance writer, working on public relations
 - B. Review participants' books and schedule for the day:
 1. 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. -- Introductory presentation.
 2. 10:30 to 12:15 p.m. -- Full group discussion.
 3. 12:15 to 2:15 p.m. -- Small group discussions including lunch.
 4. 2:15 to 4:00 p.m. -- Full group discussion.
 - C. Chairman's Comments (attached)

- II. 10:30 to 12:15 P.M.; PLENARY DISCUSSION - You may want to refer to discussion guide in front pocket of factbooks.

Staff available to answer questions and give additional input.

David Hirschhorn has agreed to talk about research, accountability, and evaluation.

[The following topics may warrant responses and minor presentations:

Community/Funding (HLZ)

Personnel (SF)

Programmatic options (SF, AH, JR)

Community action sites (SF)

Research (AH)

The mechanism for implementation (SF, AH)].

[At 11:45 a.m. direct the discussion to the implementation mechanism if the Commission has not yet reached that subject.]

- III. 12:15 to 2:15 P.M.; SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (INCLUDING LUNCH)

A. Continuation of discussion on the Action Plan, using the discussion guide.

B. Divide the commissioners into three groups with chair, co-chair and two staff people.

1. Group A - Conference Room A

Charles Bronfman, chair

Bennett Yanowitz, co-chair

Seymour Fox and Joe Reimer, staff

2. Group B - Conference Room B

Lester Crown, chair

Lester Pollack, co-chair

Henry Zucker and Jonathan Woocher, staff

3. Group C - Weiler Room

Esther Leah Ritz, chair

John Colman, co-chair

Annette Hochstein and Art Rotman, staff

IV. 2:15 to 4:00 P.M.: PLENARY 2

A. Mention outreach. (See Chairman's Comments)

B. Report of group discussions. (10 minutes each)

C. Discussion of reports.

D. Summary--MLM

1. A continuing role for the Commission ensuring the implementation of its ideas. (Desired outcomes for this meeting are endorsement and go-ahead on the mechanism for implementation and endorsement of the Action Plan.)

 2. Our February 14, 1990 meeting, (at the same time and place) will focus on specific recommendations in the areas of community/financing, personnel, and programmatic options.
- E. D'var Torah--Rabbi Arthur Green, President, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

10/20/89

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

OCTOBER 23, 1989

I. Update on progress since the June meeting

- A. This meeting - moving from discussion and research phase to action phase.
- B. We have begun to reach out to federations, foundations, educators, local commissions, denominations. More on this later.

II. Between now and June

- A. We can focus on action.
- B. We look forward to two major outcomes from the Commission process--a Commission report, and an Action Plan.
 - 1. The Commission report will overview the current state of the field, make recommendations on community and financing, personnel, and programmatic areas. Our vision for the future. Next meeting, February 14, will focus on the suggested recommendations.
 - 2. The Action Plan represents means through which we implement our recommendations. The focus of today's meeting.

3. Implementation is something we integrate into the planning phase. Next eight months, complete our report and recommendations, simultaneously be doing all we can to begin implementation. Outreach work, represents first steps of implementation.

III. Today's Agenda

- A. Discussion of proposed Action Plan includes suggestions for implementation. Some of you will recognize your suggestions in this approach.

B. Action steps

1. Mobilize the community: Encourage more top leadership to work for Jewish education; improve community structures that deal with Jewish education; generate significant additional funding.
2. Build the profession of Jewish education: improve training opportunities; find improved ways of recruitment and retention.
3. Community Action Sites: Demonstrate what happens when you implement the best programs in Jewish education with the necessary personnel and community support.
4. Continental strategies--Initiate continental strategies on problems, in addition to what can be done at the local level.

5. Programmatic options: Deal with the programmatic options, offer a general overview of the needs, problems, and scope, and identify the key opportunities for intervention.
6. Research: Improve the research base to enable us to make intelligent decisions about Jewish education.

C. Implementation mechanism--An implementation mechanism could serve many functions:

1. Assist in establishment of several community action sites.
2. Assist in addressing programmatic options.
3. Initiate continental strategies on problems that go beyond what can be done solely at the local level.
4. Act as the broker between national and local resources.
5. Gather data necessary for implementation.
6. Prepare annual progress reports on implementation. In developing action plan, research was necessary about salaries; personnel; cost of education; effectiveness of programs. Limited research program put in place.

D. Discussion today: Are these the major elements of an action plan?

Focus on what kind of implementation mechanism will work best, avoid adding a large new bureaucratic structure, envision a small body that might broker between existing resources, between local institutions and communities and national players. How would it relate to national organizations, to denominations, to communities? Would it be an independent, new organization, or be associated with an existing organization?

E. Secure adequate funding - My initial thinking:

1. Long-term financial needs will have to be met by the community--by the federations. However, to get a quick start, and test new ideas, we will need substantial funds from individuals, foundations, and endowment funds, the major sources of start-up funds while the federations are gearing up to provide ongoing funding.
2. We have begun to discuss this opportunity with some individuals. Preliminary response is encouraging.
3. Cleveland local commission produced a plan for dealing with Jewish education. Several families (including Ratner) agreed to participate in the necessary funding while the Federation builds up its funding participation over the next few years. Mandel too is participating in the local funding, and is prepared to participate in national effort.

4. Discussion. We will review each point of the Action Plan, item by item. What we don't cover in this initial plenary session can be covered in our small group discussions.

IV. Afternoon Discussion (2:15 p.m.)

A. Outreach

1. Met twice with planners of key federations.
2. Had informal meeting with key federation executives, scheduled General Assembly meeting with large group of federation presidents and executives.
3. Addressed hundreds of Jewish educators at CAJE conference.
4. Contact with several local commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity.
5. Denominational movements. Plan several meetings this winter.

B. Group Reports (10 minutes each)

[Follow Chairman's Notes]

Commission on Jewish Education in North America

Meeting of October 23, 1989

The Action Plan

Guide for Discussion

- A. The Action Plan includes seven elements. Are these the major elements? What else should be included?
- B. Within each element, what should be emphasized?

	<u>Reference to Background Materials</u>
<u>Action Plan: Elements 1 to 7</u>	
1. <u>Mobilize the community</u> : Encourage more top leadership to work for Jewish education; develop and improve community structures that deal with Jewish education and serve as support systems; generate significant additional funding.	Page 3, 4
2. <u>Build the profession of Jewish education</u> : Attract more talented people to the field; increase salaries and benefits; improve training opportunities; develop more and new full-time positions; find new and improved ways of recruitment and retention.	Page 4, 5
3. <u>Community Action Sites</u> : Demonstrate in one or more communities what happens when you implement the best programs and ideas for Jewish education with the necessary personnel and community support and financing.	Page 5, 6
4. <u>Continental strategies</u> : Jewish education must also be developed on the continental level and in Israel. Training and recruitment are among the elements that will require action on the continental level.	Page 6
5. <u>Programmatic options</u> : Deal with the programmatic options, as commissioners have urged. Some can be acted upon almost immediately if we mobilize the appropriate brain power and financial support. For each option we would offer a general overview of the needs, problems, and scope, and identify the key opportunities for intervention.	Page 6, 7

Reference to
Background
Materials

6. Research: Improve the research base to enable us to make informed decisions in the area of Jewish education. In the process of commissioning the limited research we needed for our process, we have identified many items that belong on a longer term research agenda. This could serve as the beginning of a broad research agenda for the North American Jewish community. Page 7,
Appendix
7. Implementation mechanism: The seventh point of the Action Plan is the development of an implementation mechanism. Commissioners have pointed out that some mechanism will be needed to facilitate the implementation of findings and recommendations. Therefore, we suggest designing a mechanism for implementation. It could serve many functions. Page 7, 8
- a. Facilitate and assist the establishment of several Community Action Sites.
 - b. Assist in planning for the development and implementation of programmatic options.
 - c. Initiate and facilitate the implementation of continental strategies.
 - d. Act as the broker between national and local resources.
 - e. Gather data and undertake the analysis necessary for implementation, or fund appropriate agencies or institutions to undertake such assignments.
 - f. Prepare annual progress reports on the implementation of all of these items.