**MS-831: Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980–2008.**
Series B: Commission on Jewish Education in North America (CJENA). 1980–1993.
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Background papers and "Design Document to Establish the Commission on Jewish Education in North America", 1988-1990.



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COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

Background Materials

# DESIGN DOCUMENT

TO ESTABLISH

THE

# COMMISSION

# ON

# JEWISH EDUCATION

# IN NORTH AMERICA

# INTRODUCTION

The ties that help connect Jews to a meaningful Jewish life now, and similarly help ensure Jewish identity and continuity for our children, face grave challenges. Our society is dynamic and open. It offers countless ways to define and express personal identity. Identification with a community, a tradition, a set of values is now a matter of choice, not necessity. Amid the competing demands and opportunities, what binds an individual to Jewish life? How much of our Jewish heritage will be transmitted to future generations?

These questions challenge the North American Jewish community. It is time to respond with enthusiasm and energy and with the best tool at our disposal — Jewish Education. The Mandel Associated Foundations, in cooperation with the Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) and the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), and in collaboration with the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), propose an initiative to explore and recommend significant new support for Jewish Education.

The Mandel Associated Foundations are prepared both to commit their own resources to this cause and to encourage others to support the implementation of projects designed to bring a new vibrancy to Jewish Education.

It should be clear at the outset that Jewish education includes not only classroom instruction but all the settings in which learning takes place — within the family circle, at camps and community centers, through print and electronic media, and in encounters with Israel. Many of these settings do not have the personnel, the programs, the content and the strategies needed to meet the challenge of educating Jews in our open society.

The Mandel Associated Foundations are prepared to support the formation of a national Commission to involve the North American Jewish community in a policy-oriented study of Jewish education in a variety of settings. This study will recommend practical steps and interventions for the improvement of Jewish education.

The Mandel Associated Foundations are supporting foundations of the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland. They were established in 1982 by Jack N. and Lilyan Mandel, Joseph C. and Florence Mandel, and Morton L. and Barbara Mandel as a primary means of handling their philanthropic interests.

JWB, the Association of Jewish Community Centers and YM-YWHAs, is the leadership body for the North American network of JCCs and Ys. JWB serves the needs of individual Jewish Community Centers, and it helps to build, strengthen and sustain the collective Center movement through a broad range of direct and indirect services, institutes, consultations and Jewish experiences, and by identifying and projecting movement-wide directions, issues and priorities.

JESNA is the organized Jewish community's planning, service and coordinating agency for Jewish education. It works directly with local federations and the agencies and institutions they create and support to deliver educational services.

## THE CHALLENGE: JEWISH CONTINUITY

Jewish continuity — the creative vitality of the Jewish people, its religion, culture, values and traditions — is an issue of primary importance to the American Jewish community. The central challenge is improving the means by which the Jewish community promotes an active commitment to Jewish identity.

In our society, connections to and expressions of Jewish identity are highly individual. Some Jews are linked by traditional religious practice, some through participation in communal organizations. Others are involved through Israel, Soviet Jewry or memories of the Holocaust. For many, association with other Jews is an important mode of participation.

Our efforts on behalf of Jewish continuity must strengthen as many of these links in as many American Jews as possible. It is a substantial challenge. Because Jewish identification is a matter of choice today, we must provide a persuasive rationale for why commitment and involvement are important. We are convinced that, as a people, we have the vision and the resourcefulness to accomplish this aim.

## A KEY: EDUCATION

The Trustees of the Mandel Associated Foundations, in cooperation with JWB and JESNA, have chosen to focus on Jewish education as a potent resource for transmitting the living values of our culture.

As the Jewish community's primary vehicle for responding to the questions of "why" and "how" to be Jewish, education is our best tool for helping Jews to develop and sustain a commitment to active Jewish self-expression, both individually and communally. Jewish education also has the capacity to reach into every aspect and stage of Jewish life — from children to senior citizens, from individuals to families, in schools, community centers, synagogues, camps, nursing homes and child care centers.

### Jewish Education Today

Jewish education is conducted throughout North America in a variety of settings in and outside the classroom. More than 30,000 people are employed in Jewish education today. These include teachers, school directors, teacher trainers, specialists, educational planners, and professors of education as well as personnel in community centers, camps and retreat centers. Most Jewish children receive some Jewish education at some point in their lives. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent annually on Jewish education. The field of Jewish education is a large enterprise in the North American Jewish community.

Still, Jewish education throughout North America suffers from a shortage of qualified, well-trained educators. The few institutions which train Jewish educators have fewer students than at any time in the recent past. Professional standards, meaningful positions, adequate salaries and compensation packages, career advancement possibilities and professional status are not adequately associated with the field of Jewish education. It is difficult to recruit and retain young men and women to the field.

The Jewish community has created notable successes in the last sixty years in such areas as philanthropy, social services, defense and support for Israel. It is time to make the enterprise of Jewish education one of the success stories of modern Jewish life. Now is the time to turn the concern of the Jewish community toward creating a Jewish educational system which can in all its varieties help to insure the survival of the Jewish people.

### The Potential for Tomorrow

We believe that it is possible to establish an educational environment that will be responsive to the current realities of Jewish life in America. To do this, the organized Jewish community must be shown why it should invest substantial new resources of thought, energy and money.

In fact, there are positive elements in place and there is great potential for improvement. Today, Jewish education appears on the agendas of major Jewish forums. Key community organizations and leaders are already increasing time and resources devoted to Jewish education. Jewish community federations, individual philanthropists and Jewish-sponsored foundations appear ready to increase financial support for initiatives that can have a positive impact on the range and quality of Jewish education.

The critical question is: What initiatives will be meaningful?

We propose an approach that will help guide the community toward an optimum application of resources to the needs of Jewish education.

## A COOPERATIVE EFFORT

### The Purpose

Emerging consensus on the importance of Jewish education makes this an auspicious time for a catalyst to identify the issues, point to practical opportunities for improvement, and engage key people and institutions in positive action. The catalyst: a North American Commission of community leaders, outstanding educators, and other professionals. Commission members are chosen **ad personam**, for their competence, commitment to Jewish values, influence and institutional connections.

Such a Commission will have a fourfold mission:

1. to review the field of Jewish education in the context of contemporary Jewish life
2. to recommend practical policies that will set clear directions for Jewish education
3. to develop plans and programs for the implementation of these policies

4. to stimulate significant financial commitments and engage committed individuals and institutions in collaborative, communal action.

While the Commission will initiate the study, it will seek to make it a participatory venture. Jewish continuity is a communal challenge. It can best be met through a communal effort expressing the interests and practical needs of involved institutions and individuals.

Thus, an important part of the Commission's initiative will be to involve opinion makers, community leaders, scholars and educators as active participants in all stages of its work, including the implementation of its recommendations.

The ultimate purpose of the Commission is to offer concrete recommendations for strengthening Jewish education in all its forms and settings.

Undoubtedly the Commission's recommendations will require the investment of significant financial support. As noted at the outset, the Mandel Associated Foundations are prepared to commit their own resources. They are also ready to encourage others to support the implementation of meritorious projects and programs proposed by the Commission.

## THE STUDY: CREATING CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

### The Work

The Commission will meet several times over a period of 18 to 24 months. It will direct the activities of a Commission director and appropriate supporting staff, whose responsibilities will include preparing background papers and reports, gathering and organizing data, consulting with contributing scholars, educators and policymakers, and coordinating the ongoing participation of important Jewish publics.

### The Focus: People and Institutions

A study undertaken for the purpose of positive change begins with a fundamental question: Who holds the keys to change? It is a premise of this enterprise that change can best be achieved through a partnership of educators and communal leadership committed to invigorating existing institutions and suggesting new ideas and new operational modes.

One objective of the Commission study should be an examination of what Jewish communities and educational institutions must do to professionalize Jewish education and to attract, inspire, encourage and train professionals.

The Commission study may address these issues, among others:

1. **Professional opportunities in Jewish education.** A profession is characterized by formalized standards of knowledge and training, a code of ethics, institutionalized forms of collegiality, and paths for advancement. We need to look at how these aspects of Jewish education can be developed to professionalize our educational services.
2. **The recruitment and retention of qualified educators.** Such factors as low status, low salary and limited potential for advancement have a twofold effect on a profession: they deter entry and encourage attrition. We need to examine these factors in light of the small pool of interested talent Jewish education now attracts. We also need to explore the potential for making more effective use of our feeder system — youth movements, camps, community organizations.
3. **The education of educators.** Today North American institutions graduate fewer than 100 Jewish educators annually. We need to look at how to fill the demand for qualified people in both existing and emerging positions, and to provide continuing professional education.
4. **Historical perspective and current structures of Jewish educational institutions.** We need to begin with an understanding of the existing structures. A look at the past can help us to assess current institutions and their needs and guide us in establishing any new structures that might be needed to respond to today's needs.

## TOWARD TOMORROW

Experience has shown that North American Jews can cooperate to make positive things happen. Today we know that something **must** happen if we are to transmit the riches of Jewish experience to future generations.

We now have established organizations — service, educational and philanthropic — with energetic leaders who are intensely interested in the question of Jewish continuity. We have, in Jewish education, a tradition of involvement with the why and how of Jewish life.

This initiative invites a communal venture: the deliberate shaping of new connections between individuals and the community of Jewish experience. Thinking and acting together, we can make Jewish education a sustaining force for Jewish life, as rich and dynamic as the society in which it exists.

Prepared by the Mandel Associated Foundations, in cooperation with JWB and JESNA and in collaboration with CJF.
1750 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115
May 1988

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA
Meeting of August 1, 1988

The Interview with Commission Members
A Selection

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America is composed of 44 individuals representing a wide range of perspectives. Prior to this meeting the Commission staff interviewed almost all of the commissioners to help build the agenda of the first Commission meeting. What follows is a selection of the points of view expressed by the commissioners. Some of the statements were expressed by many or all of the commissioners, while others represent the perspective of a few. Some of the views expressed complement each other while others may be contradictory.

The major issues raised appear to cluster around six topics:

1. The people who educate
2. The clients of education
3. The settings of education
4. The methods of education
5. The economics of education
6. The community: leadership and structures

## I. The People Who Educate

A. The shortage of appropriate, qualified people to educate children, youth and adults is the most important issue for our Commission to address.

B. The personnel of Jewish education, in formal and informal settings, their recruitment, their training, their retention, is the key factor affecting the quality of Jewish education. It is also a crucial factor in determining the number of participants in Jewish education.

C. There is a need to build the profession of Jewish education and to develop a greater sense of professionalism in the field.

D. Increased salaries and fringe benefits are necessary. They will raise the status of education and facilitate the recruitment of qualified people.

E. Salary is important, but the status, the empowerment, the personal growth and advancement of the educator are even more important.

F. It is necessary to undertake a concerted, well-planned effort to recruit personnel to the field.

G. The education of educators is a high priority. It evokes some interesting differences of opinion:

1. Viewpoint I - We should invest heavily in training institutions. The building of new and different programs should also be considered.

2. Viewpoint II - The most effective kind of training takes place on-the-job, through apprenticeships, mentorships and sabbaticals of various forms.

3. Viewpoint III - The most practical approach is to build centers for thinking and research. Educational reform is most effective when it moves from the top down. Martin Buber's contribution to adult Jewish education in Germany, or John Dewey's contribution to education in America, demonstrate that profound ideas are the way to attract the people we need, are the fastest and most effective way to change the image of the field of Jewish education and to create a profession.

## II. The Clients of Education

Many comments and suggestions concern the participants - young and old - who can or do partake of Jewish education:

Who are they?
What do they need?
What do they want?

A. Three points of view were expressed as to whom we should try to attract and serve:

1. We must change our approach to our clients and actively reach out to the less affiliated. We must market our product more effectively and offer the kind of variety that will attract those that are not currently involved.

2. We must improve the quality of programs: outreach will resolve itself when the quality of Jewish education is improved. Good programs will attract larger numbers of students to Jewish education.

3. The most sound investment is in the strengthening and improving of education for the committed. This point of view claims that they are our most important population.

B. Our knowledge base about the clients of education is minimal, at best, and our intuitions may even be misleading. We simply do not seem to know enough about the Jews of North America to make informed decisions.

III. The Settings of Education

Issues were raised about the many forms of formal and informal education: Which forms justify the greatest investment? What is most in need of qualitative improvement? What has the greatest potential?

A. Informal education offers great opportunities: the community center, the arts, Israel experience programs, summer camping, youth movements and youth groups are means for reaching many more clients than are currently involved and for impacting on the lives of those that are already participating.

B. Ways should be found of combining forces between formal and informal settings to create new forms of education.

C. A massive investment of energy, thought and resources should be made in day-school education. The day school offers the most nearly complete Jewish educational environment; the schools can and will grow if they are improved and properly marketed, and if tuition is within the reach of more parents.

On the other hand, the impact of day schools for students coming from homes that do not support the values and goals of these institutions is not clear.

The number of all day high schools should be increased. Enrollment drops dramatically, precisely at the time when the values of the young person are particularly open to influence.

D. Differences of opinion were expressed about the supplementary school:

1. Though the supplementary school serves the vast majority of our young people participating in formal Jewish education, it is not a successful educational enterprise and may not be salvageable.

2. The supplementary school is where the clients are. Therefore, we must engage in serious efforts to improve it.

E. The ideas, views, suggestions expressed span the age continuum from early childhood through adult education.

1. Early Childhood Education and Day Care

This area has great potential. The proponents of formal and informal education join forces to argue that the large number of children and the enormous potential for educational impact converge to make this area worthy of serious attention. However, the personnel for early childhood education, their training and salaries represent a very serious challenge.

2. The Israel Experience

Educational experiences in Israel have a significant impact on young people. Some commissioners believe this to be true for loosely structured programs, summer touring, camping. Others believe structured programs at universities, yeshivot or for day schools are more effective. The issue of ensuring program quality and the question of subsidies were raised.

3. The College Campus and the University

Approximately eighty-five percent of all Jewish young people attend colleges and universities. Educational intervention on the campus is very important because this may be our last opportunity to educate. The academic climate that values universalism over particularism forces difficult dilemmas upon our young people.

4. Adult Education - Family Education

The family environment and the education of adults is of considerable importance, particularly if we want to succeed in the education of children. Though there are encouraging developments in this area, this form of education is still underdeveloped.

## IV. The Methods of Education

Energy should be devoted to the various methods used in different forms of education. These include methods for the teaching of Hebrew, history and contemporary Jewish life. A serious effort should be made at curriculum reform that would emphasize the teaching of values, the attachment to the Jewish people and to Israel. We should invest systematically in the creative use of the media and computers for Jewish education.

## V. The Economics of Education

A. We have very sketchy data about present expenditures for Jewish education by the North American Jewish community.

B. This area is important because the reform of education will cost money, whether it be for teacher salaries, the development of training institutions, or on-the-job training.

C. The high cost of tuition, particularly for day schools, for the Israel experience, and for camping is a stumbling block to increased participation.

D. Improved educational facilities are needed. For example, we need good, up-to-date laboratories in the sciences. We need facilities for computer education and for physical education.

E. There is a need for venture capital to encourage new and creative ideas.

VI. The Community: Leadership and Structures

A. The recruitment of a cadre of community leaders to the cause of Jewish education is viewed as a high priority. The community leaders are one of the key forces for change. They will have to be informed as to the realities and problems of Jewish education and assume the key positions where policy is determined.

B. The structures that support and deliver the services of Jewish education must be strengthened to become more effective in implementing change and reform.

C. The question was raised as to whether the current structures are appropriate. It was suggested that new structures, new mechanisms, consortia between existing institutions should be developed - for example, between the federations that can fund, the denominations that deliver services and the community centers.

# # #

# COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

BACKGROUND MATERIALS
FOR THE MEETING OF
DECEMBER 13, 1988



Convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations,
JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF.

November 25, 1988

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Commission on Jewish Education was established with the assumption that its members could **suggest the ideas that would make it possible for Jewish education to play a significant role in ensuring a meaningful Jewish continuity.**

2. The Commissioners suggested ideas, plans and programs that may make it possible for Jewish education to fulfill this function. These ideas were presented in **individual interviews, at the first meeting of the Commission and in written and oral communications.**

3. The Commissioners suggested more ideas than any one commission could undertake. They could easily form the agenda for Jewish education in North America for several decades.

4. To deal with this wealth of ideas, the staff was instructed **to develop methods** to help the Commission **narrow its focus and agree upon an agenda for study and action.** This work was done between August and November 1988 in consultation with the Commissioners and other experts.

5. The method developed involves the following:

a. The Commissioners' suggestions were formulated into **a list of 26 options** for study and action (page 3).

b. The implications of each option — **what is involved** in dealing with any one of them — were studied (page 4).

c. Criteria were generated to **assess the options.** These allow us to view each option in terms of the following questions (page 5):

- How important is the option to the field?
- How feasible is the option?
- How significant an impact will it have?
- How much will it cost?
- How much time will it take to implement?

6. A preliminary assessment disclosed that many options offer great opportunities for improvement in the field of Jewish education. The question then arose **how to choose among the many outstanding suggestions.**

7. Following the analysis of each of the options, they were organized into broad categories: **programmatic options** and **enabling options** (page 8-9).

8. Programmatic options approach Jewish education through a particular cut into the field, either through **age groups, institutions or programs** (e.g. college age group; supplementary schools; Israel Experience programs).

9. Enabling options approach Jewish education through interventions that are tools or facilitators - they **serve many of the other options** and could be viewed as means (e.g. curriculum, personnel).

10. These two categories were further analyzed and these findings emerge from the analysis:

A. **Most of the programmatic options offer significant opportunities** for improvement in Jewish education. There are compelling reasons to undertake many of them: all population groups are important; all settings are important. On the other hand, there is no one option that is clearly an indispensable first step — a programmatic option from which we must begin. In fact, at this stage of the analysis, there are **no tools that allow us to rank them or to choose among them.**

B. What characterizes the enabling options is that **almost all the other options need them or can benefit from them.** Upon analysis, we find that **three enabling options emerge** as pre-conditions to any across-the-board improvements in Jewish education. We find that almost all the options require a heavy investment in **personnel**; that they all require additional **community support**; and that most need substantial **additional funding.** These options — dealing with the shortage of qualified personnel, dealing with the community as a major agent for change, and generating additional funding - are also inter-dependent. Dedicated and qualified personnel is likely to affect the attitude of community leaders. On the other hand, if the community ranks education high on its list of priorities, more outstanding personnel is likely to be attracted to the field.

11. The interrelationship of these options and the dependence of other options on them suggest that they may be the way to affect the field of Jewish education in a significant, across-the-board manner.

12. These are the issues that are on the agenda for the next meeting. The Commission will decide how to proceed.

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November 25, 1988

# THE COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

## BACKGROUND MATERIALS

## FOR THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 13, 1988

These documents are meant to serve as background materials for the second meeting of the Commission on Jewish education in North America.

Their purpose is to facilitate the work of the Commission as it decides what areas of Jewish education to select and focus its attention upon.

## I. BACKGROUND

The Commission was established to deal with the problem of ensuring a meaningful Jewish continuity through Jewish education for the Jews of North America. It was initiated by the Mandel Associated Foundations as a partnership between the communal and the private sector. The partners – M.A.F., in cooperation with JWB and JESNA, and in collaboration with CJF – invited forty six distinguished community leaders, educators, scholars, rabbis and foundation leaders to join the Commission.

In preparation for the first meeting of the Commission, the Commissioners were interviewed to learn of their views on the problems and opportunities facing Jewish education.

At the first meeting the Commissioners suggested a large number of important ideas that could serve as the agenda for the work of the Commission. A rich discussion ensued, around the following major themes:

- The people who educate
- The clients of education
- The settings of education
- The methods of education
- The economics of education
- The community: leadership and structures

At the end of the meeting and in subsequent communications (written and oral), the Commissioners urged that the **next step** be **narrowing the focus of the discussion** to a manageable number of topics. The assignment was undertaken in consultation with the Commissioners, and through a dialogue with them as well as with additional experts.

## II. METHOD OF OPERATION

The staff was asked to develop methods and materials to assist the Commissioners as they consider the implications of the many suggestions and decide which of them to study and act upon. The following steps were undertaken:

### A. FROM SUGGESTIONS TO OPTIONS

1. The Commission was chosen to **represent the best collective wisdom of the community** concerning the problems and opportunities facing Jewish education in North America. Every effort was made to ensure that the Commission would represent the interests and needs of the Jews of North America. It appears at this time that the Commission indeed fulfills this function. Nevertheless, it is necessary that this prized representativeness be ensured and that all major concerns and needs are in fact expressed. This may require that adjustments be made from time to time and that additional people be invited to join the Commission.

2. The Commissioners considered the areas of most urgent need in Jewish education and expressed their views and suggestions as to what directions – what areas of endeavour – should be selected for the work of the Commission.

They dealt with **what should be done now in Jewish education** to make it a more effective tool in the community's struggle for Jewish continuity.

These suggestions were offered in the initial interview, at the first meeting of the Commission, in letters and in conversations following the Commission meeting.

The many suggestions were then formulated as options to be considered by the Commissioners for the agenda.

### B. CHOOSING AMONG OPTIONS

1. It was evident from the very beginning that there were **too many options** (more than 26) for any one Commission to act upon. Therefore the Commission would have to **choose** among them.

**But how could a responsible choice be made among the many outstanding suggestions?**

A careful consideration of each option was required.

2. For this purpose, tools were developed to help point out what is involved in each choice.

They include:
a. Developing the **list of options** from the suggestions of the Commissioners.

b. Developing an inventory: identifying **the elements that need to be considered** when undertaking an option.

c. Compiling a **checklist or set of criteria** to assess the options.

d. **Examining the options** in light of criteria.

e. Designing **alternative possibilities for selection** by the Commission.

### a. Developing the list of options

The following options were generated from the suggestions made by Commissioners in the interviews, at the first commission meeting and in post-meeting communications.

1. To focus efforts on the **early childhood** age group.

2. To focus efforts on the **elementary school age group.**

3. To focus efforts on the **high school** age group.

4. To focus efforts on the **college age** group.

5. To focus efforts on **young adults.**

6. To focus efforts on **the family.**

7. To focus efforts on **adults.**

8. To focus efforts on the **retired** and the **elderly.**

9. To develop and improve the **supplementary school** (elementary and high school).

10. To develop and improve the **day school** (elementary and high school).

11. To develop **informal education.**

12. To develop **Israel Experience programs.**

13. To develop **integrated programs of formal and informal education.**

14. To focus efforts on the widespread acquisition of the **Hebrew language,** with special initial emphasis on the leadership of the Jewish community.

15. To develop **curriculum and methods.**

16. To develop **early childhood programs.**

17. To develop **programs for the family and adults.**

18. To develop **programs for the college population.**

19. To enhance the **use of the media and technology** (computers, video, etc.) for Jewish education.

20. To deal with **the shortage of qualified personnel** for Jewish education.

21. To deal with **the community — its leadership and its structures** — as major agents for change in any area.

22. To reduce or **eliminate tuition.**

23. To improve the **physical plant** (buildings, laboratories, gymnasia).

24. To create a **knowledge base** for Jewish education (research of various kinds: evaluations and impact studies; assessment of needs; client surveys; etc.).

25. To encourage **innovation** in Jewish education.

26. To generate significant **additional funding** for Jewish education.

27, 28... **Combinations** of the preceding options.

- **A note on the list of options:**

Some options may appear to be redundant. For example, "To focus efforts on

the early childhood age group" (option #1) and "To develop early childhood programs" (option #16) seem to be similar, as do options #2/3 and #9/10; #6/7 and #17; #4 and #18. On closer observation, this is clearly not the case. There is a significant difference between **developing programs** and considering **the needs of a whole age group.** Developing programs involves a vision of change, improvement, increase, enlargement of what already exists. Focusing on an age group involves re-examining goals and opportunities for that age group and extends the vision to include broader questions such as what kind of education is appropriate for the needs of the whole population. Such an approach invites us to take a fresh look at an entire area — both at existing programs and at creative ideas for different programs, at those who are participating as well as those who are not participating.

To illustrate the distinction, let us look at the two options that refer to early childhood. "To develop early childhood programs" (#16) would probably focus attention on enhancing programs for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and day care. "To focus efforts on the early childhood age group" (#1) would require us to look at this entire age group and consider how creative educational ideas, such as the media, books, games, parent and family education could be effectively introduced as elements for the education of the very young.

Some Commissioners were chiefly concerned with options that are based on programs because of their impact on large participating populations. Other Commissioners felt that such a focus does not address the large number of people who are not currently participating in programs, and therefore is limiting.

The list of options will continue to be revised in consultation with the Commissioners.

### b. Developing an inventory

What is involved in an option?

Following the development of the list of options it is important to ask ourselves what is involved in any single option — what are the elements that have to be considered if an option is chosen for action or study. Any option involves elements from all the following categories:

- the personnel for education
- the clients of education
- the settings for education
- the curriculum and methods
- the community.

When we consider an option, we must ask questions such as: who will deliver the programs (what personnel); to whom are the programs addressed (what clients); for what forms of education are they appropriate (what settings); what should their content be and how should the message be delivered (what curriculum and methods); what are the institutional structures, the financial and political support needed to implement the option (the community)?

To generate the relevant questions, we developed an inventory. Each of the five categories (personnel, clients, settings, curriculum, community) was explored and broken down into elements. Thus, the inventory is a list of the elements that must be taken into account when considering an option: the elements that

have to be dealt with in planning for implementation.

For example, when we consider option #19 "To enhance the use of media and technology for Jewish education," we can see from the inventory that the necessary personnel might include: formal and informal educators – classroom teachers and specialists, JCC staff and youth movement counsellors. Such personnel might have to be recruited or retrained. The clients of this option might be: students of various ages, teachers, adults or families. The settings for it could be: classrooms, summer camps, retreat centers or homes. The curriculum and methods might involve: materials to replace existing curricula, to supplement or enrich a curriculum, or possibly to teach what cannot be taught by conventional methods. The community's role in this option might include: the funding of multimedia centers, funding for productions and maintenance, or funding for the training of experts. These are but some examples of the many elements involved in the inventory.

The inventory includes more than 500 elements, making it possible to view the complexity involved when considering an option. It will allow the Commissioners to choose the appropriate angle and depth for dealing with any one option. The inventory will be continuously refined.

### c. Compiling a checklist; a set of criteria

There are too many options for any one commission to undertake. It was therefore suggested to develop some means or method to help us select among the options. It was decided that a checklist, or set of criteria, would help us better understand each option.

The checklist will permit us to disclose relevant current knowledge about each option: how important it is to the field; whether it is feasible; how significant an impact it could have; what its cost might be; and how fast it could be implemented. This checklist was prepared in consultation with Commissioners and other experts, and is likely to be modified as work proceeds.

The checklist includes the following categories:

i. How **Feasible** is the option?

   Can the option **achieve its desired outcomes**?

   Can the option be **implemented**?

ii. What are the anticipated **Benefits**?

iii. How much will the option **Cost**?

iv. How much **Time** is required for implementation?

v. What is the **Importance** of the option to the entire enterprise of Jewish education?

Each item on the checklist is briefly described:

**i. How Feasible is the option?**

**Can the option achieve its desired outcomes?**

1. Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved? E.g., Is "free tuition" likely to increase enrollment significantly?

Answering this question requires us to consider the option in light of the

knowledge that we possess. By knowledge we mean conclusions based upon research, well-grounded theory and the articulated experience of outstanding practitioners. We have decided to consider each option in terms of three levels of knowledge:

Options for which we **do have knowledge** as to how likely they are to achieve the desired outcomes.

Options for which we have **little knowledge** but **we do have assumptions** (informed opinion) as to how likely they are to achieve desired outcomes.

Options for which we **we have no knowledge** as to how likely they are to achieve desired outcomes.

The level of knowledge about any option is but one element affecting the decision to act. Should an option for which we have little or no knowledge emerge in the eyes of the Commission as central or crucial for Jewish education, the absence of knowledge alone may not invalidate such a choice. It would probably guide and modify the kind of action recommended. (E.g., For an option where there is little knowledge we may decide to undertake carefully monitored experiments.)

2. Are there alternative ways to achieve the outcomes or is this option the optimal way? (E.g., Is there a more effective way than free tuition to increase school enrollment? Some people claim that improving the quality of existing programs will be more effective.)

**Can the option be implemented?**

Are **resources** available? If not, how difficult would it be to develop them?

3. Do we have the professional know-how to successfully implement the option? If not, how difficult will it be to develop?

4. Is the personnel available? If not, how difficult will it be to develop?

5. Are materials (curriculum, etc.) available? If not, how difficult will they be to develop?

6. Is the physical infrastructure (buildings, etc.) available? If not, how difficult will it be to create?

7. Do the mechanisms – institutions for implementation – exist? If not, how difficult will it be to establish them?

8. Are funds available? If not, how difficult will it be to generate them?

**Will the communal and political environment support this option?**

9. Will this option enjoy communal and political support? What are likely obstacles?

10. Is the option timely – that is: is it likely to be well received at this time?

**ii. What are the Anticipated Benefits?**

1. What needs does this option answer?

2. What is the expected qualitative benefit or impact if it is successful?

3. How many people are likely to be directly affected?

4. What additional benefits can be expected?

**iii. How much will the option Cost?**

What will the cost of this option be (absolutely or per-capita or per expected benefit)?

**iv. How much Time is required for implementation?**

How long will it take until implementation? How long until results?

**v. What is the importance of this option to the entire enterprise of Jewish education?**

This criterion seeks to differentiate between options on the basis of questions such as: How essential is this option to the success of the whole endeavour? Could it alone solve the problems of Jewish education? Do other options depend on it? Is this option helpful to the success of other options? Items 1 and 2 address each option with these questions.

1. Is this option a **sufficient condition**? That is: if this option is selected and implemented, will it alone be able to solve the problems of Jewish education?

2. Is this option a **necessary condition**? If we look at the entire field of Jewish education can we identify issues that must be acted upon in order to bring about significant and sustained change? Does improvement in many or all areas depend on dealing with this issue? (E.g., Some people claim that the creation of an adequate climate of support for Jewish education in the community is a pre-condition for the success of almost any other option. Such an option would therefore be a "necessary" condition. We probably should not act upon any other option without undertaking this one.)

### d. Examining the options in light of the criteria

The criteria are a means for assessing the options, a way of looking at them. Experts in the field of Jewish education were asked to prepare individual papers on each option, viewing them in light of the checklist, the criteria. The authors of these papers were asked to bring to bear the best available information and to apply state-of-the-art knowledge to their brief summary statements of each option. Their work is presented here as the individual options papers (appendix 1). These papers report on the importance, the feasibility, the benefits, the cost and the time involved for the implementation of each option.

After these papers were prepared, they were reviewed by a group of experts in the field of Jewish education. The assignment could easily have become a multi-year project that would yield more comprehensive and authoritative reports. This advantage had to be foregone for now in order to offer timely and useful information to the Commission as it decides. The papers are tentative and will continue to be refined as the Commission proceeds with its work.

# INTERIM SUMMARY

Following the analysis of the individual options, it is possible to look at them collectively for an overview of the universe from which the Commissioners can choose their agenda. The Commission will then be able to identify possible alternatives for action. In order to facilitate this process we have organized the options into two very broad categories:

- **Programmatic** options
- Options that can be viewed as **enabling** – tools, facilitators, possibly as means.

## Programmatic options

These options approach Jewish education through interventions that are based on a particular cut into the field – either through age groups, institutions or programs. Some of these options involve improving existing programs or strengthening institutions. Other options call for a fresh look at an entire age group or client population.

The following options fall into this category:

1. To focus efforts on the **early childhood** age group.

2. To focus efforts on the **elementary school** age group.

3. To focus efforts on the **high school** age group.

4. To focus efforts on the **college** age group.

5. To focus efforts on **young adults.**

6. To focus efforts on **the family.**

7. To focus efforts on **adults.**

8. To focus efforts on the **retired** and the **elderly.**

9. To develop and improve the **supplementary school** (elementary and high school).

10. To develop and improve the **day school** (elementary and high school).

11. To develop **informal education.**

12. To develop **Israel Experience programs.**

13. To develop **integrated programs of formal and informal education.**

14. To focus efforts on the widespread acquisition of the **Hebrew language,** with special initial emphasis on the leadership of the Jewish Community.

16. To develop **early childhood programs.**

17. To develop **programs for the family and adults.**

18. To develop **programs for the college population.**

## Enabling options

The options in this category approach Jewish education through interventions that serve many of the other options.

They could be viewed as means for programmatic options.

15. To develop **curriculum and methods.**

19. To enhance the **use of the media and technology** (computers, video, etc.) for Jewish education.

20. To deal with **the shortage of qualified personnel** for Jewish education.

21. To deal with **the community — its leadership and its structures** — as major agents for change in any area.

22. To reduce or **eliminate tuition.**

23. To improve the **physical plant** (buildings, labs, gymnasia).

24. To create a **knowledge base** for Jewish education (research of various kinds: evaluations and impact studies; assessment of needs; client surveys; etc.)

25. To encourage **innovation** in Jewish education.

26. To generate significant **additional funding** for Jewish education.

**• Note on the categories**

The categories of programmatic and enabling options are but one way to organize the options. It is not the only way. Moreover, the decision as to which options to include in each category depends on one's view of education as well as on the strategy for intervention. To illustrate: we have tentatively put option #15 "To develop curriculum and methods" in the enabling category, taking the view of curriculum and methods as tools for other options. In a different approach it could be considered a programmatic option.

**e. Designing alternative possibilities for selection by the Commission**

Options for action could be selected from either category (programmatic or enabling) or from both. Let us consider the programmatic options first.

When faced with the need to select first options for action, we find that the programmatic category offers difficult challenges. Indeed, the analysis of the individual options does not offer a basis for choosing between them. We find compelling reasons to undertake each one, but we also find that each involves significant problems. Despite the problems, there is no option that cannot be acted upon in some form, whether experimentally or on a wide scale.

How then can one choose, given that all the options remain important and that it is quite difficult to rank the benefits that would accrue from each? How is one to assess the importance of undertaking the elementary school age, versus that of undertaking the high school age? All population groups are important. All the settings are important. We tried to identify one option that might be an indispensable first step — one that could lead us to say "we must start here." But we could not find it. In fact, it appears that choosing among programmatic options, selecting one or many for action following this analysis, may have to be done on the basis of affinities or personal values.

The situation differs with regard to the category of the enabling options. Indeed,

what characterizes the enabling options is that almost all the other options – particularly the programmatic ones – need them, or can benefit from them in one form or another. Moreover, when we analyze these options in the light of the criteria, we find that **three enabling options stand out**, because they are each required – one could say that they are each necessary conditions, pre-conditions – for making across-the-board improvements in the field of Jewish education at this time. These options are:

#20 – "To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education";

#21 – "To deal with the community – its leadership and its structure – as major agents for change in any area";

#26 – "To generate significant additional funding for Jewish education."

Indeed, most of the options require a heavy investment in personnel, the community and funding if they are to be successfully implemented. Almost all options require the improvement of existing personnel, and/or the recruitment and training of additional personnel. All options require additional and sustained community support, that is, a change in climate and decision-making that will give them the priority status needed for change. Several of the options cannot be undertaken at all, until significant additional funding and support is secured.

The inter-relationship of these three options as well as the aforementioned dependence of the other options on them, supports the view expressed by Commissioners that the way this particular Commission can make its biggest impact is by **affecting the macro picture**, that is, dealing with the conditions or options that are likely to affect the field across-the-board.

These are the issues that are on the agenda of the next meeting. The Commission will decide how to proceed.

# III. APPENDIX

# THE OPTION PAPERS

These papers offer brief overviews of the options as they are assessed in light of the criteria. They are presented here as a means of sharing with the Commissioners relevant data that informs the analysis. The papers were prepared by members of the staff with the assistance of Commissioners and some 40 experts in the field of Jewish education. They are first drafts, with some of the data still being gathered. They will be continuously revised and updated. Some of the options were combined into a single paper (options 6/7 and 17; options 21 and 26), because the author believed this was appropriate and useful. Included in this appendix are those papers available at this time. Several additional papers will be ready for the meeting of the Commission on December 13th.

# OPTION #3 – TO FOCUS EFFORTS ON THE HIGH SCHOOL AGE GROUP

## DESCRIPTION

As mentioned in the note on the list of options (page 3), there is a significant difference between developing programs and planning for the needs of a whole age group. In dealing with a specific population, we need to take a fresh look at an entire area, to ask broad, speculative questions about seemingly-familiar subjects. This particular option challenges us to ask: What does our general knowledge of adolescence suggest can be done in Jewish education for this population?

### What is the target population?

The population is all Jews of high school age in North America.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

To help the Jewish adolescent develop an identity in which Jewish ideas, practice and involvement with the Jewish people play an important role.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

Some experts view adolescence as a time for separation (or even rebellion) and that the "normal" course is for adolescents to resist parent-identified themes such as religion and ethnic solidarity, thus rejecting the familiar fare of Jewish education received throughout their childhood. At the same time, however, what adolescents most deeply seek – new ideas, experiences, peers and leaders – are resources that the Jewish community has to offer. With sufficient imagination and resources, the Jewish community could become competitive in the market of attracting adolescent attention.

We do not yet have specific answers as to how these outcomes could be achieved. The very purpose of this option is to start afresh in thinking about this age group; it is premature to list possible solutions to the problems. What follows are some first thoughts.

Until now we have rested primarily on the mass appeal of wide- ranging youth groups or on the specialized appeal of, for example, Torah study in yeshivot. While each of these has its own successes, some of the things that have not yet been tried are specified, talent-based options which could draw high school students on the basis of interest. For example, excellent music or theater groups, journals or radio shows, political or social service movements which could attract serious youth from different denominations

and communities. Israel programs as well could be designed based on the serious pursuit of excellence in learning about Israel from specific perspectives – be it politics, the arts or computer science.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We know how to put together certain elements of this option, but not a whole package. We would need to identify which resources of the Jewish community could be used to serve this population. For example:

1. Intellectual resources – how do we bring the brightest of our high-schoolers into fruitful contact with the best minds of our community?

2. Political resources – how do we let high schoolers participate in the serious political debates that take place in North America and Israel?

3. Social resources – how do we build the right social contexts in which high schoolers can come together and powerfully experience community and community action?

4. Cultural resources – how do we build the youth orchestras, drama and dance groups, etc. which would bring Jewish culture alive for high schoolers?

5. Religious resources – how do we let high schoolers into the rich and diverse religious possibilities which are available in our tradition?

### Are the materials available?

No.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

No.

### Are institutional and political support available?

Institutions are invested in their own current programs. This option may require breaking out from current patterns and could involve building new institutional and political support.

### Is the funding available?

No.

### Is the option timely?

Yes. There is widespread awareness that the majority of this population has dropped out and concern to remedy that.

### What would the cost be?

Unknown.

### How long would it take to implement?

Initial experiments could be planned and implemented in 2 years. Retraining personnel, etc. would require a substantially longer time — at least 5 years.

### How important is this to the field?

It is not a necessary condition. However psychologists speak of adolescence as the time when the developing individual begins to establish a mature identity in areas like occupation, politics, and religion, and sets his/her priorities. This view of adolescence suggests that the high school years are a time when the Jewish community would want to have significant input into the decisions young people are making. There is research in the field of Jewish education that shows that an individual's decision to continue his/her Jewish education into the adolescent years is a significant indicator of future involvement and adult Jewish commitment.

# OPTION #6 – TO FOCUS EFFORTS ON THE FAMILY and OPTION #17 – TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS FOR THE FAMILY

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

The target population is the universe of Jewish families. Two particular family constellations which have, until now, received the most attention by the field of Jewish education are parents and their school-age children and senior adults and their grown children and grandchildren. That is, the majority of existing programs are geared to these two types of families.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Greater involvement of the family unit in Jewish life and learning.

2. Greater involvement of parents in the Jewish education of their children.

3. A chance for adults to learn about and practice Judaism.

4. Reinforcing children's learning by increasing Jewish learning and practice in the home.

5. Potential strengthening of the cohesion of the Jewish family.

6. Potential building of a sense of community among Jewish families and a collective attachment to Jewish institutions.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

There has been much research done that has argued for the importance of the family as educator but programs in family education are still in an experimental stage. Educators involved in early experiments believe they have achieved some of the objectives. Models for replication have yet to emerge; no large-scale expansion has been attempted.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

1. Adults can learn directly through programs in adult education.

2. Family members can be involved in children's education through school participation (committees, fundraising, etc.) and more creative homework specifically designed for family participation.

3. A sense of community can be enhanced through social, political or religious activities for adults.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

Very little. Some educators involved in family education believe they are developing the know-how to implement single programs and may be ready to develop a model for replication.

### Is the personnel available?

Presently, family education draws from existing personnel pools – particularly rabbis, social workers and educators – but very few Jewish professionals identify themselves as family educators. Existing personnel may be qualified for the few existing models of family education, but if family education is to be developed, personnel will have to be trained appropriately for the new programs and approaches.

### Are the materials available?

A good deal of materials from other areas may be adapted for family education, but a serious curricular effort will be necessary if this area is to be fully developed.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Yes. Programs take place in synagogues, JCCs and camps. The only addition could be retreat centers.

### Is institutional support available?

The idea is new, but is considered by some experts in the field to be so potentially important as to merit immediate support. Existing programs are to be found in synagogues, JCCs, federations and camps, and there is a call for additional programs. For widespread replication, more national institutional support will be needed.

### Is the funding available?

Funding for existing programs comes from host institutions and the families themselves. Replication requires production of materials and retraining of personnel. Currently funding for large-scale development is not available.

### Is the political support available?

The political support is growing in selected locations, but is yet untested in many other locations.

### Is the option timely?

Yes. With concern about family cohesion and parental non-support for children's education, many feel this is a most timely option especially for families involved with congregational schools, day schools and other forms of Jewish education.

### What needs does this option answer?

The need of families to find ways to be involved together in Jewish life. The need of schools to involve parents in their children's Jewish education. The educators' needs to feel supported by the home and the children's needs to have continuity between the school and the home.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Family education could enrich the whole pattern of participation of the family unit in Jewish life — in the home and in the community.

2. Family education could build a connection between what is learned at school and seen at home.

3. It could help revive supplementary schools and strengthen day schools by bringing the parents more closely in touch with their children's and their own Jewish education.

4. Family education could enhance the possibility that children would continue education beyond bar mitzvah.

5. It could raise the demand for more quality adult education; and it could involve rabbis more fully in the practice of Jewish education.

### What would the cost be?

The immediate costs of moving from local experiments to producing models for replication would be low. To move to full implementation and long-term development would involve more substantial costs for the salary and training of personnel and the production of materials.

### How long would it take to implement?

The first stage could be achieved in 2 years. Full implementation would require 5-7 years.

### How important is this to the field?

Some experts believe family education may be a necessary condition in the sense that with more family involvement, many other forms of education for children and adults would be far more effective. Others caution that the work in this area is on an experimental level and has yet to be proven effective on a wider scale.

# OPTION #7 – TO FOCUS EFFORTS ON ADULTS; and OPTION #17 – TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

The target is the whole adult population of the Jewish community. This is sometimes divided into subpopulations by age (young or senior adults), status (single, parents), level of commitment (affiliated or unaffiliated) or profession.

### What kinds of programs currently exist?

There is a wide array of programs for adults in the realms of both formal and informal education. On the formal side there are lecture series, classes, institutes and schools sponsored by synagogues, community centers, national and local organizations. There are also university programs, study groups, havurot and study retreats, as well as special study programs for leadership groups. On the informal side there are interest and self-help groups, cultural events and Israel experience programs as well as retreats and weekends of all sorts.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. To encourage greater personal commitment to Jewish life.

2. To increase engagement with Jewish sources.

3. To increase participation in Jewish communal activities.

4. To encourage more knowledgeable participation in Jewish life.

5. To improve adults' ability to transmit Jewish tradition and culture to the next generations.

6. To strengthen the connection of North American Jews to Israel.

7. To involve many more adults in formal and informal Jewish learning and activity.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We know through experience that there are programs that have achieved many of the above outcomes. We know less about developing clear models that can be replicated,

and do not know the impact of different programs on adults. We do not know the numbers of adults who have been reached or potentially could be reached by these programs.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

In addition to many kinds of programs listed above, there are alternative modalities which have been suggested:

1. More systematic use of the media (including public and cable television, videos, tapes, computer programs) for reaching adults in their homes and communities.

2. More effective use of book clubs and other library or home reading programs.

3. More creative use of university programs through extension courses, etc.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We have the know-how to run individual, successful programs of many different kinds. We are first gaining know-how to develop successful models and replicate them. But we still do not know much about how to market available programs.

### Is the personnel available?

The personnel picture is uneven. There is a great potential if rabbis, scholars and informed professionals can be channelled to this area. There is a need here for retraining. There may also be a role for training paraprofessionals and supporting peer learning as in yeshivot and havurot. If this field is to be expanded significantly there will be a need for full-time personnel and much more part- time personnel.

### Are the materials available?

There is much material for the adult learner, but it is not arranged in curriculum form for teaching purposes. Some curricular efforts have begun; more would be needed for fuller implementation. Use of the media (films, video, etc.) has begun, but much material is yet to be made commonly available or incorporated into curriculum.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

It appears to be available, though careful study might indicate need for more retreat centers and vacation sites.

**Is institutional support available?**

Yes. On both a local and national level there are many organizations involved and supportive. What may be lacking is coordination among organizations to avoid overlap and increase marketing effectiveness.

**Is the funding available?**

Not for personnel retraining, development of materials, a serious effort at model-building or replication.

**Is the political support available?**

Yes. As more communal leaders are themselves touched by adult programs, they become their supporters. There is also more general awareness that we cannot educate the younger generation without also educating the adult population.

**Is the option timely?**

Yes.

**What needs does this option answer?**

1. The need of adults to learn and re-learn more about Jewish tradition and culture.

2. The need of the community to have a more knowledgeable and committed membership.

3. The need of the younger generation to see their elders also involved in Jewish life and study.

**What benefits could be anticipated?**

1. Adult education could change the nature and kind of Jewish involvement of the adult population.

2. It could involve hundreds of thousands of adult Jews in Jewish activity.

3. It could enable education for children and families to be improved as more people would have a stake in the educational enterprise.

4. It could help turn education into a top priority of national and local communal and religious organizations.

### What would the cost be?

Initial efforts at developing model programs could be begun at low costs. As efforts to expand programs, retrain personnel and develop materials got underway, costs would rise.

### How long would it take to implement?

There could be a one year planning period followed by a 2-3 year effort at developing model programs. Full fledged implementation would require a 5-7 year period.

### How important is this to the field?

Although this is not a necessary condition, adult education is considered by some to be a very important option because it could reach a very large number of Jews and also help to develop current and future leadership for the community.

# OPTION #9 – TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL (ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL)

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

The population is all Jewish families with children of school age who are enrolled in supplementary schools. In the U.S., there are close to 270,000 children currently enrolled; in Canada approximately 9,700. There are approximately 2,200 supplementary schools in North America, primarily serving elementary grades. The vast majority of them are under the auspices of either Reform or Conservative synagogues, with a smaller number under Orthodox or communal auspices. The target population could grow by several hundred thousand.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. To improve the quality of these programs by providing more highly-trained personnel, better support for teachers, better consistency in use of curriculum, and more support from families, congregations and communities.

2. To enhance the children's and families' educational experience, to better impart knowledge, to encourage more observance and participation, and to create commitment to the Jewish people and to Israel.

3. To encourage students to affiliate Jewishly and continue further study after Bar Mitzvah.

4. To increase the numbers of families who would send their children to these schools for a Jewish education.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We do have some experiential knowledge of what makes a supplementary school more effective and how to improve less effective schools but most of our knowledge is based on widely accepted assumptions. Hard data is limited, with a noted exception being the recent BJE study of New York supplementary schools. No sustained wide-scale effort has been tried to upgrade these schools. We have no hard evidence that outstanding supplementary schools can be developed. But we do know that the conditions experts list as essential for effectiveness (qualified personnel, family involvement, etc.) are currently often lacking.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Some experts have put forward these alternatives to replace supplementary schools:

1. Improved recruiting for day schools;

2. Enhancing outreach directly to Jewish families;

3. Increasing allotments for informal education and summer camps;

4. Initiating Israel programs for younger children.

Each of these alternatives is problematic. Many experts believe there will remain a limited clientele for day schools and that family and informal education work best as extensions of, not replacements for, these schools.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

With appropriate personnel, family and communal support, we believe we know how to improve the quality and attractiveness of individual supplementary schools. We have limited knowledge of how to change the culture of these schools for the whole population.

### Is the personnel available?

No, and this lack of qualified available personnel constitutes the major problem.

Currently there is a pool of mostly part-time teachers — some of whom are poorly trained Israeli teachers — and some full-time personnel. Improvement would require recruiting, training, and retention of more qualified full-time personnel (full-time positions would need to be created); creative recruitment of part-time teachers; and more support and career opportunities for both full and part-time personnel. Personnel for model programs could probably be recruited on a small scale if appropriate funding was available.

### Are the materials available?

On the elementary level, a good deal exists. On the high school level, there is less available.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Yes.

### Is institutional support available?

The crucial support by congregations and denominational organizations exists. Federations are now giving minimal support. Important issues are how to help congregations make more effective usage of available educational resources, and to help communities coordinate communal and denominational efforts to improve these schools.

### Is the funding available?

For current operations, yes; but not for serious efforts of improvement.

### Is the political support available?

To a limited extent. The poor reputation of supplementary schools has made it difficult to rally support for a sustained effort to improve their quality and appeal. There is the danger of a self- fulfilling prophecy of low expectations and poor performance.

### Is the option timely?

Most observers agree the supplementary schools are in crisis and need to be either improved or replaced. This option is timely for those who believe in the future of this institution, but not for those who doubt its ability to be rehabilitated.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. In the U.S.A., 70% of the children enrolled in Jewish schools attend supplementary schools. They need a better educational experience.

2. Most non-Orthodox synagogues spend a considerable portion of their budgets on these schools and deserve more for their money.

3. The many Jewish families with children enrolled in these schools need better quality help from these schools to help sustain their children's Jewish identity.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Better quality schools could provide students with more Jewish knowledge, firmer Jewish values and deeper Jewish commitments.

2. Better quality schools could attract and hold more students for more years.

3. Improved supplementary education could be a gateway for greater interest in informal, family and adult education as well as programs in Israel.

### What would the cost be?

High. Without a serious effort to improve the personnel no sustained improvement is possible.

### How long would it take to implement?

Pilot projects for developing model programs could be implemented in 3-5 years. More systematic improvements could require 5-7 years.

### How important is this to the field?

It is not a necessary condition. Some experts rank this as among the most important programmatic options because it reaches the largest number of families. Others believe the outcomes will be hard to achieve and that the supplementary school is a high-risk, poor investment.

# OPTION #10 – TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE DAY SCHOOL (ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL)

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

The population is all Jewish families with children of school age who are enrolled or could become interested in day school education. In 1982 110,000 students attended day schools in the U.S.A.; 16,000 in Canada. The largest concentration is in the lower elementary grades. Of the 586 day schools in North America, 462 are Orthodox, 62 are Conservative, 44 are communal, 9 are Reform, 4 are secular.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Improve the quality of day school education through support for personnel training and professional growth, model programs, curriculum development, integration of different areas of learning and increased family involvement.

2. Produce graduates with high levels of Jewish commitment and in-depth Judaic knowledge who could form a core of future Jewish leadership.

3. Improve the possibility of more families throughout the community choosing day school education for their children by increasing the total number of day schools and qualified personnel and by offering, when needed, more opportunities for tuition reduction.

4. Increase the possibility of many more children continuing their day school education through high school.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We have a good deal of experience with day school education and much informed opinion about its potential effectiveness. We assume that by creating a more total Jewish ambience, devoting more hours to Judaic content, and commanding a more serious level of commitment, a day school education produces more knowledgeable and committed Jews. But we do not yet have hard data to support these assumptions. Nor do we know how widespread day school education could become in the United States or, outside of the Orthodox community, what it would take to gain more support for day high school education.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Excellent supplementary school, informal education and Israel programs may be alternatives to day school.

Many observers believe these are not realistic alternatives and that day school (especially when complemented by informal programs, family education and Israel programs) is the most effective form of Jewish education available.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

There are impressive examples of successful day schools, but at present we have not come up with an approach to recruiting, training and maintaining the needed personnel.

### Is the personnel available?

Not enough for current needs and certainly not for potential future needs. In many cases today day schools are forced to rely on Israeli teachers for some subjects. Many observers feel that a number of steps could be taken to improve the personnel picture. These include: more active recruitment, more training opportunities, increased salaries and benefits, better in-service and staff development opportunities. There are needs for school principals and master teachers and other professional teachers.

### Are the materials available?

Only to a limited extent. There is a general lack of first-rate curriculum at all levels for teaching Judaic subjects.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Day schools face four challenges in relation to physical structures.

1. New schools need to find initial space in which to house the school.

2. Expanding schools need to find more adequate larger quarters.

3. All schools face high cost of maintenance, repair and renovation.

4. Many schools wish to improve quality of educational facilities such as libraries, laboratories, gymnasia and classrooms.

There are constant needs for funds in relation to all of the above.

### Is institutional support available?

In the Orthodox community, definitely yes. In the Conservative movement, mostly yes. In the Reform movement, it is newer, but gaining support. There is growing support in the federation world.

### Is the funding available?

Day schools rely on the following sources for funding: tuition, communal funds, governmental funds and local fundraising. Tuition fees cover between 40 and 90 percent of operational costs depending on numbers of students, on scholarships and the extent of the scholarships (which may range from 10 to 100%). Capital costs come from communal funds or local fundraising. Many day schools struggle to meet current budgets, without having adequate funding to raise teacher salaries and benefits, expand facilities or increase scholarships.

### Is the political support available?

Certainly in the Orthodox community. Otherwise, the support is increasing, but is by no means universal. Opposition, though, has greatly decreased.

### Is the option timely?

Yes. Judging by a 100% increase in enrollment between 1962 and 1982, and continued growth across ideological lines, day school education is timely.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. The need to provide students with a more complete setting to study Jewish tradition in depth and develop Jewish commitments.

2. The need to provide viable Jewish alternatives to what some parents perceive as failing public and supplementary schools.

3. The need to provide some families with opportunities for more Jewish involvement.

4. The need to provide educators with full-time work and consistently serious teaching and advancement opportunities.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Larger numbers of Jewish students would be involved in more intensive Jewish study.

2. Quality of Jewish knowledge and commitment could be elevated across the community.

3. Could create a larger pool for future lay and professional leadership in the community.

4. Could intensify Jewish identification for the family of children attending.

### What would the cost be?

Given the needs for personnel (including improved salaries and benefits and enhanced opportunities for recruitment, training and professional development), physical structure, curriculum development, scholarship funds and outreach efforts, the costs could be high.

### How long would it take to implement?

Some steps, such as curriculum development and personnel recruitment, could have first steps of implementation taken within 3-5 years. How long it would take to increase funding would depend on the response of the community to these needs.

### How important is this to the field?

Some experts argue it is the most important programmatic option because it has the highest yield. Others wonder if day schools will ever be attractive to more than a limited percentage of non-Orthodox Jews.

# OPTION #11 – TO DEVELOP INFORMAL EDUCATION

## DESCRIPTION

The scope of informal education is vast, extending from toddlers to senior citizens, from swimming with Mom to studying Torah with a resident scholar. For the purposes of this paper, it will be limited to three domains – JCCs, summer camp and youth work – and will not include programs for early childhood (option #16) or programs for the retired and the elderly (option #8).

### What is the target population?

The 200 JCCs in North America target all Jews as their potential population. The 70 residential summer camps under Jewish communal auspices are primarily for children of school age (annual population estimated at 52,000) but also are expanding to service adults on retreats and family programs as well as train college students who work on their staff. Ten major youth organizations primarily serve high school students but also extend downward to junior high and upward to college students (with 100,000 participants).

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. To create an experiential field within which Jews of varying ages and backgrounds can encounter and participate in a living Jewish environment and experience a deeper identification as Jews.

2. To create a multiplicity of opportunities for Jews to learn more about their Jewishness through informal means including interest activities, cultural programs, small groups, classes and retreats.

3. To create contexts in which Jews can freely associate with one another and forge more lasting communal and friendship bonds.

4. To create a sense of community by sponsoring major cultural events in which many elements of the community can come together and constitute themselves as "klal yisrael."

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

There are some studies which suggest that participation in informal Jewish activities – especially camps, youth movements and Israel programs – has a significant impact

on people's subsequent Jewish identity. Much of what we know of outcomes, however, is based on informed assumptions.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Only trips to Israel are seen as having the same affective and experiential impact as these informal educational programs, and they generally do not begin at as early an age. Most experts do not see formal education as an alternative to informal education, but rather as each complementing the other.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

Yes, to a great extent. Jewish camping and youth movements are well-established and given the right conditions can be run with great effectiveness. The JCC staffs have been learning to introduce Jewish content and experiences into their programs and have done so with increasing effectiveness.

### Is the personnel available?

In camping and youth movements the recruiting and maintaining of appropriately effective staff is a constant struggle. In the JCC world there are also shortages, but the main issue is the Jewish training of staff; there are definite shortages in personnel with strong Jewish backgrounds.

### Are the materials available?

Yes, to an extent. Informal education requires a "curriculum of learning" as does formal education. Over the years a "curriculum in potential" has developed in the form of many successful programs and materials that have been produced. However, there is need for actual curriculum that orders programs and materials and offers direction for their use. National access and coordination is still in need of improvement. In camping and youth movements there are few opportunities for professionals in the field to meet together on the use of materials.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

To a great extent, yes. In camping, however, there is the need to explore whether certain areas of North America are underserviced. Also, the potential use of camps as year-round resources for informal and family education would require upgrading of facilities. Maintenance and improvement of summer facilities remain a budgetary concern as well.

### Is institutional support available?

Yes. The JCC world has become supportive of viewing informal education as an essential part of Jewish education. The denominations each support a youth movement as

do other national organizations like Bnai Brith and Hadassah. The JCC world has an extensive network of residential and day camps. The Reform and Conservative movements each officially sponsors a network of summer camps. In the Orthodox world there is also much support for camping.

**Is the funding available?**

Yes. However, youth movements' reliance on national and local support often leaves them with minimal-level budgeting. Camps can rely on tuition up to a point, but as tuitions rise, the numbers of families who can afford camp drops. There is a large need in camps and youth movements for scholarship funds. Starting new camps would require a large influx of funds, estimated at $3 million per residential camp. Winterizing a camp would cost $500,000.

**Is the political support available?**

Yes. However, there is less clear support for upgrading and expanding the mandate of camping and youth work.

**Is the option timely?**

Yes. Especially in the JCC world there is much recent movement to upgrade the Jewish quality of informal education. In camping there is recent movement to include more programming for families and adults.

**What needs does this option answer?**

1. The need of individuals of all ages to express their Jewishness through a variety of informal modalities.

2. The need of individuals of all ages and families to enter a Jewish environment in which they can be at home with their Jewishness and their fellow Jews.

3. The need of individuals of all ages to learn more about their Jewishness and themselves as Jews.

4. The need of the community to have opportunities to constitute itself as a community (without having to respond to a crisis).

**What benefits could be anticipated?**

1. Jews learning a richer, more textured sense of self as a Jew.

2. Reinforcement of and expansion upon the Jewish learning done in formal settings through enactment in less formal settings.

3. Reinforcement of communal bonds through effective connections developed by people commonly engaged in informal activity.

4. Attracting to the Jewish community individuals and families who feel less comfortable in the more formal environments of schools and congregations, and helping them feel more fully integrated.

### What would the cost be?

The main costs involve staff recruitment, training and retention. On all levels, informal education requires a core of well-trained professionals who will devote their careers to this work. In addition, the work is labor-intensive and requires the constant search for new staff due to high turnover. Higher salaries and benefits, and more opportunities for professional growth and advancement are especially important in youth work and camping. JCCs need on-going funding for the Jewish education of their staff.

### How long would it take to implement?

The Jewish training of staff is already going on. The professional upgrading of camp and youth movement staff could begin to be implemented in a short period. The training of a more permanent professional top staff would require a 5-10 year effort.

### How important is this to the field?

While not a necessary condition, informal education is considered very important as a complement to existing forms of formal education and as a door through which non-affiliated Jews can more easily enter. Some argue that it enlivens the whole field of Jewish education.

# OPTION #12 – TO DEVELOP ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

## DESCRIPTION

To increase participation in quality educational programs in Israel (short, medium and long-term), of various kinds (formal and informal) and for all appropriate age groups. This option relates to educational programs and not to general tourism.

### What is the target population?

The Jewish population of North America. In most recent years, more than 25,000 young people from North America have participated in educational programs in Israel. About 35% of the whole Jewish population of North America has visited Israel, in a variety of settings (mostly tourism). Market studies indicate that many of those who have never visited the country would do so under certain conditions within the framework of educational programs and that many of those who have visited would return for such programs.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Intensify the participants' Jewish identity, emotional involvement with the Jewish people and Israel, and sense of belonging.

2. Acquaint the participants with the establishment of the Jewish state as a major creative Jewish accomplishment and enhance their understanding of Zionism.

3. Impart knowledge about the Jewish past and present and acquaint participants with the sites of Judaism.

4. Increase the sense of responsibility for, and desire to participate in, the existence of the State of Israel.

5. Increase understanding and concern for the present and future of the Jewish people.

6. Increase knowledge about Israel.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We have limited empirical data on the impact of programs in Israel. However, the major assumptions (by experts, educators and decision-makers) agree with this data and claim that Israel speaks powerfully to its Jewish visitors and has significant impact

on Jewish identity. Numerous educators and parents believe that a good program in Israel has greater impact than many other educational activities.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

American Jews can be taught about Israel in schools or in informal educational settings, through courses, books, films, lectures, celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's independence day), etc.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

Yes. However, qualitative improvement is needed, as research shows that high quality programs (thoughtfully planned and well staffed) have a greater impact. Innovations are needed to address population groups whose needs and demands are not currently met (e.g. college students, families).

We need to learn more about the marketing of programs, the preparation of participants and follow-up activities after their return.

### Is the personnel available?

Yes. Preliminary studies show that the personnel — counsellors, teachers, guides, planners, administrators — can be recruited, but they need specialized short-term training. Significant growth would require the recruitment and training of additional personnel.

### Are the materials available?

Yes, materials for use during programs do exist. However there is a lack of materials to prepare participants for programs or to follow-up. As new programs are developed, appropriate accompanying materials may have to be developed.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Yes. Studies indicate that carefully planned use of existing facilities (youth villages, youth hostels, field schools, hotels, university dormitories, etc.) could accommodate significant increases in participation. There are bottlenecks in Jerusalem and in Eilat during the winter and summer vacation times. The need for better use of existing facilities or for additional facilities should be assessed.

### Is institutional support available?

Yes.

### Is the funding available?

Some funding is available – primarily from JAFI-WZO sources and increasingly from denominations, federations and local sources. However, cost remains a significant obstacle to participation in programs. Increased scholarship funds are likely to facilitate increased participation.

### Is the political support available?

Yes.

### Is the option timely?

Yes.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. Intensification and enrichment of other educational programs.

2. Outreach.

3. Rehabilitation of negative impact from poor educational experiences. Programs have the advantage of being mostly successful experiences in the eyes of participants – unlike other educational experiences.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Increase in the number of participants from 25,000 per year (13-30 year olds in organized programs) to two or three times that number.

2. Qualitative improvements in programs.

3. Intensified involvement in Jewish activities and studies upon return.

### What would the cost be?

Initial research leads us to conclude that among different types of programs the average per capita subsidy is of $500-$1,000. For 10,000 additional participants, this could mean $5,000,000-$10,000,000 per year. For 25,000 (doubling the present numbers) this could mean $12,500,000-$25,000,000 per year.

### How long would it take to implement?

The number of participants could be doubled almost immediately. Significant increases could be achieved within 3-5 years. Qualitative improvements could be gradually achieved.

### How important is this to the field?

It is not a necessary condition.

# OPTION #13 – TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED PROGRAMS OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION

## DESCRIPTION

Though we tend to think of formal education (such as schools) and informal education (such as camps, youth groups) as separate domains, there have been efforts to integrate the two. The effort may come in an informal setting with the inclusion of formal learning opportunities or in a formal setting with the inclusion of informal learning opportunities. A third possibility is for two institutions – one formal and one informal – to work together to coordinate their activities so that the participants (students) would be exposed to similar materials on themes in both settings. All these efforts work from these assumptions: (1) formal and informal education complement one another; (2) Jewishness needs to be taught using both types of learning; (3) participants' learning greatly improves when these approaches are brought together in one programmatic package, creating a synergistic effect.

### What is the target population?

The population is all Jews who participate in Jewish education and could profit from this integrative approach.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Increasing effectiveness of both types of programs by having the cognitive component of formal education reinforced and amplified by the affective component of informal education and visa versa.

2. Students' learning how the two aspects of Jewish living – study and deed – fit together and reinforce one another.

3. Increasing coordination between educational institutions who often conceive of their missions as being distinct from one another.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if these outcomes can be achieved?

We have the informed opinion of the educators who have attempted this integration that it is likely that these outcomes can be achieved. The number of serious attempts at integration are few and we have no hard data on the effectiveness of these attempts.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Presently, in most cases in which students participate in both formal and informal Jewish settings, the co-ordination of realms is left to chance or to the students' own abilities to integrate these diverse experiences. It is generally agreed that this lack of coordination fails to realize the full potential of either formal or informal education.

### Do we have the know-how to implement the option?

There are educators who are prepared to experiment in this area and have suggested interesting programs. There is as yet no established model for dissemination or, even, a clear way of training educators for integration.

### Is the personnel available?

No, except for a small number of educators. Training educators to function well in both formal and informal settings and to build integrative programs is difficult.

### Are the materials available?

No materials have been specifically prepared for integrating education in the formal and informal settings, but there are existing materials that can be applied to the integration. There are some emerging curricula, e.g. for Shabbat retreats, that attempt the integration.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Usually, yes. Integrative programs often use camp and retreat sites but in some communities they are not available on a year-round basis. A program that would fully integrate formal and informal education would probably require the linking of institutions such as schools and JCCs.

### Is institutional support available?

This subject has not yet been directly and systematically addressed by the institutions in the community. Greatest support for it is found in informal settings where JCCs, camps and youth organizations are working to integrate formal learning opportunities into their programs. There is an increasing realization by supplementary schools that their students could benefit from school-sponsored informal activities. Day schools often look for such opportunities for their students too, though not usually through school sponsorship.

### Is the funding available?

To a very limited extent. The integration is costly and usually families are asked to pay for some of the operating costs. For the training of staff, preparation of materials and coordination or institutions there is little funding available.

### Is the political support available?

There is realization of its importance, but it is not a high priority on most community agendas.

### Is the option timely?

Yes.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. Students' need to experience a link between what is learned in a formal setting and what is learned in informal settings especially when homes do not provide the links.

2. Educators' need to find efficient ways to bring to life what is taught in the classroom and to give intellectual depth to what is experienced in a camp or on a retreat.

3. The community's need to have different educational organizations coordinate efforts and become more efficient.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. What is taught in classes could be reinforced and better understood by its being experienced in a live setting.

2. What is experienced in a camp, etc. could have more meaning if it were more clearly connected to a set of ideas and a field of information.

3. More students might choose to continue their Jewish education beyond bar mitzvah if their learning opportunities become more experiential and personally meaningful.

4. More full-time jobs for educators could become available if formal and informal education were combined into a single job description.

### What would the cost be?

Setting up model programs – which would include some small-scale staff training, material production and scholarships to offset added costs to families – could be done

at a low cost. More extensive dissemination would require more staff training and re-training.

### How long would it take to implement?

Model programs could be established in 1-2 years. Large-scale is a 3-5 year project.

### How important is this to the field?

It is not a necessary condition, but an option that could maximize educational impact and efficiency.

# OPTION #15 – TO DEVELOP CURRICULUM AND METHODS

## DESCRIPTION

A. Curriculum is an option that is particularly complex because it is so wide-ranging. We could consider, for example, the *setting or form* of Jewish education, either formal or informal. That is, we could look at day schools or supplementary schools, camps or community centers, youth groups or trips to Israel and in all those cases try to determine the nature and effectiveness of the curriculum being used. In a similar way we could look at any *population* for Jewish education and try to examine the curriculum being used for that age group. That is, the curriculum currently available for 10 year olds and the curriculum currently available for 3 year olds or adults could each be evaluated separately. And, finally, curriculum could be discussed in relation to *subject matters*. The amount and quality of curriculum currently available in the area of, for example, teaching Jewish holidays may differ greatly from curriculum available in the area of teaching Israel or Hebrew.

B. And these areas do not address the issue of *quality and availability*. We can see some materials which are examples of effective curriculum– they clearly help educators perform their tasks. Other materials are available, but are ineffective; they are designed as curriculum, but do not help the educator. And there is a very important, though often-overlooked, area which we could call "curriculum in potential." These are the available materials or effective programs which could be *turned into* curriculum, but have not yet been perceived as "curriculum". For example, the many Judaica books for adults currently in print could be seen as "curriculum in potential" for adult education; the materials exist, but we don't know how to use them for adult education in a general way (that is, there are individual talented teachers of adults that use such books, but their teaching ideas have not been organized or disseminated in a way that other teachers could use them). Another example of "curriculum in potential" is the effective programming done in camps or community centers, most of which has never been written down and therefore cannot find a wider audience.

C. Finally, none of the above addresses the crucial connection between curriculum as it is conceived and curriculum as it lives. Curriculum plans that have been developed are directly tied to the implementation of curriculum. For example, we seem to have some curriculum of quality available for the teaching of Hebrew in day schools, but we have a lack of qualified personnel to implement that curriculum. In addition we seem to have a lack of personnel who could *train* teachers to use these existing materials. And, in addition, in the important domain of "curriculum in potential," we may not have the talented or trained personnel who could do the job of taking existing ideas, programs or lesson plans and *transferring* them into curriculum. We could also consider the institutions that should develop curriculum. Should this come as a "top-down" process through boards of Jewish education, research centers and curriculum

publishers or should this emanate from local institutions or from the individual educators themselves?

Finally we could treat curriculum and methods together, for our conception of curriculum requires that we include the methods by which the curriculum is to be taught.

We will try to address the general picture of curriculum and methods in Jewish education, being fully aware that the complexity of the subject does not allow for a simple or detailed analysis.

### What is the target population?

All age groups, settings and forms of Jewish education.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Materials should encompass the various settings and age groups of Jewish education.

2. Materials should be both effective and available.

3. Educators (teachers, informal educators, etc.) should participate in in-service education programs where they can learn how to use curriculum and methods.

4. Personnel should be trained to use, implement (train others) and create materials.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We do know a good deal about our abilities to create materials for school age populations and settings; we assume, based on that fact (and perhaps incorrectly), a good deal about our ability to create materials for informal settings and other ages. We know a good deal about training educators to use materials and about working with school environments in introducing new curriculum ideas (i.e. there is considerable research in the general education field, some of which is relevant to Jewish education; and there is considerable practical work, most of which is currently not written up, about the implementation of curriculum in Jewish education) and we know something about training people as curriculum writers and trainers.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Some have argued that training teachers and helping them become their own "curriculum developers" might be preferable to working on curriculum materials per se or in working in larger institutions in a "top down" fashion. (E.g. Perhaps the local JCC or school or synagogue should be producing its own "materials" and these either may or may not be made available for larger dissemination.) This alternative will require

relieving talented teachers from a good part of their work and making consultants available to help them in the curriculum project.

**Do we have the know-how to implement this option?**

In some areas, such as formal education, yes. In informal education it is unclear what such curriculum should look like and how it should be produced.

**Is the personnel available?**

In most areas (including writing, producing and implementing curriculum): no.

But this differs among settings and even among the denominations. E.g. There is a shortage of teachers who could implement Hebrew language curriculum in almost all settings; there is a shortage of youth group leaders who could implement curriculum in almost all settings; in Jewish museums there seem to be excellent personnel for implementation of programs, but little personnel for creating curriculum materials for them to implement; there is a great shortage in the non-orthodox world of day school teachers for rabbinic literature (Talmud, Midrash, etc.,); there seem to be adequate numbers in supplementary school settings for teaching Jewish holidays, but not prayer or synagogue skills, etc.

There is a shortage of personnel for creating new materials or for training others in use of materials in almost all settings. At the very top of the training ladder there are some people available in Jewish education academic settings who could train future curriculum writers and planners and there are resources in secular education schools that could be put into play here as well.

**Are the materials available?**

This entire option is connected to this question and as mentioned above it is almost impossible to address in great detail. But a thumbnail sketch:

1) In the supplementary school arena: a good deal is available both from the national organizations and through "curriculum clearing houses" such as NERC at JESNA and the CAJE curriculum bank and from the commercial publishers (such as Behrman House). Some areas are very strong (Jewish holidays); some areas are very weak (teaching Israel); in some areas materials are available but for various reasons have not been effective (teaching Hebrew).

2) In the day school area: much less is available here in almost all subject areas except Hebrew language. Often "curriculum" in day schools simply means handing out a classical text for the class to study. Very little material of any seriousness, however, is available to help teachers teach rabbinic literature in a graded fashion, for example. Yes, there are materials in modern Hebrew; and there are literature books imported from

Israel, but these tend to present problems in the non-Israeli setting. There may be greater potential for adaptation of materials prepared in Israel.

3) For informal settings: recently some materials are starting to become available in the adult education domain. Otherwise very little in the way of materials exists, but there is potential based on programming experience and successes over many years (in youth groups, camps, JCCs, etc.). Some materials exist for specific localities and may not be relevant beyond that setting (e.g. Jewish museums).

4) Early childhood age: very little is available, although there is potential in using/adapting children's literature.

5) Adult: yes, much material exists (books on history, Israel, translations and commentaries on traditional sources, etc.) for the adult student, but very little has been done as *curriculum* per se (i.e. help for the *teachers* of adults), plus very little written material available beyond this formal domain. That is, materials for programs on adult identity, growth, etc. Even though some programs have been successful little has been preserved to help others implement such programs.

6) Family education: some material is available and some programs have been successful in specific localities but have not been turned into curriculum. However, this whole area suffers from vagueness. The term is used loosely, without definition and the goals for curriculum are unclear. Therefore it is hard at present to evaluate what exists and what can exist.

7) Computer and video materials both appropriate for children and of quality are lacking in almost all subject areas. Some video materials are available for adult education, but the full potential as *curriculum* has not yet been tapped.

**Is the physical infrastructure available?**

Not relevant.

**Is institutional support available?**

Yes.

**Is the funding available?**

Generally, not at present.

**Is the political support available?**

Unclear; depends on setting.

### What would the cost be?

Wide-range: It would include personnel for researching, writing and developing materials; personnel for training teachers in the use of new materials; and the costs for the actual production, testing and distribution of materials. In areas in which existing materials could serve as the basis of curriculum (e.g. adult education), the cost of producing curriculum would be lower than areas in which few materials exist (e.g. early childhood). There are areas in which there is currently debate over how to achieve our goals (Hebrew language) or even what those goals should be (family education) and planning and research in those areas would also entail additional cost.

### How long would it take to implement?

This is an ongoing activity and some materials could be created fairly rapidly; others would take much longer. All materials would need revision and continuing update.

### How important is this to the field?

The qualitative and quantitative improvement of curriculum and methods is important for the field of Jewish education, though not a necessary condition.

# OPTION #16 – TO DEVELOP EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

From 50,000 to several hundred thousand children, ages 2 to 6 years old (depending especially on the extent to which day care programs are developed).

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

Early childhood programs should:

1. Provide good emotional and interpersonal experiences for children.

2. Impart appropriate knowledge.

3. Encourage the desire by children and their parents to continue participating in Jewish education through the elementary and high-school years.

4. Involve their families in Jewish education.

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

Yes. Educators and psychologists have agreed that this is a very significant age for educational intervention, and that many important goals (depending on the nature of the educational program) could be attained e.g., language acquisition (Hebrew). We also know that emotional and cognitive experiences during early childhood could have an important effect on future education, and that parents are more involved with their children at this age.

While we know a good deal about early childhood programs, we do not have hard data on whether parents want *Jewish* education for their children in early childhood. In a few areas we are working with assumptions (e.g., that we could recruit and train the appropriate personnel).

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

There are those who suggest that a fresh look be taken at the whole age group, and not only concentrate on existing programs. This might include more extensive use of the media, books, games, parents and family education. We know less about these alternatives and there is almost no infrastructure for their introduction and implementation.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We have some and what is missing could probably be acquired.

### Is the personnel available?

There is a great shortage of qualified well-trained personnel. There are practically no existing training programs in North America for early childhood personnel in Jewish education.

### Are the materials available?

There is a great shortage of appropriate materials.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Yes.

### Is institutional support available?

Yes. It will probably be necessary to develop different strategies to increase the support by the different sponsoring agencies, namely, congregations, day schools, JCCs and others.

### Is the funding available?

For current programs, yes, but not for growth or for the development of staff and materials.

### Is the political support available?

There is some research that claims that there is a great deal of community support for these programs because of parent interest and general agreement about the potential impact of education for early childhood.

### Is the option timely?

Yes.

### What needs does this option answer?

There is evidence that there is a great demand for early childhood programs by both affiliated and less-affiliated parents.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Increased enrollment in Jewish elementary and high schools (supplementary and day).

2. Increased and more significant programs of family education due to greater ease of recruiting and parents at this time.

3. Greater effectiveness of Jewish schools due to the major motivation of their entering students and the mastery of basic skills and the Hebrew language.

### What would the cost be?

Salaries are by and large extremely low. We do not know what the cost of expansion — and of raising the quality — upgrading staff, salaries, and preparation of educational materials would involve.

### How long would it take to implement?

If a decision is taken to work in this area, a plan could be implemented within two years on a small scale. It could then be expanded incrementally.

### How important is this to the field?

Early childhood education could have a significant impact on the continuing education of children and their families. It is not a necessary condition.

# OPTION #18 – TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS FOR THE COLLEGE POPULATION

## DESCRIPTION

### What is the target population?

The population is the estimated 400,000 Jewish college and university students in North America. Of these, perhaps 100,000 are currently being serviced by Hillel Foundations or other Jewish agencies on campus. Of those not serviced, some choose not to participate though services are available; others are on campuses with no available services.

### What kind of programs are currently operating?

The largest provider of services is the National Hillel Foundation with 100 full foundations and 200 smaller operations. Other organizations also have representation on campus – including UAHC, AIPAC, and UJA. There are activist organizations such as Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, and houses off-campus such as Chabad House and the bayit project. College students also participate in missions to, and programs in, Israel and organized off-campus study experiences such as the Brandeis-Bardin Institute. There is an extensive network of over 600 on-campus Judaica programs in North America. Some are degree-granting departments with multiple course offerings while others may offer only a small number of individual courses.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. Increase opportunities for college students to identify as Jews, meet other Jews, learn more about Judaism and the Jewish community and develop an adult identity as a Jew.

2. To provide students with opportunities to view the Jewish community as pluralistic and multi-faceted and to learn to live and cooperate with Jews of diverse backgrounds, interests and ideologies.

3. To upgrade and expand the capacity of existing programs to provide for the Jewish needs of students by providing more and better trained personnel and funds for more extensive programming.

4. To make available services on the many campuses where no Jewish services currently exist.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We have the informed opinion of several generations of Hillel directors and other professionals on campus as to what works best on campuses to achieve these outcomes. We have little hard data in this area.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Some suggest a fresh look at the entire college population. Their alternatives include:

1. Much more extensive use of subsidized Israel programs.

2. Extended use of media and arts for on-campus programs and at-home use.

3. More effective use of retreat centers, conferences and summer institutes.

4. More direct servicing by local synagogues, JCCs, federations in home communities and on campus.

5. Better financing of student-run activities and religious groups on campus.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We know something about what it takes to run successful programs and start new ones on campus. We know less about alternative possibilities and how to effectively reach the population not currently serviced by existing programs.

### Is the personnel available?

To some extent. Personnel is drawn largely from three sources: rabbis, social or communal workers and professors on campus. Attracting and maintaining full-time professional personnel on the current level requires added funding and training facilities. Attracting, training and retaining full and part-time personnel on a level that would more adequately meet the needs of this population would require a major effort.

### Are the materials available?

Yes. There are well-established programs for use with this population. Dissemination of these programs for wider use is often lacking. Availability of new programs — such as more extensive use of media — is limited and needs fuller development.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

While college programming can draw on the physical facilities on the campus, there is much to be improved upon, especially in model programs. In some cases, the acquisition of a Hillel building made a dramatic difference in increasing outreach to students and quality of programs. Alternative off-campus options would sometimes envision acquiring new facilities for possible institutes, conferences and retreats.

### Is institutional support available?

Yes. While Bnai Brith is not able to carry alone the burden of full support, local federations and other national groups have lent support. Lacking is support for campuses not located near a Jewish community.

### Is the funding available?

Currently funding comes from three sources: national organizations, local federations and indigenous fund-raising. Funding is often at minimal levels and badly needs upgrading. Expansion of programs would certainly entail added funding.

### Is the political support available?

Yes, for continued presence on campus; less so for significant upgrading and expansion.

### Is the option timely?

As Jewish youth continue to be on campus and face assimilatory pressures, the option is timely.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. The students' need for affiliation, growth and acquisition of Jewish knowledge.

2. Parents' need to know their children will continue to experience a Jewish presence when away from home.

3. The community's need for continuity, for not losing its members at this vulnerable time to assimilation and intermarriage.

4. The community's need to have a source of young adults who will think of making a lay or professional commitment to working in the Jewish community.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. A more affiliated, better Jewishly educated young adult population.

2. A population with a greater appreciation for the pluralistic nature of the Jewish community.

3. Minimal services provided to thousands of students who currently are without; more substantial services to thousands who are currently underserviced.

### What would the cost be?

To use Hillel as an example, starting a new Hillel foundation, run at almost minimal level, costs $50,000 per year. Upgrading a functioning Hillel foundation to the level of a model program requires $500,000 per year. There are on-going costs for personnel training and development, as well as moderate costs for improving level of programming. Alternative programs add another level of expense. We do not have data on the cost of introducing programs or courses in Judaica on the college campus.

### How long would it take to implement?

Planning for alternatives and beginning new models requires a 2-3 year period. Upgrading existing programs requires about the same time period. Upgrading the quality of needed personnel could take longer, 5-7 years.

### How important is this to the field?

Some experts believe the college campus is a crucial battlefield for Jewish education. Others believe college is not an optimal opportunity for reaching young Jews given the nature of the college experience. It is not a necessary condition.

# OPTION #19 – TO ENHANCE THE USE OF MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

## DESCRIPTION

Media is a broad term that refers to a host of possible means for communicating information to an audience. In this paper we will concentrate on three forms of *visual* media - television, films and videos - and consider their potential uses for Jewish education. Two broad types of uses will be considered: media for home viewing in a family context and media as a means of instruction in a more formal learning environment. In the first we would think of television programs and videos which people would watch in their homes. In the second of using films and videos as part of instructional packages which educators would present in any number of contexts. While these limitations leave out many options which are currently in use (e.g. computer programming), they will allow us some clarity on the complex issues involved in introducing any of the new media into the world of Jewish education.

### What is the target population?

The target population is: (1) any Jewish viewer of television and/or user of home videos; (2) any group of participants in a Jewish educational program that could incorporate these media as part of the program.

The first is the broader of the two populations because it includes not only Jews who affiliate with the community and participate in Jewish educational programs, but also non- affiliated Jews who might watch a Jewish program on television or a video that deals with Jewish content. Secondly, but not insignificantly, this category extends also to non-Jews who might watch the same television programs or videos.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. To increase exposure to and knowledge of Jewish culture and tradition by providing viewers with programming on a wide variety of Jewish themes – from the holidays to history, calligraphy to cooking.

2. To make Jewish instruction and programming more effective by providing alternative, enlivening means of presenting materials to students and participants.

3. To bring Jewish materials more directly into homes and family life.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We know that high quality Jewish programming on public broadcast television can attract mass audiences, that local programming on cable television can attract smaller,

but consistent audiences and that Jewish film festivals can be popular with college and adult audiences. We know little about the integration of these media into Jewish instruction and programming, and little about the impact of home viewing on Jewish family life.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

Use of these media is thought of as the alternatives to the more traditional means of Jewish education. Experts, however, often point out that the traditional education and media can be seen as complementary to one another in the sense that a good media presentation can augment a classroom discussion; viewing a video drama might stimulate interest in reading more on that subject; or seeing a television documentary on Israel might lead to more involvement in Israel-related activities.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We are only beginning to learn how to use these media for best advantage in Jewish education. While more local communities are learning to use cable television for Jewish programming and are developing media centers to advise on the use of media in schools, JCC's, etc., we still have little know-how in training educators to incorporate media as an integral part of their educational instruction.

### Is the personnel available?

There are a wide variety of personnel to be considered, from those who produce the programs or films to those who distribute them to those who present them to groups of learners. On all levels there are more personnel available now - in Israel and in North America - than were available even in the recent past (e.g., media consultants in 24 local communities). However, there are vast gaps in the personnel that would be needed if this option were to be more fully implemented; from writers of materials for educational programs to teacher trainers in the use of media to teachers and curriculum writers who have the time and inclination to learn the skills of incorporating these media into educational instruction.

### Are the materials available?

Not to a great extent. There are many very valuable Jewish resources in film and television in Israel and North America that need to be made more commonly available for educational use. There is a great need to create appropriate, quality Jewish programs for the variety of subjects that make up the curriculum of Jewish learning. Even when high-quality media materials are available, their use in an educational setting is onLy as valuable as the way they are presented and incorporated into a coherent instructional package. We lack instructional packages for use in a variety of educational settings.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

While almost all homes have televisions and most have VCRs, most Jewish educational institutions are sorely lacking in proper facilities and equipment for satisfactory use of these media. How many day or supplementary schools have libraries with good viewing facilities or equipment? How many synagogues or camps are equipped to show quality films or videos?

### Is the institutional support available?

While more communities are supporting the cause of cable television, there is not yet comparable support for production of high-level programming for public broadcast television or for development of films or videos for instructional use. Some experts have called for a national educational service that would foster the creation and distribution of high-quality media materials, first for broadcast television and then for reuse on local cable television and in videos created for home or institutional use.

### Is the funding available?

No. The production and distribution of high-quality materials are extremely expensive, and with the exception of a few major projects which received foundation support, there are no regular funding sources currently available to carry the expense.

### Is the political support available?

As we all become increasingly aware of how the visual media are shaping our general culture and have become a powerful force in the Christian community, the political support seems to be building.

### Is the option timely?

Yes.

### What needs does this option answer?

1. The need of all Jews to see themselves and their culture well- represented in the media that increasingly shape our society.

2. The need of students on all levels of Jewish education to see the concepts and symbols of Judaism visually represented in ways that expand their understanding of them.

3. The need of educators to have more effective means of capturing the interests of a visually-oriented generation of students.

4. The need of the community to present itself and its interests as powerfully as possible on media that grant broad exposure.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

1. Existing programs in Jewish education could become more effective by increasing interest and involvement of students and families through use of media.

2. Jews who do not participate in educational programs could be exposed in their homes to Jewish content and ideas and possibly be attracted to seek greater communal involvement.

3. More and different people who would not ordinarily be involved as personnel in Jewish education might become resources for Jewish education (academics, statesmen, leaders in industry and business, etc.)

4. Jews and the general public might better understand the religious, cultural and political stances that are vital to Jewish survival via exposure and analysis on these media.

### What would the cost be?

While use of local cable television comes at a low cost, once the community becomes invested in producing high-quality programming and materials, the costs would rise dramatically. There would also be costs (more moderate) for media equipment and facilities, for curriculum development and teacher training.

### How long would it take to implement?

Gaining access to local cable television can de done in a relatively short time. Planning for a major broadcast from start to finish takes several years. Creating adequate facilities for viewing, developing curricular materials and teacher training programs could be undertaken in pilot projects in 1-2 years and be expanded more fully in 3-5 years using currently available media materials.

### How important is this to the field?

While this is not a necessary condition, there are experts who believe that this option is very important to the future of the field because of its potential for both wide exposure and appeal to a generation of students raised on television and the other visual media.

# OPTION #20 – TO DEAL WITH THE SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

## DESCRIPTION

To recruit, train and retain sufficient numbers of well qualified, dedicated professionals for all levels and settings of Jewish education. This will require developing the profession of Jewish education.

### What is the target population?

The over 30,000 educators working in formal settings; the professionals working in informal education, early childhood, family education, adult education, and special areas such as curriculum and the media; and the potential educators that could be recruited to fill the needs of growth and development.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

1. To recruit sufficient numbers of qualified, dedicated personnel for the many settings and clients of Jewish education.

2. To educate personnel in appropriate institutions and settings and to continue with on-the-job education.

3. To retain qualified and dedicated personnel by empowering them to develop the kind of education to which they are committed.

4. To make available the appropriate salaries and benefits so that educators can enjoy a respectable standard of living.

5. To create status for the profession of Jewish education so that appropriate candidates will be attracted.

6. To introduce and develop other elements that characterize a profession, e.g. a ladder of advancement, collegiality, certification, a body of knowledge and a code of ethics.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

There has been very little research done in this area but we are working with some assumptions. Initial efforts to recruit and train outstanding candidates for senior positions have been encouraging.

There have been very few thoughtfully planned approaches to the recruitment of teachers and the training of educators for informal settings. There are those who as-

sume that if educators are empowered, if they can truly effect education and are granted appropriate salaries and status, it would be possible to tap the nascent idealism of many young people and convince them to enter the field of Jewish education. Potential areas for recruitment include fields such as general education, Jewish studies and social work. Outstanding educators have been trained at the graduate schools of education.

Though the training programs (pre-service and in-service) require development, there is a good deal of knowledge available as to how to educate educators.

It is assumed that the profession can only be developed when there is significant community support for Jewish education.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

There are no alternatives. Some of the problems might be ameliorated by creative and sophisticated use of paraprofessionals and the media.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

There are some encouraging beginnings and interesting proposals that require sufficient funding in order to be undertaken.

### Is the personnel available?

In one sense this criteria is not relevant because the proposed outcome of this option is to recruit and train sufficient personnel for the field of Jewish education. However, there is a need for the personnel to educate educators in the various settings (pre- and in-service). There is a great shortage of professors of Jewish education and teacher trainers. For this purpose it may be possible to recruit some of the faculty from the programs of Jewish studies at universities and Jewish academics from the field of general education.

### Are the materials available?

Some materials are available; others could be prepared as programs are developed.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

At present, yes. As training programs are developed and new ones established there may be a need for additional buildings.

### Is institutional support available?

There are encouraging first signs that the institutions of higher Jewish learning, colleges of Jewish studies, local federations and some foundations are placing this issue high on their list of priorities.

### Is the funding available?

There are minimal funds available today. However, it is assumed that if this became a priority for the communal and private sector, sufficient funding would be made available.

### Is the political support available?

Yes, those who are concerned with Jewish education recognize the serious shortage of appropriate personnel.

### Is the option timely?

Yes.

### What needs does this option answer?

Every area of Jewish education requires large numbers of high quality educators.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

If there were sufficient high quality personnel available for the many settings of Jewish education, they would improve quality, introduce innovative and more effective programs, and most likely, increase the numbers of participants in educational programs.

### What would the cost be?

Implementing this option will be very expensive. There has been no study or analysis made of the appropriate salary range needed to attract and retain personnel. There is little information about what the cost would be for building the profession, including adding the many positions that are needed such as faculty for the training of educators, developers of educational materials, etc.

### How long would it take to implement?

Thoughtful experiments could be introduced within a two-year period. This will be an ongoing activity and it can accelerate depending on the commitment of the Jewish community and available funding.

### How important is this to the field?

To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education is a pre-condition for any significant impact in Jewish education. Experts agree that the educator is

the single most important factor in the process of education. The educator is crucial to the improvement of existing programs, the recruitment of additional clients for education, as well as the introduction of innovative ideas and programs.

It is claimed that outstanding community leaders will become involved in the cause of Jewish education if they believe they can develop a partnership with devoted, qualified personnel.

# OPTION #21 – TO DEAL WITH THE COMMUNITY – ITS LEADERSHIP AND ITS STRUCTURES – AS MAJOR AGENTS FOR CHANGE IN ANY AREA; and

# OPTION #26 – TO GENERATE SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

## DESCRIPTION

These two options are closely related and should be treated as a single option.

### What is the target population?

The target population is the lay and professional leaders who contribute to creating the climate for Jewish education, such as scholars, rabbis, heads of institutions of higher learning, denomination and day school leaders, and the leaders of the American Jewish community who relate to the planning for and financing of Jewish education. The chief organization targets are the local congregations and organizations which are leaders in Jewish education, and local Jewish community federations, particularly in the large and intermediate cities, major Jewish- sponsored foundations, and the national CJF, JWB and JESNA.

### What are the desired outcomes of this option?

The Commission is committed to being proactive in the effort to improve Jewish education. Specifically, it should attract the highest level of community leadership in order to create a climate which will offer educators greater professional substance, fulfillment and status, and which will attract maximum community support. It should encourage a substantial increase in federation and foundation funding for Jewish education. It should encourage community-wide planning to promote maximum cooperation and coordination between formal and informal Jewish education.

## CRITERIA

### Do we know if the outcomes can be achieved?

We believe that there can be major achievements, because of the widespread concern for Jewish continuity and the improved climate for Jewish education; the impetus for forward movement which will be generated by the Commission and by local committees on Jewish education; and the availability of substantially increased community financial resources which could be made available for this purpose.

### Are there alternative ways to achieve these outcomes?

The alternative to an aggressive program now would likely be much slower improvement. The purpose of pursuing the community and financing options is to speed up the desired improvements in Jewish education.

### Do we have the know-how to implement this option?

We know how to organize the community to carry out the purposes of this option. There are good opportunities for collaborative action and there are organizations through which our message can be transmitted and actions taken.

### Is the personnel available?

The necessary personnel is available in the lay and professional leadership of the Commission, of the federation movement, of the Jewish sponsored foundations, and of the CJF, JESNA and JWB, and in the leadership of organizations currently engaged in formal and informal Jewish education.

### Are the materials available?

This question is not applicable.

### Is the physical infrastructure available?

Not applicable.

### Is institutional support available?

Yes, in the Jewish community federations, the Jewish-sponsored foundations, the national Jewish agencies, and the agencies engaged in Jewish education.

### Is the funding available?

The obvious purpose of this option is to see that the necessary funding become available. Funding is potentially available in the form of federation and foundation endowments, and possibly in re-allocation of annual federation budgets.

### Is the political support available?

Jewish leaders understand that the continuity of the Jewish people and of the Jewish community of North America depends greatly upon major improvement in Jewish education. This sentiment should lead to recognition of the need for substantially greater support for Jewish education. Some persons believe that adequate political support is not yet available, and this may be true in some communities.

### Is the option timely?

This is the best time in our generation to pursue this option. There is widespread concern for constructive Jewish continuity and the preservation of the Jewish value system. In the past year or two, there have emerged comprehensive committees to plan for improved Jewish education in at least nine communities, committees which could be vehicles through which to follow up on the Commission's findings and recommendations.

### What needs does this option answer?

This option is basic to carrying out the whole purpose of the Commission to ensure Jewish continuity through a vastly improved system of Jewish education.

### What benefits could be anticipated?

A general and major improvement in the Jewish education product of the Jewish community.

### What would the cost be?

It is very difficult to give a specific figure. However, it is clear that the cost will be high, perhaps on the order of doubling the community's investment in Jewish education rather than modest increases.

### How long would it take to implement?

Some of the improvements can be accomplished within a few years after the Commission reports. Substantial improvement should be realized in a 5-10 year period.

### How important is this to the field?

It is crucial to the purpose of the Commission. Without a commitment by community leadership and greatly increased financing, the recommendations of the Commission will be simply one more study of Jewish education which makes good reading but has little result. On the other hand, real community leadership commitment and substantially increased financing can make a major impact on the Jewish education product and on its positive influence for Jewish continuity.

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# COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

BACKGROUND MATERIALS
FOR THE MEETING OF
JUNE 14, 1989

**Convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations,**
**JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF**

June 1, 1989

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. At its meeting on December 13, 1988 the Commission decided to focus its work initially on two options.

- To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education; and
- To deal with the community – its structures, leadership and funding as major agents for change.

2. There was consensus that we should deal with personnel and the community. It was recognized that these are enabling options, pre-conditions for effecting all of the programmatic options, and thereby likely to improve Jewish education in all areas. Some commissioners reminded us that agreement has existed for a long time, that these areas are in need of improvement, but expressed concern as to whether any ways can be found to significantly improve them.

3. Since the meeting on December 13th, almost all commissioners have been consulted. Two key questions have emerged:

A. Do we know *what* should be done in the areas of personnel and the community?

**Are there any important ideas?**

B. Do we know *how* it should be done?

**Are there strategies for implementation?**

4. Throughout the consultations, ideas were proposed by commissioners and other experts, programs were brought to our attention by practitioners in the field, and we were informed of current trends and developments in the areas of both personnel and community.

5. **The Community:**

We learned that key lay leaders of the community are taking a new interest in Jewish education; that eleven commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity, coordinated by CJF, have been established in communities; that private foundations interested in Jewish education are growing in number and size, and more.

6. **Personnel:**

Our assumption was reinforced that in dealing with personnel the approach would have to be comprehensive, that **recruitment, training, retention and profession-building** would have to be addressed simultaneously. There are many interesting and promising ideas in each of these areas. Some of these ideas have been tried and are considered successful; others have been formulated and seem convincing. However, we were also made aware of the paucity of data and the absence of planned, systematic efforts.

7. We learned that the **personnel and community options are inter-related** and that any strategy must involve them both. If we hope to recruit outstanding people, they will have to believe that the community is embarking on a new era for Jewish education. An infusion of dedicated and qualified personnel into the field will help convince parents that Jewish education can make a difference in the lives of their children and in the life-styles of their families.

8. This task—bringing about change in the areas of personnel and community—is vast and complex and will be difficult to address at once and across-the-board throughout North America. Because much of education takes place on the local level, and because we recognize the importance of the local community playing a major role in initiating ideas and being leading partners in their implementation, **it is suggested that the Commission consider establishing a program to develop community action sites.**

9. A community action site could involve an entire community, a network of institutions or one major institution where ideas and programs that have succeeded, as well as new ideas and experimental programs, would be implemented. If successful, other communities might be inspired to apply the lessons learned in community action sites to their own communities.

10. Working on the local scene will require the involvement and assistance of national institutions and organizations. Local efforts will not reach their full potential without the broad and sustained contribution of experts on the national level. **A community action site requires both local initiative and involvement, and national expertise.**

11. As these multiple and complex issues are being considered, many questions emerge. How does one begin to plan the local initiatives that will eventually lead to wide-spread change? Who will be the broker between the national resources and the institutions and individuals in the communities where projects are undertaken? How can one bring the best practice of Jewish education in the world to bear on specific programs? Who will see to it that successful endeavours are brought to the attention of other communities and that the ideas are appropriately diffused?

These are some of the questions that will be on the agenda of the Commission as it convenes for its third meeting on June 14, 1989.

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June 1, 1989

# WORK IN PROGRESS:

# FROM THE SECOND TO THE THIRD MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

## I. Background

Between August and December 1988, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America engaged in a decision-making process aimed at identifying those areas where intervention could significantly affect the impact of Jewish education/Jewish continuity in North America.

A wide variety of possible options reflecting the commitments, concerns and interests of the commissioners were considered—any one of which could have served as the basis for the Commission's agenda. It was recognized that the options could be usefully divided into two large categories: enabling options and programmatic options. The Commission decided to focus its work *initially* on two of the enabling options:

1. To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education; and

2. To deal with the community—its leadership, structures and funding, as major agents for change.

At the same time, many commissioners urged that work also be undertaken in various programmatic areas (e.g. early childhood, day schools, supplementary schools, informal education, the media, Israel Experience programs, programs for college students).

## II. The Challenge: Ideas and Strategies

The consensus among commissioners on the importance of dealing with personnel and the community did not alleviate the concern expressed by some as to whether ways can be found to significantly improve the situation in these two areas. These commissioners reminded us that agreement that these areas are in need of improvement has existed for a long time among educators and community leaders. Articles have been written; conferences have been held; solutions have been suggested; programs have been tried. Yet significant improvement has not occurred. Some claim that we may know what the problems are, but have not devised solutions that would address them, nor workable strategies for implementing them effectively in the field.

The challenge for the Commission at this time is to address these issues and ask the following questions:

1. **What should be done in the areas of personnel and the community?** What are some of the ideas that could help us begin our work, ideas that would address the problems of recruitment, training and retention of personnel as well as of profession-building? What are some of the ideas that would change the way the

community addresses Jewish education—through involving outstanding leadership, generating significant additional funding, building the appropriate structures, and changing the climate?

2. **How should it be done?** How should this commission propose translating ideas into practice, developing them into programs for implementation? How should it go about changing matters in the field? What strategies should guide the implementation of these ideas?

## III. What Should Be Done

Many factors contribute to the conviction that at the present time effective action to improve Jewish education can be undertaken with a reasonable chance for success. Ideas that were proposed by commissioners and other experts, programs that were brought to our attention by practitioners in the field and current trends and developments in both the personnel and community areas support this conviction.

### A. The Community

*1. Recent Developments*

As the attached paper "Community Organization for Jewish Education in North America: Leadership, Finance and Structure" by Henry L. Zucker illustrates (see Appendix 1) there are a number of encouraging developments taking place in the way that the North American community relates to Jewish education.

- Key lay leaders of the community are taking a new interest in Jewish education.
- Eleven communities have organized local commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity, coordinated by CJF. Other communities are considering establishing such commissions. (See "Federation-Led Community Planning for Jewish Education, Identity and Continuity," by Joel Fox, Appendix 2.)
- The establishment of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America has generated a good deal of interest.
- Federations have begun placing Jewish education higher on the list of their priorities.
- Private foundations interested in Jewish education, are growing in number and size. Several have already funded important programs.
- The institutions of higher Jewish learning are in the process of developing and intensifying their education and training programs.
- JESNA and some bureaus are planning and have undertaken important initiatives in formal and informal Jewish education.
- JWB's report on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of JCCs is being implemented and first results are apparent.
- The denominations, nationally and locally, are developing important new educational materials, methods and technologies for schools, camps, and youth movements.

*2. Next Steps*

As this Commission begins to respond to the challenges of the community option, it can be encouraged by these and other

activities. The Commission should carefully study and analyze the developing momentum, seek to build on it, and consider what additional steps could help the Jewish community provide the greatest possible support for across-the-board improvement in Jewish education.

## B. Personnel

*1. A Comprehensive Approach*

**There are shortages of personnel in all areas and for all age groups.** Dealing with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education will require the Commission to consider a series of complex problems and challenges. Little has been done in this area and significant development is needed. Although there have been efforts at improvement, no **systematic, comprehensive, well-funded approach has been undertaken.**

The absence of such a comprehensive approach may even diminish the impact of sound programs. For example, we know that salaries for teachers are low, yet increasing salaries has not always had the expected impact of attracting new and qualified personnel to the field. Evidence from both general and Jewish education points to the fact that salaries alone are not enough to bring about change, rather they have to be combined with other measures such as improving status, empowering educators, intensifying training and developing career opportunities.

To deal effectively with the personnel option requires that **recruitment, training, profession-building and retention** be addressed simultaneously. Since the last meeting of the Commission in December, we have been studying these four topics. We have learned of many interesting and promising ideas, and at the same time, we are aware of a paucity of data and of the absence of planned, systematic efforts.

*2. Some Examples*

What follows are some examples of the ideas suggested by experts. Some of these experts are scholars, some practitioners, some researchers and theoreticians, some community leaders. Some of these ideas have been tried and are considered successful. Others have been formulated and seem convincing and promising. All require further study and careful consideration.

### a. RECRUITMENT OF PERSONNEL

How could we increase the pool of talented people who will join personnel training programs and who can be recruited to work as educators in the field? Commissioners and other experts have pointed to the fact that no comprehensive approach to recruitment has been undertaken. A number of questions arise, including: who to recruit, where to recruit, how to recruit, under what circumstances could recruitment succeed? When do students make their career decisions – in high school? in college? Should we recruit people at various ages? What institutions and programs are likely feeder systems for the profession of Jewish education – camps, youth movements, programs in Israel? What is their potential today? At which special population pools should we target recruitment efforts?

*Some Suggestions:*

- Recruit educators from general education: There is a pool of young Jewish educators working in general education. Many have excelled in fields such

as early childhood education and adult education and could be recruited and retrained for Jewish education. In order to tap this resource, we would need to find out under what circumstances such people could be attracted and recruited.

- Recruit Judaic studies majors and graduates: A recent study has indicated that there may be a significant number of students majoring in Jewish studies at general universities who could be recruited for the field of Jewish education.

- Recruit people considering a career change: In general education there are encouraging experiments in progress on recruiting people who are considering mid-career changes in their profession.

- Recruit rabbinical school graduates: At present, a significant proportion of rabbinical school students choose to specialize in education. This may be an important pool for candidates for senior positions.

- Recruit graduates of schools and camps: There is reason to believe that there is a significant pool of dedicated and committed graduates of schools and camps who could make an important contribution during their college years to the supplementary school, the JCC and Israel Experience programs. These young people have decided on careers in business, law, medicine and academia, but are willing and interested in making a contribution to Jewish continuity. Under proper circumstances, and with appropriate rewards – both financial and intellectual – they could enhance and complement the work of full-time professionals.

Some of these ideas, such as recruiting Judaic Studies majors have been studied; others, like re-tooling people from general education, are being selectively tried. Some new ideas are untried and need to be studied. They all need to be looked at in a new and fresh way.

### b. TRAINING

Any effort to improve personnel will have to involve a significant development of training opportunities. What kind of training should take place for the various populations – on-the-job? pre-service? training for specially recruited populations? Where could it be done? In existing institutions? In Judaic departments of general universities? In Israel? What should be the content of training? What should be the relationship and balance between Jewish studies, pedagogy, administration, etc.? These are only some of the questions that will need to be examined.

*Some suggestions:*

- Some institutes and summer courses exist. They should be expanded. Large scale institutes and summer courses – similar to those that exist in general education – could be established for the improvement of the teaching of Jewish subjects (e.g. courses for teachers of Bible, Hebrew, Jewish history). Such programs would enhance the work of supplementary school teachers, day school teachers, JCC educators, principals and researchers.

- In-service courses to help educators use special techniques could be introduced. For example, programs could be offered to help teachers become comfortable with, and experience the practical benefits to be derived from, the use of media and technology in their work.

- Judaic Studies departments in general universities could be encouraged to offer in-service training courses throughout the year for Jewish educators, formal and informal.
- The use of Israel's educational resources should be expanded. As one example, currently a group of senior JCC executives is spending three months in Israel studying in a program organized by JWB. Such programs could be expanded and adapted for formal educators.
- The training capacity in North America needs to be strengthened. The faculty of existing training institutions is small and must be expanded. Some suggestions are:

* New positions for professors of Jewish education must be created.

* Judaica professors at general universities could be recruited to bolster the existing training programs by adding the expertise of their specific field of knowledge (e.g. Bible, Talmud, etc.).

* Jewish professors in university departments of education, psychology, philosophy and sociology could be recruited to teach in the education programs at institutions of higher Jewish learning.

* Outstanding practitioners who have succeeded in schools or informal settings should share their wisdom by joining the faculty of training programs.

* Creative combinations of these ideas might rapidly enhance the capability of the training of Jewish educators.

Many more ideas for dealing with the shortages in the area of training have been suggested. Some, involving fellowships and stipends, are already under way. Others involve building the research capability for Jewish education so that programs and ideas can be effectively monitored and evaluated. A blend of some of these ideas and others would yield fruitful results.

### c. BUILDING THE PROFESSION

Can Jewish education be developed into a fully recognized profession? Is this a pre-condition for increasing recruitment to the field? How can it be done? How much of it must be done? Some of the elements involved include status (which in turn is related to salaries, benefits, empowerment, etc.), career opportunities, certification, collegial networking, a code of professional ethics and an agreed upon body of knowledge. All of these are part of what makes a profession. As we consulted with commissioners and other experts, the following suggestions were made:

- Salaries and benefits are important and should be improved. However, they alone are not enough to change the status of educators.
- The empowerment of educators—strengthening their role in setting educational policy and content—is the subject of a major debate and of experiments in general education in North America. The role of empowerment for Jewish educators, particularly teachers, must be carefully considered and the insights derived from general education should be evaluated.
- Career opportunities that offer a variety of options for advancement need to be developed. Outstanding teachers should have other options for advancement besides administrative

positions (e.g. assistant principal, principal) for which they may or may not be qualified. Other senior positions, such as specialists in Bible, family education, special education, adult education, and curriculum development, should be created.

- Networks of collegiality exist only in limited form. Journals, conferences and professional communication networks should be enlarged and developed. The rapid and impressive success of CAJE serves as an encouraging example.

We will have to consider to what extent these elements need to be introduced if we hope to recruit and retain talented people for the field.

#### d. RETENTION

Significant numbers of educators leave the field after a few years. Preliminary studies indicate that issues of status, empowerment, salaries, relationship with lay boards and with superiors, excessive administrative work, etc. contribute to the attrition. We have to learn more about educators, their motivations, their aspirations, to address the issue of retention more effectively.

## IV. Interim Summary

As discussion of these four elements shows, and as we were reminded throughout our consultations, it is imperative to approach the problem of personnel by dealing with all four elements simultaneously—recruitment, training, profession-building, retention. It will be very difficult—if not impossible—to recruit if we do not build the profession. It will be very difficult to raise the large sums of money necessary to build the needed training programs unless many more students are attracted to Jewish education. The entire enterprise will suffer if talented educators are discouraged and prematurely leave the field.

**The community and personnel options are interrelated and a strategy involving both must be devised.** If we hope to recruit outstanding people, they will have to believe that the community is embarking on a new era for Jewish education. They will have to believe that they are entering a field where there will be reasonable salaries, a secure career line, where their ideas will make a difference and where they will be in a position to influence the future. Creating these conditions will require a commitment by the North American Jewish Community at the continental and local levels.

An infusion of dedicated and qualified personnel into the field of Jewish education will help convince parents that Jewish education can make a difference in the lives of their children and in the life-styles of their families. The community, through its leadership, will then be able to more effectively design and take the steps necessary to place Jewish education higher on its list of priorities.

## V. Bringing About Change

### A. From Ideas to Community Action Sites

Implicit in the notion of change is the assumption that one knows what should be changed and can demonstrate it. However, at this time, some of what should be changed and demonstrated has not yet been developed.

How can we determine which ideas are worth our investment? How comprehensive must our approach be? How can we know what combination of ideas and programs are likely to have the greatest impact? How can we decide where to begin?

These questions and others can only be resolved in real-life situations. The solution to questions, the specifics of educational plans and programs, need to be worked out in the actual situation, tailored to the particular students, educators, environment and content. Plans and programs need to be fine-tuned and adapted as implementation proceeds. How can we structure a way to move from plans to implementation, from theory to practice?

This task—bringing about change in the areas of personnel and the community through implementation—is vast and complex and will be difficult to address at once and across-the-board throughout North America. We believe, however, that it could be feasible to begin such undertakings on the local level, in communities. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Much of education takes place on the local level—in the communities, in schools, synagogues, community centers, camps.

2. Experts have reminded us that there are many advantages to building programs "from the bottom up"—with the local community playing a major role in initiating ideas and being leading partners in their implementation—thereby establishing ownership of the initiative.

3. Significant human resources and energy are required to implement a comprehensive undertaking (one that would involve all or many aspects of personnel—recruitment, training, profession-building, retention—and of community). If such an undertaking is done on a local level—during its experimental stage—its scope will be more manageable. It will be easier to find the people needed to run the project.

4. In addition to the educators currently available, a community could mobilize other outstanding people from among its rabbis, scholars of Judaica, federation executives and Jewish scholars in the humanities and social sciences for the local project.

5. A local project could be managed in a hands-on manner. It could, therefore, be constantly improved and fine-tuned.

6. There are already ideas and programs (best practices) that, if brought together in one site, integrated and implemented in a complementary way, could have a significantly greater impact than they have today when their application is fragmented.

7. In addition to proven ideas, new visions of Jewish education which have not yet been tried could be translated into practice and careful experimentation, in a more manageable way.

8. The results of a local undertaking would be tangible and visible—hopefully within a reasonable amount of time. As such, they could

generate interest and reactions that might lead to a public debate on the important issues of Jewish education.

9. A network could be developed among local sites which could increase the impact of each and, hopefully, generate interest among additional communities to replicate and adapt this approach.

At the same time we recognize the indispensable contribution that must be made through the broad and sustained efforts of experts working "from the top down." Working on the local scene will require the involvement and assistance of the national organizations and training institutions. Local efforts will not reach their full potential unless supported by the expertise of the national institutions and organizations. In turn, for the national institutions, local experiments would be an opportunity to test and develop new concepts in Jewish education.

Our challenge is to work simultaneously on the local and national levels. We need to combine these two approaches rather than treat them separately. For these reasons, **we suggest that the Commission develop a program for communities that wish to become Community Action Sites**, and can deal effectively with both the community and personnel options.

A Community Action Site could involve an entire community, a network of institutions, or one major institution. Here some of the best ideas and programs in Jewish education would be initiated in as comprehensive a form as possible. It would be a site where the ideas and programs that have succeeded, as well as new ideas and experimental programs, would be undertaken. Work at this site will be guided by visions of what Jewish education at its best can be.

An assumption implicit in the suggestion of a Community Action Site is that other communities would be able to see what a successful approach to the community and personnel options could be, and would be inspired to apply the lessons learned to their own communities.

### B. From Community Action Sites to Implementation

As these multiple and complex issues are being considered, many questions emerge. How does one begin to plan the local initiatives that will eventually lead to widespread change? Who will be the broker between the national resources and the institutions and individuals in the communities where projects are undertaken? How can one bring the best practice of Jewish education in the world to bear on specific programs? Who will be responsible for the effective implementation of local projects? What can ensure that standards and goals are maintained? Who will see to it that successful endeavours are brought to the attention of other communities and that the ideas are appropriately diffused?

There is a case for initiating change through Community Action Sites. However, as the above issues reveal, it is clear that an answer is needed to the question of "How will this be done?". If demonstration projects will be undertaken in Community Action Sites of one form or another they will have to be researched, planned, funded, implemented. Community Action Sites will need to be carefully chosen. Their professional and lay leadership will need to be engaged to take the project in hand.

For projects to have their full impact, standards will have to be set and maintained. Lessons will have to be learned from the implementation. Information will have to be diffused to additional sites and throughout the community about what works and what can be replicated or adapted. How will this complex enterprise be undertaken?

These are some of the questions that will be on the agenda of the Commission as it convenes for its third meeting on June 14, 1989.

Appendix 1

# COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR JEWISH EDUCATION:

## Leadership, Finance and Structure

by

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June 1, 1989

The Commission selected from a long list of option papers produced for its December 13th meeting what the Commission believes to be the "enabling options," those which are basic to improvement in the programmatic options. The "enabling options" have to do with personnel and with community and financing. Jewish education progress depends on improvement in teaching and administrative personnel, and on the ability of the Commission to raise the priority and funding levels which the American Jewish community assigns to Jewish continuity and Jewish education. Setting a higher community priority on Jewish education is a pre-condition to developing better quality Jewish education personnel.

On December 13, we listed options under the titles "to deal with the community--its leadership and its structures--as major agents for change in any area," and "to generate significant additional funding for Jewish education."

This paper combines these two options under the new title "Community Organization for Jewish Education--Leadership, Finance, and Structure."

This paper complements the content of the previous option papers with what has been learned from commissioners and staff in meetings and in individual discussions.

## COMMUNITY

What is the community we are talking about in connection with formal and informal Jewish education?

By community we mean the organized Jewish community as it relates to the issues of Jewish continuity, commitment and learning, and to communal organizations and personnel engaged in these issues. Our target population includes the lay and professional leaders who create the content and the climate for Jewish formal and informal education, such as teachers, principals, communal workers, scholars, rabbis, heads of institutions of higher learning, denomination and day school leaders, and the leaders of the American Jewish community who are involved in planning for and financing Jewish education. The chief organization targets at the local level are the religious congregations, Jewish Community Centers, schools and agencies under communal sponsorship, Jewish community federations and bureaus of Jewish education (particularly in the large and intermediate cities), and major Jewish-sponsored foundations. On the national level, we have the Council of Jewish Federations, JWB, JESNA, the chief denominational and congregational bodies, training institutions, and associations of educators and communal workers who are engaged in formal and informal Jewish education.

It is expected that the Commission's findings and its proactive stance will be directed primarily to these persons and organizations, and will help them to make major improvements in Jewish education.

## LEADERSHIP

Prior to World War II, the leadership of the organized American Jewish community did not consider Jewish education a top priority for communal concern. Indeed, a large proportion of the leadership was indifferent and some even antagonistic to community support for Jewish education. In the early days of federation, emphasis was on the social services and on the Americanization of the new immigrants. During World War II and in the post-War period, the highest priority for community leaders was the lifesaving work of Jewish relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, and then nation-building in Israel. More recently, community leadership has put a higher premium on Jewish education. There is an increasing awareness of the need for total community support of Jewish education. There appears to be a reordering of community priorities in the direction of Jewish education and an awareness that healthy Jewish continuity requires a deeper community commitment to the education of the younger generation.

What is clear now is that to establish a highest communal planning and funding priority for Jewish education requires the involvement of the highest level of community leadership. This leadership is now very much concerned about the healthy continuity of the Jewish people in the North American setting. They are beginning to translate this concern into an understanding that top leadership must be forceful in promoting the Jewish education enterprise.

Not all of the commissioners are convinced that Jewish education is now seen by key lay leadership as a top community priority. However, most believe that there is a decided trend toward involvement of top leadership, and that the battle to create a highest communal priority for Jewish education is well on its way to being won. Certainly there is still a marked difference among local communities in the degree to which they support Jewish education. It is clear that the Commission has a special mission to convince the North American Jewish community leadership that their personal involvement in Jewish education is necessary, if we are to improve Jewish education and stem the tide of Jewish indifference and assimilation.

## STRUCTURE

Commission members appear to agree that we have not yet developed community structures that are adequate to effect the necessary improvements in Jewish education. This criticism is directed both at local and national structures. There are recent and current efforts at improvement. Some areas which require continuing examination are:

1. The relationship among federations, bureaus of Jewish education, communal schools and congregations.

2. The place of federations in planning and budgeting for Jewish education and in financing Jewish education, and the relationship of federations to bureaus of Jewish education.

3. The need for forceful national leadership in establishing standards for the field, in promoting, encouraging, and evaluating innovations, and in spreading the application of best practices as they are discovered all over the continent.

Fortunately, JESNA, JWB and CJF are currently engaged in efforts to examine these issues, and at least eleven federations are involved in comprehensive studies of their communities' Jewish education programs. The Commission may wish to develop its own ideas regarding what new or improved structures are needed to speed up improvements in the field.

## FINANCE

Congregations, tuition payments by parents, and fund-raising, especially by day schools, have been mainstays of Jewish education financing. These sources of support are crucial and should be encouraged (there is some support for the idea that tuition should be discontinued as a source of support). There is a consensus, nevertheless, that considerably new funding is required from federations as the primary source of organized community funding. It is believed, too, that substantial funding will need to come from private foundations and leading families which have an identified concern for Jewish continuity and Jewish education.

It is believed that communal patterns of funding may need to be altered and that there may need to be changes in organization relationships to accommodate this. Cooperation between the congregations and the federations is essential to developing the funds needed to improve Jewish education.

Some specific suggestions have been made by commissioners for new programs to improve Jewish education which would require new funding. For example, one suggestion is the establishment of a national Jewish education fund to provide matching funds to support program ideas developed at the local level. Another suggestion is the establishment and funding of a national pension fund for the benefit of Jewish education personnel. These or other ideas, if and when recommended, will need to attract new funding sources. One commissioner believes that the Commission would most likely make its greatest contribution to Jewish education by developing new ideas such as these and finding the funding for them.

It is clear that the Commission intends to be proactive in its effort to improve Jewish education. This will very likely include encouraging additional funding from traditional sources and funding from new sources.

There is a feeling of optimism that greater funds can be generated for Jewish education in spite of the current great demand for communal funding for other purposes. There is evidence that a number of communities are already beginning to place a higher funding priority on Jewish education and that a trend has begun to allocate a greater proportion of Jewish communal funds to this field. There is also the fortuitous circumstance that federation endowment funds--a relatively new source of communal funds--are growing at a good pace and these funds can be an important

source of support for Jewish education. Simultaneously, there is a recent and current growth of substantial family foundations--a post-World War II phenomenon which has accelerated in recent years, and promises to be an important new funding resource to meet Jewish communal needs. A number of such foundations have an expressed interest in Jewish education.

In general, therefore, there is reason for optimism that additonal funding will be available for well-considered programs to improve and expand Jewish education.

It needs to be noted that some commissioners have expressed themselves to the effect that "throwing money" at Jewish education will not by itself do the job. They believe that, at the same time, there needs to be a careful review of current programs and administrative structures to see how these can be improved. They believe that we need to encourage monitoring and evaluation of projects aimed at improving Jewish education. Careful attention to the quality of what we are attempting to do and honest and perceptive evaluations are needed, both to get appropriate results for what is being spent and also to encourage funding sources.

In brief, then, it is clear that there is a consensus that improvements in the field of Jewish education will require an infusion of considerably greater funds. It is believed that traditional funding sources need to place a higher priority on funding Jewish education, and allocating a greater proportion of their total budget to Jewish education. There is also a consensus that considerable new funding will need to be generated from private foundations and leading families which are concerned about Jewish continuity and Jewish education, and from federation endowment funds. Cooperation between the congregations and the federations is basic to a sound development of the financial requirements to improve Jewish education, and prior organizational patterns may need to be altered to accomodate funding changes.

Finally, it is worth repeating this word of caution: money alone will not bring about the needed improvements. We will need to ensure the effective administration and utilization of funds. We will need to monitor and evaluate current and new programs to assure that improvements are realized. Only then will funding sources of all kinds be encouraged to continue and increase their support.

Appendix 2

# FEDERATION-LED COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR JEWISH EDUCATION, IDENTITY AND CONTINUITY

by

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Prepared for

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

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For the last few years, local North American Jewish community planning agendas have been shifting, evolving to a point of much more concentration on issues related to Jewish survival and continuity. While traditional community planning for special subpopulations such as the disabled and aging continues, many communities have rearranged their planning priorities to focus more resources and attention on questions about the nature of our North American Jewish community in the 21st century.

The national planning agenda has provided the impetus for this change, with major national agencies including the JAFI Jewish Education Committee (North America), JESNA, CAJE, JWB and the CJF all raising the visibility of Jewish education and continuity as an issue of primary concern requiring extraordinary community efforts.

A second impetus for change has come from research. Within both academic and communal circles a number of influential studies have recently been published which have given support to concerns about Jewish continuity and pointed towards possible solutions for problems faced in the field. These include the work done by Perry London and his colleagues at Harvard on Jewish identity formation[1], by Alvin Schiff and his colleagues in New York on supplementary schools[2], and by Barry Shrage in Cleveland on experimentation leading to institutional change[3]. These studies, along with many others, suggest the need for changes in our communal funding priorities, in our basic educational approaches and in the breadth of players involved in Jewish education. This article will explore the implications of this knowledge as a guide to federations entering this field.

## CHANGING ROLES FOR FEDERATIONS

Jonathan Woocher's concept of the "communalization" of Jewish education sets the stage for a new role for federations to be directly involved in broad-based community planning for Jewish education and continuity. We have learned from the national efforts that community-wide collaborative efforts are necessary for Jewish education planning to be meaningful in the 1990s. It is clear that many institutions have long played and will continue to play essential roles in the delivery of educational services, creation of educational materials, the training and support of educational personnel, and evaluation. What is newly emerging is the realization that federations can serve a key role in the communalization of Jewish education by facilitating and coordinating the community's efforts at improving its educational systems. Federations will not replace the work of BJE's, synagogues or JCC's, but they can add a vital new dimension to the field of Jewish education by addressing changing norms in communal life, involving the highest level of leadership and accessing new levels of funding.

Top community leadership is, of course, federations' most valuable asset. These are the people who are able to focus others on an issue and generate and move funding towards a particular goal. The leadership is also best able to reestablish community norms and address the dissonance between family practices and Jewish customs as learned in school. There are many national leaders from

CJF, JWB, JESNA and elsewhere getting deeply involved in this issue and working with their peers to get them involved.

Access to funding is another major reason to have federations at the center of the new movement towards the primacy of Jewish education and Jewish continuity on the communal agenda. Federations will be called upon to raise more money to address these issues, manage the difficult process of rearranging existing community priorities, and work with people who are capable of establishing special purpose funds to assure this activity in perpetuity. Federations can bring to bear endowment and ongoing operating support to leverage other money for this purpose. The new program concepts are big, expensive and broad-based enough to require the communities' "central address" to be the key player and coordinator and to work alongside other communal and religious organizations to bring about the desired changes.

Partnering with the synagogues is another role for federations. After all, about 80 percent of our young people who get some Jewish education get it in a synagogue school. These key service providers can neither do the whole job alone, nor should they be asked to give up their autonomy. Rather, we have started to see incredible strength in the joint-venture approach--since everyone will win if we are successful.

## MODELS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Many federations have already engaged in Federation-led community planning for Jewish identity and continuity. Commissions, committees and task forces are already well advanced in Baltimore, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Pittsburgh, Richmond and Washington. Others are at earlier stages of organization.

"Communalization" of the effort is the key to placing continuity issues high on the community planning agenda. Developing an all encompassing planning process is working. The federations have assumed a leadership role but have been sure to involve all the key players in the community and especially the synagogues.

Professional leadership teams, led by federation planners but including rabbis, school directors, JCC and BJE professionals and academics, are working together to define problems, sort out priorities and develop options to be considered by lay leadership. Most of these 11 communities report that lay involvement on the commission was originally representative of the various institutions. But, once people got involved in consideration of issues that affect everyone, the planning effort gelled into a unified approach. That in itself was of value in ensuring a broad commitment to program recommendations and appropriate use of financial resources to deal with community-wide issues.

Three different community organization approaches have been taken by the communities that are more advanced in the planning process: 1) traditional planning, 2) request for proposals, and 3) seed money. Before detailing the approaches, it is important to note that all three have as a prerequisite active experimentation with individual program ideas prior to the communal approach. Whether it be family education in Detroit, synagogue-based

teacher training in Baltimore or outreach programs in Denver, in all cases program experimentation has set the stage for people's willingness to believe that change in the educational system is possible and can have a positive impact on Jewish continuity.

Briefly, the three community organization models look like this:

Traditional Planning --

Cleveland and Baltimore have convened all the players in the community to go through the exercise of defining problems; sorting out priorities; developing and considering action plans; developing full program, implementation, funding and evaluation plans, and then publishing blueprints for broad-based community action. This process is closely linked to the traditional planning activity in these and many other communities. However, in both cases, the intensity of effort, commitment and excitement was unusually high. The broad-based partnership with the synagogues appears to be one of the most important keys to these successes.

"Request for Proposals" --

Detroit's process was initially similar to the Cleveland and Baltimore experience. However, after establishing priorities, Detroit published an inventory of issues the community wanted addressed through innovative program proposals. This "request for proposals" approach caused agencies, synagogues, and individuals to begin to think and plan together around the newly established community directives. This type of planning process should be possible in any size community and under almost any set of circumstances in the schools and other community institutions. Once a community establishes its goals and priorities, then it can begin determining who should be responsible for any new program initiatives and how they will be funded.

Seed Money Approach --

Columbus put its resources out front as an incentive for cooperative planning and creative thinking in dealing with identified community problems. The Federation's Board of Trustees set aside $250,000 of campaign money and then initiated a federation-led process to decide how best to spend it.

For all the differences between approaches, the planning processes had much in common. They all demonstrated that federation-led efforts can quickly go public with new priorities and be quite flexible in moving ahead with the planning process. They came to similar conclusions in identifying three elements that are basic to improving the effectiveness of the educational system. They are 1) the need to professionalize the personnel in Jewish education, 2) the need for involving parents in the Jewish identity formation of their children, and 3) the need for more and better informal educational experiences for building the Jewish identity of our youth. We will review each of these in greater detail.

PERSONNEL

North American Jewry is suffering from the lack of a profession in Jewish education. We have many people working in the field, but most in part-time, poorly compensated, low status positions. We have yet to create the conditions for working in this field which will attract highly qualified people, adequately compensate and support them, and offer them a challenging ladder of opportunity for a professional career.

Creating a profession of Jewish education is an idea whose time has come. The day school movement has made the most progress in offering full-time work, opportunities to advance oneself up a career ladder and, in some cases, competitive salaries and benefits. In supplementary schools and in many informal educational contexts, the professional opportunities have been far more limited, and we are seeing an increased reliance on avocational personnel. There have been urgent calls to find ways to creatively combine positions and offer educators full-time employment that is challenging, long-term and well compensated.

There are communities which have begun to take up the challenge of improving the quality of personnel in supplementary schools by helping part-time teachers acquire the skills and knowledge needed to be more effective in classrooms. In Baltimore schools have been given incentives to engage a majority of their teachers in skill training. In Cleveland a "personal growth plan" has been developed which provides individualized training programs, recognizing different backgrounds in content knowledge and pedagogic skills. Several communities are providing teachers with the opportunity to study in Israel and many sponsor participation in professional conferences such as those run by CAJE. These and other approaches will need to be developed to build a profession of Jewish educators.

INFORMAL EXPERIENCES

Research in Jewish identity formation and in Jewish professional career choices offers support to a long-held theory that informal educational experiences can play a significant role in influencing one's commitment to Jewish life. For example, Cleveland's demographic study of Jews from 18-29 years old found that many people cite summer camp, a trip to Israel or a youth group experience as most positively enhancing their current Jewish identity.

Even were everyone to agree to grant informal education a key role in Jewish education, from a planning perspective, it could not stand alone. Informal education is inherently connected to the other pieces of the puzzle. We do not have a cohort of professionals who combine strong Jewish knowledge with group work skills, so enhanced training of personnel is an immediate prerequisite. Second, for meaningful Jewish experiences to be properly understood, students need formal education to interpret them. Third, since informal education relies heavily on "artificial environments" such as summer camps and weekend retreats, there need to be bridges built to connect the "high" of these beyond the classroom experiences to the daily life of the community. In all cases, the informal experience needs to be expanded upon to be most truly effective.

For Federation planning, there is a need for a comprehensive approach, integrating BJE, JCC and school personnel. This approach provides an opportunity for people who care about these issues to talk and learn from each other. Program models like Columbus' Discovery Program which integrates preparation for an Israel trip into school curricula and JCC family retreats provide great food for thought in the Federation planning arena.

Suggestions for integrating formal and informal educational experiences can be found in the supplementary school study done by the New York BJE. Although it may seem to the leadership like a radical step, a number of planners and educators are now considering shifting supplementary school hours in some years from the mid-week program to more experiential weekend retreats. That these major shifts can even be contemplated represents a significant belief in the power of providing a Jewish life experience to students whose families may otherwise not provide it and whose formal Jewish education is otherwise not linked to their daily lives.

## JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION

It has long been recognized in general education that schools cannot educate children in a vacuum. If issues studied in the classroom, or even experienced in informal settings, are not supported at home, much of the educational advantage is lost. This idea was given empirical support in the work of Harold Himmelfarb[4] and others. In recent years a number of Jewish educators have begun to close the gap between the Jewish classroom and home by more extensively involving the family in classroom activities.

As with informal experiences, family education cannot be seen as an adjunct to the existing program but rather needs to become part of the program itself. We need to think of ourselves as educating families and not just individual students.

An outstanding example of this is to be found in Detroit's Jewish Education for Families ("JEFF"). Schools are invited to participate in informal family educational programs on the condition that they set up an internal committee structure made up of educators and parents who jointly plan the program and ensure its connection to the curriculum of the formal classroom. This "community organization" concept within the school seems to work well for Detroit schools, and in different forms, has been tried in other communities such as Boston and Los Angeles.

Cleveland is considering a model built on the social work case management approach. Around the lifecycle events, families are open to more extensive connections to the community. At these times, families can be approached to build a program involving their own commitment to learning, Israel experiences and various Jewish schooling options. Each school will learn how to sit down with parents and children to discuss this comprehensive Jewish activity. The federations can support the synagogue schools by bringing to bear communal resources to give the schools the ability to carry out these plans in an effective way.

CONCLUSION

Reviewing the work of the federation-led planning for Jewish education ongoing in the 11 cities cited above, we find their most important success has been to raise the ante, to involve the top tier of communal leadership in issues of Jewish education and continuity. From their involvement can follow a rearrangement of financial allocations to more fully address the building of a more effective Jewish educational system that will help each provider of services--synagogues and agencies--to fulfill their educational missions.

Those communities which are furthest in their thinking and planning are now dealing with very complex funding, control and governance issues. They must sort out the extent to which community resources can be expended in schools and settings over which the federations have no financial control. For the most part, the top leadership involved in these efforts have come to see that the federations' and synagogues' futures are so inextricably bound that we have no choice but to share control and influence if all of us are to be successful in ensuring Jewish continuity.

Another broad challenge will be the need for evaluation of programs. Studies will have to be commissioned to determine whether newly funded programs are accomplishing their immediate objectives and whether, in the long term, better education leads to more commitment in the next generation. Through JESNA and academic institutions we will need to build adequate facilities to conduct reliable evaluation studies.

Over time we will have to measure the degree of determination that exists on the local level to reorder funding priorities to allow these changes to happen. Unquestionably, important and difficult discussions over priorities will need to be held. Hopefully national initiatives--from JESNA, JWB, CJF and the denominations--will spur change on the local level. The existence of family foundations interested in funding initiatives and the creation of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America should add significant incentives for communal change.

We are fortunate that a number of positive influences converge at this time which help the federations to proceed. The general American return to traditional values and religious life helps. The fact that we have less worry about our physical and social needs in this generation helps. Our massive national resources both from the campaigns and in the foundations will help. Our emerging national cadre of new Jewish education professionals will help. Our mature community planning approaches and relationships with the synagogues help. And, of course, the extensive research and writing related to "what works" in Jewish education helps tremendously, although much more needs to be done.

As the federation-led comprehensive approaches to Jewish education planning continue, we will all need to continue to learn from each other and share successes. The door is wide open, and with hard work and determination we should be ready to take advantage of the many opportunities.

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# COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

BACKGROUND MATERIALS
FOR THE MEETING OF
OCTOBER 23, 1989

**Convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations, JWB anb JESNA in collaboration with CJF**

*October 4, 1989* *5 Tishrei, 5750*

# From Decisions to Implementation: A Plan for Action

## I. Introduction

As the Commission approaches its fourth meeting, the outline of a plan for action is emerging.

The proposed action plan includes the following elements:

1. **Mobilizing the Community** (leadership, structure, finance) for implementation and change.

2. Developing strategies for **building the profession of Jewish education**, including recruitment, training and retention.

3. Establishing and developing **Community Action Sites** to demonstrate what Jewish education at its best can be, and to offer a feasible starting point for implementation.

4. Implementing **strategies on the continental level and in Israel** in specific areas — such as the development of training opportunities or recruitment programs to meet the shortage of qualified personnel.

5. Developing **an agenda for programmatic options** and an approach for dealing with them.

6. Building a **research capability** to study questions such as the impact and effectiveness of programs.

7. Designing a **mechanism for implementation** that will continue the work of the Commission, as well as initiate and facilitate the realization of the action plan.

# II. Toward an Action Plan

## A. Background

The content of the proposed plan has been shaped by the discussions of the Commission and through interviews with commissioners to date. When the Commission began its work, a complex set of problems and areas of need were identified and subsequently translated into options. The commissioners determined that the initial focus would be on the enabling options: dealing with the shortage of personnel for Jewish education, and dealing with the community — its leadership, structures and finance. At the same time, commissioners urged that programmatic options be dealt with. A principle that has guided the Commission is that its recommendations must be implemented. This led to the clear need for an implementation mechanism and the endorsement of the Community Action Site concept. There was also the realization that some problems could only be resolved by a combination of local efforts and continental bodies. The commissioners recognized that a single approach — establishing Community Action Sites — would not address the complexity of problems and therefore suggested that additional strategies be considered.

The proposed plan is an effort to reflect the Commission's goal of effecting across-the-board change. It also offers concrete recommendations for implementation, initiating change simultaneously on a number of fronts and a feasible way to begin.

As work on the plan proceeded, it became clear that some research was necessary. In order to base recommendations on the best available data and analysis, a research program was prepared and a number of papers commissioned (see Appendix 1). Preliminary findings have already found their place in this report.

*The work of the Commission could result in two major products:*

I. **A final report**, including an agenda for Jewish education

and

II. **A method of implementation**, including a detailed action plan.

Recommendations on the community, personnel and programmatic options are beginning to emerge. They are being developed through consultations with commissioners and other experts, as well as current research. A draft of findings and recommendations is being prepared and will be offered for consideration at a later meeting of the Commission.

At the meeting of October 23, 1989, strategies for implementation will be offered for discussion.

## B. The Action Plan

The plan includes elements for action and a strategy for their implementation. They are briefly described below:

1. **Mobilizing the Community** (leadership, structure, finance) for implementation and change.

In order for needed changes to occur, Jewish education must become high on the communal agenda, and the community must make greater resources available for the implementation of quality programs. A systematic effort to affect the climate in the community as regards Jewish education is needed to bring this about. A three-pronged approach is suggested:

*a. To recruit top leadership to work for Jewish education.*

This Commission includes a group of outstanding leaders who have provided leadership and wisdom for the Commission's work, lent status and credibility to its deliberations, and increased the potential to mobilize the necessary financial resources for implementing the program. In some communities, local commissions for Jewish education/Jewish continuity have involved top leadership in their efforts, demonstrating that the task is feasible. Many more leaders will have to be recruited to meet the challenge. In addition, Community Action Sites will require the recruitment of outstanding leaders if they are to be successful.

*b. To develop and improve community structures for Jewish education.*

There is consensus that we have not yet developed community structures adequate to effect the necessary improvements in Jewish education. On the local level, these structures include congregations, JCCs, camps, schools and agencies under communal sponsorship, Jewish community federations and bureaus of Jewish

education. On the national level, these structures include CJF, JWB, JESNA, the denominational and congregational bodies, training institutions and associations of educators who are engaged in formal and informal Jewish education. Existing structures and any new ones will need support that will allow them to rise to their full stature and work toward major improvements in Jewish education.

*c. To generate significant additional funding — both private and communal.*

Within this Commission there is a belief that if we accomplish our mandate — offer a design for dealing with the major issues in Jewish education and suggest a feasible way to start work on a number of fronts — then the community will be more likely to rise to the occasion and mobilize the financial and human resources needed to bring about significant change.

However, communal mobilization takes time. The implementation of Community Action Sites, the expansion of training opportunities, the development of research capability, the attention to programmatic areas all require the investment of significant funds. Here the public/private partnership of this Commission could yield results. While steps are being taken by the community to prepare itself and to build consensus, private foundations and endowment funds may help provide resources and serve as catalysts to launch the process of change.

2. Developing strategies for **building the profession of Jewish education**, including recruitment, training and retention.

There is a shortage of committed, trained personnel in all areas and for all programs of Jewish education. Strategies for recruitment, programs for training and approaches for dealing with the problem of profession-building and retention will need to be developed.

*a. Recruitment*

We will want to learn more about what is required to attract the appropriate candidates to enter the field of Jewish education. We will need to identify the conditions under which talented people could be attracted to the field (e.g., the belief that they will have a significant impact on the future of the Jewish people, adequate salaries and benefits, financial incentives during training, possibilities of advancement and growth, empowerment).

*b. Training*

The centers of training will have to be further developed. It is already clear that there is a serious shortage of faculty for the education of educators for both formal and informal Jewish education. Financial assistance will be needed for the expansion and improvement of existing training programs. It may be necessary to develop new and specialized training programs (e.g., for early childhood, for informal education, for special education). Judaica departments in North American universities could make their contribution to the enrichment of educators by offering in-service education programs. The Community Action Sites will require on-the-job training for the educators who will be working in the many programs included in the demonstration projects.

*c. Building the Profession*

We hope to learn more about what is required to develop the profession of Jewish education through the study that we have commissioned. (See Appendix 1.) We already know that Jewish education does not offer sufficient opportunities for advancement, nor is there a well-developed map of positions and career lines.

We may need to develop a ladder of advancement that is not only linear (from teacher, to assistant principal, to principal), but one that makes it possible for talented educators to specialize in a variety of areas such as Bible, early childhood, the Israel experience, special education, curriculum development, etc.

*d. Retention*

We will want to learn more about turnover in the various areas of Jewish education. A strategy to retain the most talented and dedicated educators must be developed. We will have to discover how to handle what is described as burn-out, particularly for experienced and creative administrators.

3. Establishing and developing Community Action Sites.

   a. Several Community Action Sites will need to be developed. They will be places (an entire community, a network of institutions) where Jewish education at its best will be developed, demonstrated and tested. Ideas and programs that have succeeded, as well as new ideas and programs, will be developed there for other communities to see, to learn from, to modify, and where appropriate, to replicate. Community Action Sites will make it possible for local and national forces to work together in designing and field-testing solutions to the problems of Jewish education. Personnel and the Community will be addressed there simul-

taneously and comprehensively, integrating the various components: professionalizing Jewish education, recruiting, training, retaining educators. Because personnel will be developed in the Community Action Sites for specific programs, the programmatic options can also be addressed (see below).

b. Demonstration in the Community Action Sites of what Jewish education can be, may serve a number of purposes: promising ideas and programs that already exist — "best practices" — could be brought together in one site, adequately funded, integrated and implemented in a complementary way. Thus, their impact would be significantly greater than when their application is fragmented. New programs could be developed, tested, assessed and modified on the local level — where education takes place — for all to see, learn from and replicate.

4. Implementing **strategies, on the continental level and in Israel**, in areas such as the development of training opportunities or recruitment programs, to meet the shortage of qualifed personnel.

In addition to efforts that will be undertaken in Community Action Sites, a continental support system for Jewish education must be developed.

- Training opportunities do not meet the need of Jewish education in North America. Though some training can be done locally, much will have to be done in major centers in North America and Israel.

- Salaries and benefits are a concern throughout North America. Improvements may be undertaken locally, but answers to the financial and organizational issues involved may require continental policies.

- Candidates for the profession will need to be recruited on a continental basis. New pools of candidates will have to be identified. A continental plan for recruitment needs to be prepared and undertaken.

These and other challenges will benefit from the involvement of institutions and organizations in North America and in Israel.

5. Outlining an **agenda** for **programmatic options** and an approach for dealing with them.

Throughout the discussions, some commissioners have emphasized the importance of dealing with specific program areas (e.g., the media, informal education, Israel experience, the day school, college age). While Community Action Sites will deal with

personnel and the community, they will, of necessity, address programmatic options. Education takes place in programs, thus any personnel recruited will be personnel recruited for a specific program (personnel for early childhood, for the supplementary school, etc.). Community Action Sites will deal with programs as they resolve their personnel problems.

The Commission report will seek to offer a vision and a broad agenda for Jewish education. The agenda will include an approach for dealing with the programmatic options. For each option, a general overview will be provided, problems and opportunities will be identified, steps to be taken and what appears feasible will be pointed out. Based on these assessments, an institution or a foundation may decide to pursue detailed consideration of the option.

6. Building a **research capability** to deal, in particular, with impact and effectiveness of programs.

As the Commission work progresses, the paucity of information, data and analysis on Jewish education becomes more and more evident. Decisions are often made without the benefit of clear evidence of need. Major resources are invested with insufficient evaluation or monitoring. We seldom know what works in Jewish education; what is better and what is less good; what the impact of programs and investment is. The market has not been explored; we do not know what people want from Jewish education. We do not have accurate information about how many teachers there are; how qualified they are; what their salaries are.

As data is being gathered for the work of the Commission, a broad research agenda is emerging that must be addressed. The necessary research capacity for North America will need to be established.

7. Designing a **mechanism for implementation** that will continue the work of the Commission, as well as initiate and facilitate the realization of the plan.

The action plan, the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission, will require that some mechanism be created to continue the work. The mechanism may be a new organization or part of an existing organization. Its mission will be to facilitate implementation of the recommendations of the Commission. The proposed mechanism must be a cooperative effort of individuals and organizations concerned with Jewish education, as well as the funders who will help support the entire activity. Federations will be invited to play a central role and the denominations will have to be fully involved. JWB, JESNA, CJF will continue to be full partners in the work. The mechanism will carry out its assignments in a way that will encourage and assist local initiative and planning.

Some of the functions of the mechanism could include:

*a.* To help initiate and facilitate the establishment of several Community Action Sites. This may involve developing criteria for their selection; assisting communities as they develop their site; lending assistance in planning; helping to recruit personnel; ensuring monitoring, evaluation and feedback; and assisting in the diffusion of innovation.

*b.* To serve as a broker between expertise at the continental level and local expertise and initiative.

*c.* To encourage foundations and philanthropists to support innovation and experimentation in the Community Action Sites.

*d.* To facilitate implementation of strategies on the continental level and in Israel. This may mean encouraging institutions that will plan and carry out the development efforts. For example, if an existing training institution undertakes expansion and development of its training program, the mechanism may help secure funding and lend planning assistance as required.

*e.* To offer assistance as required for the planning and development of programmatic options.

*f.* To gather the data and undertake the analysis necessary for implementation; to help develop the research capability in North America.

*g.* To prepare annual progress reports for public discussion of the central issues on the agenda of Jewish education.

* * * * * *

Some commissioners have expressed the opinion that the process launched by this Commission should not end with the publication of its report in the summer of 1990. Various formats have been suggested for the continued involvement of the Commission itself with the implementation of its recommendations. A suggestion was made that the Commission should convene once a year to discuss progress and implementation. Alternately, all or some commissioners should remain involved in specific aspects of implementation. This might include a process, led by commissioners, to ensure monitoring and accountability, or active involvement of a group of commissioners in the implementation process and in the diffusion of successful programs and innovations.

# Work in Progress: Research Design

This research design is a working document aimed at developing a research program for the work of the Commission. This program will provide the background data for the Commission report. It is not comprehensive: major topics, such as the evaluation of programs, are not addressed. They belong on a wider research agenda that is beyond the scope of the Commission report. Such an agenda will be outlined in the report and may lead to a recommendation that a research capability on Jewish education be developed in North America.

## I. Introduction

In this document, we will attempt to do the following:

A. Review key questions that will be addressed in the final report.
B. Identify the research needed in order to help answer these questions.
C. Assess the feasibility of undertaking such research for the report.
D. Recommend the research papers to be commissioned at this time.

## II. Key Questions

The design will deal with key questions that need to be answered in order to make informed recommendations. The questions are presented in broad terms; they will be detailed within the framework of the actual research.

Some of these questions can be dealt with in time for the final report. Others can only be dealt with in preliminary form because of time constraints. Others yet are too broad — or the data is too scarce — to be undertaken at this time. Many of these questions will serve as a basis for the research agenda to be included in the recommendations for the final report.

We will deal with the following topics:

1. The Link Between Jewish Continuity and Jewish Education
2. The State of the Field
3. The Community
4. The Relationship Between the Community and the Denominations
5. The Shortage of Qualified Personnel
6. Training Needs
7. Jewish Education as a Profession
8. Recruitment and Retention
9. The Cost of Change
10. Best Practice
11. An Agenda for Programmatic Options

## III. The Questions Detailed

### 1. THE LINK BETWEEN JEWISH CONTINUITY AND JEWISH EDUCATION

*The Question:* The Commission defines its mandate as dealing with Jewish education as a tool for meaningful Jewish continuity. This is based on an underlying assumption that Jewish education and Jewish continuity are linked. Several commissioners have raised the question of whether this assumption can be substantiated.

*Research needed:* Optimally, the following should be undertaken in order to deal with this question:

1. A philosophical/sociological essay should be drafted on the topic of the relationship between Jewish education and meaningful Jewish continuity.

2. Empirical studies that deal with the link between Jewish education and meaningful Jewish continuity should be undertaken or, if they already exist, reported on.

*Feasibility:* A philosophical approach to the issue is highly feasible. However, given the paucity of data and the time constraints, an empirical study should be held for a longer term research agenda.

*Recommendation:*

R* Ask a philosopher-educator to write a preliminary essay on this topic.

## 2. THE STATE OF THE FIELD

*The Question:* What is the scope of the problem? What, in the state of the field of Jewish education, requires change? What are the opportunities for improvement and change?

*Research Needed:* A general statement (with data) should be offered, substantiating or disproving the notion that the field of Jewish education shows generally poor performance as regards: trends in participation; program quality; Jewish knowledge; affiliation; etc.

At the same time, the statement should illustrate positive trends that have been identified. For example: increased participation in day schools; increased visits to Israel; the trend towards Jewish education in JCCs; the trend towards adult and leadership programs of Jewish studies, and more.

The quantitative data could include: 1) enrollment figures for various types of Jewish education; 2) the number of institutions for the various forms of education; 3) general data on personnel, including the number of educators in various settings, salaries and benefits. Qualitative data should be included where available. Optimally, empirical research about the effectiveness of various programs should be undertaken.

*Feasibility:* It is possible to offer at this time a general summary picture — mostly quantitative — about the state of the field. The preliminary data report prepared for the first Commission meeting could serve as a basis. Very little qualitative data exists. A literature review including studies such as W. Ackerman's many assessments of Jewish education in North America, the New York BJE's study of the supplementary schools in New York, and the Miami Central Agency for Jewish Education's study on the Jewish educator should be undertaken.

*Recommendations*

R Draft a descriptive essay using existing data to offer an overview of the state of the field. Data from commissioned papers should be incorporated when relevant and analyzed in a way that will highlight both the problems and the opportunities.

*R = Recommendation

## 3. THE COMMUNITY

*The Question:* What can be done to improve the climate in the community regarding Jewish education, and in turn, bring more outstanding leaders to work in Jewish education, develop adequate communal structures, and increase funding for Jewish education?

The climate in the community is often skeptical about the quality and potential of Jewish education. Many outstanding leaders do not choose to become involved with education. The organizational structures — local and national — are often fragmented and divided; some are obsolete. There are, however, clear signs of change, as expressed by the establishment of this Commission, as well as the local commissions on Jewish continuity.

There is a shortage of funding for both the personnel and programs of Jewish education. This shortage affects existing programs and deters the establishment of new programs.

*Research needed:* The following research would be helpful:

1. Organizational/institutional analysis: Identify the major actors in the area of Jewish education (both local and national: federations, JESNA, congregations, denominations, JCCs, BJEs, Judaica departments at universities, etc.). Who provides services, allocates resources, makes policy? Assess their relative importance, their relationships, their financial resources and patterns of resource allocation. Point out conflicts and problems as well as trends and opportunities.

2. Resource analysis: Commission a paper on the financing of Jewish education (communal and private resources). Point out trends and major changes.

3. Market study: Possibly commission a survey on attitudes and opinions of the Jewish population concerning Jewish education, including questions such as how people perceive what exists; what their own Jewish educational experience was; how they perceive the needs; what programs and developments they would want. This survey could be undertaken with one or more of three populations: communal leaders, educators, the Jewish population at large.

*Feasibility:* It is possible at this time to present a preliminary view of the attitudes of leadership toward Jewish education. Some data is available from demographic studies conducted in recent years in several communities and analysis could yield significant knowledge. The large-scale studies belong on the long-term research agenda.

*Recommendations:*

R In addition to the papers prepared by H.L. Zucker and J. Fox for the third Commission meeting, we recommend commissioning a paper on the organizational structures of Jewish education in North America. The paper should include an historical overview pointing to major changes and evolutions along with a map of the current situation.

R A preliminary paper on the finances of Jewish education should be considered. This might include a conceptual framework for dealing with the issue as well as an assessment of major sources of funding, communal priorities, etc.

R Consider commissioning a survey of communal leadership's attitudes and opinions. If successfully carried out, such a survey could yield important data on the leaders of the community, their Jewish educational backgrounds, their opinions and suggestions regarding Jewish education, their view of the field, their assessment of quality and needs.

R Use existing data from demographic studies of individual communities to assess the market for Jewish education.

## 4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE DENOMINATIONS

*The Question:* Who in the Jewish community should be responsible for setting policy and allocating resources for Jewish education? Who could convene the many actors and forces now contributing to Jewish education so that they would complement each other?

*Research needed:* Analysis of the respective roles of denominations, congregations, and federations as regards Jewish education. The analysis would focus on opportunities for cooperative efforts, potential changes and emerging structures.

*Feasibility:* Case studies of federations, congregations and current cooperative ventures could be prepared in time for the Commission report. The larger analysis belongs in the longer-term agenda.

*Recommendations:*

In addition to the papers on "the community" (p. 13 above) the following would be useful:

R Case studies of federations that are increasingly involved in Jewish education — as conveners and as funders/ policy-setters.

R Case studies of congregations as context for Jewish education. The case studies would involve questions such as: How is educational policy set within congregations? Who decides? What is the potential for change, for expansion of the educational role of congregations? What is the potential of the supplementary school? What cooperative efforts could be developed between congregations (formal education), JCCs (informal education), federations (policy setting and resource allocation)?

R Analysis of the conditions that would allow federations to take on greater responsibility while enabling the denominations and other institutions/organizations to rise to their full stature in the provision of services and resources for Jewish education. This paper should include extensive interviews with the decision-makers and the actors.

## 5. THE SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

*The Question:* What is the gap between the personnel currently available for Jewish education in North America and the needs for qualified personnel? What are the elements of the problem? What is its scope? These questions are based on the assumption that there is a significant shortage of qualified personnel in North America in all areas of education and at all levels of personnel. It expresses itself in the difficulty to recruit, train, retain, and offer satisfying jobs and work conditions.

*Research needed:*

1. A paper outlining the elements involved in dealing with personnel (recruitment, training, retention, building the profession), how they are inter-related and why they should be dealt with simultaneously.

2. An analytic paper indicating the scope of need for personnel versus the current situation in the following terms: shortage of personnel by categories; profiles of educators as a first step toward defining the qualitative gap; what educators know (Hebrew, Jewish studies, education, administration); data on recruitment, training, retention, career ladders, etc.; data on needs from the employers' perspective. Positive trends should also be cited, such as the emergence of a pool of qualified senior personnel, positive signs in enrollment in training programs, etc.

*Feasibility:* Most available data is in research form. Some surveys of teachers have been undertaken and a number of such studies are now in progress (Los Angeles, Philadelphia). Analysis of these data can provide an initial look at the personnel shortage and help define areas for further research and potential intervention.

*Recommendations:*

R Gather available data from existing studies and through some direct primary data collection (e.g., a limited telephone survey to a carefully constituted sample of school principals to gather data on teachers' salaries, shortages, etc.). Use data from the options papers and from the other commissioned papers.

R Draft an analytic essay summarizing existing and specially collected data, to offer an analysis of the shortage of qualified personnel.

## 6. TRAINING NEEDS

*The Question:* What is the gap, qualitative and quantitative, between the training currently available for personnel in Jewish education and what is needed?

*Research needed:*

1. What training is currently available? In what types of programs? How many students actually graduate? What is the training history of qualified educators that are currently in the field? What is the respective role of institutions of higher Jewish learning, general universities, yeshivot, training programs in Israel? What pre-service and in-service training is available for educators in the various formal and informal settings?

2. How much and what kinds of training are needed? What norms and standards should guide the training of educators?

3. What is the gap between existing training opportunities and the demand for teachers and other educators? Can existing programs grow to meet the need? What new programs need to be created? Is faculty available and, if not, what should be done to develop a cadre of teacher-trainers and professors of Jewish education?

*Feasibility:* Research papers on existing training opportunities and on the shortage can be prepared in time for the final report. Data concerning the training history of current good educators in the field would have to be collected. It is not clear to what extent this could be done in time for the report.

The issue of norms and standards for training Jewish educators has not yet been addressed systematically or extensively. This major question should be placed on the long-term research agenda.

*Recommendations:*

R Prepare an inventory of current training opportunities.

R Conduct a literature survey on current approaches to training in general education and compare with existing practice in Jewish education.

R Gather data concerning the background and training history of good educators currently in the field.

R Draft a summary paper on training needs.

## 7. JEWISH EDUCATION AS A PROFESSION

*The Question:* Some commissioners and professionals claim that in order to attract qualified personnel and offer the quality of education that is desired, it is necessary to raise the state of Jewish education to the level of a profession. Is this indeed the case? If so, what interventions are required?

*Research needed:*

1. A comparative analysis of general education as a profession and Jewish education as a profession should be done. Some of the elements to be considered include: salaries and benefits, empowerment, an agreed upon body of knowledge, a system of accreditation, status, professional networking.

*Feasibility:* A literature survey is a feasible assignment. However, little hard data on the profession of Jewish education is available. For example, there is no systematic data available on salaries and benefits. Limited data can probably be obtained from existing teacher surveys (Miami, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boston, Houston) or can be gathered through a limited survey.

*Recommendation:*

R Commission a paper to assess Jewish education as a profession as compared to general education.

## 8. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

*The Question:* Are there pools of potential candidates who could be trained to work in the field of Jewish education? If yes, under what conditions can such candidates be attracted to the field? Under what conditions can they be retained?

*Research needed:*

1. Undertake a survey aimed at identifying and assessing potential pools of candidates from among likely populations, e.g., Judaica majors and graduates, day school graduates, rabbis, people considering career changes, general educators who are Jewish, etc.

2. Identify the conditions under which potential candidates could be attracted to the field and could be retained for a significant period of time on the job, e.g., financial incentives during training, salaries and benefits, job development and the possibility of advancement, better marketing and advertising of training and scholarship opportunities.

3. Examine the recruitment methods used by the training programs. How do the methods used to recruit Jewish educators differ from methods used by other programs (colleges, etc.)?

*Feasibilty:* Market research would make it possible for us to identify and test potential pools of candidates. It will not be possible to do this in time for the Commission report, nor will it be possible to accurately identify the conditions for recruitment and retention. On the other hand, much could be learned from experimenting with existing hypotheses (e.g., directing systematic recruitment efforts at certain groups) and from the current experience of training programs in North America and Israel.

*Recommendation:*

R Collect data on recruitment and retention from existing studies, literature, surveys, studies from general education, and extensive interviews with knowledgeable informants in training programs and educational institutions in North America and Israel. Summarize this knowledge for the report.

## 9. THE COST OF CHANGE

There is virtually no information on the economics of Jewish education. Such information will be of great importance as the Commission considers how to intervene to effect across-the-board change. We have not dealt with this topic at present. We will relate to it following the next round of consultations.

## 10. BEST PRACTICE

*The Questions:*

What are the good programs in the field that could be used as cases from which to learn, to draw inspiration and encouragement, and to replicate?

What vision of Jewish education will inform and inspire the report and its recommendations?

*Research needed:* In order to offer a representative selection of cases, a fairly extensive project should be undertaken that would include the following steps:

Determine criteria for selecting outstanding programs;
Define a method for canvassing the field and identifying possible candidate programs;
Select a method of assessment;
Assess and describe the program.

*Feasibility:* It may be possible to use one of many short-cut methodologies to offer a selection of best practice in the field of Jewish education. A systematic approach to this project should be on the long-term research agenda.

*Recommendation:*

R We recommend that consultations be held with the researchers at their upcoming meeting and with consultants on methodology to define a method of offering best practice case studies to the Commission by the time of the final report. Such methods are feasible, but they do not offer the comprehensiveness or the depth of insight that a complete project would.

## 11. AN AGENDA FOR PROGRAMMATIC OPTIONS

*The Question:* How should the Commission intervene or make recommendations regarding programmatic options? Should specific and concrete recommendations be made? Should an umbrella mechanism be suggested that would assist interested commissioners in developing programs of implementation for specific programmatic areas?

*Research needed:* Expand the data gathering and analyses on the the various programmatic options.

*Recommendations:*

R Develop a narrower list of programmatic options by combining topics that belong together. Outline a broad agenda for each, pointing to opportunities, needs, scope, and feasible targets for each.

R Consider the strengths and weaknesses of an umbrella organization for dealing with programmatic options.

## IV. Papers to be Commissioned

1. The Relationship Between Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity (I. Scheffler, Harvard University).

2. The Organizational Structure of Jewish Education in North America (W. Ackerman, Ben Gurion University).

3. Community Organization for Jewish Education in North America; Leadership, Finance and Structure (H.L. Zucker, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland).

4. Federation-Led Community Planning for Jewish Education, Identity and Continuity (J. Fox, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland).

5. The Synagogue as a Context for Jewish Education (J. Reimer, Brandeis University).

6. Approaches to Training Personnel and Current Training Opportunities (A. Davidson, Jewish Theological Seminary of America).

7. Assessment of Jewish Education as a Profession (I. Aron, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles).

8. Data Gathering, Analysis and Report on the Field of Jewish Education in North America (I. Aron, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles).

# COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

BACKGROUND MATERIALS
FOR THE MEETING OF
FEBRUARY 14, 1990

**Convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations,
JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF**

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# Summary and Recommendations

## The Action Plan and Its Implementation

The work of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America is nearing completion. The enclosed materials include a draft of eight major recommendations.

What is emerging is a **ten-year plan for change.** This plan focuses on two major priorities: 1) mobilizing the community for positive systemic change in Jewish education, and 2) building the profession of Jewish education. It also identifies opportunities for improvement in a range of programmatic areas in Jewish education. The plan can be undertaken immediately, because there is a readiness on the part of certain family foundations to grant initial funding, because a staff is being recruited to continue the work of the Commission and implement its recommendations, and because communities have shown an interest in being selected to demonstrate the possibilities of Jewish education at its best.

The plan is designed to meet the shortage of dedicated, qualified and well-trained educators. We believe that talented educators will be able to develop programs that will engage and involve the Jews of North America so that they will be conversant with Jewish knowledge, values and behavior.

A process of communal mobilization for Jewish education will be launched: outstanding leaders, scholars, educators and rabbis will be encouraged to assume responsibility for this process and to recruit others to join them. They will develop policies for intervention and improvement; they will effect changes in funding allocations; they will develop the appropriate communal structures for Jewish education.

By the time the Commission issues its report in June 1990, the Commission will have taken the following initial steps:

**A. Funding:** Substantial funds will be available to launch the plan. This is now being arranged through the generosity of family foundations. Long-term funding will be developed in concert with federations of Jewish philanthropy, the religious denominations, the communities involved and other sources.

**B. Implementation:** The establishment of a facilitating mechanism for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. This mechanism, guided by its board, will be charged with carrying out the plan decided upon by the Commission. It will design development strategies and be a full-time catalyst for the development efforts. It will facilitate implementation, ensure monitoring and evaluation and engage in the diffusion of innovation.

## How Will We Begin Implementation?

Several communities will be selected for the first phase of the plan.* The purpose will be to develop and demonstrate excellence in Jewish education locally. The educational personnel in all settings in these communities will be upgraded. Programs that have proven effective elsewhere will be brought to these communities, will be adequately funded and implemented. Educators, rabbis, scholars and community leaders will be given the opportunity to jointly experiment with new ideas. Local and national institutions will work together on designing and testing new approaches to the problems of Jewish education.

In these communities ("Community Action Sites") all teachers, administrators and informal educators will participate in in-service training programs. National and local training institutions will join in the training effort. In order to meet longer-term personnel needs, a cadre of talented people will be recruited and trained.

At the continental and regional levels, training programs will be developed to significantly increase the number of trained educators and to participate in on-the-job training of personnel in the local communities.

All of this will lead to changes in the terms and conditions under which many educators work. Salaries and benefits will be raised, full-time jobs will be created to meet the needs of programs and a ladder of advancement will be developed. Many educators will be empowered to participate in determining educational policies.

## Who Will Do the Work in These Communities?

The local communities will decide how to undertake their assignment. They will establish a coalition of the key actors in Jewish education. The currently existing twelve local commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity may serve as prototypes.

The communities may decide to appoint a local planning unit to prepare the plan. This unit will assess the community's needs and design the programs.

The national facilitating mechanism will offer assistance as needed, with staffing, planning assistance and some funding where appropriate.

* This, of course, is but one possible scenario for a community. Each community will build a program to fit its needs and aspirations. (See pp. 18-24.)

## A Long-term Effort

Initial work in several communities, the availability of funding and the availability of staff are all important preliminary steps for ushering in an era of change for Jewish education.

However, for the significant across-the-board change to take place, a long-term effort is required. The lessons learned in Community Action Sites will be applied in many communities, gradually changing standards of Jewish education throughout North America. The available pool of qualified personnel will be increased. The profession of Jewish education will be developed as the number of qualified educators increases, as training programs are developed and as job opportunities, terms and conditions for employment are improved. Gradually, major program areas will be addressed. A research capability will be developed.

For these and other changes to occur, we need to issue a clarion call for change in Jewish education and we must offer long-term development and funding strategies.

In the draft recommendations that follow and in the attached document you will find the expression of our collective thinking on these matters.

# Decisions and Recommendations of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America

## A Ten-Year Plan

1. The Commission on Jewish Education in North America has decided to undertake a ten-year plan for change in Jewish education. Implementation of the first phase of the plan will begin immediately.

The Commission calls on the North American Jewish community, on its leadership and institutions, to adopt this plan and make resources available in this attempt to make a serious frontal attack on the issue of its future.

## Community/Financing

2. The Commission urges a vigorous effort to involve more key community leaders in the Jewish education enterprise. It urges local communities to establish comprehensive planning committees to study their Jewish education needs and to be proactive in bringing about improvements. The Commission recommends a number of sources for additional funding to support improvements in Jewish education, including federations and private foundations.

## Personnel

3. The Commission recommends that a ten-year plan to build the profession of Jewish education in North America be developed and immediately launched. The plan will include the development of training opportunities; a major effort to recruit appropriate candidates to the profession; increases in salaries and benefits; and improvements in the status of Jewish education as a profession.

## Programmatic Arenas

4. The Commission process has identified the following programmatic arenas, each of which offers promising opportunities for intervention.

*Target populations:* early childhood, the child, the adolescent, the college-age youth, the adult, the family, the retired and elderly, the new immigrant.

*Settings and frameworks:* early childhood education and child care, the supplementary school (elementary and high school), the synagogue, the Jewish community center, camping, the Israel Experience, and a number of other informal educational frameworks.

*Content, resources and methods:* curriculum, Hebrew language education, the arts, the media and new technologies.

The Commission believes that collectively these form a challenging agenda for the next decade and urges communities, institutions, communal organizations, foundations and philanthropists to act upon them.

## Community Action Sites

5. The Commission recommends the establishment of several Community Action Sites, where excellence in Jewish education will be demonstrated for others to see, learn from and, where appropriate, to replicate. Community Action Sites will be initiated by local communities which will work in partnership with the facilitating mechanism. The mechanism will help distill the lessons learned from the Community Action Sites and diffuse the results.

## Research

6. The Commission recommends the establishment of a research capability in North America to develop the knowledge base for Jewish education, to gather the necessary data and to undertake monitoring and evaluation. Research and development should be supported at existing institutions and organizations, and at any specialized research facilities that need to be established.

## The Facilitating Mechanism

7. The Commission recommends the establishment of a facilitating mechanism that will undertake the implementation of its decisions and recommendations. The mechanism, directed by its board and staff, will be a driving force in the attempt to bring about across-the-board, systemic change for Jewish education in North America.

# 1. Introduction

Communal leaders, educators, rabbis, scholars, parents and youth in North America are searching for ways to more effectively engage Jews with the present and the future of the Jewish people.

There is a deep and wide-spread concern that, for too many, the commitment to basic Jewish values, ideals and behavior is diminishing. There is a growing recognition that better ways must be found to:

1. ensure that Jews maintain and strengthen the beliefs that are central to the diverse conceptions of Judaism expressed in North American Jewish communities;

2. guarantee that the contribution American Jews have made to the establishment and maintenance of the State of Israel, to the safety and welfare of Jews in all parts of the world, and to the humanitarian causes they support be continued;

3. deal with the negative trends regarding the number of unaffiliated Jews, with the rate of assimilation and intermarriage.

These are among the important reasons for the renewed and intensified interest in Jewish education—a Jewish education that will enable Jews of all ages to experience, to learn, to understand, to feel and to act in a way that reflects their commitment to Judaism.

Responding to these challenges will require a richer and broader conception of Jewish education. It will require that North American Jewry join forces, pool the energies of its many components, and launch a decade of renewal—a major effort over the next ten years to raise the standards and quality of Jewish life in North America.

The North American Jewish community will need to mobilize itself as it has for the building of the State of Israel, for the rescue of Jews in distress, for the fight against discrimination and injustice, and for the support of its health and human services. Beginning with the religious denominations, CJF, JWB and JESNA, local federations and service agencies, and encouraged by the vision and generosity of private Jewish foundations, Jewish organizations everywhere will be recruited to join this effort. Through the work of this Commission, we have learned that there are almost no Jewish institutions that are not concerned about the Jewish future.

The Commission believes that if the appropriate people, energy and funds are marshalled, positive systemic change will be initiated. The Commission urges the North American Jewish community to act quickly and vigorously on its recommendations.

# 2. Community/Financing

## I. Background

What is the community we are talking about in connection with formal and informal Jewish education?

By community, we mean not only the general Jewish community, but especially the organized Jewish community as it relates to the issues of Jewish continuity, commitment and learning, and to the involved organizations and persons engaged in these issues. From the Commission's perspective, its target population must include the professional and lay leaders who create the content and the climate for Jewish formal and informal education. This means teachers, principals, communal workers, academics and other scholars, rabbis, heads of institutions of higher learning, denomination and day school leaders and the leaders of the American Jewish community who are involved in planning for and financing Jewish education. The chief local institutional targets are the synagogues, Jewish community centers, camps, supplementary and day schools, agencies under communal sponsorship, Jewish community federations and bureaus of Jewish education, and major Jewish-sponsored foundations. At the national level are JWB, JESNA, CJF, the chief denominational and congregational bodies, training institutions, and associations of educators and communal workers who are engaged in formal and informal Jewish education.

The North American Jewish community has proved to have an excellent capacity to deal with major problems when they are addressed by the very top community leaders. This same highest level of community leadership is needed to establish the necessary communal planning and funding priority for Jewish education. Indeed, the involvement of top community leadership is the key to raising the quality of Jewish education in North America.

While Jewish education is generally not now seen by many key lay leaders as a top community priority, most believe that there is a decided trend toward the involvement of more and more top leaders. It is felt that the battle to create a very high communal priority for Jewish education is well on its way to being won.

Prior to World War II, a large proportion of the leadership of the organized Jewish community was indifferent to community support for Jewish education. Some were even antagonistic in the early days of federation, when emphasis was on the social services and on the Americanization of new immigrants. Just before and during World War II and in the post-War period, the highest priority for community leaders was the lifesaving work of Jewish relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction and then nation-building in Israel. More

recently, community leaders have become concerned with issues related to Jewish survival and continuity, and are putting a higher premium on Jewish education.

Generally, we have not yet developed community structures that are adequate to effect the necessary improvements in Jewish education, either at the local or continental level. Improvement in the following areas requires continuing examination:

1. The relationship among federations, bureaus of Jewish education, communal schools and congregations.

2. The place of federations in planning and budgeting for Jewish education and financing Jewish education.

3. The need for forceful national leadership in establishing standards for the Jewish education field, in promoting, encouraging and evaluating innovations, and in spreading over the continent the application of best practices as they are discovered.

At least a dozen federations are currently involved in comprehensive studies of their community's Jewish education programs and many more are in earlier stages of organization. JESNA, JWB, and CJF are currently engaged nationally in efforts to examine related issues.

*Financing*

Very little is known about overall financing of Jewish education. Nonetheless, a few general observations about financing can be made.

Congregational funding, tuition payments, and agency and school fundraising (especially by day schools) are the mainstays of Jewish education financing. These sources of support are crucial and need to be encouraged. There is consensus also that considerable additional funding is required from federations as the primary source of organized community funding, and that substantial funding will be needed from private foundations and concerned individuals.

Communal patterns of funding may need to be altered, and changes in organizational relationships are necessary to accommodate this. For example, greater cooperation between the congregations, schools, agencies and the federations is basic to developing and allocating the funds needed to improve Jewish education.

From its very beginning, the Commission has expressed its intention to be proactive in efforts to improve Jewish education. This includes encouraging additional funding, and initial steps have been taken in this direction.

The Commission is optimistic that greater funds can be generated for Jewish education, in spite of the current great demand for communal funding for other purposes. There have always been and there always will be great demands on limited communal funds. We should not allow ourselves to be put off by the pressing needs of the moment from facing the very urgent need for adequate support of Jewish education.

A number of communities have already begun to place a higher funding priority on Jewish education, both by raising new funds and by allocating greater general Jewish communal funds to Jewish education. There is also the fortuitous circumstance that federation endowment funds—a relatively new source of communal funds—are growing at a good pace and can be an important source of support for Jewish education in the future. Simultaneously, there is a relatively new growth of large family foundations—a post World War II phenomenon—which has accelerated in recent years and promises to be an important new funding resource for Jewish education. It appears likely, therefore, that additional funding will be available for well considered programs to improve and expand Jewish education.

The Commission recognizes the pressures on federations' annual operating funds make it very difficult to set aside substantially larger sums for Jewish education in the near term.

Longer-term funding requires that federations, as the expression of the community's will to improve Jewish education, should produce substantially greater support for Jewish education. It is expected that private foundations and concerned individuals, federation endowment funds, and special communal fundraising efforts will play a major role in supplying the near term financing, (and some of the long term financing), while federations are gearing up to meeting the basic longer term funding needs. Federations also have a key role in encouraging and bringing together private and communal funding sources into coalitions for support of Jewish education, and in leveraging support from the different sources.

It needs to be noted that some members of the Commission are concerned that "throwing money" at Jewish education will not by itself do the job. There needs to be a careful review of current programs and administrative structures to see how these can be improved. They believe that projects aimed at improving Jewish education need to be monitored and evaluated. Careful attention to quality and honest and perceptive evaluations are needed, both to get appropriate results for what is being spent, and also to encourage funding sources to participate more significantly.

## II. Recommendations

**The Commission urges a vigorous effort to involve more key community leaders in the Jewish education enterprise. It urges local communities to establish comprehensive planning committees to study their Jewish education needs and to be proactive in bringing about improvements. The Commission recommends a number of sources for additional funding to support improvements in Jewish education, including federations and private foundations.**

In order for this to happen:

* The Commission encourages the establishment of additional local committees or commissions on Jewish education, the purpose of which is to bring together communal and congregational leadership in wall-to-wall coalitions to improve the communities' formal and informal Jewish education programs.

* The Commission encourages each community to seek aggressively to include top community leadership in their local Jewish education planning committee and in the management of the schools and local Jewish education programs.

* The Commission recommends that as federations identify priority needs and opportunities, they should provide greater sums for Jewish education, both in their annual allocations and by special grants from endowment funds and/or special fundraising efforts on behalf of Jewish education.

* The Commission and its anticipated implementation mechanism should encourage private foundations and philanthropically-oriented families to set aside substantial sums of money for Jewish education for the next five to ten years.

* The Commission recommends that private foundations establish a fund to finance the facilitating mechanism and subsidies for community action sites and other projects.

* The Commission recommends that Community Action Sites be established to demonstrate models of programs and funding partnerships to show what improvements in Jewish education can be accomplished under favorable conditions.

# 3. Personnel

## I. Background

In North America there are an estimated 30,000 people working in the field of Jewish education, formal and informal. Of these, some 5,000 hold full-time positions; the remainder work part-time. There is a serious shortage of qualified personnel in all areas of Jewish education in North America. The shortage is both quantitative—there are fewer people to be hired than positions to be filled—and qualitative—many educators lack the qualifications, the knowledge, the professional training needed to be effective. The studies that have been undertaken document this shortage (see p. 30). They reveal that many educators lack knowledge in one or several of the following areas: the Hebrew language, Jewish sources, Jewish practice, teaching and interpersonal skills, and more. The shortage is not limited to specific institutions or programs, geographic areas or types of community; it exists across-the-board.

The shortage of qualified personnel is the result of the following:

- It is difficult to recruit qualified candidates for work in the field and for training programs because of the reputation and realities of the profession. Salaries and benefits are low and educators are most often not empowered to affect the field.
- Current training opportunities for Jewish educators do not meet the needs of the field.
- The profession of Jewish education is underdeveloped.
- There is a high rate of attrition among Jewish educators.

In competition with other professions to attract talented young Jews, Jewish education fares poorly. Why should talented people choose Jewish education when it is perceived as a low-status profession in a field that is frequently failing? Educators work with little opportunity for professional growth, a feeling of isolation from their colleagues and a sense that their work often does not make a significant difference.

The key to meeting the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education resides in building the profession of Jewish education. The profession will be strengthened if talented, dedicated people come to believe that through Jewish education they can affect the future of the Jewish people. These people must believe that their dedication will be rewarded and that creativity will be given a chance. If educators are encouraged to grow as they work and are recognized by the community for their successes, they will be able to positively impact the lives of children and their families.

## II. Recommendations

**The Commission recommends that a ten-year plan to build the profession of Jewish education in North America be developed and immediately launched. The plan will include the development of training opportunities; a major effort to recruit appropriate candidates to the profession; increases in salaries and benefits; and improvements in the status of Jewish education as a profession.**

This plan will require that:

A. The North American Jewish community undertake a program to significantly increase the quantity and enhance the quality of pre-service and in-service training opportunities in North America and in Israel. The plan will raise the number of people graduating from training programs from 125 to 400 per year and will dramatically expand in-service and on-the-job training programs.

Increasing and improving training opportunities will require investing significant funds in the development of existing training programs to enable them to rise to their full potential, and developing new programs within training institutions or at general universities in North America and in Israel. These funds will be used to:

* Develop and increase faculty for Jewish education programs, including the endowment of professorships and fellowships for training new faculty.

* Create and expand specialized tracks in various institutions to meet the needs of the field (e.g. specialization in pre-school education, in informal education, in the teaching of the Hebrew language, in the use of media for education, "fast-track" training programs for career-changers, etc.).

* Improve the quality of training opportunities by creating partnerships between training institutions in North America and Israel, research networks, consortia of training programs.

* Establish training programs for geographic areas that do not have any at this time (e.g. the South-East – see maps, Appendix).

* Develop and support training for professional leadership in Jewish education in North America.

* Support specialized programs at general universities (e.g. George Washington University, Stanford University, York University) and consider the establishment of similar programs where they are desirable.

* Provide a significant number of fellowships for students who want to become Jewish educators.

* Develop a variety of in-service training programs throughout North America and in Israel that will accommodate many more educators. The programs will be designed to fulfill a variety of in-service needs:

  On-the-job training programs, either at existing training institutions or at education departments and Judaic studies departments at general universities.

  Specialized programs for the various content areas and for specific positions (e.g., curriculum writers, Israel Experience educators, teacher trainers).

  Programs that use Israel more extensively as a resource for Jewish educators.

B. A nationally co-ordinated recruitment plan to increase the pool of qualified applicants for jobs and for training programs be developed and implemented. The plan will seek to significantly expand the pool from which candidates for training and re-training are recruited, and develop methods and techniques for recruiting them.

   This will involve:

   * Undertaking a survey to identify new pools of candidates (e.g. Judaic studies students at universities, day school students, youth group graduates, rabbis, career-changers, general educators who are Jewish; members of large Jewish organizations, etc.).

   * Identifying the conditions under which talented potential educators could be attracted to the field (e.g. financial incentives during training; adequate salaries and benefits; possibilities of advancement and growth; challenging jobs).

   * Developing a systematic marketing and recruitment program based on the findings of the survey.

C. The profession of Jewish education, including the conditions that are likely to attract and retain a cadre of dedicated, qualified educators, be developed. In particular, the plan will recommend policies to improve the status of educators, their salaries and benefits, grant them empowerment and improve their working conditions.

This will involve:

* Developing appropriate standards for salaries and benefits for all Jewish educators, strategies for implementing them in communities, and assuring their funding.

* Creating a comprehensive career development program for educators which will allow for professional advancement and personal growth.

* Mapping out the positions that need to be created and filled in order to meet the current challenges of Jewish education (e.g. specialists in early childhood, family education, adult education, special education, and the education of educators).

* Developing both linear and non-linear ladders of advancement for education, ranging from avocational positions to senior academic and executive positions. The ladder of advancement will be accompanied by the appropriate criteria for advancement and related salaries and benefits.

* Encouraging colleagial networking through conferences, publications and professional associations, as a way of maintaining standards, exchanging ideas and facilitating innovation and experimentation.

# 4. Arenas for Programmatic Intervention

## I. Background

The Commission has become convinced that there are many arenas in which programmatic initiatives can lead to significant positive improvements in Jewish education. These initiatives, often complementing each other, would address specific target populations, settings and frameworks, and educational content, resources and methods.

Among the important arenas for such initiatives are:

*By target populations*

1. Early childhood
2. The child
3. The adolescent
4. The college-age youth
5. The adult
6. The family
7. The retired and elderly
8. The new immigrant

*By settings and frameworks*

9. Early childhood education and child care
10. The supplementary school (elementary and high school)
11. The day school (elementary and high school)
12. The synagogue
13. The Jewish community center
14. Camping
15. The Israel Experience

*By content, resources and methods*

16. Curriculum
17. Hebrew language education
18. The arts
19. Media and new technologies

In all of these areas, new programmatic efforts have been launched in recent years. Some of these appear to be achieving positive results. Yet there is clearly much more that can and should be done. Additional initiatives must be encouraged, carefully planned, and closely monitored.

The Commission has identified opportunities for further action, and will encourage foundations, philanthropists and institutions to pursue programmatic initiatives in areas of interest to them.

The Community Action Sites will offer an opportunity to learn how to intervene in many of these programmatic areas. Examples of best practice will be assembled there and will be carefully studied. Local taskforces will probably be established for specific programmatic areas in Community Action Sites.

The Commission was reminded that though programmatic arenas are at the very heart of the educational endeavour, the history of general education and of Jewish education offers many examples of important ideas that were acted upon prematurely. It wants to avoid this pitfall for programmatic arenas.

For these reasons—the opportunities inherent in the programmatic arenas; the readiness and interest of institutions, foundations and philanthropists to undertake specific projects; the need of Community Action Sites to work through programs—the Commission has decided to design an agenda for programmatic arenas. The agenda will be presented in the Commission's report for further consideration by the facilitating mechanism.

## II. Recommendation

**The Commission has identified the following programmatic arenas, each of which offers promising opportunities for intervention.**

***Target populations:*** **early childhood, the child, the adolescent, the college-age youth, the adult, the family, the retired and elderly, the new immigrant.**

***Settings and frameworks:*** **early childhood education and child care, the supplementary school (elementary and high school), the day school (elementary and high school), informal education, camping, the Israel Experience.**

***Content, resources and methods:*** **curriculum, Hebrew language education, and media and new technologies.**

**The Commission believes that collectively these form a challenging agenda for the next decade and urges communities, institutions, communal organizations, foundations and philanthropists to act upon them.**

The facilitating mechanism will offer its services to those who want to concentrate their efforts in a programmatic arena and will help in research, planning and monitoring those efforts.

The mechanism will continue to develop the programmatic agenda towards implementation in Community Action Sites and will help diffuse the results of work in these areas throughout the North American community.

# 5. Community Action Sites

## I. Background

A Community Action Site is a place—a whole community or a network of institutions—where excellence in Jewish education will be demonstrated for others to see, learn from and, where appropriate, to replicate. The Community Action Site will engage in the process of re-designing and improving the delivery of Jewish education according to state-of-the-art knowledge. The focus will be on personnel and the community, with the goal of effecting and inspiring change in the various programmatic arenas in the field of Jewish education.

### A. Working Assumptions

The concept of the Community Action Site is based on several assumptions.

*1. LOCAL INITIATIVES*

The initiative for establishing a Community Action Site should come from the local community and the key stakeholders must be fully committed to the endeavour. The community must be willing to set for itself the highest possible standards and guarantee the necessary funding for the project. The community selected will have to develop a local mechanism that will play a major role in the initiation of ideas, the design of programs and their implementation.

*2. LEARNING BY DOING*

The notion of a Community Action Site assumes that it is possible to demonstrate effective approaches to problems in a specific community which can then be replicated elsewhere. Significant questions concerning innovation and implementation, such as what elements should be included and how they should be combined, can only be resolved in real-life situations, through the dynamics of thinking about implementation, and in the process of implementing.

*3. BEST PRACTICE*

Best practice will be an important resource for the work of the Community Action Site. Examples of best practice in Jewish education, suggested by the national denominational bodies, their training institutions, educational organizations, JWB, JESNA, CJF, and other relevant groups, together with the staff of the facilitating mechanism, will be brought to the site, integrated in a complementary way, and adequately funded, thus significantly increasing their impact.

*4. CONTENT*

The educational program in a Community Action Site will be guided by a carefully articulated philosophy which reflect deliberations concerning educational goals and the means for accomplishing them. Local institutions working with the denominations, JWB, JESNA, the facilitating mechanism and others invited to participate, will produce background papers on the philosophy that should guide the work being done. These papers should address the problem of translating the particular philosophy into curriculum, as well as describe the texts to be studied and the teaching methods to be used. They will also help guide the evaluation of the program.

*5. ENVIRONMENT*

The Community Action Site will be characterized by innovation and experimentation. Programs will not be limited to existing ideas, but rather creativity will be encouraged. As ideas are tested, they will be carefully monitored and will be subject to critical analysis. The combination of openness and creativity with monitoring and accountability is not easily accomplished, but is vital to the concept of the Community Action Site.

*6. EVALUATION*

The work of the Community Action Site will have to be monitored and evaluated in order to discover what can be achieved when there is a massive and systematic investment of thought, energy and funding in Jewish education. The results of the evaluation will serve as the basis for diffusion.

*7. DIFFUSION*

The results of work in a Community Action Site, and lessons learned from projects demonstrated there, will be diffused throughout the North American Jewish community and to other interested Jewish communities in the world. This will require thorough documentation of all aspects of the work.

## B. The Scope of a Community Action Site

The scope of a Community Action Site has not yet been decided. Below are two possible models.

1. The Community Action Site could be an entire community where all the institutions involved in Jewish education are invited to join. One to three such comprehensive sites could be established. Each site would have to guarantee the participation of a minimum number of its institutions. It might be determined that a substantial proportion of all the Jewish educational institutions in the community (e.g. the early childhood programs, the supplementary schools, the day schools, JCCs, Judaic studies programs at the local university, adult education programs, etc.) would be needed to build this version of a Community Action Site.

2. Several Community Action Sites could be established with each of them taking different cuts into Jewish education. This could be a cut by ages (e.g. elementary school age), by institutions (e.g. all the day schools), or some combination of these approaches. If, for example, three Community Action Sites decided to concentrate on early childhood and the supplementary school and the day school, three others on the high school and college age groups, and three more on JCCs, summer camps and Israel Experience programs, a significant portion of the map of Jewish education would be covered.

## C. An Example of a Community Action Site at Work

After establishing criteria for the selection of a Community Action Site, the board of the facilitating mechanism will consider several possible communities and choose from among them. A community that is selected will create a structure to work in partnership with the facilitating mechanism. If a local commission already exists, it might serve as that structure. Together they will conduct a study of the community to learn about the market for Jewish education (e.g. how many people are involved, what they want); the nature and status of the personnel; the lay leadership of Jewish education; the current level of funding for Jewish education, etc. A preliminary plan would then be developed. Below are some of the elements of a plan which could serve as examples of the work that will be undertaken in a Community Action Site.

### *1. PERSONNEL*

The study might show that there are currently 500 filled positions (formal and informal, full-time and part-time) in all areas of Jewish education in the community. The study would also identify the gaps that exist—the positions that need to be created and filled. The denominations (their organizations and training institutions) and others will be invited to join in developing a plan for recruiting, training and retaining personnel.

### a. RECRUITMENT

All of the recommendations related to recruitment in the Commission's report, and the results of the national recruitment study that will be undertaken, will be reviewed and the Community Action Site would act on those recommendations. Some examples:

- Recruiting appropriate college students (good Jewish background, commitment to Judaism) from the local universities, and contracting several years of work in the supplementary schools, day schools and JCCs in the community.

- Recruiting people interested in changing their careers.

- Encouraging general educators in the community to retool themselves for positions in Jewish education.

- Bringing a number of outstanding educators from outside the community in to assume key positions (e.g. three Jerusalem Fellows, four Senior Educators, etc.).

- Recruiting personnel from among the membership of various national organizations and building a program to prepare them to work in the field.

- Canvassing the retired population in the community to recruit appropriate candidates for work in Jewish education.

### b. TRAINING

In addition to preparing people who are new to the field, every person in the educational endeavour would be involved in in-service training. Some examples:

- All avocational teachers would be assessed in terms of their current knowledge and their potential and a program to advance them would be designed.

- All professional teachers, principals, and informal educators would be involved in some continuing education planned jointly by the national and local mechanisms.

- Special fast-track programs would be developed for retraining general educators or career-changers who are moving into the field of Jewish education.

- The Community Action Site might be adopted by a consortium of training institutions, with each institution undertaking a specific assignment. The training institutions, the local universities, institutions in Israel, and any other relevant players could be invited to participate.

- Lay leadership training programs might be established.

### c. PROFESSION BUILDING

As a result of the community study, a new map of the Jewish educational needs in the community would be developed. This map might include, for example, three full-time positions for special education; several positions for experts in early childhood education; two teacher-trainers; specialists in the teaching of Bible, Hebrew, History; an expert on the use of Israel Experience programs; consultants on Jewish programming for the JCCs; several adult educators; several family educators, etc. To respond to these needs, it might be determined that a 10% increase in the number of positions in the community is required. This could include introducing more full-time positions for people currently working part-time. This map would be the beginning of a new conception of the profession and would develop with time.

Accompanying the map would be a description of the training, salary, benefits and status appropriate to each position. Thus, a Bible expert might earn the same salary and be granted the same status as a principal. This would expand the possibilities of advancement in Jewish education beyond the conventional linear pattern of teacher, assistant principal, principal.

### d. RETENTION

The issue of retention would be addressed in light of the results of the community study. The study might point to the need for improving the relationship between lay boards and educators; the need for better compensation, the need for sabbaticals, trips to Israel as well as on-the-job training for teachers. The local mechanism will have to determine the conditions that are necessary to retain good people in the field and deal with them accordingly.

## *2. COMMUNITY – ITS LEADERSHIP, FUNDING, AND STRUCTURES*

From the onset of the Community Action Site, the appropriate community leadership will have to be engaged. These leaders, either the board of a local commission and its staff or newly recruited leaders, will have to be involved in developing the plans of the Community Action Site, overseeing them, monitoring them and responding to feedback. The community would have to either create its own evaluation program or subscribe to a national evaluation program so that success could be measured and appropriate decisions could be made.

Only if the community leadership is well-informed and totally committed will the necessary funding and overall support be obtained for the work of the Community Action Site. A partnership between the community's lay leadership, educators and educational institutions must be created.

*3. AN EXAMPLE OF AN INSTITUTION WITHIN A COMMUNITY ACTION SITE*

The supplementary schools within a specific community are offered below as a hypothetical possibility of how the national and local mechanisms would work together to implement appropriate recommendations. Over time, such an approach could be introduced for all of the institutions in a Community Action Site.

A taskforce, which could be composed of the top experts of various movements involved in supplementary education, might be created to join with the local structure in examining the supplementary schools. They would search for examples of best practice and invite those who have developed them, as well as thinkers or theoreticians in the area, to join in deliberations on the supplementary school. Together, the national and local teams would begin to plan an approach to improving the supplementary school which could include the following:

- the elaboration of educational philosophies for the supplementary school;
- the supplementary school's relationship to the synagogue, to informal education, to summer camping, to trips to Israel, to family education and to adult education;
- legitimate educational outcomes of the supplementary school;
- the range of curriculum and the content that should be offered in the supplementary school;
- the methods and materials currently available that should be introduced;
- the crucial problematic areas for which materials must be prepared e.g., methods for the teaching of Hebrew. In such a case, one of the national institutions or research centers might be asked to undertake the assignment immediately.

Each of the denominations would be given the opportunity and appropriate support (e.g. funding, expert personnel) to develop a plan including all of the elements listed above. The local and national mechanisms would review, modify and adopt the plan. Funding and criteria for evaluation would be agreed upon. The appropriate training institutions would be asked to undertake responsibility for training the personnel and would accompany the experiment as a whole. For example, for the Conservative supplementary schools, the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and its Melton Research Center might work with the staff of the mechanisms, helping them decide what materials should be taught and developing a training program for the teaching of this material. JTSA and Melton faculty would be involved with the local supplementary schools on a regular basis, to monitor progress and to serve as trouble-shooters.

Although denominations would work individually with their Conservative, Orthodox, Reform and Reconstructionist schools, there are some areas where all of the denominations

could work together. On issues such as the integration of formal and informal education, the use of the Israel Experience, family education, and possibly even in certain content areas such as the teaching of Hebrew, combined effort could yield significant results.

Within a few years, we could learn what can be achieved when proper thinking, funding and training are invested in a supplementary school. We could also see how informal education, the Israel Experience, family education and other elements could be combined to increase the impact of the supplementary school. The extent of the success and the rate at which new ideas should be introduced will become readily apparent when the Community Action Site is functioning.

The facilitating mechanism, in addition to its role in planning, evaluating and overseeing the entire project, would, as quickly as possible, extrapolate principles from the experience of a Community Action Site to feed the public debate, leading to the development of policies on issues such as salaries, benefits, the elements of professional status, sabbaticals, etc. These policies, as well as specific lessons learned, would be diffused to other communities in North America.

## II. Recommendation

**The Commission recommends the establishment of several Community Action Sites, where excellence in Jewish education will be demonstrated for others to see, learn from and, where appropriate, to replicate. Community Action Sites will be initiated by local communities which will work in partnership with the facilitating mechanism for implementation. The mechanism will help distill the lessons learned from the Community Action Sites and diffuse the results.**

# 6. Research

## I. Background

There is very little research on Jewish education being carried out in North America. As a result, there is a paucity of data; too little is known concerning the basic issues and almost no evaluations have been undertaken to assess the quality and impact of programs.

Because of this, decisions are made without the benefit of clear evidence of need; major resources are invested with insufficient evaluation or monitoring. We seldom know what works in Jewish education, what is better and what is less good, what the impact of programs is. The market has not been explored; we do not know what people want. There are not enough standardized achievement tests in Jewish education; we do not know much about what students know. We do not have accurate information on how many teachers there are, how qualified they are, what their salaries are.

Various theories and models for the training of educators need to be considered as we decide what kinds of training are appropriate for various types of educators. The debates in general education on the education of educators need to be considered in terms of their significance for Jewish education. A careful analysis of the potential of the existing training institutions would help us determine both what is desirable and what is feasible.

More extensive investigation into the history and philosophy of Jewish education would inform our thinking for future developments.

We are also in need of important data and knowledge in areas such as the curriculum and teaching methods for Jewish schools. For example, the teaching of Hebrew needs to be grounded in research. The various goals for the teaching of Hebrew should determine the kind of Hebrew to be taught: the Hebrew of the Bible, of the prayer book, spoken Hebrew, Hebrew useful on a first visit to Israel, and so on. These decisions in turn would determine the vocabulary to be mastered, the relative importance of literature, of grammar, etc.

The potential of informal education has not been researched. Summer camping appears to make a difference. Is this really so? If it is, how can its impact be increased by relating it to the education that takes place in the JCCs and in schools?

Adult education is also an area that needs to be researched. How could we best reach out to the many Jewish adults who might be interested in Jewish study but are not involved in existing adult education courses? What are the varied needs of different audiences of adults and what kinds of programs would meet diverse needs and learning styles?

The role of Israel as an educational resource has not been studied adequately. It plays too small a role in the curriculum of Jewish schools. There is a shortage of educational materials and literature about teaching methods for this topic.

We need research in order to allow decision-makers to make informed decisions. We need it, too, to enrich our knowledge about Jewish education and to promote the creative processes that will design the Jewish education of tomorrow.

## II. Recommendations

**The Commission recommends the establishment of a research capability in North America to develop the knowledge base for Jewish education, to gather the necessary data and to undertake monitoring and evaluation. Research and development should be supported at existing institutions and organizations, and at specialized research facilities that may need to be established.**

# 7. The Facilitating Mechanism

## I. Background

The challenge facing the Commission at this time is to create the conditions for implementing its plan and to launch the process that will bring across-the-board change. The Commission needs to decide **who will undertake the continuation of its work and how this will be done.** The plan for action, the implementation of the Commission's recommendations, will require that some mechanism be created to continue the work of the Commission after its report is issued.

Such a mechanism will

- facilitate the establishment of Community Action Sites;
- encourage foundations and philanthropists to support excellence, innovation and experimentation;
- facilitate the implementation of strategies on the continental level and in Israel;
- assist in the planning and development of programmatic agendas;
- help to develop the research capability in North America and prepare comprehensive annual progress reports for discussion by the North American Jewish community.

A number of principles will guide the relationship between this facilitating mechanism and the communities, organizations and individuals implementing the recommendations: Ready-made plans will not be offered or imposed. Rather, the mechanism will act as facilitator and resource for local initiatives and planning, bringing together the appropriate local and continental resources. The work will be guided by agreed-upon criteria such as pluralism, accountability and the highest professional standards. Participating communities and institutions will establish their own local planning and implementation mechanism that will be responsible for the work.

## II. Recommendations

**The Commission recommends the establishment of a facilitating mechanism that will undertake the implementation of its decisions and recommendations. It will be a driving force in the attempt to bring about across-the-board, systemic change for Jewish education in North America.**

The facilitating mechanism will create a cooperative effort of individuals and organizations concerned with Jewish education, as well as the funders who will help support the entire activity. Central communal organizations—CJF, JWB and JESNA—will be full partners in the work. Federations will be invited to play a central role and the religious denominations will be fully involved.

The facilitating mechanism will be charged with gaining acceptance for the action plan decided upon by the Commission and bringing about implementation of the Commission's recommendations. It will be devoted to initiating and promoting innovation in Jewish education. As such, it should be a center guided by vision, together with rigorous work and creative thinking and characterized by an atmosphere of ferment, search and creativity. It will be a driving force for systemic change.

It will help to design and revise development strategies in concert with other persons, communities and institutions. It will be a full-time catalyst for development efforts in Jewish education. It will work with and through existing institutions and organizations and help them rise to their full potential.

## III. Governance and Relationship to the Commission

The issue of continuation of the Commission's work and of the governance of the facilitating mechanism was addressed by commissioners and a number of suggestions were offered for consideration.

### *A. GOVERNANCE*

1. The mechanism will be comprised of an active board and staff. The board will determine policy and follow the work of the small, highly qualified professional staff.

2. The work of the mechanism will be guided by the vision and philosophy contained in the final report of the Commission. In addition, the work of the mechanism will be enriched through consultations with institutions, scholars, rabbis, educators and community leaders. A professional advisory team shall be established to stimulate this activity.

3. The authority of the mechanism will derive from the ideas that guide it, and the prestige, status and effectiveness of its board and staff.

*B. CONTINUATION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION*

Many commissioners have expressed an interest in retaining an active involvement in the work of the Commission after the final report is issued. The mechanism could be viewed as heir to the Commission—as its successor in charge of implementation. In this case, the board of the mechanism would be composed of some of the commissioners interested in being actively involved in implementation, be it as funders or representatives of relevant institutions in addition to other members.

An additional possibility would be that the full Commission convene once a year—possibly in an enlarged format, becoming a major communal forum on Jewish education. This forum, convened by the board of the mechanism, would review progress on implementation and the state of the field of Jewish education in North America.

## IV. Tasks & Functions

A. The mechanism will undertake the following **tasks:**

1. To **initiate and facilitate the establishment of several Community Action Sites.** This involves developing criteria for their selection; assisting communities to plan and develop their site; ensuring monitoring, evaluation and feedback. Each site will have its local mechanism—whether this be a commission, a planning unit or some other suitable structure—that will undertake responsibility for planning and implementing the Community Action Site.

2. To **facilitate implementation of strategies on the continental level and in Israel.** This may mean encouraging institutions that will plan and carry out the development efforts. For example: the mechanism may commission the preparation of a national recruitment plan; it may lend planning assistance to existing training institutions as they undertake expansion and development of their training programs; it may help secure funding for these.

3. To offer **assistance as requested for the planning and development of the programmatic arenas.** The mechanism may serve as consultant to foundations, institutions and organizations that want to undertake work in a programmatic arena, helping to design a development process, recruit staff, gather experts who might bring knowledge and data to the planning process.

4. To help **develop the research capability needed in North America** that will allow for more informed policies concerning Jewish education.

5. To **prepare progress reports** for public discussion of the central issues of Jewish education.

6. To facilitate the development and enhance the effectiveness of a **network of existing commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity, local mechanisms of the various Community Action Sites** and other relevant organizations, for the promotion of change and the diffusion of innovation.

B. In order to meet these complex tasks, the mechanism will insure that the following **functions are performed.**

*1. Research, data collection, planning and policy analysis*

Research and planning work may be commissioned, performed in-house or other institutions may be encouraged to do various parts. The necessary data bases will be created; major issues will be studied and key questions will be researched (e.g. inventories of Jewish educational resources may be developed; analyses of needs and wants in the community will be undertaken; the work on setting norms and standards for training will be initiated; the quality of existing training will be assessed and alternative models considered; etc.).

The research function will:

- Provide the analysis needed for informed decisions. (E.g. What are relevant criteria for the selection of Community Action Sites? What is the nature of the problem/s in that site? What are the political and institutional givens relevant to change in Community Action Sites? Who are the stakeholders and how can they be involved? What are the financial and funding possibilities?)

- Provide the knowledge and planning support needed by the Community Action Sites; work with the local mechanism in Community Action Sites, providing expertise that may be needed and ensuring the level and quality of the work intended.

- Be the arm of the mechanism for planning and strategic thinking. Strategies will be defined and revised on an ongoing basis. This work will extensively involve other persons and institutions. It is a different activity from that of facilitating the setting up of a North American research capability but it may provide some of the initial impetus.

2. *Community interface (for Community Action Sites)*

The mechanism will work closely with the communities where Community Action Sites are located. This complex function will include negotiation over criteria, modes of operation, the establishment of local structures for planning and implementation, funding and more. It will be undertaken in cooperation with the local mechanisms that will be established in Community Action Sites.

The community interface function may deal with:

- Initiation of negotiations with relevant stakeholders and community leaders who want to establish a Community Action Site.

- Helping the local community establish a mechanism for its Community Action Site and recruit staff for such mechanism.

- Ongoing facilitation of implementation as needed (e.g. assistance in negotiations with national training institutions, universities, organizations, etc.). The mechanism staff will be pro-active in its support of the local management of the Community Action Sites and will maintain ongoing contact with the local team.

3. *Funding facilitation*

This function may include the following:

- Undertaking, as appropriate, brokering between various possible sources of funding (foundations, national organizations, local sources of funds, federations, individuals) and the Community Action Sites.

- Being a central address both for funding sources and for relevant institutions who will seek guidance in accomplishing their objectives.

- Assisting funders in moving ahead with programmatic arenas in which they have an interest, acting as a consultant, and providing professional assistance as appropriate.

- Developing long-term funding strategies with all relevant stakeholders.

4. *Monitoring, evaluation and feedback*

The purpose of this function is threefold:

- To monitor the activity of each Community Action Site and all other elements of the action plan.
- To evaluate progress—in whatever form or forms deemed most useful.
- To create and activate feedback loops to connect practical results with a process of re-thinking, re-planning and implementation.

5. *Diffusion of innovation*

The mechanism will deal with the complex issue of the diffusion of innovation from one or more Community Action Sites, from programmatic undertakings and from continental developments, to many or all communities. Strategies will be devised to maximize change throughout the community working through existing organizations and institutions.

Note: The data upon which these background materials and recommendations are based are to be found in the studies that have been undertaken for the Commission; all the studies will be completed before the Commission issues its report.

*The Relationship Between Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity* (I. Scheffler, Harvard University; S. Fox, The Hebrew University).

*The Organizational Structure of Jewish Education in North America* (W. Ackerman, Ben Gurion University).

*Community Organization for Jewish Education in North America; Leadership, Finance and Structure* (H.L. Zucker, Director, Commission on Jewish Education in North America).

*Federation-Led Community Planning for Jewish Education, Identity and Continuity* (J. Fox, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland).

*The Synagogue as a Context for Jewish Education* (J. Reimer, Brandeis University).

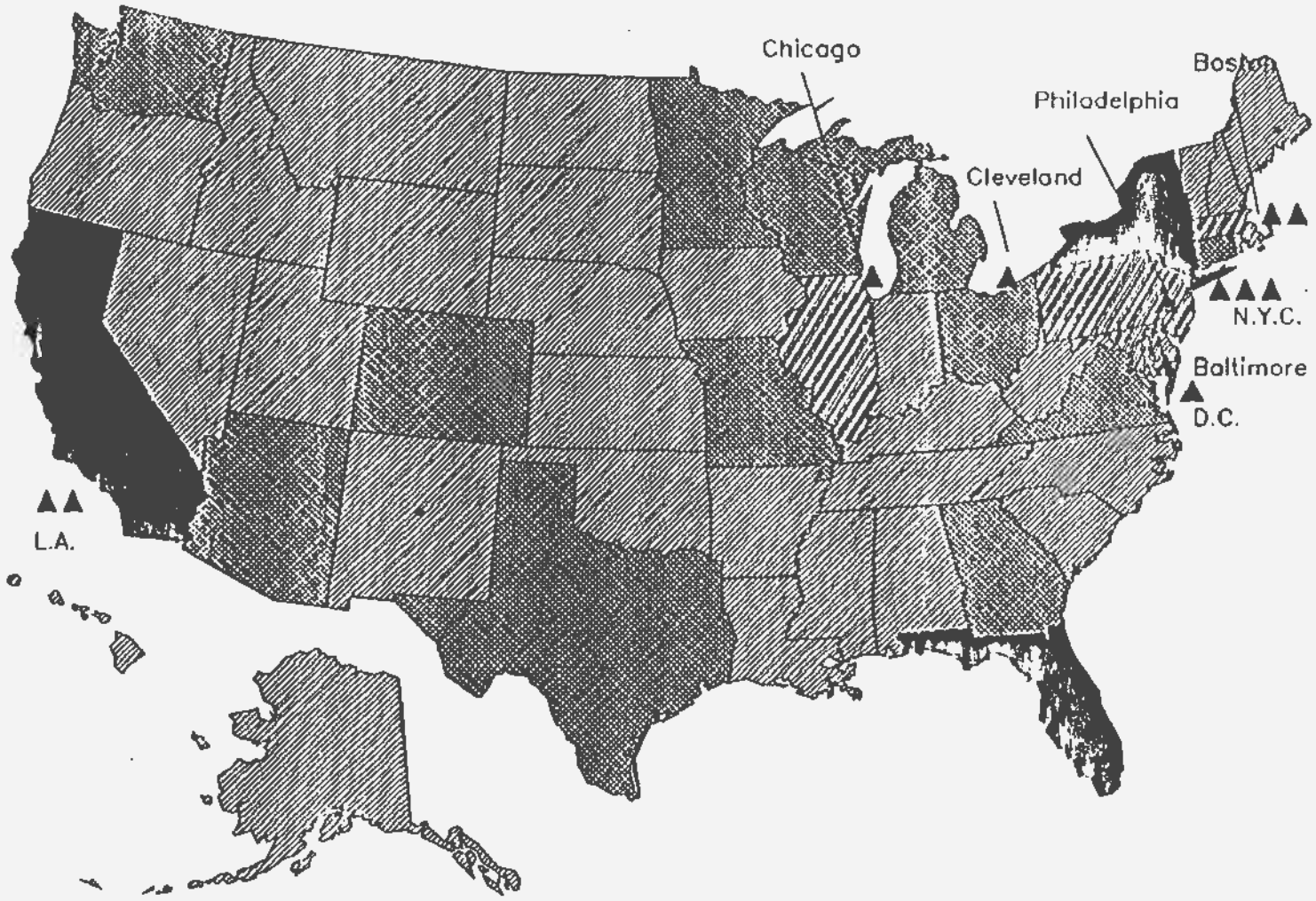
*The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Research Study* (A. Davidson, Jewish Theological Seminary of America).

*Towards the Professionalization of Jewish Teaching* (I. Aron, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles).

*Studies of Personnel in Jewish Education: A Summary Report* (I. Aron and D. Markovic, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles).

*Informal Jewish Education* (B. Reisman, Brandeis University).

# Training Institutions in the United States & Estimated Jewish Population 1987




**Population**

▲ Training Institutions

- Up to 19,999
- 20,000 to 149,999
- 150,000 to 499,999
- 500,000 Up

Source for Populotion.: *American Jewish Yearbook, 1988*

# Training Institutions in Canada
# Total Population 1986 = 310,000


Source: Population: American Jewish Yearbook, 1988

# COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

BACKGROUND MATERIALS
FOR THE COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT
JUNE 12, 1990

**Convened by the Mandel Associated Foundations,**
**JWB and JESNA in collaboration with CJF**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 has yet to be written. It will deal with three topics:

1. A statement about the mission of Jewish education.
2. A presentation of divergent views on Jewish continuity – as they were expressed in the Commission's deliberations.
3. A discussion of the relationship between Jewish education and Jewish continuity. This will be based on the paper by Prof. I. Scheffler and Prof. S. Fox on this topic.

## The Crucial Importance of Jewish Education in Contemporary Life

There is a deep and wide-spread concern in the Jewish community today that the commitment to basic Jewish values, ideals and behavior may be diminishing at an alarming rate. There is considerable evidence that a high percentage of Jews have come to feel that Judaism does not address their search for personal fulfillment and communality. This has grave implications not only for the richness of Jewish life but for the very continuity of the Jewish people. Throughout history Jews have faced dangers from without with courage and steadfastness; now a new kind of commitment is required.

The Jews in North America live in an open society which presents an unprecedented range of opportunities and choices. This extraordinary environment confronts us with what is proving to be an historic dilemma; while we cherish our freedom as individuals to explore new horizons, we recognize that this very freedom poses a dramatic challenge to the future of the Jewish way of life. There is an urgent need to find better ways to ensure that Jews maintain and strengthen the commitments that are central to Judaism.

In our uniquely pluralistic society, where there are so many philosophies and ideologies competing for attention, and where the pursuit of Judaism increasingly in-

volves a conscious choice, the burden of preparation for such a decision resides with education. Jewish education must be compelling, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually, so that young people will say to themselves: "I have decided to remain engaged, to continue to investigate and grapple with these ideas and to choose an appropriate Jewish way of life." Jewish education must be vastly improved if it is to achieve this objective. It must become an experience that inspires Jews to learn, feel and act in a way that reflects a deep understanding of Jewish values.

The difficulties facing Jewish education bear some resemblance to the problems of education in general in the U.S. Well known reports have documented the serious lack of teaching talent as well as other problems facing the educational system. A severe lack of funds, resources, status and vision is causing the system to strain and crack. Jewish education is also impoverished in regard to these basic requirements.

In North America today, Jewish education is often limited in scope: at times it is confined simply to facts about Jewish history and holidays and some study of the Hebrew language. Many additional elements that should be central to the mission of Jewish education—such as the teaching of Jewish values and ideals, the concern for the State of Israel and for Jews throughout the world, the meaning of prayer, the relationship with God and community—are often lacking. It is imperative that at this moment in history Jewish education again become a transformative rather than merely an informative experience. Without this change in the educational experience, it will be increasingly difficult to pass on to future generations a strong identity with and commitment to Judaism.

The core of Jewish education must be character education. Its goal must be no less than shaping the inner lives of people. It must find a way to transmit the essence of

what Jewish life is all about, so that future generations of Jews will be impelled to search for meaning through their own rich traditions and institutions. Judaism must present itself as a living entity and give the Jews of today the resources to find answers to the fundamental questions of life as readily as it did for their ancestors through the centuries. Otherwise it could eventually be overtaken in the minds of young people by other systems of thought that they feel are more meaningful for the modern world.

This dangerous state of affairs is in no small measure the result of the historically low priority that the Jewish community as a whole has given to Jewish education. At the beginning of the federation movement at the turn of the century, the chief emphasis was on financial support for the indigent newcomers and on their Americanization. Federations generally ignored Jewish education, which was left to those people who had Jewish education as a special interest. While many outstanding schools, community centers, and summer camps were established by committed leaders and parents, overall the field met with indifferent support by the leaders of the community.

In the '20s and the '30s, the situation began to improve, but federations tended to give community support priority to the health and social service fields, and to dealing with problems of anti-Semitism. In the immediate post-War period, the highest community priority was the lifesaving work of Jewish relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the upbuilding of Israel. At the same time, Jewish education became a higher priority and received increased support from federations and from the religious denominations. Today federation leaders attach a higher priority to Jewish education.

Currently, federations are urgently involved with the rescue and resettlement of Soviet Jewry, and this is emerging as the need which overshadows all other federation concerns.

In the face of such life-and-death issues, the needs of education seem to be less urgent, less insistent, more diffused; a problem that can be dealt with at some point in the future when more pressing problems have been solved. This is an illusion. We may continue to live with emergencies indefinitely, and we can no longer postpone addressing the needs of Jewish education lest we face an irreversible decline in the vitality of the Jewish people.

An obvious symptom of the inadequacy of Jewish education is the rise in intermarriage and the consequent turning away from Jewish traditions in the search for fulfillment and meaning in life. According to a recent Gallup (Israel) Poll of American Jews, carried out in December 1989, the number of intermarriages has sharply increased in the past couple of decades, growing from 16% of Jews between the ages of 40 and 59, to 28% of Jews under the age of 40. These figures are consistent with studies of individual communities in North America undertaken in recent years. Today, nearly one out of every three married Jews under the age of 40 is married to a non-Jew. A number of studies indicate that Jews who intermarry are significantly less likely to provide their children with a Jewish education. A study of children of intermarriages shows that only 24% of children in dual faith households identify themselves as Jews.

Another symptom of the problem is that while a large majority of Jewish children have at one time or another received some form of Jewish education, it has often been so sporadic that it has had little impact on their lives. A recent study found that

over half of Jewish school age children in the United States are not currently enrolled in any kind of Jewish schooling. Inevitably these children will grow up with a relatively weak identification with and understanding of Judaism, and have difficulty passing on to their children an appreciation of the beauty and richness of Jewish life.

This weakening commitment to Jewish life, which can already be seen in the lives of the current generation of young adult Jews, may become even more apparent among their children and grandchildren. This painful prospect, which community leaders can foresee in their own families as well as in the community at large, has brought to a head concern about the quality and mission of Jewish education.

In the past the Jewish family and the Jewish community had certain bonds that gave it remarkable inner strength. Jews grew up in Jewish families and Jewish neighborhoods with a strong Jewish ambience. They were constantly surrounded by the symbols and customs of Jewish life. They came into contact with their cultural and spiritual heritage in a variety of institutions and settings. Thus young people received a strong sense of Jewish identity through experiences in their everyday life. Today these neighborhoods and the way of life they represented have all but disappeared from the modern world, and ways must be found to respond to these new circumstances.

It was to meet these challenges that the idea of creating the Commission on Jewish Education in North America was born.

The underlying assumption that guided the Commission was that the North American Jewish community had the will and capacity to mobilize itself for education as it had in the past for the building of the State of Israel, the rescue of Jews in

distress, and the fight against discrimination. This would require that all sectors of North American Jewry join forces, pool their energies and resources, and launch an unprecedented undertaking to enlarge the scope, raise the standards and improve the quality of Jewish education. To accomplish this, the Commission would have to analyze the current shortcomings of Jewish education, develop a concrete plan of action with specific goals, and establish a mechanism to oversee the enactment of that plan.

## How the Commission Was Formed

The idea of forming a Commission to tackle the problems of Jewish education was first conceived by Morton L. Mandel and his brothers Jack N. Mandel and Joseph C. Mandel of Cleveland, Ohio, in November, 1986. Morton Mandel has played a central role in the Jewish world during his long career as a community leader, and has been responsible for developing new initiatives for education in his local community, in the Jewish Community Center movement, and in the Jewish Agency for Israel. In calling for the creation of a Commission, Morton Mandel and his brothers, Jack and Joseph, decided to commit their personal energies and the financial resources of the Mandel Associated Foundations to bring about a major change in Jewish education.

In making this move, Mandel was mindful that commissions and their reports had played a significant role in the field of general education over the years. In 1910, *The Flexner Report on Medical Education in the U.S. and Canada* led to major reform in this field. More recently, national concern about the crisis in education has been aroused by such reports as *A Nation At Risk*, published by the National Commission

on Excellence in Education (1984), *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* published by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986), and *An Imperiled Generation*, published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1988).

Moreover, the Jewish world was not unfamiliar with the activities of national or international commissions. They have been used at various times to address different areas of contemporary life or fields of service and to achieve specific goals. Also, numerous local communities have begun, in recent years, to organize commissions on Jewish education or Jewish continuity as a means of studying local problems, developing appropriate responses and implementing the necessary changes. About a dozen major communities have such commissions in various stages of maturity.

However, in this generation there has not been a national commission singularly devoted to the subject of Jewish education in North America as a whole, and it was clear from the outset that in order to do its job well it would have to incorporate several unique features.

It was determined that the private and communal sectors would need to establish a working partnership to create the broadest possible base for the Commission. It would also be necessary that the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist movements work together; a prerequisite for the success of the Commission was that it benefit from the power of the various religious persuasions. Moreover, other sectors of the community involved and concerned about Jewish education and Jewish continuity needed to be included. Across-the-board changes could only happen through a process that reflected and respected the diversity of North American Jewry. Finally, it was critical that the work of the Commission result not only in

recommendations of steps needed to be taken, but in concrete action that could, over time, actually transform Jewish education.

## The Composition of the Commission

At the invitation of Morton L. Mandel, who agreed to chair the Commission, the following central communal organizations joined as co-sponsors:

J.C.C. Association:

> The Jewish Community Center Association of North America (formerly, JWB) is the leadership body for the North American network of JCCs and Ys; JCCA serves the needs of individual Jewish Community Centers, and it helps to build, strengthen and sustain the collective Center movement through a broad range of direct and indirect services, institutes, consultations and Jewish experiences and by identifying and projecting movement-wide directions, issues and priorities.

JESNA:

> The Jewish Education Service of North America is the organized community's planning, service and coordinating agency for Jewish education. It works directly with local federations, the agencies and institutions created and supported by federations, and other independent education institutions to deliver educational services.

In addition, the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), the umbrella organization for Jewish federations in North America, agreed to collaborate with the effort in order to facilitate communication and cooperation with local communities.

From the beginning, it was recognized that major Jewish family foundations should play a leading role in the Commission. With this in mind, the heads or principals of a number of foundations were approached. They agreed that a Commission in which they could work together with other segments of the organized Jewish community to revitalize Jewish education would be the key to achieving success in a significant common endeavor.

The joining together of the communal and private sectors would be fundamental to the success of the Commission. Private foundations could provide the initial funding to get new programs started, but implementation would ultimately be the responsibility of the federations, together with the religious denominations, the institutions of higher Jewish learning, the schools, the community centers, the bureaus of Jewish education, and above all, the educators on the front lines.

The next step was to draw up a list of heads of institutions of higher Jewish learning, educators, scholars and rabbis who would be invited to join the Commission.

The participation of outstanding community leaders would ensure the ultimate support of the organized Jewish community and help the Commission have a realistic understanding of how best to achieve its goals. Leaders from local communities and of national institutions (including the co-sponsoring organizations) were, therefore, invited to join the Commission. The following individuals agreed to join the Commission for Jewish Education in North America:

## Commissioners*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Morton L. Mandel<br>*Chairman* | | |
| Mona Riklis Ackerman | – | President of the Riklis Family Foundation |
| Ronald Appleby | – | |
| David Arnow | – | |
| Mandell L. Berman | – | |
| Jack Bieler | | |
| Charles R. Bronfman | | |
| John C. Colman | | |
| Maurice S. Corson | | |
| Lester Crown | | |
| David Dubin | | |
| Stuart E. Eizenstat | | |
| Joshua Elkin | | |
| Eli N. Evans | | |
| Irwin S. Field | | |
| Max M. Fisher | | |
| Alfred Gottschalk | | |
| Arthur Green | | |
| Irving Greenberg | | |
| Joseph S. Gruss | | |
| Robert I. Hiller | | |
| David Hirschhorn | | |
| Carol K. Ingall | | |
| Ludwig Jesselson | | |
| Henry Koschitzky | | |
| Mark Lainer | | |
| Norman Lamm | | |
| Sara S. Lee | | |
| Seymour Martin Lipset | | |
| Haskel Lookstein | | |
| Robert E. Loup | | |
| Matthew J. Maryles | | |
| Florence Melton | | |
| Donald R. Mintz | | |
| Lester Pollack | | |
| Charles Ratner | | |
| Esther Leah Ritz | | |
| Harriet L. Rosenthal | | |
| Alvin I. Schiff | | |
| Lionel H. Schipper | | |
| Ismar Schorsch | | |
| Harold M. Schulweis | | |
| Daniel S. Shapiro | | |
| Margaret W. Tishman | | |
| Isadore Twersky | | |
| Bennett Yanowitz | | |
| Isaiah Zeldin | | |

* A one-sentence description of each commissioner will appear in the text and a fuller description of each member of the Commission will appear in an Appendix.

To help plan and carry out the work of the Commission, a group of senior policy advisors was established, and a staff was assembled (see overleaf).

Henry L. Zucker accepted the invitation to serve as Director of the Commission, and Seymour Fox and Annette Hochstein were appointed, respectively, as Director and Associate Director of Research and Planning.

The forty-seven Jewish leaders and thinkers who agreed to join the Commission were a remarkable group, with broader representation than had ever been gathered together to address the problem of Jewish education. The readiness with which these individuals responded to the invitation was in itself clear evidence that the time had come to give education the highest priority in planning the future of the Jewish community. Never before had there been a single group in which heads of foundations could meet with community leaders, directors of communal organizations, heads of institutions of higher learning, rabbis, educators and scholars, and work together towards a common goal.

## An Auspicious Beginning

The commissioners felt inspired by the prospect of so diverse and prominent a group arriving at a consensus about the kinds of intervention that should be undertaken. They agreed that the Commission provided an ideal means for Jews to join together to develop a plan of action. As one commission member noted:

## Senior Policy Advisors

David S. Ariel
Seymour Fox
Annette Hochstein
Stephen H. Hoffman
Martin S. Kraar
Arthur Rotman
Herman D. Stein
Jonathan Woocher
Henry L. Zucker

## Director

Henry L. Zucker

## Research & Planning

Seymour Fox, Director
Annette Hochstein, Associate Director

## Staff

Estelle Albeg
Mark Gurvis
Virginia F. Levi
Debbie Meline
Joseph Reimer

> The problem of Jewish education is too large for any one group. Only through a partnership can we hope to legitimize the pluralism within and between Jewish communities. The partnership has to occur between the religious and the non-religious institutions and organizations that make up the national Jewish community.

A formal methodology for the work of the Commission was established. It would meet six times over a two year period. Background materials would be circulated prior to each meeting of the Commission. Some of the deliberations of the Commission would take place in small work groups; others would be in plenary sessions. On the basis of transcripts of these discussions, the staff and the senior policy advisors would formulate recommendations on next steps that would then be circulated to commissioners for comments.

All of the commissioners shared the determination to make a concrete impact on Jewish life. They agreed that the Commission could not be merely "a lot of talk." "We will not conclude the work of this Commission," stated Mandel, "without beginning the implementation process the very day we issue our report."

The commissioners felt there were grounds for optimism about the ultimate success of the project. Several pilot projects had been developed for Jewish education in recent years that had shown promising results. These could serve as models for the kind of massive effort that would be necessary if the nature of Jewish life as a whole were to be affected. Moreover, as another commissioner pointed out:

> The concern about Jewish survival comes at a time of unprecedented success in Jewish scholarship. There are today in Israel and North America more Jewish books and other Jewish publications being issued than there were in Europe during the height of the so-called 'Golden Age of Polish Jewry.' Ironically, however, this flourishing of Jewish thought is not reaching large numbers of Jews.

During the Commission's first meeting, in August 1988, a member expressed the enthusiasm felt by the commissioners:

> Just the possibility of working together with so many fine minds and so many committed people of varied religious outlooks is extremely inspiring. Despite our philosophic differences, we all have many common goals, and it is an extraordinary opportunity to sit down and work on them together.

# CHAPTER 3: JEWISH EDUCATION—WHERE IT STANDS TODAY

In order to understand the context in which the Commission would have to approach its task, it was necessary to obtain as much information as possible about the state of Jewish education in North America today.

What are the various components that make up Jewish education? What is their reach and effectiveness? What are the major problems and opportunities?

In this chapter we have included the following:

- Figures about participation in Jewish education.
- A description of major forms that make up Jewish education and an assessment of their scope.
- A brief appraisal of major issues that need to be addressed.

## The Known Facts and Figures of Jewish Education

**JEWISH POPULATION**

| | *United States (1987)* | *Canada (1989)* |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 5,944,000 | 310,000 |
| School age (ages 3-17) | 880-950,000 | 57,000 |

The major settings for Jewish education in North America are usually considered to include*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. *Day Schools* | (600-800 schools; approximately 110,000 participants in 1982) |
| 2. *Supplementary Schools* | (1300-1400 schools; about 280,000 participants in 1982) |
| 3. *Jewish Community Centers* | (220 centers and branches; close to 1,000,000 members, many more occasional participants in activities [1989]) |
| 4. *Camps* | (85,000 children in residential camps; 120,000 participants in day camps [1989]) |
| 5. *College and University Courses* | (over 600 colleges and universities offering courses and academic programs in Judaica [1989]) |
| 6. *Youth Movements* | (75,000 members and 25,000 additional occasional participants [1989]) |
| 7. *Educational Visits to Israel* | (about 25,000 participants in a large variety of programs [1986]) |
| 8. *Adult and Family Programs* | (estimated at 5-10% of the adult population) |

**Formal Jewish education** in North America consists of two major types of schools: the day-school, which is an all-day educational institution teaching both general and Jewish subjects; the supplementary school, which meets one to three times a week after public school hours and/or on Sunday mornings for instruction on Jewish subjects.

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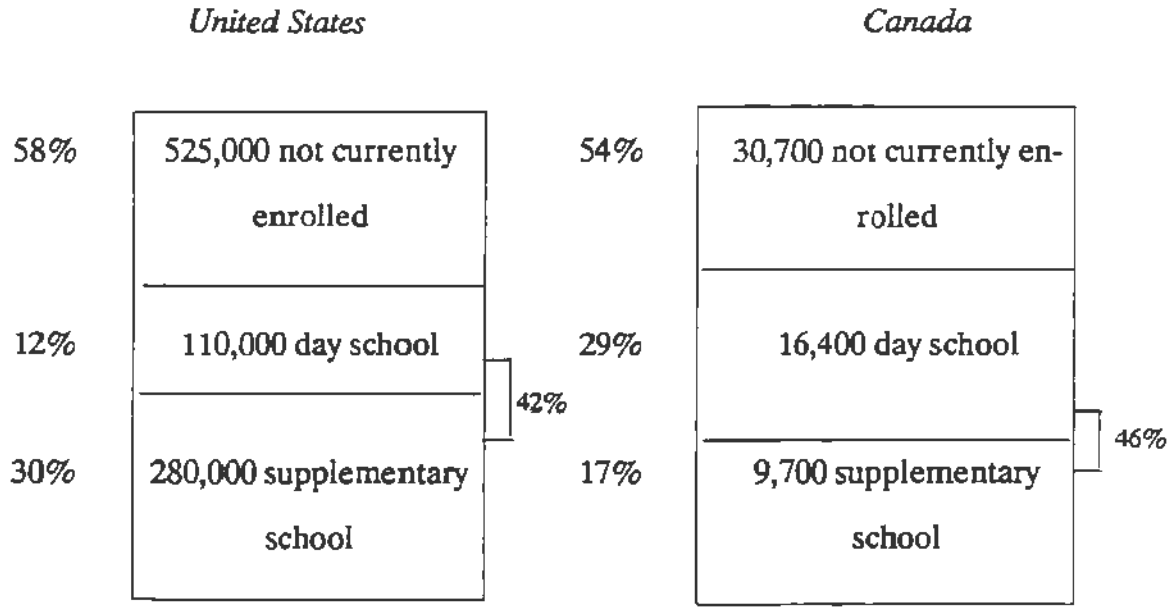
* The data represent a compilation of sources reflecting current available statistics on Jewish education in North America, as well as research undertaken for the Commission. Figures are approximate.

It is estimated that there are approximately 2,000 schools throughout North America, about 75% of them supplementary schools. Most schools are associated with one of the three major denominational movements—the Orthodox, the Conservative, and the Reform. The overwhelming majority of day schools (75%) are Orthodox, while children attending Reform and Conservative supplementary schools comprised 85% of the supplementary school population.

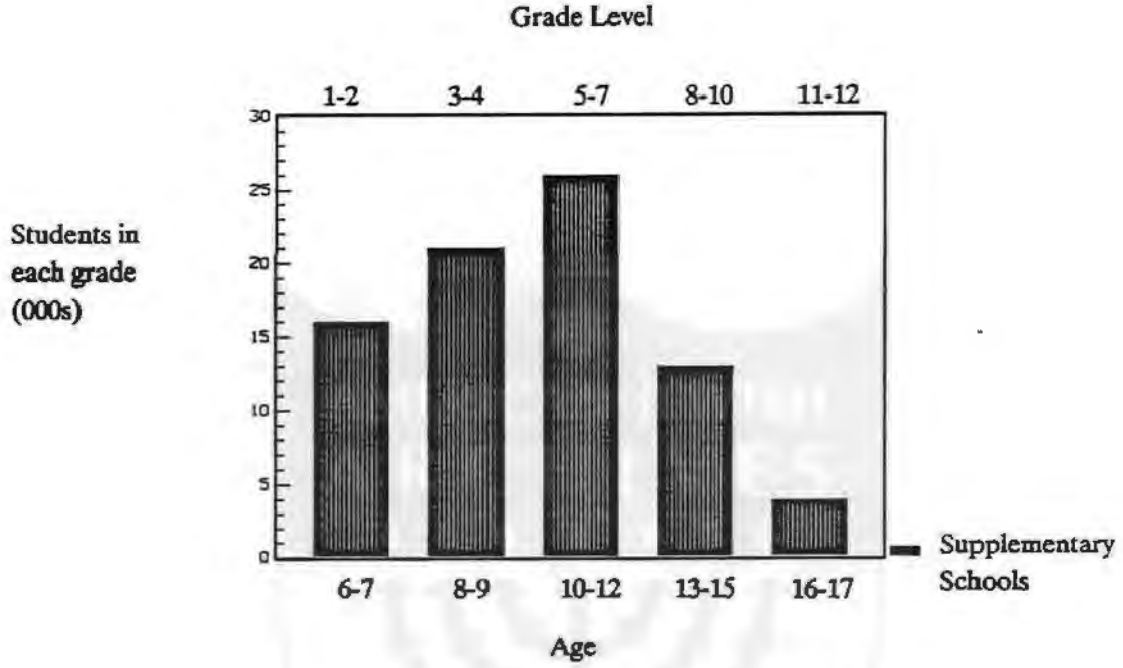
There are close to one million Jewish children of school age in North America. Most of these children, perhaps as many as 80%, have attended some form of Jewish schooling at least one time in their lives. However, for many attendance is often short-lived and sporadic. Close to 600,000 children currently do not receive any form of Jewish schooling. Only some 400,000 in the U.S. (about 40% of all Jewish children), and 32,000 in Canada (about 55%) are currently enrolled in any Jewish school. (Figure 1)

**FIG. 1: ENROLLMENT IN DAY SCHOOLS AND SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS (1982)**



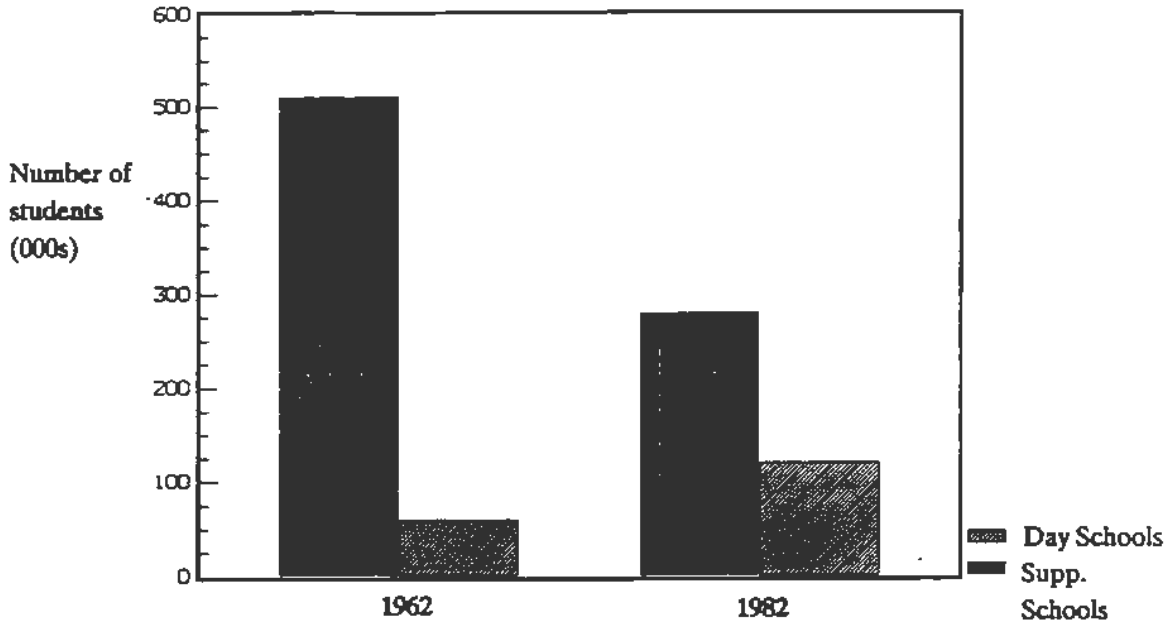
This is even more of a problem with children over Bar or Bat Mitzvah age (13 or 12) when attendance drops by more than 60%. (Figure 2)

**FIG. 2: AVERAGE ENROLLMENT IN SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL PER AGE AND GRADE LEVEL (U.S., 1982/3)**




Over a twenty year period, from 1962 to 1982, total enrollment in Jewish schools in the U.S. dropped from approximately 600,000 to approximately 400,000, an overall decline of nearly 35%. It is estimated that about half of this decline reflects negative demographic trends (i.e., the end of the baby boom), the other half a lessening interest in Jewish schools. It is interesting to note that the most extensive form of Jewish education in the U.S., the supplementary school, declined by about 50%, from 540,000 to 280,000; while day school enrollment rose from 60,000 to 110,000, a rise of 80%. (Figure 3)

FIG. 3: ENROLLMENT U.S.: 1962 & 1982




Of the many important settings for Jewish education outside the schools, the most far-reaching are the **Jewish Community Centers** (JCCs) with close to one million members throughout North America. JCCs were first established in the middle of the 19th century and are the oldest form of informal Jewish educational settings in North America. In the mid-1980s, the JCC Association – formerly known as the JWB, embarked on a major campaign to upgrade the Jewish educational activities of JCCs around the country.

**Camping** is considered to have significant educational impact, particularly when used to complement the work of schools, youth movements or JCCs. There are two types of camps: day camps and residential camps, ranging in duration from several days to a full summer. In 1988/89 there were approximately 120,000 children in day camps and 85,000 children in residential camps. Camps are sponsored either by JCCs, by national denominational groups (e.g. Ramah, National Federation of Temple Youth, and Yeshiva University camps) or by B'nai B'rith, Zionist Youth

movements and others. There are also specialized camps serving special needs or interests, such as camps for older adults or camps for college age men and women.

**Youth movements** have played an important role in the preparation of the leadership of the American Jewish community. There are some 75,000 members of youth movements, with another 25,000 or so attending on different occasions. Youth groups serve adolescents and are usually sponsored by national organizations (e.g., BBYO), the religious denominations, (e.g., USY, NCSY, NFTY), and Zionist movements (e.g., Bnei Akiva, Betar, Habonim Dror, Young Judea).

It is estimated that approximately 25,000 young Americans participate annually in a variety of organized **educational visits to Israel.** There has been a steady increase in the number of young people participating in these programs over the past two decades, however it is estimated that close to 65% of the American Jewish population has never visited Israel, a percentage that is probably higher among the 15-to-25 year-olds. There is strong evidence that these educational programs have a significant positive impact on participants, but it is also agreed that their potential is still largely untapped, both in terms of number of participants and the quality of the programs.

In recent years there has been increasing awareness of the importance of **adult education.** There are today both formal and informal adult education programs. Formal adult education programs take place in synagogues, JCCs or Hebrew colleges. Demographic studies indicate a level of participation of between 5% and 10% of the Jewish population. Informal programs (e.g., *havurot*, *minyanim*, study groups) are often unstructured, and there is little reliable information about the number of people involved.

**Retreat or conference centers** are increasingly popular. They exist today in about 50 cities in North America and provide a setting for family camping, *shabbatonim* for Jewish schools, specialized weekends, conferences on different subjects and leadership programs for boards and staff groups.

Finally, **family education** is considered one of the developing frontiers for informal Jewish education in North America. Although data is not available at this time as to the extent of family education programs, many communities in the U.S. have undertaken these recently or plan to undertake them.

* * * * *

The conventional audience for general education in North America consists of individuals between the ages of 3 (pre-school training) and 22 (college graduation). However in accordance with traditional Jewish thinking the audience for Jewish education includes all age groups, the affiliated as well as the non-affiliated – in other words the entire Jewish population.

Thus, while there are many different forms of Jewish education, only a fraction of the Jewish population of North America currently participates in any type of program:

- less than half of Jewish children currently attend any type of Jewish school;
- only about one in three Jews has ever visited Israel;
- it is estimated that only one in ten Jewish adults are involved in any type of Jewish learning.

If Jewish education is to achieve its objectives its reach must be extended to include the majority of Jews of North America.

## The Need for Reliable Data

As the Commission began its work, it realized that there was a paucity of data on the facts and scope of Jewish education. The data available was often approximate, incomplete, and frequently not dependable. In addition, there was almost no research on the impact of the various forms of Jewish education. Clearly, the gaps in knowledge could not be filled by the time the Commission would need to take decisions. The Commission therefore undertook the following steps:

a. Every attempt was made to gather available data and assess its reliability;

b. a series of research papers were commissioned (see Appendix A);

c. for the second meeting of the Commission, the staff prepared a series of papers that described 23 areas of Jewish education (e.g., the supplementary school, the JCC, the media, curriculum) in terms of their current state, their importance to the field, and their potential (see background materials for the meeting of December 13, 1988). When analyzing the papers a number of major issues emerged that cut across all forms and settings of Jewish education. In the section that follows we will summarize a selection of these materials.

## A Closer Look at Six Major Forms of Jewish Education

### 1. The Supplementary School

The supplementary school is the most extensive form of formal Jewish education in the United States. Although at one time it served over half a million children, it is estimated today that about 300,000 are enrolled in these schools.

Based on a concept brought to America from European communities around the turn of the century, supplementary schools seemed ideally suited to an immigrant population that wanted to become part of the mainstream of American society while maintaining its own tradition. The theory was that these twin objectives could best be accomplished by sending Jewish children to public schools along with other American students, and enrolling them as well in an after school program where they would learn Jewish subjects. The early supplementary schools were under communal or neighborhood sponsorship. After World War II these schools experienced a rapid growth under the direction and supervision of the three major denominational movements—the Orthodox, the Conservative and the Reform. Some of the schools were limited to as little as one or two hours on Sundays, while others involved as much as twelve to fifteen hours per week in four afternoon classes and a full Sunday morning of study.

In a number of congregations the supplementary school was at the heart of the synagogue's activities. Rabbis played a leadership role along with principals and staffs of knowledgeable teachers who served as role models for students. Some of

the graduates of these schools became the following generations' rabbis, community leaders, communal workers and Judaic scholars.

Over the past several decades, however, there has been a significant decline in the role and quality of the supplementary school. Today there are practically no full-time jobs to attract qualified teachers, and few to attract principals. Many of the best educators have left their positions to join faculties of day schools. Congregations are having difficulty providing adequate resources for their supplementary schools. Part-time teachers are often poorly trained or not trained at all. They receive low salaries and no fringe benefits. The curricula and the educational impact are very uneven. Articles have appeared in the press about this unfortunate condition, and this in turn has contributed to poor morale and reduced communal support.

As a result, there is a perception among American Jews that supplementary school education is not succeeding. Few people can make a career, or even support themselves, teaching ten or twelve hours-a-week. Almost by definition these part-time teachers cannot make the professional commitment that is required. Moreover, the teachers are often frustrated by the difficulty of making a serious impact on the lives of students in the limited amount of teaching time that is available, and they see no possibility of improving their own skills or advancing their careers through self-improvement programs. As one Commissioner put it, "as long as Sunday school is something you have to live through rather than enjoy, it cannot be valuable. So many of Jewish Americans have had an impoverished Sunday school experience as their only Jewish education."

## 2. Day Schools

The day school concept is based on the premise that in order to be effective, Jewish education must take place in a comprehensive Jewish environment and be accorded a sufficient proportion of the student's time. Here, in theory, Jewish and general studies are given equal status. Since the Jewish education of the child is a prime concern of the entire school program, there is an attempt to introduce Jewish values and traditions into all aspects of the curriculum.

Proponents of the day school believe that meaningful Jewish education cannot take place after normal school hours when the child is tired, when there may be an option to attend or not to attend, and when parents tend to believe that it is general education that really counts. Proponents also feel that a more total environment has many advantages, the most significant of which is the peer-support for a commitment to a Jewish way of life.

During the first half of this century there were few day-schools, almost all of them Orthodox. In recent years the Conservative movement has developed over 70 day schools; there are about 50 community supported non-denominational day-schools; and the Reform movement has also begun to establish day schools. The day-school movement has grown dramatically since World War II from about 45 schools in 1950 to about 800 today. There has been an especially accelerated growth in the recent past when the number of students has grown from 60,000 in 1962 to 110,000 in 1982. There are those who claim that the growth of the day school movement parallels the growth of private schools in general and is in part the result of the difficulties facing the American public school system.

However, day schools have problems of their own. Despite the large number of full-time teachers, average salaries are significantly lower than those of their colleagues in the public school system. Many of these teachers are poorly trained, and there is little on-the-job training available to them. Policy makers who question the prospect of continued growth of the day school point to the higher cost of tuition which is even prohibitive for many middle-class families.

Critics of the day school concept feel that it conflicts with their desire to be part of the mainstream of American society. They point out that while enrollment in day schools has been increasing and enrollment in supplementary schools decreasing, the latter is still serving approximately three times as many students as the former, and is likely to continue to be the primary setting for the formal education of American Jewish children.

Today only about 12% of American Jewish children attend day schools. Most of them leave after elementary school.

### 3. The Jewish Community Center

The Community Center movement had as its initial purpose the integration of Jewish immigrants, largely from Eastern Europe, into the American community.

To carry out this mission, the Centers offered courses and programs in subjects such as the English language and American history, and later developed special programs in the arts, athletics and adult education. They functioned very much as the YMCA did for the general community and some of the Centers are still called YMHA.

For many years the JCC movement did not consider Jewish education to be one of its central functions. Beginning in the 1970s, however, its potential for informal Jewish education was increasingly recognized. In 1985 a commission was established by the umbrella organization (then known as JWB, now known as JCCA) to develop a new educational focus for Community Centers. As a result, a variety of important educational programs has been introduced into centers during the past five years. Jewish educators have been hired as a resource for staff training and program development. Staff and board members are participating in Jewish educational programs in Israel and in North America. Educational materials especially suited to these informal settings are being prepared. Early childhood and youth programs are proving to be of special interest and are growing at a rapid rate.

While these developments are promising, almost no pre-service training program for Jewish education of JCC staff exists. Experts indicate that the new emphasis on Jewish education introduced in the Community Center movement has yet to find its appropriate place in relation to the more traditional role of JCCs as a place for Jews to meet, socialize and participate in recreational and sports activities.

## 4. Israel Experience Programs

An estimated 25,000 young people from North America participate in educational programs in Israel every year. These consist of study tours, programs at universities, work programs in Kibbutzim, archaeological digs, and a variety of religious, cultural and professional study programs. Recent studies indicate that many young people who have never visited the country would do so in the framework of educational programs, and even those who have visited as tourists would return if appropriate programs were made available.

Although there is limited empirical data on the educational impact of programs in Israel, experts agree that Israel speaks powerfully to its Jewish visitors. There are educators and parents who believe an effective program in Israel has a greater impact than many other educational activities and can be further enhanced if appropriately integrated into broader educational experiences.

In some communities savings programs have been undertaken by parents, local synagogues and the community in which monies have been set aside from the day a child enters school for an organized trip to Israel during his or her high school years. This practice could become a model for Jewish families throughout North America.

Research indicates that the present number of 25,000 young people in study groups in Israel could be substantially increased.

### 5. Early Childhood Programs

In North America today there is increasing attention being given to the importance of early childhood education. This has a significant bearing on Jewish education not only in relation to educational theory but because there are more and more households where both parents are working and they are concerned about having an appropriate educational setting for their children.

There are some 50,000 children in early childhood programs today. Most of these programs take place in JCCs, the next largest group is in congregations, and some are attached to day schools. This activity should be increased enormously if the needs of the population are to be adequately served.

Early childhood is an especially important period for Jewish education, particularly since the family has all but abdicated its role as Jewish educator. It is a period of deep emotional experiences in the child's life and important attachments to Judaism can be developed. It is also the age when certain skills, such as the learning of new languages, can be easily mastered. A successful Hebrew program in early childhood can therefore provide a foundation for subsequent study in day schools and supplementary schools. Parents also may be stimulated to focus on their own educational interests as adults when their young children are involved in childhood educational programs.

A major problem in early childhood education is that the teachers are among the lowest paid of Jewish educators. Early childhood educators are often poorly trained, in terms of their Jewish background. Only three teacher training institutes provide early childhood teacher training (Spertus College of Judaica, the Boston Hebrew College and Stern College of Yeshiva University).

Moreover, early childhood programs suffer from a dearth of curricular and educational material.

### 6. College-Age Programs

There are an estimated 400,000 Jewish college and university students in North America. No more than 100,000 are being serviced by the Hillel Foundation and other Jewish agencies on the campus. The largest provider of services on the campus is the National Hillel Foundation. The Orthodox, Conservative and Reform movements have their own representatives on a number of campuses, as does the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and The United Jewish Appeal (UJA). There are an estimated 600 colleges and universities offering courses and

academic programs in Judaica on college campuses in North America, some of which are extensive enough to grant degrees, while others are limited to individual course offerings. There are no accurate figures as to how many Jewish students participate in these courses.

This is a key area for Jewish education. The two to four years students spend in college are critical for their personal development, and an impact could be made in a variety of ways. While there are Jewish students in many colleges and universities in North America, there is a concentration of Jewish students on approximately 30 college campuses where they may represent 20-30% of the student population. Often on these same college campuses there is a very high percentage of Jewish faculty. The opportunity for meaningful Jewish education to take place in these settings could be extremely significant. Some experts view this as a second chance for Jewish education. Extra-curricular Jewish programs on college campuses are often under financed and unable to offer competitive salaries for well-trained, dedicated personnel. Little has been done to develop programs that would attract faculty to planned Jewish education activity on college campuses. This is important because faculty members in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, as well as in Judaica, who are committed to Jewish values and ideas, could serve as role models for the students and other members of the faculty.

## Major Issues That Need to be Addressed

The Commission's review of the state of Jewish education brought to the fore several issues that cut across all forms, all settings, all programs;

1. The need to develop a profession for Jewish education
2. The need to improve curriculum and methods
3. The need for additional funding
4. The need for strong lay-leadership
5. The need to reconsider the structure of Jewish education

### 1. The Need to Develop a Profession of Jewish Education

It is estimated that there are today some 30,000 teaching and 3000 administrative positions for Jewish education in North America. Yet only one hundred students graduated in 1989 from all Jewish education training programs and only 144 individuals are currently enrolled full-time in bachelor's and master's degree programs.

A majority of those who enter the field of Jewish education do so with far less preparation than their counterparts in the public education system. Thus, while over half of public school teachers hold a Masters Degree, this is true of only a handful of teachers in Jewish day schools. It is estimated that nearly one out of every five (17%) teachers in day schools does not have a college degree, and fewer than half of the teachers in the supplementary schools have had a high school Jewish education. Informal educators are trained in various disciplines but receive almost no pre-service training in Jewish education.

Of the total number of Jewish school teachers it is estimated that only about 15% to 20% hold full-time positions. Isa Aron and Bruce Phillips have reported in *Findings of the Los Angeles BJE Teachers Census*, that only 23% of all the teachers in Los Angeles teach more than 20 hours per week, while 54% teach under 10 hours. Seventy-one percent of the teachers have other occupations—of these, some are homemakers who enjoy teaching a few hours a week in supplementary schools; others are full-time students. Some hold other part-time or even full-time employment. Only 14% of the teachers in Los Angeles earn $20,000 or more, while 41% earn under $3,000. Only 20% receive health benefits.

The *1988 Teachers Salary Update* reported that supplementary school teachers, carrying a 12-hour work load per week, earn an average annual salary of $9,000. Early childhood teachers earn $8,000 to $10,000. Full-time day school teachers, carrying a 30-hour work load per week, earn an average annual salary of $19,000. These figures are low compared with the average public school teacher's salary of $25,000 for kindergarten teachers and $30,000 for elementary school teachers (according to the latest NEA figures), which in itself is recognized as woefully inadequate.

Aryeh Davidson, in *The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Research Study* reported that there are fourteen training programs for Jewish education in North America, with a total enrollment of 358 students in degree or teacher certification programs. A total of 100 people graduated from all programs in 1989—only a fraction of what the field needs. In fact, it appears that there could be as many as 3,000 openings the day school starts. This year, all training programs together have only 18 full-time faculty who specialize in Jewish education. It is obvious that so small a faculty cannot possibly undertake the multiple assignments that the training institutions must fill. The problem of inadequately qualified teachers, is likely to

continue unless there is a major effort to develop Jewish education as a serious profession. Students today often enter training programs with insufficient knowledge of Judaica, and with little interest in achieving teacher certification.

It is clear that many of the 30,000 teachers who presently hold positions in Jewish schools do not provide positive role models for outstanding college age students who might otherwise be attracted to careers in Jewish education. Moreover, throughout the United States, supplementary Jewish education experiences a high rate of teacher turnover. According to the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland's Report on Jewish Continuity, in 1986 there was an annual teacher turnover rate in Cleveland schools of approximately 20%.

Another problem is that often the best teachers in the schools find themselves promoted to the role of school principals. The ladder of advancement in Jewish education is essentially linear – from teacher to assistant principal to principal. There is almost no opportunity for advancement that would enable talented teachers to assume leadership roles in crucial areas of education – such as specialists in the teaching of Hebrew, the Bible, Jewish history, early childhood, family education, and special education.

As one considers these problems, it becomes obvious that the salaries, training, working conditions and status of Jewish educators have an important bearing on the problems of the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel for the field of Jewish education. For Jewish education to become an attractive profession it will have to develop clearly defined standards, appropriate terms of employment, a high level of training and a network of collegial support.

## 2. The Need to Improve Curriculum and Methods

A great deal of energy and thought is being invested in the preparation and implementation of curriculum, educational materials and methods. This work has been undertaken at national centers such as the various denominational commissions on Jewish education, at the Melton Center for Research in Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary, at JESNA, through the CAJE curriculum bank, at bureaus of Jewish education, by individual schools and by commercial publishers.

Sometimes the needs of the field have been met through these efforts—as is the case for many of the subjects taught in the supplementary school. However, for the day school there is a serious shortage of available material. Early childhood, adult education, informal education and family education all suffer from the lack of a curriculum and educational materials. Even more serious is the shortage of trained personnel necessary for the introduction of these materials and methods.

The successful implementation of a curriculum requires that teachers participate in training programs to learn how to effectively use the materials. There are very few on-the-job training programs available for Jewish educators that could make this possible.

Though Jewish education employs many of the methods that are used in general education, there is one area where significant untapped potential exists—in the use of the media and educational technology.

## 3. The Need for Additional Funding

Funding for Jewish education currently comes from a variety of sources, including tuition payments by parents, fund-raising by the schools, by congregations, and federation support. There are no concrete figures available as to how much in total is currently being spent on Jewish education (estimates range from $500 million to $1 billion annually). There is a consensus among Jewish leaders that the combined resources provide far less than is needed to effect a major change in the whole spectrum of Jewish education in North America. Some have estimated that budgets of two or three times present levels will have to be established if real progress is to be made. It is clear that these levels will only be reached if the Jewish community as a whole makes a conscious decision to give Jewish education the highest priority in its plans for the future.

A survey of federation allocations to Jewish education in the 1980s reveals that although a few communities have made education a high priority (i.e. Toronto and Montreal) and allocate as much as 50% of their federation's budget to education, the average contribution of federations is little more than 25% of local allocations.

## 4. The Need for Strong Lay-Leadership

Though Jewish education is not seen by many key lay-leaders as a top community priority, most believe that there is a decisive trend toward the involvement of more and more top leaders.

The North American Jewish community has proved to have an excellent capacity to deal with major problems when they are addressed by the very top community leaders. This same highest level of community leadership is needed to establish the

necessary communal planning and funding priority for Jewish education. Indeed, the involvement of top community leadership is the key to raising the quality of Jewish education in North America.

Top community leadership must be recruited to lead the educational effort on the local and national level as well as in individual institutions. They will make it possible to change the priorities of the Jewish community and to provide the appropriate support for Jewish education.

## 5. The Need to Reconsider the Structure of Jewish Education

The structure of Jewish education is complex and is in need of serious rethinking in the light of recent developments. A structure that might have been appropriate for the 1930s may well be inappropriate for the important developments that have taken place in Jewish education since then. Thus, the almost complete separation which exists today between formal and informal education, between the preparation of educators and on-the-job training, the role of the synagogues, denominational organizations, the federations, the local Bureaus of Jewish Education, makes it difficult to plan an integrated educational approach for the future.

As Walter Ackerman has indicated in *The Structure of Jewish Education,* Jewish education is without a compelling framework, and it is essentially a volunteer effort consisting of autonomous units. There is at best a loose relationship between schools and parent bodies of their affiliated denominations. This is effected through the Commission on Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations for the Reform movement, the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education for the Conservative movement, the National Commission on Torah Education at Yeshiva University, and Torah U'Mesora for the Orthodox movement. Final authority for

the conduct of congregational schools rests with the synagogue board and school committee. Day schools have their own boards and committees, which are responsible for the school's activities including funding, the hiring of staff and the curriculum.

The central agencies of Jewish education, which were originally established to function as the organized Jewish community's agency responsible for education in local communities, have by and large not assumed, or as some claim, not been permitted to assume the crucial role of supervising the system. Instead they have performed a coordinating role with some bureaus undertaking city-wide educational activities such as teacher centers and principal centers.

The Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), the successor agency to the American Association for Jewish Education, functions as the educational consultant for Jewish federations and central agencies of Jewish education. Its mandate includes advocacy on behalf of Jewish education and providing a variety of information and other services to Jewish communal and educational institutions. Today JESNA is considered the organized Jewish community's planning coordinating and service agency for Jewish education.

For informal education the structure is even less clear. Though the Jewish Community Center Association of North America is the leadership body for the North American JCCs and Ys, youth groups are often affiliated with local and national denominational organizations or are headquartered in Israel (Zionist youth movements). Many other forms of informal Jewish education are very loosely organized and often have little coordination—e.g., summer camps, trips to Israel, adult Jewish education programs, retreat centers.

The fourteen training institutions have recently created an association of institutions of higher learning for Jewish education to improve the practice of the education of educators in North America.

On-the-job training or in-service education is carried out by many different groups (the local school, the various religious denominations, the Bureau of Jewish Education, the institutions of higher learning). It also takes place in Israel at universities or in the departments of education of the World Zionist Organization.

The increasing involvement of the federation movement with education in recent years has focused attention on the problem of structure in Jewish education. Among the questions that have been raised are: what relationship should the bureaus have to the federations? What should be the relationship among the denominational groups, the bureaus and the federations? What can be done to relate the work of formal education to that of informal education? How can pre-service education be related to in-service education? Local commissions on Jewish education have tried to address these questions, but there is still much confusion as to how they should be resolved.

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As the Commission undertook its study of Jewish education it learned of many successful programs and of a number of creative new initiatives led by outstanding educators and supported and sponsored by dedicated community leaders. These initiatives were to play an important role in the thinking and planning of the Commission.

# CHAPTER 4: COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEM: THE COMMISSION DEVELOPS ITS PLAN

The Commission faced several major challenges in determining how to come to grips with the problems facing Jewish education.

First, the Commission consisted of individuals of different backgrounds: outstanding volunteer leaders who were serving the Jewish community with great distinction; important philanthropists; leaders of institutions of higher Jewish learning; world renowned scholars, creative educators and distinguished rabbis.

It was inevitable that these commissioners would bring to the table diverse and sometimes conflicting approaches to analyzing the nature of the task. This was an advantage in that it brought together the different perspectives that would be needed to develop realistic and comprehensive solutions. But it posed a challenge in the search for common ground for discussion.

In view of this, the setting of the agenda for each of the Commission's sessions, and planning for discussions that would be constructive and result-oriented, required a great deal of preparation.

Secondly, the subject was so vast that it was unclear how the Commission should focus its work so that it would achieve the greatest impact. There were no clear

guidelines as to how to establish priorities among the multitude of issues that needed to be addressed.

To meet this challenge, a method of operation was decided upon that was to characterize the work of the Commission throughout. Before its **first meeting on August 1, 1988**, and before and after each of the six Commission meetings, contact was maintained between the staff and senior policy advisors and each of the commissioners through personal interviews. In this way, there was constant dialogue between senior policy advisors and the commissioners, and all the commissioners provided input into the process.

In interviewing the commissioners before the first meeting it became evident that they would suggest a large number of areas in Jewish education that were in need of improvement (e.g., the supplementary school, programs for the college age, early childhood programs). In fact, at the first meeting the following 23 options were suggested by the commissioners as areas that should be the focus of the Commission's work:

## The Options

1. The early childhood age group.
2. The elementary school age group.
3. The high school age group.
4. The college age group.
5. Young adults.
6. The family.
7. Adults.
8. The retired and the elderly.
9. The supplementary school.

10. The day school.
11. Informal education.
12. Israel Experience programs.
13. Integrated programs of formal and informal education.
14. The Hebrew language, with special initial emphasis on the leadership of the Jewish community.
15. Curriculum and methods.
16. The use of the media and technology (computers, videos, etc.) for Jewish education.
17. The shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education.
18. The Community—its leadership and its structures—as major agents for change in any area.
19. Assistance with tuition.
20. The physical plant (buildings, laboratories, gymnasia).
21. A knowledge base for Jewish education (research of various kinds: evaluations and impact studies; assessment of needs; client surveys; etc.).
22. Innovation in Jewish education.
23. Additional funding for Jewish education.

The commissioners suggested more ideas than any one Commission could undertake. Many of the subjects suggested could warrant the creation of a full commission. Together they could easily form the agenda for Jewish education in North America for several decades. **At the end of the first Commission meeting, the staff was asked to develop methods that would help the Commission narrow its focus so that it could agree upon an agenda for study and action.**

In the personal interviews that preceded the second meeting of the Commission, the staff learned that there were compelling reasons to undertake the ideas suggested: all of the population groups were important; all of the settings of education were important. A deeper analysis of the problem would have to be made if the commissioners were to be able to decide on the indispensable first steps. Indeed, at the **second meeting on December 13, 1988** it became clear that some needs had to be addressed that were pre-conditions to any across-the-board improvements in Jewish education. These are "building blocks" upon which the entire Jewish educational system rests. They are:

- Personnel for Jewish education; and
- The community—its leadership, funding and structures.

There is a shortage of talented, dedicated, trained educators for every area of Jewish education. This is true for all age groups, for all types of schools, all types of educational settings, JCCs, trips to Israel, the preparation of curricular materials, and the training of educators.

Further, if the Commission were to make a difference, the community attitude towards Jewish education would have to change. A new environment for Jewish education could be created if outstanding community leaders were to grant Jewish education a higher priority on the local and national scenes. Only then could the funds necessary for a program of major change be obtained.

Recognizing **personnel** and **community** as the building blocks upon **which all else rests the Commission, at its second meeting, agreed on its agenda. It was to devote its efforts to developing a comprehensive plan to recruit, train and retain large numbers of dedicated, talented educators for the field of Jewish education.** It was

**to develop a plan to involve a large number of outstanding community leaders in Jewish education.** They, in turn, in their local communities, and on the continental scene would be able to take the steps that would raise Jewish education to the top of the agenda and create a better environment, a better ambience for Jewish education.

The commissioners felt that personnel and the community were interrelated. Outstanding community leaders could only be recruited to the cause of Jewish education if they believed it would be possible to recruit talented and dedicated educational personnel. At the same time, outstanding educators would not be attracted to the cause of Jewish education unless they felt that the Jewish community would give them the necessary resources to make a difference. They must believe that **the community is embarking on a new era in Jewish education in which there will be reasonable salaries, a secure career line, and an opportunity to have an impact on the quality of the curriculum and methods of education.**

These two building blocks would be essential in order to build a true profession of Jewish education. With an infusion of dedicated and qualified personnel to the field, **parents would recognize that Jewish education can make a decisive contribution to the lives of their children and the life-styles of their families.** This would establish a basis of support that would enable community leaders to achieve the level of funding necessary for a renewed system of education.

Though the Commission agreed on this agenda at the second meeting, some commissioners were reluctant to omit the programmatic areas. One commissioner asked, "How is it possible for this Commission to ignore the revolution that the developments in the area of the media have made available for Jewish education? Is it conceivable that a plan for Jewish education could be developed at the close of the 20th

century that would not take advantage of the contributions of television, video cassettes, computers and museums?"

Another commissioner reminded us that experience and research indicate that unless we encourage the family to adopt a more vigorous role in Jewish education, the formal and informal settings for Jewish education are not likely to have a significant enough impact on children.

Though the Commission established that the first items on its agenda would be the building blocks, it agreed to address some programmatic ideas at a later date.

At the conclusion of the second Commission meeting, the staff was instructed to prepare an outline of a plan of action. Commissioners urged that the plan be comprehensive. There had been notable attempts in the past to deal with the problem of personnel by raising salaries or by concentrating on the development of a specialized area of training. But these efforts had not met with major success. It was felt that unless the problem were dealt with comprehensively, there would not be any substantial improvement.

In interviewing commissioners before the third meeting and consulting with other experts, the staff was reminded time and again that bringing about change in the area of personnel and the community would be so vast and complex that it would be difficult to address these across-the-board throughout North America. How would it be possible to achieve concrete results within a foreseeable period of time. Retraining many of the 30,000 teachers to meet the standards contemplated by the Commission would take years, perhaps even decades, to accomplish. In addition, finding the personnel for new programs in informal educational settings, for study trips to Israel

and for the effective use of the media, would require a long-range effort. The Commission was searching for a way to begin this process.

It was decided to **demonstrate in a small group of communities what could happen if sufficient numbers of outstanding personnel were recruited and trained; if their efforts were supported by the community and its leadership; and if the necessary funds were secured to maintain such an effort over a multi-year period. These sites would later be called "Lead Communities."**

Fundamental to the success of the Lead Communities would be the desire of the community itself to become a model for the rest of the country. This needed to be a "bottom-up" rather than a "top-down" effort if it were to succeed. The Lead Communities would have to provide real-life demonstration of how effective Jewish education can be implemented.

Lead Communities would provide the laboratories in which to discover the policies and practices that work best. They would become the testing places for "best practices" – exemplary or excellent programs – in all fields of Jewish education. This would happen through the combined efforts of the key continental educational institutions and organizations, and above all, the creative front-line educators who have developed innovative, successful programs in their classrooms, community centers, summer camps, adult education programs and trips to Israel.

As ideas are tested, they would be carefully monitored and subjected to critical analysis. A combination of openness and creativity with continuing monitoring and clear-cut accountability would be vital to the success of the Lead Community program. Although the primary focus of each Lead Community would be local, the

transformations that would take place would have an effect on national institutions that are playing a key role in Jewish education. Thus, the institutions of higher Jewish learning would need to expand their education faculties to train additional personnel for the Lead Communities and to offer on-the-job training for the personnel that are presently working in existing institutions.

**At its third meeting on June 14, 1989 the Commission adopted the strategy of implementing its ideas through the establishment of several Lead Communities.** Because this concept requires local initiative and involvement as well as the expertise of continental institutions and organizations, the staff was requested to develop the elements of a continental strategy for implementation.

Time was devoted at this third Commission meeting to **the importance of educational research,** of monitoring and evaluation, of learning about the impact of various programs. Commissioners thought it would be appropriate to carefully monitor and supervise new initiatives and the work with Lead Communities. Also, commissioners raised the crucial issue of who was going to implement this ambitious plan—who would do the work? The staff was asked to prepare materials that would deal with the following questions:

1) Who would assume responsibility for continuing the work of the Commission after it issued its report and recommendations;
2) who would implement the plans that were emerging;
3) who would initiate the establishment of Lead Communities;
4) how would the necessary research, evaluation and monitoring be introduced into the plan that the Commission was preparing?

In the interviews that followed the third meeting, the staff was referred to successful programs in the field, and found that there were many excellent ideas that could be incorporated into the work of the Lead Communities. They also learned that several prominent family foundations had already undertaken pioneering work in programmatic areas.

The tension that had arisen because we were dealing only with the "building blocks" and not programmatic areas, diminished as it became clear that personnel would inevitably be recruited and trained to deal with specific programmatic areas (e.g., educators for early childhood, the supplementary school, the day school, and the community center).

Responding to the issues of implementation, commissioners recommended that an entity be established to carry out the work. This entity would be responsible for initiating the establishment of the Lead Communities; it would begin a dialogue between the work of the family foundations and the work undertaken in Lead Communities, between the foundations and national institutions such as the training institutions. It would initiate the establishment of a crucially needed research capability and it would carry on the work of the Commission when it completed its report.

**At the fourth meeting of the Commission, on October 23, 1989, the idea of creating a new entity, later named the "Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education," was agreed upon.** The Council would be responsible for the implementation of the Commission's decisions.

The staff was asked to bring together the various elements that had been discussed in the first four meetings of the Commission and in the many interviews that had taken place between these meetings with commissioners and other experts.

**At the fifth meeting of the Commission** it became clear that a **concrete plan for change had emerged and that implementation could begin immediately.**

The plan deals with personnel and the community, with the programmatic areas and with research. In addition, by the time the Commission issues its report in the Fall of 1990, the following initial steps will have been taken:

1. **Implementation:** The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education will be established – to be a facilitating mechanism for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

2. **Lead Communities:** First steps to establish several Lead Communities will be taken. They will be places where Jewish education at its best will be developed, demonstrated and tested.

3. **Funding:** Substantial funds will be available to help launch the plan. This is now being arranged through the generosity of family foundations.

For significant across-the-board change to take place, a long-term effort is required. The lessons learned in Lead Communities will need to be applied in many communities, gradually changing standards of Jewish education throughout North America. The available pool of qualified personnel will be increased. The profession of Jewish education will begin to be developed as the number of qualified educators

increases, as training programs are developed and as job opportunities and conditions for employment are improved. Gradually, major program areas will be addressed and an education research capability will be developed.

## The Continuing Role of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America

It was agreed that with the issuing of this report the Commission will be reconstituted as a representative body of the North American Jewish community concerned with Jewish education.

It will plan to meet once a year in order to assess the progress being made in the implementation of its plan. Its continuing role will exemplify the Jewish community's determination to achieve fundamental improvements in Jewish education.

To fulfill its mission, the Commission designed a blueprint for the future.

Its elements are:

I. Establishing The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education
II. Establishing Lead Communities
III. Developing Continental Strategies for Personnel and the Community
IV. Developing Programmatic Areas
V. Establishing a Research Capability
VI. Spreading the Word—The Diffusion of Innovation

## I. Establishing The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education

The Commission recognized that a new entity would have to be created to assume responsibility for the follow-up and implementation of its plan.

There were no precise parallels that the Commission had in mind when conceiving of the idea of the Council, but there were parallels that were useful when thinking through its functions and roles. These parallels ranged from the American Assembly at Columbia University, founded by President Eisenhower as a center for the

development of new thinking in key segments of American life, to High/Scope, that helped establish demonstration programs in the area of early childhood education and disseminated their results. The difference between the Council and other similar enterprises is that the Council is designed to be a significant yet small undertaking. It will strive to have new initiatives carried out by existing organizations. It will bring together the necessary talents and resources to make sure the overall plan of action is being carried out, but it will turn to existing institutions to undertake specific assignments. There was considerable discussion about whether the role envisioned for the new Council could be undertaken by existing organizations. It was decided that the prospects for success would be strengthened considerably by the creation of a new entity which had this program as its sole responsibility.

In establishing the Council, the commissioners knew that they would work in closest collaboration and be supported and helped by those organizations that are playing a leading role in Jewish education in North America today.

CJF, the umbrella organization for Jewish federations in North America, will be asked to intensify the recruitment of and communications with community leaders, encourage the development of supporting structures (such as local commissions on Jewish education), and encourage a significant increase in the allocation for Jewish education throughout North America.

JESNA would be called upon to intensify its work with communities around the country in the on-going effort to place Jewish education higher on the agenda of the Jewish community. It would continue to gather significant data about Jewish education and to offer its expertise in consultations. As work progresses, it will need to

play a major role in diffusing the lessons learned through the initiatives of the Council.

The JCC Association would have to intensify the vital role it has played in the development of informal settings for Jewish education. Since it serves the total needs of all the Jewish Community Centers, and offers a broad range of direct and indirect services, the JCC Association would be able to integrate new educational developments into the arena of informal education.

The Commission developed its plan, fully appreciating the centrality of those who deliver the services of Jewish education: the denominations, their schools, their training institutions and commissions on Jewish education, and particularly, the front line educators and their professional organizations. One of the functions of the Council will be to learn how their contributions can aid in the implementation of the Commission's plan. With the help of these institutions, the Council could become a driving force for innovation and change, serving as a catalyst to help bring about the necessary transformation of Jewish education in North America.

It was decided that the Council would be an independent entity. Its charter will call for a Board of Trustees, to be chosen by the sponsors of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America (the Mandel Associated Foundations, JCC Association, JESNA, and CJF). Trustees will include principals of foundations that have committed major funds as well as educators, scholars, and community leaders. The initial annual operating budget of the Council will cover the cost of staff and facilities to carry out its work.

## II. Establishing Lead Communities

A Lead Community will engage in the process of re-designing and improving the delivery of Jewish education. The focus will be on seeking and preparing qualified personnel and on developing communal support—with the goal of effecting and inspiring change in the various programmatic areas of Jewish education, through a wide array of intensive programs. Several Lead Communities will be chosen in North America.

A number of cities bave already expressed their interest. These and other cities should be considered by the Council. The goal should be to choose those that provide the strongest prospects for success and would serve as models for other communities in the future. The Council will produce an analysis of the different communities that have offered to participate in the program, and then make suggestions as to how best to select the sites that will provide the most fruitful settings, as well as the most representative spread. After the recommendations are acted upon by the Board, a public announcement will be made so that the Jewish community as a whole will know which cities will be selected as Lead Communities. Commissioners have suggested some of the following conditions for consideration by the Board of the Council—

For each Lead Community:

- There should be credible demonstration that the leadership of the community is willing to undertake a significant program of change in Jewish education.
- A large percentage of all the educational institutions and settings in the community should agree to join the endeavor.

- The community should undertake to raise substantial funds for the program.

Among the first steps to be taken in each Lead Community could be the creation of a local planning committee consisting of the leaders of the organized Jewish community, the rabbis, the educators, and lay leaders in all the organizations involved in Jewish education. A report would be prepared on the state of Jewish education in the community. It would form the basis for the preparation of a plan of action, including recommendations for new programs. The following could serve as examples of ideas which should be considered by Lead Communities:

- Encourage educators in Lead Communities to join in an ongoing collective effort of study and self improvement.

  Develop on-the-job training programs for all educators—both formal and informal.

  Establish training programs for principals and teachers, with experts and scholars from the denominations and institutions of higher learning, both in the U.S. and in Israel.

- Each local school, community center, camp, youth program, etc. should consider adopting elements from an inventory of best practices maintained at the Council. After deciding what form of best practice they want to adopt, the community would develop the appropriate training program so that this practice could be introduced into the relevant institutions. An important function of the local planning group and the Council will be to monitor and evaluate these innovations and to study their effect.

- Cultivating new sources of personnel will be a major area of activity. Some of it will be planned and implemented at the continental level. However, each Lead Community should be a testing-ground for the recruitment of new and talented people into the system.

  The injection of new personnel into a Community will be made for several purposes: to introduce new programs; to offer new services, such as family education; to provide experts in areas such as Hebrew, the Bible and Jewish history; and to fill existing but vacant positions.

These new positions could be filled in innovative and creative ways so that new sources of personnel are developed. For example, it has been suggested that the Council establish a Fellowship program and a Jewish Education Corps to enlist the services of young talented Jews who might not otherwise consider the field of Jewish education as a career choice. These are discussed here as emerging ideas only:

- *Fellows of the Council.* There is a reservoir of young Jews who are outstanding people in general education as well as in other fields (philosophy, psychology, etc.) who would welcome the opportunity to make contributions to Jewish life in a Lead Community. The Council and the local planning committee will seek to recruit such individuals as Fellows, for a period of two-three years. These fellows could bring the best of general education into Jewish education, serving as educator of educators, and working on monitoring and evaluation.
- *A Jewish Education Corps.* Another source of talent for the system could be outstanding college students who have good Jewish backgrounds (such as graduates of day schools, of Hebrew speaking camps, and students specializing in Judaica at colleges and universities). These students might not be planning a career in Jewish education, but many are deeply committed to Judaism and have the potential to

be good educators. These people could be attracted through a program modelled after the concept of the Peace Corps. Multi-year agreements might be made in which young people will commit themselves to devote a fixed number of hours a week for a number of years to Jewish education in a Lead Community and to be trained for the assignment. During this time they could continue with their general studies at the university. In exchange for their teaching services, the Lead Community might offer appropriate remuneration.

- *Fast-Track Programs.* Efforts might be made to build fast-track programs for young men and women majoring in Judaica at colleges and universities. It is estimated that there are hundreds of potential candidates. These people might well be excited about working in Lead Communities.
- *Career Changers.* Another source of new personnel could be people who are looking to make a career change. Many such individuals are currently in the general education system. Often they are in their thirties or forties and are looking for new challenges.

If each Lead Community succeeds in recruiting people from these and other sources, it could have a tremendous impact on the quality of Jewish education. Such newly recruited educators would choose to participate in this endeavor because they believe that they will be making a difference. They would be highly motivated, and their enthusiasm will be transmitted to their students.

- All the Lead Communities might work together in an Association of Lead Communities. It will be the responsibility of the Council to make sure that the local committees and professional staffs meet together and network appropriately.

- Lead Communities will also serve as pilot programs for continental efforts in the areas of recruitment, the improvement of salaries and benefits, the development of ladders of advancement, and generally of building the profession.

For example, a program might be developed to allow senior educators in Lead Communities to be given a prominent role in determining policy and in deciding which best practices to adopt, thereby playing a more important role in the education process. The issue of empowerment may be one of the most significant keys for attracting a high caliber of educator. While the Council will develop ways to give teachers nationally a greater voice and creative input, this will be applied early on and experimentally in Lead Communities. One commissioner suggested: "A society of master teachers should be created, not only to recognize excellence, but to allow these individuals to make recommendations, develop innovations, and serve as models. Regular meetings of such a group would provide encouragement to the members themselves."

In this process, a new ladder of advancement for teachers could be established. Lead Communities will be creating new positions and alternative career paths. Advancement will not only be linear from teacher to assistant principal to principal. A talented teacher will be able to specialize and play a leading role in his or her field of expertise throughout the community. For example, a teacher who became a Bible specialist might become a leading figure in this field for an entire community.

## III. Developing Continental Strategies for Personnel and the Community

In addition to the work with Lead Communities, the recommendations call for the Council to develop a continental strategy consisting of a number of major initiatives. A detailed plan will include **personnel** and the **community, programmatic components** and **the establishment of a research capability**. The following ideas have been suggested by commissioners and could be considered by the Council.

### A. Personnel

A broad scale effort should be undertaken to introduce changes in the personnel structure of Jewish education in North America. These efforts will be related to profession building and will focus specifically on the areas of recruitment, training, determination of salaries and benefits, career track development, and teacher empowerment.

*1. Recruitment*

A major marketing study should be conducted to identify those segments of the population that are potential candidates for Jewish education careers, and what motivations or incentives would most likely attract them to the field. Thus, for instance, while salary levels are important, there is some evidence that empowerment (the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students and parents) may be the primary factor.

Among the issues the marketing study will explore is what the key target groups for recruitment are—i.e., graduates of day schools, students participating in Hebrew

speaking camps, college students on campuses with serious Judaica departments, students participating in Israel Experience programs, and professionals at mid-career who are looking to make career changes. Following the market study, a comprehensive communications effort should be developed to create a sense of excitement and anticipation among those who might consider a career in Jewish education. This may involve, for instance, visits to the major colleges and universities that have large Jewish populations by educational consultants and talented recruiters. A key resource for these visits would be individuals in Lead Communities who are actually working on innovative programs. They could visit nearby colleges and universities to convey to students the exciting changes that are taking place in their communities.

In addition, public relations efforts should be undertaken to focus attention on the Council's work and the progress in Lead Communities. This special emphasis on the media will reach those key target groups who should be encouraged to enter the field of Jewish education. Also, a series of promotional materials (a newsletter, brochures, videos, etc.) may be produced to maintain a constant flow of information.

While it is clear that there could be career opportunities in Lead Communities for a number of candidates, the recruitment efforts will extend across North America, to fill vacant positions and to attract students to the training programs.

*2. Training—the Education of Educators*

The number of students graduating from training programs must be substantially increased. The immediate target will be to increase the number of graduates from the current level of 100 annually to a number approaching 400. To accomplish this, the Council will first work with the institutions of higher Jewish learning to expand the full time Jewish education faculty. This would involve the endowment of professor-

ships as well as fellowships for the training of new faculty. Likely candidates for these faculty positions are outstanding practitioners in the field, scholars from Yeshivot, academics from universities in the areas of general education, Judaica, the social sciences, and the humanities.

Hand-in-hand with efforts to increase faculty, plans should be designed to both recruit students and provide an extensive program of support through grants and fellowships. Encouraging first steps in this regard have already been taken by others to attract outstanding candidates to training programs.

New programs to prepare students for different educational roles (e.g., early childhood education, special education, informal education, family education) will be established at institutions of higher Jewish learning and universities.

The Council should encourage the development of innovative leadership programs where candidates for key roles in Jewish education can be provided with special educational experiences.

*3. Salaries and Benefits*

It is clear that salaries and benefits for educational personnel must be substantially increased. Lead Communities should provide models for how desired salary levels can be obtained. To achieve appropriate levels, a determination will be made as to what proper remuneration should be and funds must be raised to cover the additional costs.

On a continental level, a parallel effort should be encouraged by the Council, working through local federations. The role of federations for this purpose is key and they

will be the primary basis for support. The Lead Communities will help develop standards as to what salaries and benefits should be, and local federations will be encouraged to move towards these standards.

The Council might issue reports periodically on the progress being made in regard to salary and benefits, not only in Lead Communities, but throughout North America.

*4. Empowerment*

The empowerment of teaching personnel has to do with encouraging greater input on curriculum, teaching methods, administration, and the educational philosophy of the schools in which they work. This too represents a reorientation of educational thinking, and in order to prepare the foundation for this approach, the Council will encourage schools to develop incentives for teachers who show special promise in this respect. This may involve awards or bonuses or increases in title and stature for teachers who show initiative in regard to the educational direction of their schools. Efforts are now underway by others to establish awards for educators who have developed outstanding projects and programs.

Educational administrators should be encouraged to welcome these new initiatives. The Council could seek to work with various organizations to project messages to administrators about this concept, urging them to encourage their faculties to exercise greater influence and power over the character and nature of their schools.

## B. The Community

The work of the Commission is itself evidence of the growing concern on the part of the Jewish community for the quality and effectiveness of Jewish education. The Council will work to maintain this momentum in order to secure a leading place for Jewish education on the agenda of the organized Jewish community.

The goal is clear, as one commissioner observed: a majority of community leaders must rally to the cause of Jewish education. "The chances are," he said, "that in 1980, only a few of these leaders thought Jewish education was the burning issue, many thought it was important, and the rest didn't spend much time thinking about it. In 1990, it may well be that there are significantly more community leaders who think that education is a burning issue; more who think it is important, and fewer don't give it too much attention. The challenge is that by the year 2000, the vast majority of these community leaders should see Jewish education as the burning issue and the rest should think it is important. When this is achieved," the commissioner concluded, "money will be available to finance the massive program envisioned by the Commission."

Long-term support for Jewish education must continue to be provided by current sources: tuition income, congregational and organizational budgets, and fundraising, and gradually increasing federation allocations. Relatively new and critically important sources are the family foundations and federation endowments. These sources can allow a quick start on initiatives, while traditional sources gradually increase. A number of foundations, some represented on the Commission, have indicated a willingness to invest substantial sums in Jewish education and indeed are already doing so. The Council will sustain this effort by recruiting additional family foundations to

support specific elements of the Commission's action plan. Also, the Council will work with CJF to encourage federations in developing new fundraising initiatives for specific aspects of this educational plan.

The possibility of developing new structures that will enable the various elements concerned with Jewish education to work more effectively together will be explored. This process will include the federations, bureaus of Jewish education, the denominations, JCCs, communal schools, and congregations along with the continental organizations (the JCC Association, JESNA, and CJF).

## IV. Developing Programmatic Areas

The major thrust of the work of the Council initially will be related to the building blocks of Jewish education – establishing a profession of Jewish educators and building local community support. However, there is a strong interrelationship between these building blocks and programmatic areas. Teachers are trained for particular age groups – early childhood, elementary school, high-school. Educators work in particular settings – summer camps, trips to Israel, JCCs, a classroom where Bible or Hebrew is taught. Educational personnel is always involved in programmatic areas.

The creation of innovative and effective programs in the various areas of education will be crucial for the success of the Commission's educational plan. Therefore, the Council, as part of its long range strategy, will develop an inventory of successful programs in the various programmatic areas. This inventory will be offered to the planning committees of the Lead Communities, who will choose among them, adapting and modifying the programs for their local settings. The Council will also advise

regional and national organizations and local communities on how they might benefit from these programs.

The Council will build upon the work already beginning in programmatic areas by several family foundations. One foundation will specialize in programs relating to the Israel experience; another wants to encourage outstanding educators to develop best practices; a third is concerned chiefly with the recruitment and training of educators; another is doing work in the area of the media and other means of communication; others work in the areas of adult education and early childhood education. The Council should function as a bridge between these and other foundations and Lead Communities, between the foundations and creative educators, and between institutions which want to develop programs and potential funders.

## V. Establishing a Research Capability

The Council should facilitate the establishment of a research capability for Jewish education in North America. This would enable the development of the theoretical and practical knowledge base that is indispensable for change and improvement. It would require the creation of settings where scholars and practitioners can think together systematically about the goals, the content, and the methods of Jewish education. It would also include procedures for the evaluation of each component of the Commission's plan as well as gathering new information concerning the state of Jewish education generally.

This research will be carried out by professional research organizations by departments at universities and by individuals. The results will be disseminated throughout

the Jewish community, for use in short-term and long-term planning. Data on Lead Communities will be gathered and analyzed to ensure that their individual programs are educationally sound and are meeting with success.

This endeavour would also encourage innovative research projects that will test out new approaches to Jewish education. These will involve frameworks in which data can be collected and analyzed on key educational issues, ranging from the effectiveness of the supplementary school to the impact of camping, to alternative methods for the teaching of Hebrew as well as other subjects in the curriculum, to the assessment of educational methods in various settings.

## VI. Spreading the Word – The Diffusion of Innovation

Although the main thrust of the Council will be to work with Lead Communities and to develop national strategies over the next several years, another focus of attention will be to set up a process whereby other communities around the country will be able to learn, adapt and replicate the ideas, findings, and results of the Lead Communities. In this phase of the Council's work, continental organizations – especially JESNA, JCC Association, CJF, and the denominations – will play a critical role since they will be the means by which this process can be effected.

The Council will encourage these organizations to develop procedures that will accomplish this objective through such means as published reports, seminars, publicity in the Jewish and general media, and eventually through training programs for communities around the country. The national organizations will also arrange for on-site

visits by community leaders and educators to observe what is taking place in the Lead Communities.

As Lead Community programs begin to bear fruit, a plan will be developed by the Council to initiate new Lead Community programs. At the end of the first five years, it is expected that the initial Lead Communities will have matured to the point where they will have developed a momentum of their own towards a continually improving educational system. By that time, another three or four Lead Communities may be added to the plan. These communities will be able to move forward at a more rapid pace because of the lessons learned in the first communities.

The process of adding new communities should be a continuing one, so that in time there will be a growing network of communities in North America that will be active participants in the program. It also may be possible to establish a new category of Lead Communities that will function as associates or satellites of the original communities. These will not require the same kind of intensive effort that will be necessary in the founding communities, and they will help the Council provide the level of support necessary for building the entire effort into a nationwide program. The program will thus have a ripple effect, and as time goes on, be extended to an increasing number of communities throughout North America.

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America decided to undertake a ten-year plan for change in Jewish education. Implementation of the first phase of the plan should begin immediately.

The Commission calls on the North American Jewish community, on its leadership and institutions, to adopt this plan and provide the necessary resources to assure its success.

**1. The Commission recommends the establishment of *The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education* to implement the Commission's decisions and recommendations. It should be a driving force in the attempt to bring about across-the-board, systemic change for Jewish education in North America.**

- The Council should initiate a cooperative effort among individuals and organizations concerned with Jewish education, as well as the funders who will help support the entire activity. Central communal organizations—CJF, JCC Association and JESNA—should be full partners in the work.

- The Council should be devoted to initiating and promoting innovation in Jewish education. As such, it should be a center guided by vision and creative thinking. It will be a driving force for systemic change.

- It should help to design and revise development strategies in concert with other persons, communities and institutions. It should work with and through existing institutions and organizations and help them rise to their full potential.

**2. The Commission urges a vigorous effort to involve more key community leaders in the Jewish education enterprise. It urges local communities to establish comprehensive planning committees to study their Jewish education needs and to be proactive in bringing about improvements. The Commission recommends a number of sources for additional funding to support improvements in Jewish education, including federations and private foundations.**

In order for this to happen:

- The Commission encourages the establishment of additional local committees or commissions on Jewish education, the purpose of which would be to bring together communal and congregational leadership in wall-to-wall coalitions to improve the communities' formal and informal Jewish education programs.

- The Commission also encourages each community to include top community leadership in their local Jewish education planning committee and in the management of the schools, the Jewish Community Centers and local Jewish education programs.

- The Commission recommends that federations provide greater sums for Jewish education, both in their annual allocations and by special grants

from endowment funds and/or special fundraising efforts on behalf of Jewish education.

- Private foundations and philanthropically-oriented families are urged to set aside substantial sums of money for Jewish education for the next five to ten years. In this connection the Commission urges that private foundations establish a fund to finance the Council, and subsidies for Lead Communities and other projects.

**3. The Commission recommends that a plan be launched to build the profession of Jewish education in North America. The plan will include the development of training opportunities; a major effort to recruit appropriate candidates to the profession; increases in salaries and benefits; and improvements in the status of Jewish education as a profession.**

To accomplish this, the North American Jewish community will be encouraged to undertake a program to significantly increase the quantity and enhance the quality of pre-service and in-service training opportunities in North America and in Israel. Increasing and improving training opportunities will require investing significant funds to expand existing training programs and develop new programs in training institutions and general universities in North America and in Israel.

**4. The Commission recommends the establishment of several Lead Communities, where excellence in Jewish education can be demonstrated for others to see, learn from and, where appropriate replicate. Lead Communities will be initiated by local communities that will work in partnership with the Council. The Council will help**

distill the lessons learned from the Lead Communities and diffuse the results to the rest of North America.

5. The Commission identified several programmatic areas, each of which offer promising opportunities for new initiatives. The Council will encourage the development of these areas in Lead Communities and will act as a broker between Foundations and institutions that wish to specialize in a programmatic area. The Council will assist in the provision of research, planning and monitoring for those efforts.

6. The Commission recommends the establishment of a research capability in North America to develop the knowledge base for Jewish education, to gather the necessary data and to undertake monitoring and evaluation. Research and development should be supported at existing institutions and organizations, and at specialized research facilities that may need to be established.

To Be Done

## Commissioned Papers

*The Relationship Between Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity,* I. Scheffler, Harvard University; S. Fox, The Hebrew University)

This paper was commissioned to respond to the questions raised by commissioners about the nature of the evidence that links Jewish education to Jewish continuity.

*The Structure of Jewish Education in North America* (W. Ackerman, Ben Gurion University)

A historical perspective on the structure of Jewish education with particular reference to the role of Bureaus of Jewish education, the religious denominations and the federation movement.

*Towards the Professionalization of Jewish Teaching* (I. Aron, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles)

An analysis of the status of Jewish teachers and of the issues involved in the creation of a profession for Jewish teachers.

*Studies of Personnel in Jewish Education: A Summary Report* (D. Markovic and I. Aron, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles)

A survey of the available data on Jewish educational personnel, their educational background, salary and benefits.

*Community Organization for Jewish Education in North America: Leadership, Finance, and Structure* (H.L. Zucker, Director, Commission on Jewish Education in North America)

An analysis of the role that the organized Jewish community has played in Jewish education as well as a projection of future trends and opportunities.

*Federation-Led Community Planning for Jewish Education, Identity and Continuity* (J. Fox, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland)

A report on the status and significance of the recently established local commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity.

*The Synagogue as a Context for Jewish Education* (J. Reimer, Brandeis University)

A study of how synagogues differ in the ways they support their educational programs and the relationship of a congregational school's receiving favored status and its being a good school.

*The Preparation of Jewish Educators in North America: A Research Study* (A. Davidson, Jewish Theological Seminary of America)

A comprehensive study of the fourteen teacher-training institutions in North America, their student body, faculty, curriculum and plans for the future.

*Findings of the Los Angeles BJE Teacher Census* (I. Aron and B. Phillips, Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles)

An analysis of the data gathered by the Bureau of Jewish Education of Los Angeles on the teachers in the city's Jewish schools.

*Informal Education in North America* (B. Reisman, Brandeis University)

A study of the issues involved in informal education in North America with particular reference to the Jewish community centers, the youth movements, camping, family and adult education.

*A Pilot Poll of the Jewish Population of the U.S.A.* (Gallup, Israel), December 1989

The Commission participated in a Gallup Poll of the Jewish population in North America, introducing questions that are of importance for the issues and policies of Jewish education.

In addition to these commissioned papers, the staff consulted with several professional organizations and individual experts. A complete list of consultations will be appended to the report. It is important to note that CAJE organized several volunteer activities aimed at sharing views with the Commission. Among the products is:

Roberta Goodman and Ron Reynolds: "Field Notes": On December 4-5, 1989 a group of 17 Jewish educators, members of CAJE, assembled in Cleveland to deliberate on programmatic agendas.