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Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.

101 Smith Street, P.O. Box 510, Dewitt, New York 13214-0510 • (315) 445-0161 • FAX: (315) 445-1559



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Volunteer Recruitment,
Training, Placement

Av 9, 1989
August 10, 1989

TO: Art Napastak

FROM: Lois Zachary, Chair, Jewish Education Forum
Barry Silverberg, Executive Vice-President

RE: Our Jewish Education Forum Final Report

Given the interest which you have expressed over the past 3 years in our Jewish Education Forum's progress, we thought you might enjoy receiving a copy of our Final Report.

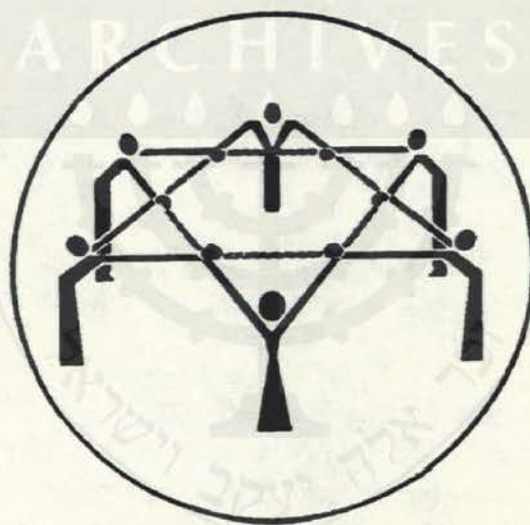
We sincerely thank you for the interest and support you have provided over the years.

Shalom.

Enclosure

The Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. is the primary agency for fund raising, community relations, planning and leadership development for the Central New York Jewish community. In addition to Federation program services, Federation funds and supports: Locally — Bnai Brith Hillel Foundation at Syracuse University • Jewish Community Center • Jewish Community Educational Resource Center • Jewish Educators Training (JET) Project • Jewish Family Service • Project Chaver • Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies • Religious School for Exceptional Students • Syracuse Hebrew Day School • Syracuse Area Interreligious Council • Va'ad Ha'ir • Nationally and Overseas — American Jewish Committee • American Jewish Congress • American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) • Anti-Defamation League of Bnai Brith (ADL) • Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies • Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) • Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) • Jewish Agency for Israel • Jewish Educational Service of North America • Jewish War Veterans • Joint Cultural Appeal (American Academy for Jewish Research • American Jewish Historical Society • Conference on Jewish Social Studies • Congress for Jewish Culture • Histadrut Ivrit • Jewish Publication Society of America • Leo Baeck Institute • National Foundation for Jewish Culture • YIVO Institute for Jewish Research) • National Conference on Soviet Jewry • National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) • New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) • Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT) • United Israel Appeal • United Jewish Appeal (UJA) • Zionist Organization of America

Jewish Education Forum
of the
Syracuse Jewish Federation



**Creating the Climate for Educational Change:
A Final Report**
(June, 1989)

Acknowledgements and Preface

This Final Report of the Jewish Education Forum of the Syracuse Jewish Federation is dedicated to the many volunteers and professionals in our community — *listed on the back inside cover* — who worked so diligently over a three year period to heighten our community's consciousness about the importance of Jewish education in the improvement of Jewish life in Central New York. That they continue to contribute to the ongoing effort of promoting greater understanding of Jewish educational issues and concerns within our community is a tribute to them and to the community-wide process which the Jewish Education Forum of the Syracuse Jewish Federation initiated.

From the beginning, the Jewish Education Forum process has been a collaborative partnership between the volunteer leadership and the professional leadership of our community. Setting out to create the climate for educational change, the Forum substantially accomplished this mandate by clearly outlining its mission, goals and objectives at its outset and at critical milestones throughout the process. These served as reference points, keeping participants focused on the greater mission.

This final Report of the Jewish Education Forum begins where the Forum's August, 1987 Report concluded. It is intended to serve as the Summary and record of what has transpired. To obtain a full picture of all that transpired, it is suggested that copies of that Report and the various materials produced by the Forum (*referenced herein*) be obtained from the Syracuse Jewish Federation.

We express our appreciation to Gail R. Robinson of Laguna Beach, CA for graciously allowing us to use the logo she originally developed for the Jewish Federation of Orange County, CA as our Forum's logo.

In completing our work, we recall the words of Shel Silverstein (included within the Acknowledgements of our first Report), which we kept in mind as our planning process evolved, so that we always maintained "the big picture":

The fanciest dive that ever was dove
Was done by Melissa of Coconut Grove.
She bounced on the board and flew in the air
With a twist of her head and a twirl of her hair.
She did thirty-four jackknives, backflipped and spun,
Quadruple gainered, and reached for the sun.
And then somersaulted nine times and a quarter —
And looked down and saw the pool had no water.

From A Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein

Dr. Lois J. Zachary, Chair, Jewish Education Forum 1986-1989
Dr. Neal Bellos, Vice-President, Community Development
Barry Silverberg, Executive Vice-President

Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.

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"The story of American Jewish education in the past half-century is a saga of many paths, and it is not presently clear where the roads are leading. However, the signposts that we have erected clearly indicate that American Jewish education is at a crossroads and will look different in the coming decades."

Dr. Barry Chazan, *The State of Jewish Education*, Spring, 1988



"Where To Now?"

Jewish Education in Central New York mirrors the Jewish educational scene nationally. We, too, are facing critical choices and options. We, too, are witnessing new modes and forms of Jewish education. We, too, are realizing that we need to pay better attention to these changes — if we are to build a stronger, more informed Jewish community.

Barry Chazan tells us the question Jewish communities are asking is "where to now?" While there is no easy answer to this question, there is agreement that the question must be addressed **now**. Communities across the continent are engaged in major planning efforts aimed at developing functionally literate and thoughtful Jewish communities.

Jewish Education Forum

Since December, 1986, the Syracuse Jewish Federation has made Jewish education a priority on its agenda. The Federation created and empowered the **Jewish Education Forum (JEF)** to study and recommend ways to enhance Jewish education in Central New York.

Its **Mission statement**, adopted by the Federation Board, reads:

"The Syracuse Jewish Federation is embarking on a community planning effort to strive for the highest quality of services for the improvement of Jewish life in Central New York."

Jewish education has been targeted as the initial priority. Nationally, it has been identified as the area of greatest concern and need as well as the most successful arena in which to begin building community in a rapidly changing world.

The Jewish Education Forum is being established to study and recommend ways to enhance the quality of Jewish education opportunity in Central New York for the present and the future. It seeks to foster a spirit of communal collaboration by developing a participatory structure of involvement bringing together persons with knowledge of and/or interest in Jewish education.

Its goals are:

- 1. To heighten the Jewish education consciousness of the community;*
- 2. To foster excitement and involvement about Jewish learning throughout the lifespan;*
- 3. To identify the range and scope of the current education scene (what is);*
- 4. To specify and prioritize education issues;*
- 5. To design and recommend strategies for the implementation of a program in Jewish education to meet the considerable challenges facing the Central New York Jewish community both in the present and the future.*

It is anticipated that the act of bringing together individuals involved in the current Jewish educational enterprise in Central New York will lead to an additional outcome: bettering communication, cooperation and coordination and maximizing the resources of the Central New York Jewish community."

The Forum has been participatory, continually seeking community-wide participation in planning and implementing action recommendations. The underlying premise is that the needs of the entire Jewish community can best be identified and met by encouraging participation and involvement of the **whole** Jewish community. To that end, over 200 individuals have been involved in this local educational planning initiative.

Considerable progress has been made since the inception of the Forum nearly three years ago.

Evolving Functions

As the work of the Forum changed during its three years, so, too, did the function of the Forum. For the first two years, most of the work took place within the larger Forum and work groups or task forces.

In Year III, the Forum evolved from a planning group to its present status of being a dialogue group for bringing together persons with a vested interest in Jewish education.

To promote the coming together of persons concerned and knowledgeable about Jewish education, the Forum process included a number of keynote "thought-provoking" presentations.

What the Forum Learned About

December, 1986 to Present

- "Strategies for Improving Jewish Education: A National Perspective" by Dr. Jonathan Woocher
- "Goal Tending — Or Goals for Jewish Education" by Dr. Saul Wachs
- "The Effect of Educational and Societal Change Upon Jewish Education" by Dr. Joan Burstyn
- "Federations and Synagogues and Jewish Education Issues" by Dr. Sherry Israel
- "What Do We Do Now That We're Here? Blueprint of Our Next Steps" by Dr. Jonathan Woocher
- "Programmatic Responses to Major Issues in Jewish Education" by Fradle Freidenreich
- "Prospects for the Future — A Day In The Life of the Jewish Community Educational Resource Center" by Deborah Goldstein
- "The Jewish Teacher Crisis" by Seymour Rossel

The Steering Committee :

How It Changed Over The Years

The Jewish Education Forum's Steering Committee members have played a valuable role in guiding the Forum.

The Steering Committee was formed in the Fall of 1986 to establish policy and direct the activities of the Jewish Education Forum.

With the formation of the Work Groups in the Fall of 1987, the Steering Committee's role changed as the Forum's work became more decentralized. Each of the Work Group chairs and Position Paper Writers became part of the enlarged Steering Committee — which continued to steer as well as coordinate the work of the Forum.

By the Fall of 1988, the activities of the Forum were becoming even more decentralized with implementation of the Forum's recommendations. A much smaller Steering Committee convened regularly thereafter to coordinate the Forum's activities.

Year II: Work Groups

Four **Work Groups** were established to continue the Forum's exploration of the issues of Jewish education requiring attention within Central New York. Each met on a regular basis. Two Position Paper Writers (Ruth Curtis and Barbara Holstein) prepared position papers which were distributed to all Forum participants to promote further discussion.

Each Work Group was given specific guidelines:

Work Group I: Building Community — Now and in the Future

This work group's purpose is to develop new programs in Jewish education. Planning, which is important, is time consuming. Too often the time spent in planning has drained energy for the all important follow-up and implementation phase. To avoid this situation, this action-oriented work group will focus on building community cooperation; taking advantage of good ideas, timely resources, and opportunities to keep Jewish education in the forefront of community concern and action.

Goals:

1. Create the climate, environment to support Jewish Education.
2. Develop plans for implementing creative and attractive programs, (e.g. wild ideas, pilot program modules, collaborative teaching models, etc.—both short term and long term).
3. Create community support (e.g. participation, identification, knowledge about, and financial backing).
4. Stimulate and promote curiosity about Jewish learning.
5. Build a sense of excitement.
6. Build a sense of pride.
7. Build a sense of "community."

Work Group II: Educating the Educators

This work group's purpose is to identify the major components of a comprehensive program to strengthen teaching in Jewish education programs. A point of consensus that cuts across all levels in our community is the concern for building effective instructional performance. To achieve this requires effective, relevant professional teacher training, with the necessary incentives to recruit and retain teaching personnel.

Areas to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

A. Who is the Educator?

1. Rabbis
2. Principals
3. Teacher
4. Teacher aides
5. Avocational educators
6. Others

B. Recruitment and Selection

1. The problem is the shortage of teachers.
2. Lack of money.

C. Preparation (need to upgrade teachers and their profession)

1. Long term (e.g., teacher career development — initial and continuing)
2. In service, on site.
3. Certification.

D. Recognition

Work Group III: Educating Youth

This work group's purpose is to articulate the concerns of all segments of the Jewish community with this issue, to identify and make suggestions on how this condition may be improved, and to recommend a plan of action by which the community can assist our youth to strengthen their sense of Jewish identity. The survival of Judaism rests on how well our youth identify and function as Jews. The growing interest in Jewish education, throughout the country, stems from the concern that our youth are not well-enough prepared to maintain a strong identity as Jews.

Areas to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

A. Pre-school.

B. Pre bar and bat mitzvah

1. Formal
2. Informal

C. Post bar and bat mitzvah

1. Formal
2. Informal

D. College age

Work Group IV: Adult Learning

This work group's purpose is to identify the programs and population that can make up a dynamic effort in adult education. The Forum views adult education as encompassing a continuum of life-long learning, comprising a myriad of activities, programs, and participating groups. Obviously parents have a major role in building the sense of identity in the children and in kindling a receptivity to future Jewish educational efforts. How can parents assist in building a sound foundation for Jewish learning? Most adult learning has been found to be self-planned and self-initiated. How can our various institutions provide resources to facilitate that process?

Finally, what are the ways and the programs to reach special groups of adults, such as the elderly, the newly-arrived, and the disabled.

Areas to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

A. Participants

1. Adults as Parents.

- a. Socialization of the young to Judaism.
- b. Creation and fostering of the Jewish home.

2. Adults as Consumers

- a. Deepening knowledge and commitment.
- b. Providing new knowledge.

B. Delivery Resources

1. Educational institutions

- a. Universities
- b. Community Colleges
- c. Public Schools
- d. Sectarian Schools.

2. Organizations and agencies.

3. Informal, self-initiated and self-directed.

Work Group Members' Responsibilities

1. To analyze a specific set of issues
2. To prepare written documents which will include:
 - a. The scope of the issue(s)
 - b. The extent of the perception regarding the issue(s)
 - c. The facts regarding the issue(s)
 - d. The importance of the issue(s) in the overall picture
 - e. Action Recommendations to deal with the issue(s)

At the January, 1988 Forum, participants identified priority issues based on the items derived from the Work Groups' position papers:

Jewish Education Forum Priority Setting

Public Relations:

1. Column in the *Jewish Observer*
2. Tape and Video Presentations
3. Public Relations Campaign to promote Jewish learning
4. Educational supplement in *Jewish Observer* during Jewish Education Week
5. Monthly educational calendar in *Jewish Observer*
6. Guidebook to Jewish educational services/activities (with youth focus)

Ongoing Long Range Planning: The Institute

1. Research: demographic study with identification of marginally involved and unaffiliated

2. Educational Needs Assessment
3. Think Tank on the Whys of Jewish Education

Programmatic Responses:

1. Creative collaborative community projects
2. Inter-synagogue youth activities
3. Annual theme for Jewish education
4. Civic literacy process
5. Education Fair
6. Parents as Teachers
7. Citywide preschool parenting days
8. Israeli dance club for youngsters
9. Children's Choir
10. Teen programming at Jewish Community Center
11. Teen exchange program
12. Teen missions to Israel
13. Youth groups
14. Services and programs for special learning needs

Professional Development:

1. Subsidize Conference participation
2. Inter-institutional sharing
3. Increased in-service days
4. Utilization of Syracuse City Teacher Center
5. Community teacher plan
6. Jewish educators newsletter
7. Establish teachers association
8. Mentor teachers program
9. Establish Jewish education resource center
10. Creation of full-time Hebrew teaching positions

Formal Jewish Education:

1. Jewish Educators Training Program expansion
2. Parents as teachers
3. Avocational educational programs
4. Jewish educators institute
5. Certification program

Community Support Structures:

1. Educational activity center
2. Permanent home educational providers
3. Jewish Education Forum
4. New structures
5. Civic literacy process

Financial Support:

1. Individual and group support
2. Ongoing subsidy for conference participation
3. Financial incentives (seed money) to stimulate creative programming
4. Finding for community-wide staff development
5. Retreat house/camp
6. Funding for special projects
7. Inter-institutional linkages
8. Raising teachers' salaries and benefits
9. Utilization of funding search services

Forum's Top Ten Priorities

1. Establish Resource Center
2. Create full-time Hebrew Teacher positions
3. Continue Jewish Educators Training Project
4. Raise Teachers' Salaries
5. Funding of community-wide staff development
6. Column in Jewish Observer
7. Conduct Educational Needs Assessment
8. Inter-synagogue youth activities
9. Subsidize conference attendance
10. Establish financial incentives for creative programming

A number of task forces were established to further study these priorities and make concrete proposals concerning each:

1. Jewish Community Educational Resource Center
2. Professionalizing the Professional
3. Dissemination of Information on Jewish Education
4. Community Outreach
5. Long Range Planning
6. Jewish Educators Training Project

Based on the Forum's recommendations, the Syracuse Jewish Federation funded the establishment of a **Jewish Community Educational Resource Center** and the continuation of the Jewish Educators Training Program. In addition, a monthly column on Jewish education, entitled *Signposts*, began to appear in the *Jewish Observer*.



As a result, at that meeting, the Forum determined its top ten priorities to be:

Jewish Community Educational Resource Center

As its Mission Statement describes:

The Jewish Community Educational Resource Center (JCERC) was established by the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. to serve the educational needs of learners of all ages in the Central New York Jewish community. During its initial stage, the JCERC will focus primarily on the existing schools in the community.

The JCERC is one result of a two-year collaborative educational planning initiative undertaken by the Jewish Education Forum. The Forum was established by the Syracuse Jewish Federation to study and recommend ways to enhance the quality of Jewish education in Central New York for the present and the future.

An Advisory Board presently governs the JCERC. This Board is comprised of representatives of all major providers of Jewish education as well as the broader Jewish community and reports to the Jewish Education Forum.

The JCERC will respect the ideological principles and institutional autonomy of all those it serves.

The JCERC's goals are:

- 1. to provide resources to learners of all ages involved in organizational, institutional or self-directed Jewish learning experiences, either formally or informally;*
- 2. to provide guidance to educators in developing curricula, pedagogic skills and classroom resources;*
- 3. to facilitate collegial sharing of ideas, concerns and materials among educators;*
- 4. to conduct seminars and workshops to promote educators' professional development and growth;*
- 5. to develop cooperative relationships with local resource and teacher centers and Jewish resource centers in other communities;*
- 6. to publish a periodic newsletter to publicize the Center's activities, to enhance communication among educators and to augment*

Judaic learning in the community;

- 7. to examine and inventory existing Jewish media resources and libraries in the region and to develop a plan for their utilization;*

- 8. to establish the physical Center.*

By fulfilling these goals, the Center will enhance the climate of Jewish educational professionalism in our community, encourage communication and cooperation among the various Jewish educational providers, and foster greater understanding and appreciation of Jewish education as a life-long endeavor.

Various articles about the formation of the Center appeared are contained in Appendix A.

Forming the JCERC's first Advisory Board were Dorothy Pearl and Joan Poltenson, co-Chairs, along with:

Helen Buck	Margery Burstein
Joan Burstyn	Elaine Charles
Sara Charney	Carol Chottiner
David Cohen	Elihu Cohen
Michael Cynamon	Barbara Davis
Ira Dubnoff	Lillian Feldman
Mark Field	Steven Grossman
Daniel Jezer	Rhea Jezer
Annetta Kaplan	Joseph Lebediker
Helen Marcum	Alice Pearlman
Edythe Schneider	David Sheinkopf
Corinne Smith	Gary Spencer
Jeff Swartz	Andrea Weiler
Anita Weinberger	Lois J. Zachary
Robert Zucker	
Barry Silveberg, Executive Vice-President	
Deborah Goldstein, JCERC Director	

Focus of Activity Year III

- Long Range Planning
- Community Outreach
- Generating New Income
- Setting Up the Resource Center
- Think Tank
- Hyman Lecture Series

To make teachers aware of its existence and to summarize its services — for easy reference — the JCERC distributed bookmarks to all of the Jewish school teachers:

The Jewish Community Educational Resource Center

of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.
will bring to you and your school

- Judaic Teacher Texts
- Activity and Gaming Books
- Judaica Catalogs
- Teacher-Created Materials
- Other Assorted Resources

The Resource Center provides
these services:

- Development of Supplementary Materials
- Curriculum Development
- Resource Bank
- Classroom Observation
- Classroom Modeling
- Basic Judaic Information
- In-Service Workshops
- Private Consultations

The Resource Center is a central information and referral service on all aspects of Jewish education for the Central New York region. We exist to work with you to improve the Jewish educational enterprise.

Give us a call — 315-445-0161

**Deborah Goldstein, Director
Jewish Community
Educational Resource Center**

101 Smith Street • PO Box 510
DeWitt, New York 13214

Signposts

The *Signposts* column has been bringing issues of Jewish education to the community — through the *Jewish Observer* — to create greater public awareness and dialogue about these issues. A list of the columns which have appeared as of this Report are contained in Appendix B.

Think Tank

The Forum's Think Tank was charged with sorting out and discussing the broad issues of community and recommending ways to enhance Jewish education locally. A report on its deliberations is expected in December, 1989.

Its participants have been:

Neal Bellos	Joan Burstyn, Chair
Jonathan Freedman	Roberta Goodman
Michael Kagan	Charles Sherman
Corinne Smith	Allan Yozawitz
Lois Zachary	

Community Outreach: What We've Learned

The goal of the Forum's Community Outreach effort is to widen the circle of understanding about the Forum process, inform community leadership about the outcomes to date and those expected in the near future, describe opportunities for involvement and generate discussion about their concerns and ways in which the Forum process can better meet their needs.

To accomplish these objectives (since May, 1988) the Forum Chair and Federation Vice-President for Community Development have presented the Federation planning picture, a history of what was, is, and will be regarding the educational planning process, a calendar of events and the Major Issues process to the following congregational entities:

Temple Adath Yeshurun Executive Committee
Temple Adath Yeshurun Education Committee
Syracuse Hebrew Day School Board of Directors
Young Israel-Shaarei Torah Board of Directors
Congregation Ner Tamid Board of Directors
Temple Society of Concord Board of Education
Congregation Beth Shalom-Chevre Shas Board of Directors.

In addition, the Forum Chair and Federation Vice-President for Community Development convened four meetings with the congregational presidents during the last two years to discuss concerns and thoughts about Jewish education and identify common synagogue education issues.

Each of these meetings provided valuable feedback for the planning process. Many of the suggestions from these discussions have already been incorporated into the planning process.

The community outreach process is invaluable in generating fresh ideas, in enhancing understanding of the Federation's role as a catalyst, in providing the Forum with an idea of some of the common issues and concerns of the congregations and agencies.

The most frequently mentioned ideas were:

1. The importance of CAJE (the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education) as a community Jewish educational opportunity for Syracuse. The need for more community funding to support teachers, interested volunteers, rabbis, etc. to attend CAJE conferences;
2. Concern about the community's perception of Jewish educational programs at synagogues as being limited to that congregation. Why is it the community does not attend a particular synagogue's Jewish learning opportunities and programs despite the fact that the publicity emphasizes that program is open to all? How do you change people's perception about congregations as vehicles for delivery of Jewish educational programming for the entire community?
3. The immediate need for a community educational calendar. A regular column describing Jewish learning opportunities (which are open to the community) was suggested including an annotated Jewish educational schedule of events.
4. The need to establish an educational clearinghouse.
5. Establishing "a community-wide Hebrew program" for the community in one location in which all synagogues would participate. The afternoon schools would retain their separate identities and subjects other than Hebrew.
6. The need to have full-time Jewish educators. Questions raised for us to consider: how do you attract qualified Jewish educators to Central New York?
7. The need to subsidize education for teachers was emphasized. The suggestion of an endowment fund to meet this need was made.
8. The value of the Jewish Educators Training (JET) program at the Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies

was stressed.

9. Time was spent talking about the enrichment of the community enhancing congregational efforts and vice versa. The addition of a Scholar-in-Residence was discussed and seen as helpful and desired

Community Outreach Objectives

- Continue and deepen synagogue involvement
- Long Range Planning
- Generating New Income Sources
- Implementing the Priorities
- Community Leaders Invitational Conference on Jewish Education

Professionalizing the Profession

The *Statement of Purpose* of the Task Force on Professionalizing the Profession states:

"The success of Jewish education rests ultimately on the commitment and capabilities of the people who plan, implement and support it. Therefore, the quality and effectiveness of Jewish education can only be maintained through the continual updating of the knowledge and skills of teachers and administrators."

"The purpose of the Task Force on Professionalizing the Profession is therefore, to promote the professional development of Jewish educators:

- 1 by establishing incentives for continuing education;
2. by recognizing and supporting teachers committed to Jewish education;
3. by stimulating interest in the profession;
4. by increasing public awareness in this community of the importance of Jewish education as a profession.

To this end the Committee set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To formulate a grant from which monies will be used by Jewish educators for the purpose of staff development, teacher in-services, local and national conference attendance;
2. To develop a rationale for an endowment fund to encourage college students to pursue a degree in Jewish studies and allow current Jewish educators to further develop their careers in Jewish education;

3. To increase collaboration and communication among teachers and to develop and establish an organization for Jewish educators for the purposes of empowerment and networking;
4. To establish a pension and benefits package for Jewish educators (which may include a larger group);
5. To create a Syracuse Jewish Educators Institute;
6. To develop community activities focusing on teacher recognition;
7. To conduct a needs assessment among professionals to determine who we are, who we should be, where we should be going, and how we will get there;
8. To heighten community consciousness about Jewish education as a profession.

This Task Force's participants, chaired by Andrea Weiler, have been:

Barbara Baum	Susan Cauger
Michael Fixler	Deborah Goldstein
Roberta Goodman	Marjorie Loeb
Carole Millstein	Iris Petroff
Lorraine Sher	Bonnie Sukert
Simona Szafran	Maryse Wilkins
Richard Wilkins	Lois Zachary

Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund

The Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. was established to honor Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman's memory and to support Federation programming and services in the area of Jewish educational development, including, but not limited to stimulating interest in and providing information about Jewish educational opportunities, both as a career and as a life-long learning experience.

The Fund's first activity was the **Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Inaugural Lecture** held on March 8, 1989 and featuring Dr. Mervin Verbit who spoke on "*D'or L'Dor (From Generation to Generation): Building Continuity and Involvement Through Jewish Knowledge, Commitment and Values*".

The *Jewish Observer* coverage of the Fund and the lecture are in Appendix C.

Contributions to the Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Fund can still be made by sending a check made payable to *Syracuse Jewish Federation—Hyman Fund* to the Federation (address below).

Major Issues in Jewish Education Conference

The goals of the Major Issues in Jewish Education Conference, held on May 7-8, 1989, co-chaired by Michael Cynamon and Libby Rubenstein, were:

1. To continue to help support a climate in which Jewish education will go forth; and
2. To create a coalition and cooperative effort between Federation and synagogue leadership to accomplish the goal of creating a strong Jewish education community in Central New York.

The general goals of the day's program were:

1. Transmit information: Knowledge and Leadership Skills
2. Understand the role of leadership: Volunteer and Professional
3. Help clarify personal feelings and attitudes
4. Study the national and local Jewish educational structures, problems and potential promises
5. Confront issues of importance from a **communal** perspective
6. Promote positive changes through:
 - a. a program of knowledge about the issues
 - b. a realistic assessment of needs and resources
 - c. a strong working relationship between all agencies and personnel

Comments on this Report are *eagerly* sought

Please send them to:

Jewish Education Committee
Syracuse Jewish Federation
PO Box 510
DeWitt, New York 13214-0510

Jewish Education Forum: Goals and Outcomes

The goals set for the Jewish Education Forum included:

1. Heightening the Jewish educational consciousness of the community
2. Fostering excitement and involvement about Jewish learning throughout the lifespan
3. Identifying the range and scope of the current education scene
4. Specifying and prioritizing education issues
5. Designing and recommending strategies for implementation of a program in Jewish education to meet the considerable challenges facing the Central New York Jewish community both in the present and the future

Some Outcomes of the Jewish Education Forum included:

1. Education synagogue community working together
2. Learned about how "to community"
3. A renewed sense of community
4. New faces, new talents within Jewish community identified and utilized
5. Opening up of new channels of communication
6. Heightened consciousness within community about Jewish education
7. Increase in communication across synagogue lines
8. Increased national networking capabilities
9. Increased sensitivity to the Jewish education crises nationally and locally

Jewish Education Committee

While many of the goals adopted by the Syracuse Jewish Federation have already been achieved, others are still being achieved. Federation has, accordingly, created a standing Jewish Education Committee to continue the educational planning initiative it began by establishing the Jewish Education Forum nearly three years ago.

This Committee will coordinate Federation efforts in Jewish education in order to insure the continued implementation and evaluation of the projects of the Forum, coordinate and implement future activities and avoid duplication of efforts. It will be responsible for continued long-range planning for Jewish education in the community.

Per the formal charge given it by the Federation's Board of Directors, "The Jewish Education Committee shall be responsible for studying issues that relate to Jewish education in our community, developing recommendations for action on issues of Jewish education by the Board of Directors and coordinating action rec-

ommendations which are approved by the Board.

As such it is responsible for:

1. coordinating the committees charged with responsibility for specific activities (such as the Think Tank, Task Force on Professionalizing the Profession, "The Signpost" *Jewish Observer* column, Rabbi Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund, etc.);
2. assessing needs on an ongoing basis;
3. evaluating existing projects of the JEF;
4. evaluating new projects as they develop;
5. continuing the Jewish Education Forum's role as advocate for Jewish education in our community;
6. engaging in long-range planning of Jewish education efforts;
7. ensuring the continued viability of any long term projects that are established;
8. working cooperatively with other community entities;

9. avoiding duplication of efforts;
10. maintaining ongoing efforts to create a climate in which Jewish education in our community can be enhanced and can flourish.

Projected is a new Jewish Education Forum, with a reformulated mission, which would continue broad community dialogue on Jewish education issues.

Jewish Education Committee (JEC) of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. Major Goals and Priorities

Goals:

1. To identify resources to support continuing Jewish education
2. To continue linking organizations and resources
3. To facilitate communication about Jewish education
4. To coordinate the activities of the JEC committees
5. To continue to examine educational issues
6. To work out a dissemination plan
7. To identify and prepare volunteer, community-minded, Jewish educational leadership for the '90s

Priority Areas:

1. Communication with educational community
 - regular newsletter updates
 - face-to-face
 - outreach to synagogues
2. Communication with wider Jewish community
 - opportunities for Jewish educational experiences
 - information about Jewish education
 - information about Jewish education as a profession

Next Steps in Continuing Jewish Educational Initiatives

1. Working together as a total community
2. Continuing to improve communications
3. Continuing to link resources
4. Building on Foundations of last three years
5. Implementing recommendations of Jewish Education Forum
6. Continuing to identify and involve new volunteers and educators
7. Developing professional Jewish educational leadership for the '90s
8. Developing volunteer, community-minded Jewish educational leadership for the '90s
9. Continuing the collaborative planning process

Who Is Sponsoring Jewish Education in Central New York?

An analysis of Central New York expenditures on Jewish education, prepared for the Major Issues in Jewish Education Conference showed **total expenditures exceeding \$1,560,000** of which it was estimated that about \$300,000 — 19.23% — was spent by synagogues and about \$1,260,000 — 80.77% — was spent by Federation and its beneficiary agencies (for the programs outlined on the *Working Document: Central New York Jewish Education Categorized By Provider and Type* — see next page).

The *Working Document of Central New York Jewish Education Categorized by Provider and Type* was developed to illustrate the scope of Jewish education in Central New York and to facilitate discussion for the Major Issues in Jewish Education Conference (held to culminate the third year's work of the Forum).

Organizations, agencies and institutions whose objective is to provide Jewish education in formal and informal settings — as one of their primary organizational objectives — are included. Not included are all of the entities for whom Jewish education is an important by-product. These need to be inventoried and charted in the future as we continue our comprehensive study of Jewish educational resources and opportunity within our community.

In preparing this *Working Document*, we learned that it raised more questions than it answered. We realized that we need to rethink our categories and paradigms; that there is no central source for gathering such information; and that we need to carefully analyze the significant gaps which exist. We need to focus more on the areas of service provided.

Most importantly, we realized that the organizing of, and coordinating of, Jewish education is an issue of defining relationships and then consciously and planfully going about improving and making more effective, those relationships.

In studying who is doing Jewish education, we found that it has become more of a collaborative effort over the past three years.

As for who is providing Jewish education, we discovered that currently **there are 80 distinct teaching positions in our community** which are filled by 74 people. In addition, there are 7 School Principals, 5 rabbis and 3 cantors involved in the Jewish educational process.

We found that the very existence of the Jewish Education Forum, and the limelight it placed on Jewish education and Jewish educational issues, helped change the climate for Jewish education in Central New York.

We attribute this success to a number of factors:

1. Commitment of the Federation professional staff;
2. Commitment of the Federation's Board of Directors to the process;
3. Institutional Change;
4. Communal Change;
5. The climate for educational change; the readiness and desire for action, fostered by the existence of the Forum process;
6. New volunteers;
7. New educators;
8. More cooperation among educational providers as evidenced through the Syracuse Hebrew Principals Association, creation of Jewish Education Week, etc.

As a result of the Forum's efforts, we take pride that Jewish education has become more of a collaborative effort. Jewish educational leadership which formerly consisted solely of rabbis, educators and agency professionals has given way to an expanding and growing critical role for volunteer leadership.

The critical role of the Syracuse Jewish Federation in Jewish education has also been highlighted as a result of our serving as a catalyst in promoting study of and changes within the Central New York Jewish community's Jewish educational service delivery system. *How Syracuse Jewish Federation Interfaces With Jewish Education*" was prepared for the Major Issues in Jewish Education Conference.

Vision for the Future

The following Committee objectives are recommended for the coming year, under the auspices of the Jewish Education Committee:

A. Think Tank

Joan Burstyn, Chair

The focus of current discussion within the Forum's Think Tank centers around the following questions: What is it that functionally literate Jews should know at different points along the lifespan? What does it mean to be functionally literate? What are the key basics which ought to be possessed by adult Jews today?

Accordingly, the Think Tank's goals for the coming year:

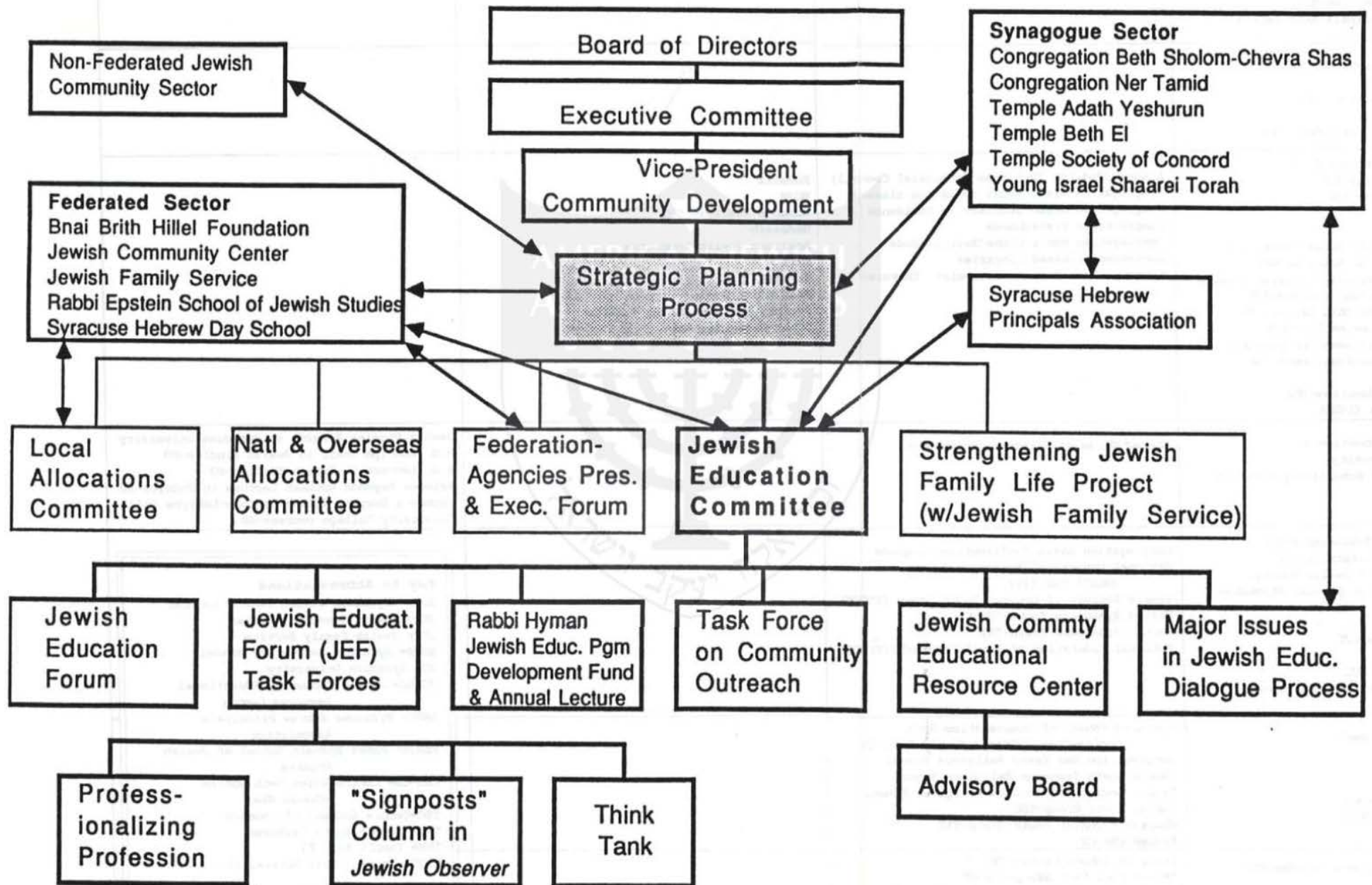
1. To continue its process until it reaches closure;
2. To prepare a report or series of reports which can be disseminated;
3. To make a formal report to the Jewish Education Committee and a presentation to the reconstituted JEF;

B. Task Force on Professionalizing the Profession

Andrea Weiler, Chair

Teacher survey data is being collected and analyzed. Accordingly, the Task Force's goals for the coming year:

How Syracuse Jewish Federation Interfaces With Jewish Education



a Working Document:

Central New York Jewish Education Categorized By Provider and Type

any.jed.doc: 5/4/89

Community Planning	Jewish Education Forum & projects-SJF Jewish Education Week-SJF, JCERC, SHPA Jewish Education Committee-SJF Syracuse Hebrew Principals Association	Congregational Board/Committees of Jewish Education		
Teacher Training	Jewish Community Educational Resource Center (JCERC) Jewish Educators Training (JET) Program-RESJS Teacher In-Service Program-SJF, SHPA			
Adult	Jewish Community Relations Council & its activities-SJF Career Women's Network-SJF Jewish Observer-SJF Jewish Journal-SJF Saul Schneier Community Media Center-SJF Sidney Block CNY Jewish Archives-SJF Rabbi Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund & Annual Lecture-SJF Jewish Community Leadership Caucus-SJF Annual Campaign for Jewish Life-SJF Young Leadership Development Program-SJF Jewish Community Educational Resource Center (JCERC) Jewish Family Life Education-JFS Hebrew Literacy Class (SHDS)	Academy Judaica (Syracuse Rabbinical Council) Congregation-based adult education classes Congregation-based Scholars In Residence Congregation Sisterhoods Congregation Men's Clubs/Brotherhoods Congregation-based libraries Syracuse Area Reconstructionist Chavurah	Kumsitz NCJW Women's American ORT Hadassah American Jewish Committee AMIT Na'amat Bnai Brith Women Society for Humanistic Judaism Other Organizations	
College	Bnai Brith Hillel Foundation at Syracuse University Saul Schneier College Scholarship Fund-JFS	Chabad House at Syracuse University		Jewish Studies Program at Syracuse University B.G. Rudolph Chair in Jewish Studies-SU B.G. Lecture in Jewish Studies-SU Arlene & Raymond Rothman Lecture in Judaica-SU Jerome & Dorothy Wilson Lecture-LeMoyné Coll. University College courses-SU
Secondary	Isaiah Wolfson Youth Scholarship-SJF Golden Girls Youth Scholarship-SJF Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies Religious School for Exceptional Students-NCJW, SJF Youth Activities-JCC Youth Tzedekah Program-SJF Day Camp-JCC After School Programs-JCC Jewish Community Educational Resource Center (JCERC)	Congregation Based Confirmation Programs National Council of Synagogue Youth (NCSY)-TBE, YIST Temple Society of Concord Youth Group (TYCON) United Synagogue Youth-CBS-CS United Synagogue Youth-TAY National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY)-TSC		Key to Abbreviations SJF = Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. JCC = Jewish Community Center JFS = Jewish Family Service SHDS = Syracuse Hebrew Day School SU = Syracuse University JCERC = Jewish Community Educational Resource Center SHPA = Syracuse Hebrew Principals Association RESJS = Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies CBS-CS = Congregation Beth Sholom - Chevra Shas TSC = Temple Society of Concord TAY = Temple Adath Yeshurun TBE = Temple Beth El YIST = Young Israel Shaarei Torah
Elementary	Syracuse Hebrew Day School Youth Activities-JCC Day Camp-JCC Holiday Camps-JCC Youth Tzedekah Program-SJF After School Programs-JCC	Combined School of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas & Temple Beth El Congregation Ner Tamid Religious School Temple Adath Yeshurun Religious School Temple Society of Concord Religious School Junior Youth Group-TSC Shores - Junior Youth Group-TAY Kadima-CBS-CS		
Pre-School	Early Childhood Development Program-JCC	Early Childhood Center-TAY "Pre-School Fun" Group-CBS-CS "Chavurette" (Chavurah children's classes)		
Federated Jewish Sector		Synagogue Sector	Non-Federated Sector	General Community

1. To disseminate the results of the teacher survey;
2. To increase collaboration and communication among teachers by developing and establishing a Hebrew Teachers Association;
3. To look at issues of funding, considering endowments that support Jewish education, grants and benefit programs;
4. To work on ongoing professional development of teachers;
5. To continue to focus on public relations;
6. To create an annual stage to recognize teachers collectively and individually

**C. Rabbi Irwin I. Hymn
Jewish Education Program
Development Fund**

Lois Zachary, Chair

To continue raising funds until the \$25,000 goal is reached

D. Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Lecture

The goal for the coming year is to insure a continuous chain of leadership for planning, implementing and evaluating the annual lecture.

E. Task Force on Community Outreach

The goal for the coming year is to establish ongoing dialogues with the synagogue Boards, presidents and rabbis

**F. Major Issues in Jewish Education
Conference Follow-Up**

The goal for the coming year is to plan and implement continued communication and follow-up with the Conference participants and to disseminate the outcomes of the Conference

G. Jewish Education Forum

The goals for the coming year are:

1. To continue to foster dialogue and interaction among the individuals in this community with a vested interest and concern for Jewish education;
2. To expand participation in the group to include parents, teachers, volunteer leaders;

3. To hold three or four dialogues during the period from September, 1989 to June, 1990;

H. Signposts Column in the *Jewish Observer*

Ruth Federman, Chair

The column's goals for the coming year are:

1. To continue moving toward production of copy for a monthly Jewish education page in the *Jewish Observer*;
2. To coordinate the columns for the coming year;
3. To identify and train a coordinator for the next year

**I. Jewish Community Educational
Resource Center**

The Center's goals for coming year are:

1. To continue to develop and expand the JCERC program;
2. To expand programs and solidify JCERC within the community;
3. To conduct a formal evaluation of the JCERC: its growth, programs, impact on the community and its future
4. To build support and understanding to demonstrate how the JCERC can become an integral part of the community, marketing the JCERC to a broader constituency;
5. To build support and understanding among constituents;
6. To expand services in adult learning;
7. To reappoint, orient and develop the Advisory oversight board;
8. To develop a long range financial and operational plan by December, 1989;
9. To evaluate services provided by JCERC;
10. To develop additional funding sources.

☆ Continuity ☆

☆ Persistence ☆

☆ Momentum ☆

Closing

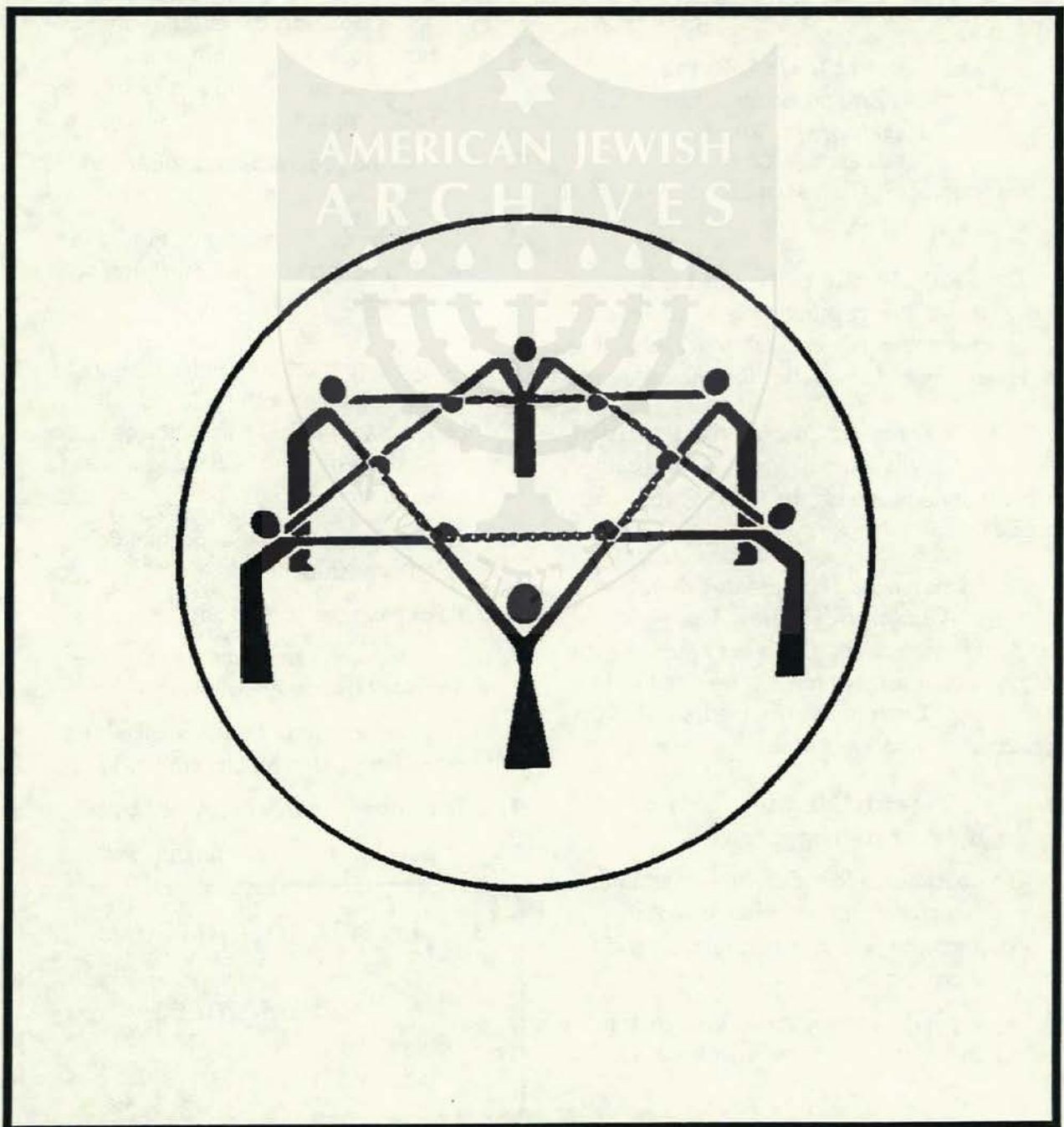
As the Signposts (Chazan, 1988) indicate, American Jewish education is at a major crossroads. It has been said before, but bears repeating, that if you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there.

In Central New York, we have begun to chart a new course for the future. With the work of the Jewish Education Forum having been successfully completed, we've made a very strong start.

We know the road is long and that we have only just begun. We need to negotiate the traffic carefully and deliberately, pausing at intersections along the way, and continuing our journey

TOGETHER

AS A COMMUNITY!



Appendix A: Jewish Community Educational Resource Center

Jewish Observer, March 3, 1988:

Forum sees resource center for education as 'top priority'

An educational resource center for the entire Jewish community has emerged as the top priority on the planning agenda of the Syracuse Jewish Federation's Jewish Education Forum.

According to Dr. Lois Zachary, JEF chairperson, such a facility will provide a much-needed educational service presently lacking in Central New York. By fostering a more informed Jewish community, it can significantly affect the quality of Jewish life.

"What emerged from all four Forum work groups earlier this year is that the teacher is the central force in Jewish education, and needs all the support and assistance the community can provide," Dr. Zachary said.

"What we hope to create in an educational resource center is a tremendously exciting place where teachers, parents and organizations can come together to learn and to experience the very best in educational techniques, content, and materials. The person who staffs it will have to be very creative, and at the cutting edge of what's new and best in pedagogic technique.

"The center will provide a networking service where teachers can share ideas and experiences," Dr. Zachary continued. "Eventually it will be a place where parents and other interested adults can come for resources on family life education or other Jewish pursuits."

A task force is currently developing a proposal for funding an educational resource center.

Miriam Davidow, who heads a center in Richmond, VA similar to the one proposed for Syracuse, will share her experiences with the Forum on March 3. As in Syracuse, the Richmond center

resulted from a community-wide planning process. At that meeting, members of the Forum will have a chance to respond to the proposal developed by the task force.

"Community efforts such as an education resource center will succeed only if they have the support of the whole community," said Dr. Neal Bellos, Syracuse Jewish Federation vice president for Community Development. "We are encouraged by the enthusiastic participation of a wide cross-section of the people who matter most in Jewish education, including rabbis, school principals, teachers and parents."

Dr. Bellos is organizing an effort to discuss all of the priorities which emerged from the work groups and subsequent Forum meetings with other members of the Jewish community, so that the proposals can be enriched by their input as well.

Two other task forces have been formed as a result of the recommendations of the JEF work groups. One task force, chaired by Joan Poltensen, is looking at ways of "Professionalizing the Jewish Professional." Among the issues her task force will address are ways to provide full-time positions, to improve salaries and benefits, to enable professionals to attend conferences, to provide incentive grants for continuing education, and to develop a city-wide staff development program. The task force will explore new sources of funding inside and outside the community which have the potential to make these projects into realities.

Another task force, chaired by Ruth Federman, is investigating improved ways to communicate what's going on in Jewish education to the community. □

Education forum establishes Jewish resource center

Lois Zachary, chairperson of the Jewish Education Forum, has announced the establishment of the Jewish Community Educational Resource Center which will provide educational resource services for the Syracuse Jewish community. To implement the program, the Syracuse Jewish Federation board of directors has allocated \$28,000 for fiscal year 1989 for hiring a part-time director to oversee setting up the project.

The establishment of JCERC is the result of a two-year collaborative effort of the federation's Jewish Education Forum, involving Central New York Jewish

educators, volunteers and congregational, organizational and agency leadership.

Focus of the group in setting up JCERC was to identify the community's critical educational needs and to design plans for implementing resources to meet these needs.

According to Zachary, the design of the program initially is to enhance the curriculum of existing schools by offering professional support to these institutions, particularly the Jewish Community Center's Early Childhood Development Program, the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, synagogue afternoon programs and the Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies.

In meeting the needs of these groups, leadership of the Forum noted that the JCERC will not infringe upon the institutional autonomy of schools, institutions or synagogues, will seek to meet needs regardless of ideological persuasion and will address the needs throughout the lifespan of the program's population.

Although JCERC will be housed for the first year at the federation, it will be housed elsewhere after the start-up period, operating as a separate agency. □

**Applications for the position
of Director of the Jewish
Community Education Re-
source Center may be sent
to:**

Barry Silverberg
Executive Vice President
Syracuse Jewish Federation
P.O. Box 510
De Witt, NY 13214
(315) 445-0161

Goldstein to direct JCERC

Deborah Goldstein has been appointed director of the Jewish Community Education Resource Center for 1988-89.

The Center has been established in the offices of the Syracuse Jewish Federation to coordinate and facilitate the work of members of the community involved in Jewish education.

According to Goldstein, it is her goal "to offer teachers the professional support and the curricular materials necessary to assist them in providing the best Jewish education possible for local children."

A summa cum laude graduate of Barnard College/Columbia University and member of Phi Beta Kappa, Goldstein received her master of arts degree from Syracuse University.



Deborah Goldstein

A graduate of Hebrew elementary and high schools, Goldstein also attended the Jewish Theological Seminary's Teachers' Institute while at Barnard. She is fluent in Hebrew and has spent 11 summers living in Israel.

Goldstein has been active in Jewish education for most of the 13 years she has lived in Syracuse. She has privately tutored students in Hebrew for the past seven years and frequently has been a substitute teacher at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School.

As a teacher at the Temple Adath Yeshurun Hebrew School program she has taught Hebrew, Jewish history and culture, prayer, music and synagogue skills. At Temple Adath, she was a pilot teacher, working with the same class from fifth through seventh grades, as part of a nationwide group of 13 schools involved in developing United Synagogue's experimental curriculum for afternoon schools.

From 1980 to 1982 she taught the Hebrew language Regents class at the Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies.

She has served on the board of the Day School's education committee.

Lois Zachary, chairperson of the Jewish Education Forum, notes that the establishment of the JCERC and the appointment of Goldstein are important additions to Jewish education which reflect a continuing commitment to quality education by members of the community. □

Teachers thank federation for services of JCERC

To the Editor:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Syracuse Jewish Federation for the services of the Jewish Community Education Resource Center, which has been a great help to us during this school year.

We are professional, experienced Hebrew teachers at the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, who in the past could rely only on ourselves and each other. How wonderful it has been to know that there is someone "out there" who can make things a little easier.

This year, whenever we needed a resource, a tape, a book or information about a holiday, a subject

or new materials, we knew that the JCERC would supply it for us, or would help us locate it.

Debbie Goldstein, the director of the JCERC, has been very helpful, very professional and eager to assist us in any way she could. Whenever we inquired about something, her reply was, "If it's out there, I will find it." And she did. This saved us time that we have so little of, and made teaching so much better.

--Simona Szafran
Jessie Kerr-Whitt
Judy Habib
Tamara David

Appendix B: Signposts Column in *Jewish Observer*

Jewish Observer, September 15, 1988, Editorial:

'Signposts' column

In this issue of the *Jewish Observer*, there's a new column that will appear monthly. It is called "Signposts," so named because it will provide information to the community as to some of the avenues emerging or already existing for Jewish education in Syracuse.

Contributing to the column will be educators, rabbis, students and community leaders who all have a stake in the educational process, who have ideas to share with the community for expanding the possibilities of a broader, better education for local Jews.

Coordinated by Lois Zachary, chairperson of the Jewish Education Forum, the column will provide information on a variety of topics.

It will not be just about educating our children. It will develop ideas and possibilities for the enrichment of adult Jewish life through education also.

The development of JEF with the outgrowth of education task forces and the Jewish Community Education Resource Center leads us to believe that the Syracuse Jewish community wants more teachers, curriculum development, better equipped schools.

"Signposts" will be one means to show us the way.

- "Jewish Education 'Facing Critical Choices and Options' by Lois Zachary (September 15, 1988)
- "A Positive Learning Experience" by Mooshi R. Namordi (October 13, 1988)
- "Making Connections Through CAJE" by Michael Fixler (November 10, 1988)
- "Jewish Education for Jewish Life" by Marsha Roth (December 8, 1988)
- "A Gradual Career Choice" by Simona Szafran (January 5, 1989)
- "Memorable Experiences in Adult Education" by Alice and Gus Pearlman (March 2, 1989)
- "Educational Resources: Profiling the JCERC" by Deborah Goldstein (April 28, 1989)
- "Jewish Education Forum" Learning About Learning" by Lois Zachary (May 25, 1989)

Appendix C: Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund and Inaugural Lecture

Jewish Observer, March 16, 1989:

JEWISH OBSERVER

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Helen Marcum, left, Syracuse Jewish Federation president, presents an award to Lois Zachary for her contribution to Jewish education.

Educator addresses challenge facing Jewish education in U.S.

"Jewish education in the United States is an unqualified success," said educator Mervin Verbit at the inaugural lecture of the Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Educational Program Development Fund of the Syracuse Jewish Federation.

"We must assume it's a success," he continued, "because, in our free society with no constraints we can direct Jewish education in any direction we wish."

He noted that if Jews demand no more of Jewish education than a well-presented Haftarah for a child's bar or bat mitzvah as the criterion for education—and we now have a "100 percent" on this—then we must say Jewish education is a "success." We therefore would have to assume that we are getting all we want educationally, he said.

He added however, that most Jews today want a different kind of "success" in Jewish education.

Verbit, a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College, believes that in the past, Jews have failed to seek a better Jewish education because of the fear of seeming "different" from their neighbors.

Newly arrived from the shetls of Europe, Jews had less interest in keeping Jewish tradition alive and more interest in appearing "like everyone else."

Halloween he said, with its tradition of "give me a treat or I'll do something bad to you," became more of a custom for Jewish children than Purim and the tradition of "I've baked something for you." Jews did not want to feel different than their neighbors.

The secularism of Judaism during the past 200 years, he feels, is being questioned now. With no

(Continued on Page 17)



Mervin Verbit

Inaugural lecture for Rabbi Hyman Fund celebrates Jewish education in Syracuse

The inaugural lecture of the Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. was held Mar. 8 at Temple Adath Yeshurun.

The fund was established to honor the late Rabbi Hyman's memory and to support an annual federation program to stimulate interest in and provide information about Jewish educational opportunities.

Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman

The fund was named in honor of the late Rabbi Hyman because of his devotion to learning and his contribution to the community.

Rabbi Hyman assumed the pulpit of Temple Adath Yeshurun in 1935 and remained the chief rabbi until his retirement in the mid-1970s at which time he was named rabbi emeritus.

A lecturer and writer, he supported human rights and services. He was active in the civil rights movement and served as chairperson of the Civil Rights Commission of Syracuse and Onondaga County. He also served as chairperson of the Onondaga Health Association.

In 1947, he was general campaign chairman of the Jewish Welfare Fund drive. In 1986, he received the federation's highest award, the Esther and Joseph Roth Award for Outstanding Jewish Community Leadership. He was also the recipient of Temple Adath Yeshurun's Citizen of the Year award.

Zachary honored

Lois M. Zachary, who has chaired the Jewish Education Forum since its inception three years

ago, was recognized for her work on behalf of Jewish education in Syracuse. She was instrumental in establishing the forum, bringing community focus to the need for expanded Jewish education. She developed the "Signposts" column, which appears monthly in the *Jewish Observer*, as a means of keeping the community and educators aware of what is happening in Jewish education in Syracuse.

She played a key role in the establishment of the Jewish Community Educational Resource Center which acts as a clearing-house for materials and resource development.

Zachary has been active in the Syracuse community for more than 20 years. She was the first woman president of Temple Adath Yeshurun and worked on behalf of numerous local organizations including the Syracuse Hebrew Day School, the Syracuse Jewish Federation and the Syracuse Area Interreligious Council.

She received her doctorate in education from Columbia University.

Lecture program

Guest speaker for the evening was Mervin Verbit who addressed the issues of "Dor L'Dor: Build-

ing Continuity and Involvement through Jewish Knowledge, Commitment and Values."

Verbit is a professor at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, a national chair of the American Professors for Peace in the Middle East and fellow of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

Co-hosting the evening were Frann Albert and Margery Burstein.

Co-chairing the fund raising effort for the Hyman fund are Dr. David Poushter and Gerald Meyer.

Expressions of appreciation for the work done locally on behalf of Jewish education were presented by Lois Zachary, chairperson of the Jewish Education Forum; Andrea Weiler, chairperson of the Task Force on Professionalizing the Profession; and Helen Marcum, president of the Syracuse Jewish Federation.

The invocation was led by Rabbi Charles Sherman. Introduction of the keynote speaker was by Rena Hyman Taubes, daughter of Rabbi Hyman.

A champagne reception in honor of Jewish educators of Central New York and volunteer participants in the Jewish Education Forum was held prior to the evening's program. □

Educator

Continued from Page 1

fear for survival, Jews are again believing that there "is something valuable to transmit, that the Jewish way of living has promise."

Verbit thinks that Jews are on the threshold of a new era. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was a key to the renewed feeling of "Jewishness." This feeling is reinforced in Jewish communities throughout the country which are able to mobilize on behalf of other Jews in a short time.

For Jews of the Diaspora, however, he feels that it is imperative to know Hebrew, to study religion, to share in Jewish holidays and traditions. Jewish education is instrumental in sustaining Jewish life. Verbit sees that, although American Jews are culturally different from Jews in Israel, there is a renewed commitment to rekindling Jewish values.

The challenge on behalf of future generations, Verbit believes, is to develop a sense of what it is to be Jewish and to meet the challenges this involves.

The work being done in communities, such as the work of the Jewish Education Forum, Jewish educators and religious leaders in Syracuse, are evidence, he feels, of a new commitment to better Jewish education. □

Hyman fund established

The past three years have been a time of a renewed interest and dedication to Jewish education in Syracuse. Central to the effort is the Syracuse Jewish Federation's Jewish Education Forum which, along with community educators and religious leadership, spearheaded a number of innovative programs including the Jewish Community Educational Resource Center.

A recent addition to this effort is the Rabbi Irwin Hyman Jewish Education Program Development Fund. Established to support federation programming and services in the area of Jewish education, the fund's goals include stimulating interest in Jewish educational opportunities and providing information about Jewish education both as a career and as a life-long learning experience.

The fund has been named for the late Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman, who led Temple Adath Yeshurun from 1935 until his retirement in the mid-1970s, when he was named Rabbi Emeritus there.

"This tribute to Rabbi Hyman's memory is particularly fitting," said Lois Zachary, Jewish Education Forum chairperson, "since Rabbi Hyman truly epitomized a life of Jewish learning. We see this fund as enabling our community to come together as a community to celebrate Jewish learning."

This goal will be met by an annual lecture sponsored by the fund, bringing to the community a nationally-known speaker whose work reflects the aims of the fund.

The inaugural fund lecture will take place this year on Mar. 8. Featured speaker will be Mervin Verbit of Brooklyn College who will speak on "Dor L'Dor: Building Continuity and Involvement through Jewish Knowledge, Commitment and Values."

Co-chairpersons for the program are Frann Albert and Margery Burstein. A champagne reception in honor of area Jewish educa-



Rabbi Irwin Hyman

tors and Jewish Education Forum participants is planned.

Albert stressed the importance of taking this opportunity to recognize those who strive to further the community's Jewish education enterprise. "A strong Jewish education," she said, "is what will preserve our heritage and, we hope, keep our children involved in the Jewish community." Zachary added, "It's often very hard to thank people like our educators and people who have volunteered their time to strengthen these efforts. We are trying to express our appreciation through this additional vehicle for community education, to which they are so dedicated." □

Appendix D: Major Issues on Jewish Education Dialogue

Jewish Observer, March 30, 1989:

JESNA conference planned for May

On May 7 and 8, the Syracuse Jewish Federation, in cooperation with the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), will sponsor "Major Issues in Jewish Education," an invitational conference for key leadership in the Central New York Jewish community.

Co-chairpersons for the event are Libby Rubenstein and Michael Cynamon.

The Major Issues program, the result of a collaborative effort by JESNA and the Council of Jewish Federations, is designed to bring together community leaders who determine policies for Jewish education and provide intensive

training and simulation activities to sensitize these leaders to Jewish educational issues in their community.

The program has a ten-year record of success across the country. Each community which has undertaken the project has made significant advances and improvements in Jewish education.

The Syracuse seminar will focus on a strong working partnership between all synagogues, agencies and the federation, so as to facilitate a climate in which Jewish education will continue to be strengthened.

Participants will study the na-

tional and the local Jewish educational structures, problems and potentials. Small-group activities will enable participants to confront educational issues from a communal perspective, to examine local needs and resources and to develop priorities and solutions.

Materials and arrangements for the Major Issues seminar are being prepared by co-chairs Rubenstein and Cynamon, and by their steering committee: Linda Alexander, Neal Bellos, Alan Goldberg, Priscilla Leslie, Deborah Rosenbaum, Carl Rosenzweig, Rabbi Neal Turk and Lois Zachary.

SJF sponsors education program

The Syracuse Jewish Federation sponsored a community leadership program, "Major Issues in Jewish Education," May 7 and 8.

The goals of the program, an invitational seminar developed by JESNA, the Jewish Education Service of North America, were:

To increase sensitivity to and understanding of community leadership, particularly lay leaders, around issues of Jewish education;

To create a forum for dialogue among synagogue, agency and federation leadership on educational issues of importance to all sectors, including community needs and resources in Jewish education;

To create an opportunity for participants to experience, through simulations and guided exercises, the decision-making process that community leaders must undertake when making choices that affect Jewish education.

The program was led by two facilitators from JESNA—Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president, and Paul Flexner, director of JESNA's department of human resources development.

Thirty-six people, lay leaders and professionals, representing all congregations as well as the federation and its beneficiary agencies took part.

The program began with an exercise to establish goals of the group for Jewish education for the participants themselves, for their children and their vision of the

community.

Later in the weekend, participants grappled with issues raised by a case study examining the state of Jewish education in a hypothetical sunbelt community, issues that reflected many local concerns.

Proposals for new and innovative programs in Jewish education for this community were drawn up. Some of the areas covered included perceived needs in adult education, training for local education professionals and "marketing" Jewish education to the community.

Participants demonstrated an increased interest in and enthusiasm toward Jewish education, and a greater appreciation for the processes by which communal and organizational priorities are set, according to Paula Schlusberg, federation staff associate.

The goal, said Woocher, was "not to solve the problems of Jewish education in Syracuse, but to whet people's appetite for attacking the issues with vigor and effectiveness."

"This goal," said Schlusberg, "was certainly achieved."

The co-chairpersons for the Major Issues program were Michael Cynamon and Libby Rubenstein.

The planning committee consisted of Linda Alexander, Carl Rosenzweig, Priscilla Leslie, Alan Goldberg, Deborah Rosenbaum, Rabbi Neal Turk and Lois Zachary. □

Appendix E: Jewish Education Forum

Jewish Observer, April 24, 1987:

Panel to Study Local Jewish Education Opportunities

By Lois J. Zachary

"Syracuse, by joining the ranks of a group of select communities that have begun community planning efforts of Jewish education, is moving to the forefront of new planning initiatives that will result in the upgrading of Jewish education nationwide," said Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president of Jewish Education Service of North America. This effort involves bringing together all the forces in the Jewish community that care about Jewish education to collaborate on strengthening Jewish education here.

According to Pollack and Lang (1983), "Jewish education has always been a major concern of the Jewish community. It is now an accepted axiom." In fact, they report that federations and synagogues throughout the country "have reaffirmed that Jewish education is or must become the highest priority item of the agenda of the Jewish community."

In December, the Syracuse Jewish Federation adopted a mandate to put Jewish education on the forefront of its agenda by establishing the Jewish Education Forum to study and recommend ways to enhance Jewish education in Central New York for the present and the future. The Jewish Education Forum seeks to foster a spirit of communal collaboration by developing a participatory structure of involvement. Its goals are to: heighten the Jewish educational consciousness of the community; foster excitement and involvement about Jewish learning throughout the lifespan; identify the range and scope of the current education scene; specify and rank educational issues; design a program of Jewish education to meet the considerable challenges facing the Central New York Jewish community both in the present and in the future; maximize the potential of the presently existing range of Jewish services, and establish feasibility of implementing study recommendations regarding the promotion of Jewish education and learning in Central New York.

Before the issues of Jewish education can be addressed locally, we need to identify what Jewish education now exists in the community. We are looking at any and all programs for children and adults, in any form. We want

to identify specifics: where, when, how, what and to whom Jewish education is being provided. We are interested in formal and informal learning, early childhood programs, denominational and communal programs, congregational programs, camps, youth groups, study groups whatever.

We need the cooperation and assistance of the entire community to accomplish this objective. While it is relatively easy to identify institutional providers such as agencies, schools and synagogues, it is very difficult to identify informal study groups.

It is important to us to be able to identify collaborative and informal Jewish education. We know that a tremendous amount of adult Jewish learning occurs outside traditional institutional classrooms, but we don't know

very much about it. As we seek to identify, describe and establish the scope of Jewish education in Central New York, this information will be vital.

Very often people do not know what is available in their own community and, therefore, don't avail themselves of the opportunity to use those existing resources. We cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that education is a means by which we, as individuals, can help ensure Jewish survival.

We've thought of schools as communities for so long that we've neglected to turn the tables and look at our own Jewish community as a school for survival. Let's not wait any longer.

Ms. Zachary is the chairwoman of Jewish Education Forum. □

Jewish education.

Like motherhood and apple pie, we take it for granted. It has an assumed life of its own. It is also an assumed "good" of its own. Everybody assumes that somebody will take care of it.

We have been lulled into complacency, a complacency which is unwarranted. Given a recent court decision, even assumptions about motherhood have been called into question. Apple pie, once seen as the symbol of Americana, is up for grabs. Even linking Mom with apple pie has become unrealistic.

Our very assumptions are being called into question as we continue to deliver Jewish education based on old assumptions. The "life of its own" has been affected by dwindling numbers of students and by erosion of numbers of qualified teachers. Jewish education has become more than the responsibility of the school. The home and the community are an integral part of the Jewish education scene today.

Because Jewish education is a priority for survival, we anticipate change. We are preparing for action. As a community we have taken the first important step. We recognize that we need to take a look at who we are, what is happening in society around us, and decide how we will respond. We can't just let change happen and wait until it's over to address it. By then it will be too late.

Action is needed now. We need to make our assumptions about Jewish education explicit. Examine them. Ask hard questions, and, in the process, discover together who we are as a caring and responsible Jewish education community.

We are counting on your help.

Forum Members Speak at Conference

By Barbara Haas

The Syracuse Jewish Federation's Jewish Education Forum ended its first half year in operation with a late-August presentation at the Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education at West Georgia College in Atlanta.

Representing the Syracuse group was Lois Zachary, chairperson of the forum and consultant in adult education; Chaya Fried-

mann, director of the Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies and principal of the Combined School of Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas and Temple Beth El; and Michael Fixler, a teacher at Temple Society of Concord.

"We were invited to take part in the conference because Syracuse is one of six cities in the country currently engaged in a community-wide effort to foster Jewish

education of the highest possible standard," said Zachary. "People are watching to see if we can accomplish what we set out to do. This conference came just as we're about to enter the second phase of the Jewish Education Forum," she said. "It's a perfect time to take a critical look at what we've accomplished so far, and at what lies ahead."

"As a professional educator I've attended many conferences, but CAJE is about the best," Friedmann said of the annual conference. "The enthusiasm is infectious, and there are always wonderful opportunities to find out what is at the cutting edge of Jewish education."

The Syracuse Jewish Education Forum was created, in the words of the mission statement adopted by the federation board of directors last December, to "study and recommend ways to enhance the quality of Jewish education opportunity in Central New York for the present and the future."

"The federation is not the provider of education," said president Helen Marcum, who presided over the creation of the forum as vice president of community development last year. "But we have

been able to lend our planning skills. We have built a coalition of teachers, principals, lay leaders and volunteers with a vested interest in Jewish education, and professionals in the field of education. Together we have been asking the hard questions and seeking solutions."

After the forum's first meeting in February, the federation invited nationally recognized experts in Jewish education to put the local situation into perspective. These included Dr. Jonathan Woocher, executive director of the Jewish Education Service of North America, Dr. Saul Wachs, professor of Jewish education at Gratz College; Dr. Joan Burstyn, dean of Syracuse University's School of Education; and Dr. Sherry Israel of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston. Written summaries and audiocassettes of the talks are available from the federation office.

This spring JEF committees gathered information about the current state of Jewish education in Central New York, and compared their data to national statistics. Different sectors of the community—educators, leaders of Jewish community agencies, congregations, boards of Jewish education, Jewish school principals, and others—were queried about their perception of critical issues confronting Jewish education.

"Our major accomplishment so far has been to raise the consciousness of the community," said Zachary. "People are talking about Jewish education."

For Dr. Neal Bellos, who took over in June as federation vice president of community development, the process of communal decision-making developed by the forum is in itself an achievement. "The success of the forum to date is the fact that people are

(Continued on Page 24)



Working on future plans for the Jewish Education Forum are (standing) Lois Zachary, chairperson; Michael Fixler, and Chaya Friedmann (seated).

Education Forum Continued from Page 1

more concerned about the quality of Jewish education than they were a year ago. Dozens of community leaders have been asked thought-provoking questions and participated in dialogue. All the major stakeholders in Jewish education have been involved. The process we've evolved will serve as a model for mobilizing community support on other issues."

Many of the problems JEF has so far identified, such as scarcity of qualified teachers, low pay, and lack of full-time teaching opportunities, are not news to Friedmann. "People involved in Jewish education have lived with these problems for a long time," she said. "It's gratifying to me that because of the forum, the community is beginning to share our concern. My hope is that some concrete achievements come out of it."

This spring the federation co-sponsored the Judaica Faculty Conference and held a city-wide conference and teacher-recognition luncheon honoring outstanding educators. The federation also made available a grant which, along with funds provided by Temple Society of Concord, enabled Michael Fixler to attend CAJE. In addition, the federation is helping to support the Jewish Educator's Training program (JET) which was designed by Friedmann and Syracuse educator Anita Weinberger. That program will get under way at the Epstein School this year.

On Sept. 8, the forum will begin the next stage by dividing into work groups charged with investigating particular areas and coming up with recommendations for action. "We've done the necessary preparation," Zachary said. "Now it's time to get to work!" □

Syracuse Jewish Education Forum Completes Work for Position Papers

Can a community collectively decide on a plan of action and get something accomplished?

That's the challenge that faces the Jewish Education Forum as it completes the second phase of a community planning effort to strive for the highest quality of Jewish educational services in Central New York.

As one of the few groups involved in such an effort, the Syracuse Jewish Education Forum was invited to report last month in Miami at the Council of Jewish Federations' general assembly, which was attended by more than 3,000 Jewish leaders from across the country. The only other city so honored was Philadelphia.

Out of the first year of interviews and investigations, members of the forum, chaired by Lois Zachary, identified four areas of concern. These became the subject of work groups which have now completed their investigations and issued position papers.

On Dec. 21, Dr. Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president of the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), met with the full forum to help set priorities for action. JESNA is the nationwide planning, coordinating, and service agency for the field of Jewish education. An authority on Jewish communal affairs, Dr. Woocher is the author of *Sacred Survival: the Civil Religion of American Jews*. He also served as a catalyst for communal action in Syracuse last February when he helped launch JEF.

Getting the community to care about the quality of Jewish education, building pride, putting good plans into action—these were some of the questions assigned to Work Group I, "Building Community, Now and in the Future," co-chaired by Kermit Schooler and Joan Poltensen.

One of the issues that emerged strong and clear from the first year's discussions was the need for professional teacher training, with the necessary incentives to recruit and retain teaching personnel. Work Group II, chaired by Lillian Feldman, was charged

with the task of suggesting ways to develop a program to strengthen teaching in Jewish education.

Work Group III, chaired by Ruth Federman, concentrated on ways that Jewish education from pre-school through college can strengthen young people's identity as Jews.

But since Jewish education is a life-long process, Work Group IV, chaired by Rhea Jezer, focused on adult learning.

To ensure that the work groups represented those with an interest in and knowledge about Jewish education, organizers included rabbis and members of congregations, parents, teachers, and community professionals who contributed their expertise and information.

The position paper of the work group on educating the educators was written by Ruth Curtis. The other three position papers were written by Barbara Holstein.

The reports are available to anyone in the community who would like to receive a copy. Call the federation at 422-4104. □

JEF work groups propose plans to implement education goals

Conducting a Jewish census as a basis for planning and the establishment of a standing committee on Jewish education were two of the proposals for action by the four work groups of the Jewish Education Forum at the meeting of the full forum on Dec. 21.

The *Executive Summary* of the work group also noted ways of implementing the forum's mission to study and make recommendations for enhancing Jewish education locally:

- To establish an innovative project for the education and training of community leaders;
- To obtain cooperation of Jewish media in an effort to promote awareness of Jewish education;
- To establish a Jewish education and training resource center to provide materials and services;
- To promote coordination and collaboration of agencies, organizations and synagogues offering educational programs;
- To develop a cooperatively managed system for recruitment and training of educators; and
- To develop creative efforts to find innovative funding sources.

Facilitating the discussion of possible plans of implementation along with Lois Zachary, chairperson of the forum, was Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president of the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), the organization which aims to achieve on a national scale what the Jewish Education Forum seeks to accomplish for Central New York.

"The local programs are where the changes will occur," Woocher said in an interview earlier in the day. He noted that one of the functions of JESNA is to disseminate information about innovative programs in Jewish education from one community to another, and that JESNA is watching developments in Syracuse with interest.

During the day Woocher also met with area rabbis, principals of Jewish schools, and congregational presidents.

At the Jan. 27 meeting, members of the forum will decide which recommendations to investigate for implementation. □

Educator calls Syracuse forum 'unique'

Calling the work of the Jewish Education Forum in the Syracuse Jewish community unique in the United States, Fradle Freidenreich, associate director of the Jewish Education Service of North America, noted that the kind of process undertaken locally to develop a comprehensive program of Jewish education was not widespread. Freidenreich spoke to the group at its final meeting for the year June 13.

"There is not another community in North America who has undertaken as ambitious a process as Syracuse," she said. "Others have undertaken a review of parts: adult or teenage, parenting, etc. No one else has undertaken as comprehensive a program." She also noted that the work begun by the forum was "self done" by the community itself. "It wasn't a study but rather a process without foregone conclusions" that the group would have to support with their work.

Freidenreich added, however, that "to stop now would be a travesty" since as a process the work of the forum is only partly done.

"It's seminal," she said. "Now we need to continue with fertile furrows for planting seeds to grow in the community."

She noted that Jewish education demands examination in terms of context—continentally, nationally and locally. Impact on Jewish education is felt in three areas, she said.

National and worldwide issue affecting Jewish education include social upheaval, the aftermath of Vietnam, the drug culture, ecumenicism, the breakdown of family, acceptance of violence in our culture and the attenuation of religion.

Jewish issues affecting Jewish education include demographic and identity trends, the crisis in Israel, the problems of oppressed Jews, assimilation, missionary movements and birthrate decline.

Educational trends not necessarily Jewish but having an impact on Jewish education include networking, the rise of centers such as resource centers, back to basics, special needs, school culture and empowerment of teachers.

Freidenreich noted that unless

educators remain cognizant of and taken these areas into consideration, then they ignore "the forest for the trees." She added that those planning for the needs of their community often are so overwhelmed with immediate needs that they cannot stop to think about long-range planning.

"Jewish education is a complex communal system." There exists no set curriculum even in the same branch of Judaism. Highly decentralized, there is almost always a lack of goal confluence among Jewish educators, she said. Developing a solution to problems is very complex, she noted, citing the need to keep several facts in mind:

- Both formal and informal Jewish education must be integrated to transmit a culture and identity, not just religion. This is not indigenous to most groups.

- Education is a lifelong learning process, not just attending school. Jewish education is a continuum that begins with preschool and is a part of Jewish life through senior activities.

- The role of family in transmitting identity is crucial.

- Community support is vital in providing good Jewish education.

- Good personnel, building profession and lay leadership for Jewish education is the "key to creative survival."

The Jewish Educators Training program, established by the Jewish Education Forum, provides in Syracuse the kind of support for educators that Freidenreich noted as crucial to quality Jewish education.

Presenting a report on JET, Chaya Friedmann, principal of the Rabbi Epstein School, noted the positive response to the program this year. Both Friedmann, who directed the program, and Anita Weinberger, who developed pedagogical techniques of the program, agreed that the program had far reaching successes for

those enrolled.

The program was divided into two 15-week semesters. The first semester, taught by Rabbi Daniel Jezer and Rabbi Neal Turk, dealt with Judaica topics typical of Hebrew School curricula. The second semester, taught by Weinberger, dealt with pedagogy and educational theory. Ten students completed the program and fulfilled course requirements for a Certificate of Completion at the Rabbi Epstein School.

Inasmuch as Friedman will be leaving Syracuse next year, Weinberger noted the need to find a replacement for her in the JET program in order to continue in the fall. □

Congratulations are in order for local Jewish educators

If Mervin Verbit was correct when he spoke at the inaugural lecture of the Rabbi Irwin I. Hyman Jewish Educational Program Development Fund of the Syracuse Jewish Federation—that we get what we are willing to support and ask for in Jewish education—then Syracuse Jewish educators are to be congratulated.

In the past two years, local religious leaders, educators and parents have recognized the needs of their children, the needs for continuing education in Syracuse, and have aggressively sought to improve and reorganize to make sure the educational programs offered are the best possible.

Not content to have a few pilot studies or task forces to make recommendations and then cease to function, which is often what happens when a group addresses a concern, the Syracuse Jewish community took action. Under the able leadership of Lois Zachary the Syracuse Jewish Federation's Jewish Education Forum acted as a hub to initiate a number of programs. The Syracuse Hebrew Day School, the Rabbi Epstein School and the religious schools of the synagogues shared in the responsibility of developing better curriculum, expanding teacher training and exploring new avenues of sharing facilities and materials for the good of the whole educational system.

One end result was the Jewish Community Educational Resource Center which opened this year for the entire community to share. Eventually it is hoped that this facility will act as a resource hub for all Syracuse educators. In its first season, the center has proven how valuable a community "clearinghouse" is for materials and ideas when funds are limited. Each smaller school can enjoy drawing from books, videos, speakers that could never be possible financially for one school.

Historically, with any group of religious schools there are philosophical, pedagogical and financial differences that can make cooperation among them difficult. It is to the credit of every individual involved in Jewish education in Syracuse that they have overcome these traditional barriers and are addressing the larger of agenda of better educating our community.

Nationally, Jewish educators are talking about what is being accomplished in Syracuse. Already teachers from other communities are taking a look at what is going on here.

Locally, the offices of the mayor and the county executive declared March 5 through 12 as Jewish Education Week in Syracuse—another tribute to the efforts of our educators.

We know that part of our future is in our children's education. We know Jewish life depends on how we support this. It is to the credit of everyone involved that in Syracuse, we aren't just talking about better education—we've taken action to make sure we get it.

Jewish Education Forum: learning about learning

By LOIS J. ZACHARY

It has been three years since the Syracuse Jewish Federation began its educational planning initiative—the Jewish Education Forum. There is much to show for our effort. As a community, we can be justifiably proud of what it is we have accomplished together and even prouder of the fact that as a community, we continue to learn from our efforts.

We usually think about lifelong learning as a personal experience. However, the Jewish Education Forum, provides a good example of lifelong learning as a communal experience. We have learned together in our efforts to create the climate for educational change. Most importantly, we have learned that we are continually learning as a community and that we have much yet to learn.

The process of learning itself has been evolutionary. We have been building a history, a continuity and an identity. It has evolved into a truly participatory, action-oriented process.

It also has been a discovery process for us as individuals, as educational institutions, agencies and synagogues in learning how to

Lois J. Zachary is the chairperson of the Jewish Education Forum.

better work together.

It is appropriate as we close this first three-year phase of educational planning to review what just what it is that we have learned.

We've learned that learning is connected with patience. It may be slow, but maintaining momentum is essential. We've also learned that knowing *how* doesn't do any good, unless we know *when* to use our knowledge.

We've learned that participation takes preparation. We are learning how and when to use our human resources effectively. We've learned to make room for varying levels of participation, different areas of expertise and involvement in the Jewish educational scene.

We've learned the importance of mutual support. This means support for dreaming, support behind the scenes, support for creativity, and support in which judgment is suspended.

We've learned that for Jewish education to be taken seriously, Jewish education has got to be perceived as a community issue.

We've learned to look to others outside the local Jewish community for enrichment and renewal. Talking to other community leaders in different parts of the country has enriched us and at the same time taught us to appreciate the richness of our own local re-

sources. Learning from other communities has resulted in innovation, saving energy and being able to remain focused and on task.

We've raised many issues and even more questions.

We've learned to ask the hard questions and as we have, we've discovered other issues that need to be addressed. The lesson from this has been in knowing when to move on these and when to stand still; when to regroup so we can move forward.

The lessons are many. We must continue to learn as individual effort and as a community. While we've learned about substantive issues and the community process, we cannot assume we've learned it all. We've got to continue learning if we are truly going to effect change.

We need to nurture the learning process through individual effort and involvement. The responsibility to create the climate for Jewish education does not rest solely on a communal level.

The question we need to ask ourselves on a personal level is "how can we as individuals help support Jewish education in this community?"

Here are three specific ways.

First, we can take advantage of what presently exists by *participating in Jewish educational programs*, such as Academy Judaica,

the Hyman lectureseries, scholar-in-residence programs at synagogues and community-wide educational programs.

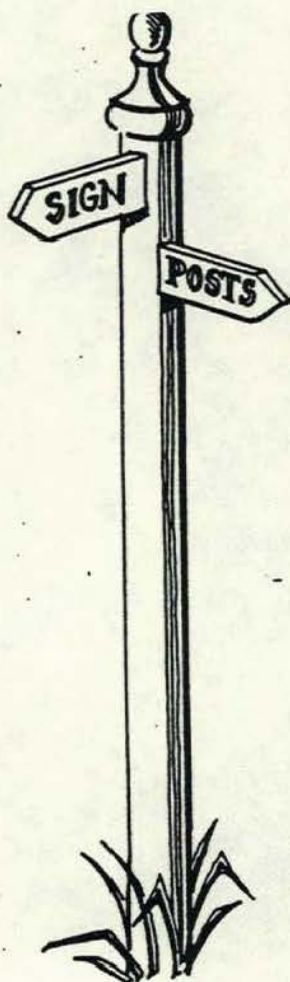
Second, we can *lend financial support* to educational programs. The Hyman Program Development Fund is such a fund. It was established in memory of Rabbi Irwin Hyman to support Jewish educational programming which stimulates interest in and provides information about Jewish educational opportunities, both as a career and as a lifelong learning experience.

If you or your family are interested in becoming a *founder*, please contact Dr David Poushter or Barry Silverberg (445-0161).

By calling the federation offices and requesting a Hyman Fund card to be sent for a special occasion, you can become a *contributor* to this fund and support in the process support lifelong Jewish learning.

Third, we can continue to be *informed about Jewish educational issues*. One way to do this is to regularly read the Signposts column in the *Jewish Observer*. Let us know what you think about what you read, what it is you'd like to read, or if you would like to write a column. (Leave a message for Ruth Federman at the federation office, 445-0161.)

We are optimistic and upbeat as we close year three. Things are not perfect in Camelot by any means. To continue to create the climate will require a continuing commitment which CANNOT AND MUST NOT be taken for granted. The road is long. It has some signposts, but we can find our way. We will make a difference if we keep moving! □



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Betsy Yurdin
James Yurdin
Lois Zachary
Robert Zucker

תלמוד תורה
כנגד כולם
"Jewish education
is the equal of
everything else"
Talmud: Shabbat 127a

Jewish Educators of Central New York

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Notes



Jewish Education Forum of the Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.
"Creating the Climate for Educational Change": A Final Report
(June 1989)

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Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.

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November 3, 1989

Mr. Arthur J. Naparstek
Commission Director
Mandel Commission on Jewish Education
Mandel Associated Foundations
1750 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115

Dear Mr. Naparstek:

As you may recall, through its Jewish Education Forum, the Syracuse Jewish Federation set up a Think Tank in 1988 to examine the purpose and structure of Jewish education. I am writing now to give you a synopsis of our discussions.

In developing a model of Jewish education throughout the life span for the Syracuse Jewish community, we decided to take into account for each age category the following items: the processes through which we might develop an independent learner; the settings in which teaching and learning would take place; the forms of delivery that would be most desirable; and the content that would be most appropriate. Currently we are shaping our model after spending several months discussing the topics below. We expect to have a final document ready by Spring 1990.

All but two members of the Think Tank are lay members of the Jewish community. One of the two rabbis is currently working as a college professor not with a congregation. Several different occupations and discipline approaches are represented in the group.

We began our exploration by identifying what we believe it means to be a Jew in today's American society. We discussed in some detail the nature of our Jewish heritage and how it has been passed from one generation to another. We moved on to a discussion of the way that the individual and the community are expressed in Jewish spirituality. We then discussed how Jewish education might address issues of Jewish community. The next issue we discussed was the context of Jewish education within the Jewish community. Lastly, we had an extensive discussion of the process and content of an ideal Jewish education.

We concluded that:

- Jews have to interact with contemporary society whether they accept or reject aspects of it.

Helen Marcum
President

Barry Silverberg
Executive Vice-President/
Secretary

Neal Bellos
Victor Hershdorfer
Philip Pinsky
Malcolm Smith
Howard Weinberger
Vice-Presidents

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Departments and Services
Campaign for Jewish Life
Annual Fundraising
Overseas Study Missions
Endowment Fund
Community Development
Community Planning
Allocations
Jewish Education Forum
Information and Referral
Communications
Jewish Observer
Jewish Journal
Community Calendar
Coordinating Activities
Schneier Community
Media Center
Block Historical Archives
Community Relations
Jewish Community
Relations Council
Jewish Community
Celebrations
Fighting Prejudice
and Discrimination
Intergroup Activities
Assisting Soviet Jewry
Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Twinning
Pro-Israel Activities
Israeli Independence
Day Celebration
Festival of Nations
Israel Exhibit
Israeli Teen Mission
Holocaust Remembrance
and Commemoration
Speakers Bureau
Leadership Development
Young Leadership Program
Jewish Community
Leadership Caucus
Youth Tzedekah Program
Career Women's Network
Welcoming Newcomers
Volunteer Recruitment,
Training, Placement

The Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc. is the primary agency for fund raising, community relations, planning and leadership development for the Central New York Jewish community. In addition to Federation program services, Federation funds and supports: Locally — Bnai Brith Hillel Foundation at Syracuse University • Jewish Community Center • Jewish Community Educational Resource Center • Jewish Educators Training (JET) Project • Jewish Family Service • Project Chaver • Rabbi Epstein School of Jewish Studies • Religious School for Exceptional Students • Syracuse Hebrew Day School • Syracuse Area Interreligious Council • Va'ad Ha'Tr • Nationally and Overseas — American Jewish Committee • American Jewish Congress • American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) • Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith (ADL) • Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies • Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) • Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) • Jewish Agency for Israel • Jewish Educational Service of North America • Jewish War Veterans • Joint Cultural Appeal (American Academy for Jewish Research • American Jewish Historical Society • Conference on Jewish Social Studies • Congress for Jewish Culture • Histadrut Ivrit • Jewish Publication Society of America • Leo Baeck Institute • National Foundation for Jewish Culture • YIVO Institute for Jewish Research) • National Conference on Soviet Jewry • National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) • New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) • Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT) • United Israel Appeal • United Jewish Appeal (UJA) • Zionist Organization of America

- Their heritage often leads Jews to a life of service and to a psychic bond with other Jews around the world.
- Jews pass on from one generation to another a culture code that provides each person with a sense of his or her identity as a Jew.
- A sense of incompleteness helps to build community because people then feel needed. Although this is not considered necessarily as desirable by the wider American society, we suggested that incompleteness is considered, among Jews, as a desirable individual attribute as well as a desirable community attribute.
- Many Jews in the United States seem to have lost the sense of spirituality. We explored ways that we might recapture it.
- Jewish experiences are often intensely personal, while schools emphasize learning that is impersonal; that boundaries for learning about Judaism are fluid, while schools contain learning within the classroom.
- Synagogue is not where most Jews are at today, and that to create an excitement about Jewish learning we would have to create new forms and new locales for it. We talked about the "Lehrhaus" in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, and about today's Kallel, the Learning Annex, and distance education.
- People need guidance on how to study, where to find Jewish literature on topics of current concern to society. Adults need to be empowered to make their own interpretations using Jewish and non-Jewish sources.
- Jewish children and adults should be encouraged to apply the techniques of moral learning beyond Judaism to issues of world-wide concern.
- Jewish children are more often brought up to feel good about being smart than about believing the correct thing. At least in the past, Jews have been permitted to doubt even the existence of God. Jewish experience provides a strong sense of identity, of being loved and of belonging, and the freedom to explore dissonance.

In our extended discussion on Jewish education:

- We identified the need for Jewish education to address both affective and cognitive issues, community and individual issues, and for it to address issues in-depth rather than seeking to provide all students with an overview of Jewish culture.
- We examined the role of Jewish ritual and tradition in providing opportunity for transformational learning, whereby individuals put themselves in the shoes of others of another time and place. We felt that this style of learning should be emphasized in Jewish education.
- We spoke of three principles of learning - the background one brings to it; the motivation one has to learn; and the strategies and tools needed to learn. We commented that sometimes tools are mistaken for goals, so that learning Hebrew, for instance, sometimes becomes a goal instead of a tool for communicating with people in Israel, reading and discussing the old and new narratives of our cultural heritage, and participating in services.
- We thought that it would be useful to develop a curriculum that looked at Judaism as though from the outside. That would take away the expectation that you know certain things if you are Jewish - that you learn them, as it were, by osmosis, and that if you don't know those things your family is in some way deficient.
- We explored the implications of the finding that as parents become involved with Jewish education for themselves their children become more involved with their own Jewish learning. We discussed ways that parents might be brought into the development of curriculum changes in their children's schooling.
- We acknowledged that the first years and the last years of life are times when the most differences seem to exist among individual capacities for learning. In those age groups, particularly, teachers and facilitators need to consider individualizing educational programs.

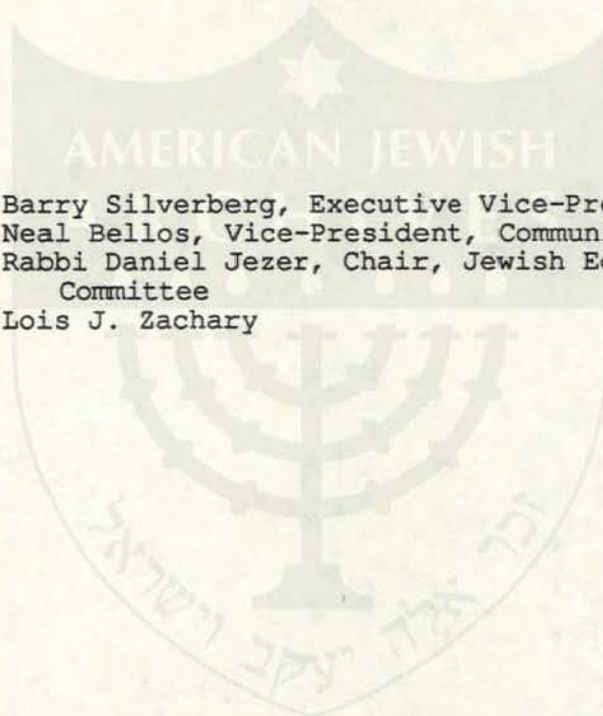
We hope that our deliberations may be useful to you and other members of the Mandel Commission. If you have addressed issues similar to the topics outlined above, we would be delighted to learn of your conclusions. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached most easily at 315-445-0620.

Yours sincerely,

Joan N. Burstyn

Joan N. Burstyn
Chair, Think Tank on Jewish Education,
Syracuse Jewish Federation, Inc.

cc: Barry Silverberg, Executive Vice-President
Neal Bellos, Vice-President, Community Development
Rabbi Daniel Jezer, Chair, Jewish Education
Committee
Lois J. Zachary



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December 21, 1989

Ms. Joan Burstyn
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Dear Ms. Burstyn:

Thank you for your correspondence outlining the discussions your Think Tank on Jewish Education has held. It is clear that the Syracuse community is approaching its planning in Jewish education in a very serious and thoughtful manner. I have shared your letter with the staff and leadership of the Commission.

As you may know, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America is primarily focusing its effort on two priority areas of personnel and community support and financing. Since the Commission was not created with a think tank type of format, the nature of our deliberations are very different. There are, of course, overlapping concerns and issues. What is most intriguing about your approach is that your model for lifelong learning may well prove to be a very important demonstration of how a community builds a supportive environment for Jewish education.

I am enclosing background materials on the Commission that you may find helpful. I hope that you will keep us posted on your developments in the coming months.

Sincerely,



Mark Gurvis
Commission Staff

cc: Barry Silverberg