



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MS-831: Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980–2008.
Series B: Commission on Jewish Education in North America (CJENA). 1980–1993.
Subseries 3: General Files, 1980–1993.

Box
14

Folder
9

Senior Policy Advisors meeting. 14 December 1988.
Correspondence and minutes, 1988.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Arthur J. Naparstek
NAME
DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

FROM: Henry L. Zucker
NAME
DEPARTMENT/PLANT LOCATION

DATE: 5/9/88
REPLYING TO
YOUR MEMO OF: _____

SUBJECT:

HRZ

MLM requests that you and I invite the senior policy advisors to serve in connection with the Commission.

I suggest that we divide up the names between us and invite them to serve, namely, David Ariel, Seymour Fox, Stephen Hoffman, Arthur Naparstek, Arthur Rotman, Carmi Schwartz, Herman Stein, Jonathan Woocher, Henry Zucker.

The personal approach should probably then be followed up by a letter from MLM.



*Yes, I'll do it
let's do a
letter*

MEMO TO: Senior Policy Advisors
FROM: Arthur J. Naparstek
DATE: November 22, 1988
SUBJECT: Post-Commission Meeting

This will confirm plans to hold a meeting of the senior policy advisors in New York on Wednesday, December 14, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The meeting will be held at the offices of JWB, 15 East 26th Street.

Please call Joan Wade at my office (216-391-8300) to confirm your plans to attend.

This memo was sent to: David Ariel
Seymour Fox
Annette Hochstein
Stephen Hoffman
Arthur Rotman
Carmi Schwartz
Herman Stein
Jonathan Woocher
Henry L. Zucker
Virginia Levi
Rachel Gubitz

cc: Morton Mandel
Joseph Reimer

MINUTES: Senior Policy Advisors
Commission on Jewish Education in North America

DATE OF MEETING: December 14, 1988

DATE MINUTES ISSUED: January 10, 1989

PRESENT: David Ariel, Seymour Fox, Rachel Gubitz, Annette Hochstein, Stephen Hoffman, Virginia Levi (Sec'y), Morton L. Mandel, Arthur Naparstek, Joseph Reimer, Arthur Rotman, Carmi Schwartz, Herman Stein, Jonathan Woocher, Henry L. Zucker

I. Introduction

At an earlier meeting, Senior Policy Advisors set three goals for the Commission meeting of December 13:

- A. To develop a clearer focus for a Commission agenda.
- B. To develop a sense of how to organize in order to accomplish that agenda.
- C. For participants to continue to feel good about the work of the Commission.

In the discussion which took place on December 14, there was agreement that goals A and C above were accomplished at the December 13 Commission meeting. The focus of this meeting was to move toward a plan for organizing to accomplish the Commission's agenda. The pages which follow summarize the points made by Senior Policy Advisors at this follow-up meeting.

II. Format

The morning session of the Commission meeting was excellent. It was felt that more time might have been given to lunch, where constructive conversations were taking place and Commissioners were beginning to network. In the future we should consider varying the format for the afternoon.

III. Enabling Options

There was a mandate to pursue personnel and community, accompanied by a concern for finding ways to integrate programmatic options. It was suggested that we might look at each programmatic option as it relates to personnel and community. It was also suggested that a study of the two primary options should include a research component.

It was felt that the community option requires further clarification and definition. It may be that any lack of enthusiasm for the concept of community reflects an assumption that it is a "given," rather than less support for the option itself. A look at community should include input from the Bureau system and Federation planners. Some smaller communities might become laboratories to experiment with new approaches.

We have two parallel priorities -- one to address individual interests of commissioners and a second to pursue our main thrusts, personnel and community.

IV. Programmatic Options

In addition to developing an approach to dealing with personnel and community, we should work on a plan to examine programmatic options. In looking at programmatic options, we might wish to develop: (1) the road map concept; (2) the matchmaker concept -- finding people to finance initiatives; and (3) a means for evaluation on a continuing basis. Furthermore, we might look at good practices within a programmatic area and identify key factors for success.

V. Involving Commissioners

All commissioners who were present at the December 13 meeting should be contacted for debriefing as soon as possible. Those who were not present should be called and briefed on the outcomes of the meeting.

In light of the Commissioners' confidence in the work of the staff, commissioners might be inclined to rely too heavily on staff and to participate less themselves. We must work to retain the involvement of commissioners. We can accomplish this goal by continuing to listen to them through interviews, focus groups, forums and task forces.

It was noted that personnel and community are interrelated. If we establish task forces to study each area, we should ensure that there is a means of communication between them.

We might hold a series of meetings hosted by commissioners in various parts of the country to get additional input and provide an opportunity to stay involved. Each meeting might be on a different aspect of the Commission's work and each commissioner would be invited to participate in one of the meetings. It is suggested that MLM would chair these meetings.

We know that some commissioners have a specific agenda in mind. We might approach them and ask how the commission process can serve their goals, thus engaging them in the process.

With respect to possible representation of other groups on the Commission, it was felt that our general approach should be to include them in the research and writing process rather than adding more commissioners. Consideration will be given to replacing Rabbi Zeldin, possibly with Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, if Rabbi Zeldin continues to show minimal interest.

VI. Copyright

We will not copyright our working documents. We will either indicate on them that they may be reproduced with appropriate credit, or we will mark them "Draft. Do not reproduce."

The options paper series will be revised and completed. AJN will work on the matter of copyright.

VII. Commission Public Relations Strategies

We need a communications/PR strategy. We should identify publics and inform them about the Commission. A newsletter of highlights which actually quotes commissioners should be considered. All press releases should include a standard paragraph defining the Commission. We can use JWB, JESNA and CJF mailing lists for this. In addition, MLM should plan to meet with the CJF board in January, 1989.

VIII. How to Proceed

There is a need for research as expressed at the Commission meeting. The basic question of proof that there is a link between Jewish education and Jewish continuity should be studied. We might consider commissioning occasional papers on a variety of topics. When a vision paper is written, it should be useful to every denomination.

The Commission's purpose is to engage in producing change. We will need to address the strengths and weaknesses in the array of structures which currently comprise Jewish education. We need a paper on the status of Jewish education in North America, and possibly another which restates our goals as set forth in our design document and shows where we are one year after it was written.

We might take a dual approach to organizing the Commission process as follows: (1) Contingency approach -- temporary groups such as forums and focus groups which provide temporary leadership roles for some commissioners, parallel with (2) Non-contingency groups such as task forces which exist for the life of the Commission and provide more long-term leadership roles for others.

The nine local Federation commissions on Jewish education currently in existence could provide models to help advance Jewish education. Perhaps a position paper can be written which will suggest how to accomplish this. We should develop a plan within the context of JWB, JESNA and CJF that will define the roles of these organizations in our work. If we decide to add staff, we should hold a seminar for them so that everyone takes the same approach and understands the rules.

Life After the Commission:

We are committed to concluding in the spring of 1990. We should consider the possibility of a "successor mechanism" as a way of keeping initiatives going.

IX. Moving Toward a Final Report

It is not too soon to begin to develop an outline for a final Commission report, as a means of focusing the efforts of staff in the interim. The final report should include an assessment of the current state of American Jewish education and visions for the future, as well as a case history study which might be done as an independent document edited by a single individual or committee, but would be written by a number of authors.

X. Next Steps

1. A proposal for life after the Commission -- due by June.
2. A design for setting forth alternative approaches, including a definition of the issues and alternative solutions.
3. A paper stating the outcomes which we seek:
 - a. systemic change
 - b. published papers
 - c. a broker-process to link issues with potential funders
4. A public relations plan to include:
 - a. communications
 - b. a definition of each public and the outcomes we seek with each

5. Case studies -- models within Jewish education that could be adopted by all. This might include looking at individual aspects of programs rather than highlighting an entire program. It might be somewhat less politically sensitive than selecting a small number of projects and identifying them as the successful ones. This project might be done with an editor and multiple authors.
6. A plan to move ahead. In order to determine whether we require more staff, we should write a paper outlining outcomes and how we envision organizing to achieve those outcomes. This should be done by January 13.
7. Research -- this should be added to the list of desired outcomes. We will decide later what can be done.
8. Following the next Commission meeting, staff will meet for approximately one hour that evening to plan an agenda for the next day. Senior policy advisors will be asked to meet the next morning to evaluate and debrief. Staff will meet that afternoon and perhaps the next day to plan for the future.
9. Staff were encouraged to use their own judgment in sharing Commission materials with others.

