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Senior Policy Advisors meeting. 15 February 1990. Minutes,  
February 1990.

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

DATE: February 15, 1990

DATE MINUTES ISSUED: March 2, 1990

PRESENT: Morton L. Mandel, (Chair), David S. Ariel, Seymour Fox,  
Mark Gurvis, Annette Hochstein, Stephen H. Hoffman,  
Joseph Reimer, Arthur Rotman, Herman D. Stein, Jonathan  
Woocher, Henry L. Zucker, Virginia F. Levi (Sec'y)

GUEST: David Finn

COPY TO: Martin S. Kraar

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I. Impressions of the February 14 Commission Meeting

There was general agreement that the meeting went well and that commissioners demonstrated a real investment in the Commission process. There was broad agreement with the elements of the report and a reiteration of support for the focus on enabling options.

It was noted that the following concerns remain:

- A. A sense that the Commission's recommendations remain too vague and general, and a desire for more specific recommendations.
- B. Tension between a desire for the final report to serve as an advocacy document laying out a broad agenda, and a preference for concrete, clearly delineated recommendations and steps for achieving them.
- C. Some concern with timing in light of the current financial focus on the needs of Soviet immigrants.
- D. Lack of clarity in the financial involvement of the facilitating mechanism in local community efforts.
- E. Lack of total agreement about whether the successor mechanism should be independent and over its role as a force for change and a catalyst for implementation. There was a general desire for more details on the mechanism, including the proposed size and scope of the mechanism.
- F. A need to fully define Jewish education--to clarify that we mean to include the informal, as well as the formal.
- G. Uncertainty about how to address the programmatic areas, both in the final report and through the implementation mechanism.

## II. Preparation of Final Report

David Finn spoke of his firm's role of translating what has been written into an important report, put in concrete terms.

It was agreed that it would be unrealistic to expect the final version of the report to be ready for a Commission meeting in June. It was suggested, however, that a draft could be ready to be mailed about June 1 and presented for approval at the June 12 meeting. Ideally, by the June meeting a first draft will have been reviewed and approved by Fox, Hochstein, Hoffman, and Zucker; a second draft will have been reviewed by senior policy advisors, and a third draft will have been sent to commissioners. Mr. Finn suggested that a more realistic time table could be developed toward the end of March.

It was suggested that the June meeting be the final formal meeting, at which the Finn draft will be presented to commissioners for feedback. This might be followed in the fall of 1990 by a press conference and celebration of the printed final report, possibly followed immediately by the first meeting of the board of the implementation mechanism.

In the time between the February and June Commission meetings, we will send to commissioners the research papers which have been produced for the Commission.

## III. General Discussion

The question of whether or not to place the recommendations of the Commission in the context of a ten-year plan was discussed. It was suggested that the recommendations constitute an approach to Jewish education, not a plan, and that a specific time frame may create unrealistic expectations. It was suggested, however, that some milestone dates might be useful. It was concluded that it would be appropriate for Mr. Finn to help us to decide whether to write the final report in terms of a specific time frame.

In discussing the timing of issuance of the report in light of the current situation with Soviet emigration, it was agreed that it would indeed be appropriate to issue our report when it's ready. It will take some time for local communities to be ready to participate, and the sooner we begin to deal with the issues raised by the Commission, the sooner Jewish education can begin to benefit from the process.

We were reminded that the implementation mechanism will have access to funds which will have been set aside by individual funders for specific purposes. In addition, it will have a pool of discretionary funds and a core budget. One role of the mechanism will be to match ideas generated by local communities and national organizations with prospective donors.



#### IV. Research

The following approach will be taken to the review of research papers:

- A. Fox and Hochstein will review each paper and may ask the author to make revisions.
- B. When a paper has been approved by Fox and Hochstein, Gurvis will circulate it to senior policy advisors for their reactions.
  - 1. If all agree with the paper as submitted, it will be distributed to commissioners.
  - 2. Minor disagreements will be discussed among Fox, Hochstein, and Gurvis, who will decide whether to recommend revisions to the author.
  - 3. Any major disagreements by senior policy advisors will be sent by Gurvis or Hochstein back to the author for possible revision of the paper.
- C. Gurvis and Hochstein will decide if people other than senior policy advisors should be asked to review specific papers.
- D. Selected papers will probably be published as a supplement to the Commission's report.

#### V. Outreach and Public Relations

Assignment

It was agreed that no additional groups would be involved in outreach until after the June Commission meeting. We will try to respond to communities which press us for input to their local processes, but will not seek additional meetings with communities. One possible exception: Zucker will consult with John Colman on the desirability of a meeting with Chicago before June.

It was noted that Philadelphia, Boston, Toronto, and Metro West New Jersey are undertaking local efforts to improve Jewish education. These are communities with which the implementation mechanism should be in touch.

#### VI. Introduction of Mandel Institute for the Advancement and Development of Jewish Education

Mr. Mandel reported that the Mandel Associated Foundations have been considering how to impact Jewish education issues worldwide. An organization is being formed, with an international board of directors, to consider this further.

Annette Hochstein explained one idea currently under review to establish a Jewish education computer network for the exchange of ideas worldwide. Jon Woocher volunteered to consult on the project based on his experience and involvement with an already existing system.

VII. Future Meetings

A meeting of the senior policy advisors was set for Sunday, April 22, 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Hopkins Airport, Cleveland.

Senior policy advisors are reminded of the following meetings:

- A. Monday, June 11, 1990--JWB--Planning Meeting--1:30 - 5:00 p.m.
- B. Tuesday, June 12, 1990--American Jewish Committee, New York--Commission Meeting--hours to be determined.
- C. Wednesday, June 13, 1990--JWB--Post-Commission Meeting--8:30 a.m. - 12 noon.

