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21

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3

Board of Directors. 17 October 1996. Minutes, October 1996.

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**BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL FOR INITIATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION
OCTOBER 16-17, 1996
UJA/FEDERATION OF JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES OF NEW YORK**

Attendance

- Board Members:** Mandell Berman, Charles Bronfman, John Colman, Maurice Corson, Alfred Gottschalk, Lee M. Hendler, David Hirschhorn, Morton Mandel (chair), Charles Ratner, Esther Leah Ritz, David Teutsch, Bennet Yanowitz
- Guests:** Saul Andron, Ray Bloom, Aryeh Davidson, Daniel Gordis, Robert Hirt, Stanley Horowitz, Sergio Della Pergola, Louise Stein, Devora Steinmetz
- Consultants and Staff:** Sheila Allenick, Karen Barth, Gail Dorph, Adam Gamoran, Stephen Hoffman, Alan Hoffmann, Barry Holtz, Josie Mowlem, Nessa Rapoport, Richard Shatten, Jonathan Woocher
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I. LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

On Wednesday evening, October 16, board members and guests attended a seminar at the Jewish Museum at which Dr. Larry Hoffman, Professor of Liturgy at Hebrew Union College-JIR in New York, spoke about how the synagogue will be transformed in the coming century as American Jews move beyond ethnicity to spiritual renewal within a caring community. Dr. Hoffman described the three previous generations of American-Jewish life - "the founders," "preserving peoplehood," "suburbs and survival" - and identified today's Jews as "spiritual seekers." This generation's project is to make synagogues into places where the quest for meaning is central.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The chair opened the meeting on October 17 by welcoming all in attendance and introducing the following first time attendees and guests: Stanley Horowitz, Sergio Della Pergola and Saul Andron. He called on Alan Hoffmann to introduce Karen Barth who has joined the staff of CIJE as a Senior Consultant. Ms. Barth was a consultant at McKinsey and Co. specializing in the management of change. At a future meeting, she will address the board on the issue of the management of change.

Mr. Hoffmann gave a brief overview of the day's program. Today's meeting grows out of the Mandel Institute's work on the educated Jew and thus the ideas and content that one needs to know. He indicated the two newly revised Best Practices volumes - Supplementary Schools and Early Childhood were now available, and said that at future Board meetings, we will report on the use and distribution of these volumes.

III. THE POWER OF IDEAS IN JEWISH EDUCATION

Mr. Hoffmann called on Daniel Pekarsky, a CIJE consultant who is working full-time with CIJE this semester. Dr. Pekarsky's opening comments emphasized that the most serious source of inefficiency in Jewish education is not poor organizational arrangements but the failure to be clear about what the enterprise is fundamentally about; the result is that decisions are not driven by any coherent set of purposes, and practice is at best a hodge-podge of activities with no rhyme or reason. He emphasized the need to unearth our unarticulated preconceptions about such matters as what the aims of Jewish education are and what it means to lead and to subject these ideas to searching examination. Such an examination will be deeply enriched through attention to what others have to say about these important matters; especially relevant are Jewish sources which contain a host of powerful ideas that will enrich our deliberations and inform our practices as educators and as communal and other leaders.

Against this background, Dr. Pekarsky invited Dr. Devorah Steinmetz, founder and principal of the Beit Rabban School, to lead us in a text study activity organized around three powerful passages from GENESIS that chart the development in human beings of autonomy, responsibility, and a changing relationship to God and world. Following an exciting period of learning, which included working in *chevruta*, Dr. Pekarsky took note of some of the ways in which, beyond contributing to our own personal growth, engagement in such study can contribute to the work of lay boards and of professional educators: among other things, shared participation in such study changes to better the community of discourse among decision-makers -- it changes who we are as a community; it sends a powerful message to the larger Jewish community about the importance of such study; and it is a source of powerful Jewish ideas that will deepen our approach to our work as educational and lay leaders.

IV. MILWAUKEE LAY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The chair called upon Nessa Rapoport to introduce Louise Stein to describe the Milwaukee Lay Leadership Project to which Nessa Rapoport and Dan Pekarsky are consultants.

Ms. Rapoport identified three questions that this pioneering project in Milwaukee is designed to address: What does a communal leader need to know to be an effective champion of powerful Jewish education? What frameworks does a leader need to have to network with peers within an individual community and continentally? And how does a leader transmit his or her acquired knowledge base to a succeeding generation of leadership?

She then introduced Louise Stein, co-chair, with Jane Gellman, of the Milwaukee Lead Community Project.

Ms. Stein described the work of Milwaukee's Leadership Development Action Team, which has been meeting since January 1996 with the goal of creating a leadership development program specifically for lay leadership on behalf of Jewish education. The presenting question for the action team was: What will it take to change the leadership climate in Milwaukee? Ms. Stein's presentation addressed plans for recruitment (institutional teams; a work project component; representation from a range of institutions); motivation of potential leaders to join the program (desire to make a difference; opportunity for personal Jewish growth and learning; appreciation for their contribution); the content (powerful Jewish ideas; powerful educational ideas; skills for "usable" leadership knowledge); and the desired outcomes (effective leadership to take Milwaukee's Jewish educational system to a new level; the integration of Jewish ideas, educational ideas, and leadership skills; credible, capable leaders committed to a cause).

The ensuing discussion pointed out such a project is feasible in every community, but it may not necessarily succeed, because it depends on strong leadership. In addition, there is an inherent tension between the exhilaration of big ideas and the "nuts-and-bolts" issues most meetings need to address: transportation, payroll, benefits, etc. The great challenge in leadership development, then, is to link the big ideas to the mundane realities. Another issue is the limited resources of a community like Milwaukee to devote to such a project, although it was also noted that "You don't try an experiment in an ideal situation." The Chair called on Nessa Rapoport to describe the lay leadership program in which she and Dan Pekarsky are involved.

V. MEDICAL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

WHERE AS it has been determined to be in the best interest of CIJE employees to provide health care reimbursement and pre-tax benefit plans. These plans allow employees to pay for certain health care expenses not covered by CIJE's insurance and the cost of insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars as a benefit of employment subject to certain limits.

RESOLVED, that the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education hereby adopts the Health Care Reimbursement Plan and Pre-tax Benefits Plan, effective January 1, 1997 and May 1, 1995, respectively. These plans are available for your review.

VI. DVAR TORAH