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Rethinking Jewish Education in Atlanta

Final Report: Proposal for Atlanta's Jewish Educating System

**Prepared for the Ad Hoc Committee
on the Bureau of Jewish Education**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The organization of Jewish education in Atlanta is being reconfigured to reflect the changing educational needs of the Atlanta Jewish community. New or restructured entities are being proposed to take the place of the Bureau of Jewish Education which has supported Atlanta's Jewish education up to now. Atlanta is developing new 1990's structures to meet new 1990's challenges.

This proposal for rethinking Jewish education in Atlanta is embedded within the the framework presented in the *Atlanta Year 2000* documents and builds upon the community goals outlined there. It also incorporates the distinctions among levels of planning contained in JESNA's 1989 "Jewish Education Report."

Important input into this proposal came from the discussions carried out during the past year by the Ad Hoc Committee, the Educators Group, the Federation Planning and Allocations Education Committee, the Board and staff of the Bureau of Jewish Education, and other groups dealing with specific programs.

This proposal represents a synthesis of perspectives garnered from more than 150 educators, parents, high school and college students, young and older adults, community leaders, academics and others during my three visits to Atlanta in the winter of 1991-2.

This proposal is intended to be the start of Atlanta's bold experiment in creating an inclusive community-wide educating system which, by responding to children's and adults' needs and interests, strengthens personal Jewish identity and sustains the Jewish tradition.

The reconfiguring of Atlanta's Jewish education system is essential because of the times in which we live. We are participating in an age of transition. As a country, we are experiencing rapid changes in our political, social and economic institutions. As American Jews, we are part of this American culture. And, as well, we are part of an organized American Jewish community increasingly aware that our distinctive Jewish identity and the preservation of our Jewish heritage is being challenged by these changes. We believe that this challenge presents us with opportunities.

We must respond to the challenge by inventing replacements for what used to occur naturally. We used to share common neighborhoods and common views of our past, present and future. Continuing our religious and cultural tradition used to come naturally. But now, in Atlanta, and in most other places in the United States, we no longer

live in close proximity to one another or to our Jewish heritage. Therefore, we need to create for ourselves a Jewish "invisible village."

Jewish schooling for the young used to be embedded within an enculturating family and community. As those supports eroded, Jewish schooling was delegated the task of both enculturation and instruction. Today, Jewish schooling, standing by itself, is not able to nurture Jewish identity or sustain Jewish continuity. Without doubt, Jewish schools must be strengthened. But, in addition, educating must become a function of all groups in our "invisible village." Especially is this true for Jewish families who must be helped to become stronger Jewish educating forces. After all, it is within the family that our primary relationships are formed and the place where we get our sense of who we are and who we want to be.

So, Atlanta Jews have framed an urgent and compelling vision for Jewish education: that the Atlanta Jewish community become an educating community for life long learning. The vision is that every Jewish child, adult and family living in Atlanta will find ways to deepen their understanding and connection to their Jewish heritage. Included in the vision is the promise that the Atlanta Jewish community will provide attractive, affordable, accessible learning opportunities to Jews of all ages through an integrated system of Jewish educating institutions.

A Jewish educating system for Atlanta that will transform the vision into reality requires leadership, dedication, common values, hard work and financial support. The mission of such a system is to bring together and promote cohesiveness and cooperative arrangements among all educators and educating institutions; and to reach out and encompass all segments of the Atlanta Jewish community so that their commitment to Judaism, to Jewish continuity and to the Jewish community is strengthened.

Among the goals of this system are: outreach to those not yet participating; strengthening the schools; building a Jewish education profession; providing high quality support to educating professionals; developing family-oriented education; increasing pre-school, teen adult and special needs programming; encouraging experiences in Israel as an essential aspect of Jewish education; enhancing the educating function of all community institutions; creating inter-institutional arrangements, information and referral systems, networks and data collection methods to link and track all parts of the system; and developing new financial resources to support Jewish learners and Jewish learning. As Atlanta moves to achieve these

goals it will act with others so as to become a regional partner and leader.

To maintain such an educating system there are three sets of essential functions to be performed; and structures must exist to carry them out. At the base are community functions which support the education system. Next, at the mid-level there are professional advisement functions which support educators and their institutions. At the top and closest to the learners are the direct educating functions.

To carry out the system support functions of strategic planning, fundraising specifically for Jewish education, and coordination, three new structures are being proposed. The COUNCIL FOR JEWISH CONTINUITY(CJC) represents all segments of the community and provides leadership, direction and strategic planning. The JEWISH EDUCATION FUND (JEF) develops new sources of funding to support new initiatives for educational improvement and growth. The FEDERATION EDUCATION PLANNING DEPARTMENT facilitates planning and infrastructure building. The existing COORDINATING COUNCILS, with expanded number and responsibilities, will bring together individuals and institutions who have common roles or common interests to promotes inter-institutional communication, and be seedbeds for new initiatives.

Three entities will provide the professional assistance and resources needed to support the Jewish educational profession itself. JEWISH EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (JES) is charged with developing the Jewish profession in Atlanta, providing training and consultation services for a variety of subjects and in many formats, and recommending new educational initiatives. The already conceptualized JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER containing resources and exhibits will collect, preserve, display, research and interpret materials related to the Jewish heritage. The ISRAEL PROGRAMS CENTER will encourage experiences in Israel as an important educating element for the entire community.

The schools, synagogues, day schools, youth groups, Jewish Community Centers and other entities will continue to educate learners and strive to improve the quality and impact of their efforts. New arrangements will be made for handling particular programs including the SUPPLEMENTARY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL AND ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS; ADULT EDUCATION; ESL EDUCATION FOR IMMIGRANTS; and SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMS.

INTRODUCTION

The organization of Jewish education in Atlanta is being reconfigured to reflect the changing educational needs of the Atlanta Jewish community. New entities are being proposed to take the place of the Bureau of Jewish Education which has supported Atlanta's Jewish education up to now. Atlanta is developing new 1990's structures to reflect new 1990's challenges.

This proposal for rethinking Jewish education in Atlanta is embedded within the framework presented in the Atlanta *Year 2000* documents and builds upon the community goals outlined there. It also incorporates the distinctions among levels of planning contained in JESNA's 1989 Jewish Education Report." Important input into this document came from the discussions carried out during the past year by the *Ad Hoc* Committee, the Educators Group, the Planning and Allocations Education Committee, the Board and staff of the Bureau of Jewish Education, and other groups dealing with specific programs.

This proposal therefore represents a synthesis of perspectives garnered from the more than 150 educators, parents, high school and college students, young and older adults, community leaders, academics and others who spoke with me during my visits to Atlanta in December, 1991 and in January and February 1992. While some people may be disappointed that their views are not emphasized, others may be surprised to find their own words in the text.

The system suggested here to carry out Atlanta's comprehensive vision of Jewish education may need adjustment and refinement as people begin to work within it. Maintaining open channels of communication will be essential to the transition from the old to the new. This proposal is intended to be the beginning of Atlanta's bold experiment in creating an inclusive high quality community wide educating system which, by responding to children's and adults' needs and interests, strengthens their personal Jewish identity and sustains the Jewish tradition.

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

We live in a time of transition. The historians of the future will likely look back on our lifetimes and see us as part of an age of profound transformation. Along with the rest of the world's population, we as Americans, are experiencing rapid changes in our political, social and economic institutions. We are affected by these changes in our daily life and so are our families, friends and the organizations we belong to.

As American Jews we are part of this American culture. And as well, we are part of an organized Jewish community that is increasingly aware that our distinctive Jewish identity and the preservation of our Jewish heritage is being

challenged by these changes. We believe that this challenge presents us with opportunities.

We must invent replacements for what used to occur naturally. As American Jews, we used to live within family structures which were similar to those we knew from our parents and grandparents. We used to live in geographically bounded communities where people knew each other and shared common views of their past, their present and their future. Jewish schooling for the young used to be embedded within an enculturating family and community. As these supports eroded, Jewish schooling was delegated the task of both enculturation and instruction. Jewish schooling, in contemporary American culture, is not able, by itself, to nurture Jewish identity or sustain Jewish continuity. Without doubt, Jewish schools must be strengthened. But, in addition, Jewish learning must again become a function participated in by Jewish families and by the Jewish community.

We need to create for ourselves a Jewish "invisible village". As American Jews, we are now dispersed and living within the modern American culture. We have fewer and fewer Jewish neighborhoods. We have fewer and fewer extended family groups around us. In order to sustain ourselves as Jews, we need to create for one another an "invisible village" which reflects back to us our Jewish views of our common past, present and future. As Americans, many of us regard ourselves as autonomous individuals. As American Jews, we have available to us an antidote to the isolation of rampant individualism; we can find sustenance and comfort in a community ethos built on our religion, history, traditions, celebrations, customs and shared associations.

We need to think of education as a function of every institution in our "Invisible village." Since we no longer live in a geographically bounded community with an organic culture, we can no longer define Jewish education narrowly as formal instruction only for the young but must reconceptualize it broadly and encourage everyone to pursue Jewish learning of many sorts throughout their lifetime. This means that not only Jewish schools but all Jewish institutions must regard themselves as performing an educating function for the Jews who come together there whatever the reason.

We need to re-emphasize the importance of family and home in Jewish enculturation. The family is the anchor of both the individual and the community. Home is the primary educating setting for the next generation. Our Jewish households may look very different from one another and from those of earlier times but they are still the place where we form primary relationships and within which we get our sense of who we are and who we want to be. Jewish families need to become more Jewishly knowledgeable so that they can live with one another in a more intensely Jewish way.

An emerging paradigm for conceptualizing and organizing Jewish education in America is taking shape. A conception of Jewish study as an essential activity for enriching and nourishing Jewish individuals and the Jewish community has always been part of our tradition. However, contemporary institutional arrangements for providing Jewish education do not always reflect this. Reasserting the personal and communal worth of continuing Jewish education, organizing for it, and carrying it out within a twenty-first century American context requires a paradigm shift – a basic alteration in the way we frame our vision and see our individual and collective responsibilities and commitments. Such a paradigm shift appears to be under way.

This shift in goals is reflected in the quotation by Professor Isador Twersky that introduces *A Time to Act*, the 1990 Report of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America:

"Our goal should be to make it possible for every Jewish person, child or adult, to be exposed to the mystery and romance of Jewish history, to the enthralling insights and special sensitivities of Jewish thought, to the sanctity and symbolism of Jewish existence and the power and profundity of Jewish faith."

An interrelated open educating system must be organized to support the new paradigm. The metaphor of a Jewish community as an educating "invisible village" is a powerful one. Without doubt, it will require understanding and skill to bring about. Existing institutions such as schools must be strengthened and perhaps, with assistance, take on new functions in relation to family education. New structures and relationships will have to be forged. A new educating system will have to be brought into being.

ATLANTA'S VISION FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

A vision-- a view of that which is possible for the future but not yet in existence-- serves to motivate and direct the work that individuals do. An urgent and compelling vision, understood and endorsed by all those involved in an endeavor, energizes and sustains people in achieving a common cause. Asked what they desired in the way of opportunities for learning both for themselves and their children, Jews in Atlanta suggested a multitude of different subjects and a variety of formats. The common threads running through their answers were that they wanted high quality educational options which responded to the needs of learners of all ages and levels; and they wanted to reach out and encourage those who are not yet involved to enrich their lives by such learning.

**Atlanta's Vision for Jewish Education:
To be an educating community for life long learning.**

Our dream is that throughout their lives, every Jewish person and family living in Atlanta will find ways to deepen their understanding and connection to their Jewish heritage. We would like their Judaism to infuse their thoughts and feelings and positively influence their behaviors at home and in the world.

We want the Atlanta Jewish community to provide attractive, affordable, accessible learning opportunities to people of all ages through an integrated system of Jewish educating institutions. We want good schools and programs for children from pre-school through college; and for families and adults.

This vision is not only about Jewish schooling during childhood but about Jewish learning during all the stages of a lifetime. It marks the end of attention only to "pediatric Judaism," and the beginning of attention to life long learning.

The vision is not only about education conducted in day and supplementary elementary and high schools, but about Jewish educating through the home, the synagogue, camps and weekend experiences, social and recreational facilities, and the Israel experience.

And, the vision is not only about the improvement of isolated Jewish educational facilities but about developing a comprehensive, flexible system for teaching all Jews about themselves and their tradition.

A PROPOSAL FOR A JEWISH EDUCATING SYSTEM FOR ATLANTA

A Jewish educating system for Atlanta that will transform the vision into reality requires leadership, dedication, common values, hard work and financial resources. It also requires a long term sustained commitment to the process because change will come with difficulty and progress will be achieved incrementally.

The Atlanta community asserts that Jewish education in Atlanta is a high community priority. The community declares itself prepared to dedicate additional financial and human resources to Jewish education. All those involved in education are eager to improve the status, quality and level of participation of existing educating institutions and provide new educating opportunities. As it develops its own restructured system and successfully meets the challenges of doing so, Atlanta commits itself to providing regional leadership and forming regional partnerships.

Mission of Atlanta's educating system

- * The mission of the Jewish educating system in Atlanta is to bring together and promote cohesiveness and cooperative relationships among all educators and educating institutions; to enhance the profession of Jewish education; to strengthen existing schools and programs and create additional ones to meet emerging needs; and to reach out and encompass all segments of the Atlanta Jewish community so that their commitment to Judaism, to Jewish continuity and to the Jewish community is strengthened.

Principles of Atlanta's educating system

Atlanta's educating system is presently composed of many institutions and groups, each fulfilling their own responsibilities and performing their own tasks. Nonetheless, these entities should not exist in isolation nor should they function without regard to what others are doing. All participants in the educating system should affirm their commitment to ongoing communication and to the creation of a variety of productive and collaborative arrangements. Attention should be paid to building and maintaining trust and feelings of inclusion between and among individuals, groups and institutions. To ensure quality and accountability, all agencies and groups should incorporate into their operations recurring cycles of needs assessment, program development, program evaluation leading to program improvement.

Goals of Atlanta's educating system

The following goals form the basis for the planning needed to actualize Atlanta's vision and carry out the mission of its educating system.

1. Reach out to those not yet participating in Jewish education and find ways to meet their needs and overcome barriers to their involvement.
2. Strengthen Jewish schools.
3. Build a Jewish education profession.
4. Provide high quality professional support and services to educators and educating institutions so that they can deliver high quality instruction and programs.
5. Develop family oriented education for parents, grandparents and the extended families of preschool, elementary and secondary school age

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children, being sensitive to the many variations of family relationships and household settings now existing in the Jewish community.

6. Expand and increase the variety of programs for preschoolers so that very young children can begin their lifelong involvement with Jewish education.

7. Expand and increase the variety of programs for teens so that in the crucial years during which they develop their identities as adults they will have positive and sustaining Jewish educating experiences and strong positive affiliations with other Jews.

8. Encourage serious adult study and learning by offering a range of high quality lectures, classes, courses, seminars, retreats, chavurot, study groups to accommodate the interests of those who are beginning, those in the middle, and those who are advanced in their knowledge and understanding.

9. Expand programming to meet the needs of special populations.

10. Use programs in Israel as important educating experiences for families, for teens, for adults -- for involved Jews, not yet involved Jews, previously involved Jews and perhaps non-Jews.

11. Intensify and raise the visibility of the Jewish educating function in all Jewish institutions.

12. Develop strategies for inter-institutional arrangements that will foster communication, create trust and empower individuals and agencies to generate new ideas and improve on current practice.

13. Create information and referral systems and institutional linkages so that learners become aware of options for deepening their present involvements and choosing future involvements.

14. Bring into Atlanta's educating system people who can provide leadership, financial support, academic expertise and Jewish learning in many areas.

15. Develop methods for providing regional leadership and services to other communities through networks, partnerships and other forms of association.

16. Develop data bases relevant to finding, motivating and retaining Jewish learners.

17. Develop evaluation checkpoints and techniques to assess the functioning of the system itself and the work of the various elements of the educating community.

18. Develop new financial resources to support Jewish learners and Jewish learning.

Functions and Structures

For a complex educating system to operate, many different functions must be carried out. Organizational structures must exist within which dedicated people can work effectively to perform these functions. The combined efforts of talented and skilled individuals, within their own settings and in productive relationships with those in other settings, produce a smoothly operating, successful system which will fulfill its mission and achieve its goals.

There are three sets of functions which Atlanta's new expanded Jewish educating system must perform and structures must be designed to carry out these functions. Having a single organization such as the BJE attempt to carry out multiple functions with a largely part-time staff, no matter how dedicated that staff, is no longer an adequate way to meet Atlanta's vision of quality education for all learners young and old. Some entities to handle the required functions are already in existence and will continue their current work. Others in existence will change the scope of their work or their mode of operation. Some structures will be phased out; others will be newly created.

The necessary structures can be categorized in terms of three levels: at the base are community structures which support the education system; next, at the mid level there are professional advisement functions which support the educators and their institutions; and finally, at the top and closest to the learners, are the direct educating institutions.

To carry out the system-support functions of strategic planning, fundraising specifically for Jewish education, and coordination, three new structures are being proposed: the Council on Jewish Continuity (CJC), the Jewish Education Fund (JEF) and the Federation Education Planning Department. In addition Coordinating Councils, which already exist to bring together people with similar roles or who address a particular population group, will increase in number and responsibility.

To carry out those functions which upgrade the profession and practice of Jewish education and provide assistance to those doing the teaching and educating a new entity is being suggested called the Jewish Educational Services (JES). Inheriting part of what was previously handled by the Bureau of Jewish Education in conjunction with its other responsibilities, the work needed

to develop the Jewish profession in Atlanta will be done by the JES with a clearly defined focus and more staff. The Jewish Heritage Center, already conceptualized although not yet physically in place, will be a central repository to preserve and pass along to future generations written materials and memorabilia. The Israel Programs Center will expand its role in making study in Israel a major educating thrust..

The direct educating function of teaching and arranging opportunities for learning currently handled by the many agencies and institutions who provide a range of high quality Jewish educational opportunities -- in formal, semi-formal and informal formats-- to meet the needs of children, teens, families and adults will continue.

It is suggested here that those direct education functions previously performed by the BJE, such as the ESL program for immigrants and the programs for those with learning or developmental disabilities, be reassigned to one or another of the direct service entities who operate related programs. In addition, new structures for the Community High School/ Activities for Teens and for Adult Education should be developed.

Each structure in the system is described below. In some cases, not all of the operational details have yet been worked out. These will be developed either during the transition period or in the first year of operation by those most immediately involved.

COUNCIL FOR JEWISH CONTINUITY (CJC)

Mission: To provide a supporting base of leadership, direction and strategic planning for Atlanta's Jewish educating system in a forum which fosters information sharing and the frank discussion of important problems and priorities. The CJC sets community priorities, works to achieve system goals and objectives by generating new and creative initiatives, ascertains the achievement of these goals and objectives and works with the Jewish Education Fund (JEF) to channel funds to identified priorities and programs.

(Note: The CJC is not intended to supplant the current Federation planning and allocations structures for funding and reviewing on-going operations but rather to stimulate new efforts. Arrangements for handling "new" initiatives which then become institutionalized must be worked out in practice.)

Composition: 25 - 30 professional and lay people from a broad base of those involved with Jewish education and continuity, including Councils , representatives from the Jewish Education Services, the Jewish Heritage Center, the Israel Programs Center, the Jewish Education Fund, Planning and Allocations, relevant agency, organizational and denominational

representatives, donors, and at-large members to ensure that synagogue, preschool, teen, adult, family education interests are represented.

Meetings: Every four to six weeks as needed

Staffing: Federation Education Planning Department

Governance: Atlanta Jewish Federation

JEWISH EDUCATION FUND (JEF)

Mission: To develop new sources of funding to support and encourage the growth of Atlanta's Jewish education system. The JEF works in cooperation with the Council on Jewish Continuity and the Federation Education Planning Department to achieve system-wide goals and objectives, particularly those related to particular fields of interest, or to scholarship or voucher programs or incentive grants for educational innovation or improvement. The JEF considers how to acquire funds through donor directed giving; endowments, planned giving, grant seeking, business-education partnerships, or other arrangements.

Composition: The members of the Fund are Jewish business, professional and civic leaders in the Atlanta community who have an interest in Jewish education as well as knowledge of and access to sources of funds untapped by the annual community campaign.

Staffing: The Federation Education Planning Department

Governance: Atlanta Jewish Federation

FEDERATION EDUCATION PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Mission: To facilitate strategic and long range planning; to assist with resource development, marketing, public relations, grant writing; to assist with the development of outreach efforts including action research into barriers to participation perceived by the uninvolved; to develop Management Information Systems or other data banks and the reporting arrangements to track demographic trends and emerging needs; to coordinate inter-community regional arrangements.

Staff Qualifications: Experience in planning, familiarity with Jewish educating institutions and Jewish educational issues, good interpersonal and group process skills.

COORDINATING COUNCILS

Mission: Coordinating councils are the mechanism for inter-agency sharing of information, coordination of activities and development of new ideas to propose for consideration by the CJC. The councils may pilot test new programs or modifications of programs in their areas and implement initiatives approved by the CJC.

Tasks: Each Council* will develop its own mission statement in accordance with the characteristics of that Council. The Council will define its own annual objectives and plans for achieving them. The Council will be represented at CJC meetings. Liaisons may be appointed to attend meetings of other Councils when appropriate. Each Council will set up regular meeting times.

Funding: A small sum of discretionary money should be available to each council for expenses and for trying out small scale pilot efforts.

Composition: Each Council is unique and may constitute its members as professional only or a combination of lay and professional members.

Staffing : Administrative facilitation should be provided by staff of the Federation Education Planning Department and/or the Jewish Educational Services.

Governance: None. Each Council is self determining and participation is voluntary .

***Note:** Existing councils include: Educational Directors Council; Day School Council; Synagogue Council; Atlanta Rabbinical Association; the Atlanta Jewish Youth Professionals. Under discussion are councils for those involved with: Family Education, Day Care, Adult Education, Pre-school Education.

JEWISH EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (JES)

Mission: To develop the Jewish profession in Atlanta, to provide professional advisement and training for educators and educating institutions; to provide personnel services for teachers and administrators; to facilitate the work of the Councils; to make recommendations to CJC for new initiatives; to carry out initiatives proposed by the CJC, to encourage regional relationships.

Specific tasks:

1. *Upgrade the education profession for teachers and other educators* by providing or arranging for training including courses, workshops, classes, conferences for role-alike groups such as administrators, general studies teachers, supplementary school teachers, avocational teachers, teaching aides, parent volunteers or for site-alike groups such as school teams, AJCCstaff, JFS staff or for individuals leading to professional growth; expand teacher certification and licensure through SDU's.
2. *Consultant Services* by request or as needed to schools and other educating institutions who want customized assistance with educational planning, introducing new classroom techniques, developing student evaluation systems, initiating school improvement, and incorporating more Jewish content into informal or recreational activities.
3. *Program Development:* Assistance to educators or agencies in specific subject areas: e.g., Holocaust education, Judaic Studies, Hebrew, Israel, integration of formal and informal programming, others as needed. (Coordinated with Heritage Center and Israel Programs Center where appropriate); or assistance with the development of programs in relation to specific student populations such as the developmental or learning disabled students or students with social/emotional problems. (Coordinated with Jewish Family Services where appropriate.)
4. *Jewish Education For Families (JEFF)* : Facilitate the formation of Family Education Councils in day and supplementary schools; provide training to synagogues, schools, AJCCs about materials and teaching techniques for family events, family retreats, parallel and intergenerational learning, for preschool families, day care families supplementary and day school families, for congregants and their families; broker the co-development or purchase of family education programming; encourage the development and delivery of Jewish parenting programs in collaboration with Jewish Family Services.
5. *Personnel:* Assist with the recruitment, screening and placement of teachers and administrators as requested by day and supplementary schools. Perform tasks related to salary schedules and benefits programs as needed.
6. *Networking:* Develop pool of contract specialists by locating local and out-of-town experts, academics, others, putting them in touch with school and youth programs; assist with inter-agency program development and program brokering across institutions, for example, joint JFS and school sponsored programs on topics such as sex education, dealing with loss, parent-child

conflict; organize and operate an educational information and referral system.

7. Creating regional relationships such as partnerships, fee for service arrangements, collaborative trainings, conferences, consultations.

Staffing: The JES should be staffed by the equivalent of three full time highly qualified and experienced professionals in Jewish education who, collectively, are knowledgeable about specific subject areas including Holocaust education and Family education, about all levels of formal and informal education and how to integrate them, about school administration and school change; who have excellent training and consultative skills and who have excellent interpersonal and group process skills.

The JES Head Consultant (perhaps with another title) should be dynamic, creative, passionate and flexible about Jewish education and the Jewish tradition. This individual should be an expert in the subject matter of Jewish education, should have a practical working knowledge of school administration and teaching, should be up-to-date on research about child development and the psychology of teaching and learning, should understand the operations of supplementary and day schools; should be credible to Atlanta's educators; have good interpersonal and process skills. This person will work closely with the Council on Jewish Continuity, the Coordinating Councils, the Federation Education Planning Department as well as with The Heritage Center, the Israel Programs Center, schools, synagogues, the AJCC and other educating agencies.

Th other staff of the JES should have experience and subject area strengths that complement those of the Head Consultant. These individuals also should be excellent trainers and consultants, have excellent interpersonal and group process skills, and be credible to the educators of Atlanta.

Location: accessible to educators, and in close proximity to the Jewish Heritage Center.

Governance: JES is an independent agency with its own Board of Directors. The Board should represent a broad range of educational institutions and religious denominations, including professional educators, parents, and, on an *ad hoc* basis, high school students and adult learners concerned with family education.

Funding: JES receives its core funding through the Planning and Allocations process and is accountable to the Education Subcommittee of Planning and Allocations. Supplementary funding for special projects initiated by the CJC will come from the Jewish Education Fund.

JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER

Mission: To make available to Atlanta educators and students, as well as to the general Jewish and non-Jewish Atlanta community, print, audio visual and exhibit resources including those of the Jewish community library, the Zachor Holocaust Center, the community archives, oral histories and curricular and instructional materials.

Tasks: Annual priorities should be set for start-up and implementation activities including: organizing the collections, producing an on-line computer catalogue, stimulating awareness of the collection through public information and marketing materials, providing assistance to JES, CJC, Federation Education Planning Department, day and supplementary school educators, special programs and exhibits related to particular aspects of the collections, special services to learners such as story hours for children, large print books for elderly, teen library of books, videos, computer software.

Staffing: A professional director and staff familiar with Judaic content as well as possessing skills needed for acquiring, storing, maintaining, displaying and facilitating access to the materials. The professionals should be available to educators, schools, and learners to advise and consult. Clerical and support staff should be available as required to keep the facility open to accommodate user needs and to deliver materials on request. Volunteers should be available to help with specific tasks and projects.

Governance: The governance of the Heritage Center will be determined during the transition period and first year of operations with the participation of the Committee involved in developing the concept..

Funding: The Heritage Center should receive an allocation from Federation and be accountable for those funds through the Planning and Allocations process. Supplementary funds for special services or projects may come from the Jewish Education Fund.

Location: The materials should be easily accessible to educators and the general public. They should be housed in a facility, perhaps one especially constructed for this purpose, which has adequate space for shelving and for exhibits and appropriate light and temperature controls. It is important that JES educators and the professional staff of the Heritage Center maintain close contact and work together to enhance the educating aspects of the Center. Specifics should be discussed during the transition period.

ISRAEL PROGRAMS CENTER

Mission: To make Israel experiences an important educational component for the Atlanta Jewish community by encouraging a variety of educating experiences about and within Israel for Atlanta's young people, families and adults, both Jewish and non-Jewish; to provide services to Atlanta's visiting and resident Israelis; to encourage formal and informal educational programs about Israel within schools and in the community at large.

Goals: to increase the number of people participating in high quality, intense and educating experiences in Israel; to increase the variety of such experiences and to motivate people, particularly teens, to participate by developing financial incentives and supports; to increase knowledge about and awareness of Israel.

Tasks:

Work closely with the staffs of Jewish Heritage Center, the Jewish Educational Services and participate in the Council on Jewish Continuity.

Support programs such as the Alexander Muss High School in Israel, university study and other quality Israel experiences.

Set annual priorities for responsibilities including

Coordination of pre- and follow-up programming for Israel experiences for teens, college students, families, missions, other adults and non-Jews; arranging trips, programs, as appropriate; providing materials and information about programs in Israel for schools and individuals; facilitating or conducting community lectures adult education programs, high schools programs; assisting with the development of savings, incentive or matching financial arrangements for students and adults; coordination of activities for visiting and resident Israelis; participation in Israel-related community events.

Staffing: A shaliach from Israel; a Coordinator for the High School in Israel program, Israel program returnees as volunteers when appropriate.

Location: Materials should be accessible to users. Staff should have close working relationships with staffs of Heritage Center, JES, schools, others.

Governance: AJCC

Funding: Federation allocations with support by the AJCC. Possible funding assistance from the World Zionist Organization or the American Zionist Youth Foundation.

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL/ ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS

Mission: To increase the impact of Jewish education on teens through broadening, deepening and coordinating formal and informal educational programs, to provide city-wide social events, to intensify outreach efforts

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Populations to be served: 8th-12th grade students from all the congregations in Atlanta; unaffiliated students with tie-in synagogue membership.

Program :Twice a week classes organized into a regular and an intensive program with an array of required and elective courses with teaching staff of congregational rabbis, academics, specialists, others; projected development of informal weekends, retreats, camping experiences and experiential additions such as a one year option of a 4-6 weekend plus weekly class program modeled on LA's Havurot Noar; on-going evaluation to assess student attendance, student and parent satisfaction, student outcomes in relation to increased knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors, teacher performance, range of course offerings.

Location: Epstein school, AJCC and other synagogues.

Staffing: The Supplementary Community School will be directed by a committee of the Education Directors Council with support from paid administrator with secretarial assistance. Other programs run by agencies and groups in cooperation with one another.

Funding: Anticipated to be supported by fees supplemented by additional Federation allocation.

Governance: Linkages with JES and other governance arrangements to be developed during transition period and first year of operations.

ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS

Programs: JCC Sunday afternoon sports league bringing 300-500 teenagers together; community wide annual youth events; Israel Programs Center experiences in Israel with pre and post programming.

ADULT EDUCATION

Mission: To encourage adult study and learning; provide high quality options for those beginning, pursuing and deepening their Jewish knowledge; to form a network of participating local and visiting scholars and experts; to develop and publicize catalogue of classes, courses, lectures, and other learning opportunities.

Operations: Classes delivered in many locations. Coordination, marketing, outreach by Adult Education Council composed of representatives from, synagogues, AJCC and others doing adult education. Paid administrator with support assistance.

Location: multiple sites

Funding: anticipated to be self supporting

Governance: to be worked out during transition period. Options include arrangements parallel to those for the Supplementary Community High School.

ESL EDUCATION FOR IMMIGRANTS

Mission: to provide English language instruction to newcomers from the Soviet Union and other emigres.

Currently ESL for adults is provided by a cooperative arrangement between the Atlanta Bureau of Jewish Education and DeKalb County. ESL for children is provided at the day schools in which they are enrolled. Those in public school receive ESL at those schools. The community's resettlement committee is reviewing the above programs to determine necessary improvements. Governance and staffing arrangements will be worked out as appropriate during the transition period.

HAVANAH

Mission: To provide a Jewish religious education to developmentally disabled young adults.

Governance: Incorporated into the AJCC programming Very Special People which sponsors activities aimed at developing and enhancing Jewish identity.

Staffing: A teacher with Judaic knowledge and experience in teaching the developmentally disabled, in consultation with an educator from the Jewish Education Services.

Funding: Whatever is currently allocated to the BJE budget to cover the expense of this teacher should be transferred to the AJCC to cover the same expense.

AMIT

Mission: to ensure that a Jewish education is available to children with learning disabilities.

Goals: To provide technical assistance to congregations and schools which are mainstreaming children with L.D.'s or wish to sponsor special classes; to provide magnet sites in the community for religious education for L.D. children. These might be set up based on geographic areas or on particular learning disabilities.

Organization: Jewish Education Services in consultation with the Education Directors Council.

Funding: The transfer of current budget for Amit along with fees from participating families and congregations.

Appendix A Transition Plan

The transition from the Bureau of Jewish Education structure to the proposed reconfigured system for Jewish education requires the cooperation of many individuals and coordination among many agencies so that the details required by the changeover are handled smoothly, with minimum disruption of services and maximum consideration for the professionals, lay leaders and learners who are affected.

The transition period should begin soon after the appropriate discussions of the proposal have been completed. The transition period should last approximately four months. After the first nine months of operation an evaluation of the new system should be done so as to identify and correct flaws.

The following suggestions may be helpful. The tasks below are listed component by component and, for convenience, should be sequenced on a time line.

1. Appoint a transition team composed of professionals and lay people to oversee all the arrangements to transfer operations from one entity to another and to establish new entities.

2. Transfer Bureau of Jewish Education responsibilities. The Transition Team, in consultation with a small committee of BJE professional and lay leaders, should:

- a. Discuss with the BJE professional staff the disposition of each of their responsibilities and the time currently spent on each program or activity.
- b. Request of each BJE professional a description of the substantive tasks in their area of responsibility with suggestions about how to handle them. These should include notification of relevant groups and individuals about the intended changes, provision for updating and reorganizing files, for orienting or training successors, for handling on-going programming during transition, for physical relocation of program.
- c. Discuss arrangements for severance, transition or application for new positions with individual BJE staff as soon as appropriate and in accordance with standard personnel procedures.
- d. Arrange for the formal dissolution of the BJE Board by a predetermined date.

3. Establish the Council for Jewish Continuity. Assisted by the Transition Team and working with a small lay committee, the appointed Chair of the Council, should

- a. Confirm, for the first year of operations, those groups/organizations/ populations which should be represented on the Council.
- b. Decide on number and type of at-large members and method for their recruitment and selection.
- c. Discuss and publicize time commitments and general responsibilities of CJC members.
- d. Prepare agenda and schedule the first CJC meeting. Among the items for early consideration should be a review of the composition, mission and structure of the CJC, an update about the transition process, confirmation of the name of the Council, discussion of the mission, formation and scope of work of the Education Development Fund, priority goals for first year attention.

4. Establish the Jewish Educational Services as an agency with an independent Board. The Transition Team, in consultation with selected members of the BJE staff and Board and of the Education Planning and Allocations Committee, should

- a. Review legal and other requirements for an independent agency.
- b. Decide on the immediate physical location of the JES.
- c. Decide on the composition of the JES Board for the first year.
- d. Develop selection procedure for first year membership
- e. Constitute the Board.
- f. Develop job descriptions for the Head Consultant, other staff
- g. Organize a broad based search committee.
- h. Plan and implement search.
- i. Among the items for early consideration: confirmation of the JES mission, the name of the agency, the by-laws, roles and responsibilities of Board members.

5. Establish the Jewish Heritage Center The Transition Team, in consultation with all relevant groups, should

- a. Determine governance structure for the Jewish Heritage Center.
- b. Decide on the immediate physical location of the Center.
- c. Ask the BJE librarian, the archivist and the Zachor staff to describe issues needing consideration during the transition. Discuss.
- d. Develop job descriptions for professional and support staff.
- e. Plan and implement the search and selection procedure.

6. Revive the Israel Programs Center. The Transition Team, in consultation with all relevant groups, should

- a. Decide on the appropriate funding and governance arrangements; and on the immediate physical location for the Center.
- b. Discuss job descriptions, qualifications, accountability arrangements for shaliach and other staff.
- c. Plan and implement search and selection for shaliach, others.

7. Organize supplementary Community High School. The Transition Team should work with designated members of the Educators Council, synagogue lay and professional leadership, Youth Professionals Council, to

- a. Establish the legal, financial and governance structures for the Supplementary Community High School.
- b. Determine the appropriate location(s) for classes.
- c. Develop job description for the administrator.
- d. Plan and implement the search and selection strategy.
- d. Facilitate operations: students, teachers, curriculum, evaluation.

- 8. Organize Adult Education.** The Transition Team should work with representatives of all entities providing adult education to
- a. Prepare proposals for governance, funding and administration to coordinate existing adult education programs and the development of new programs.
- 9. Arrange for the transfer of the ESL Education for Immigrants, Havanah, and Amit programs as appropriate**



Appendix B

Examples of measurable outcome and process objectives for selected system-wide goals

An interagency MIS or other data base system can collect baseline data and can track the achievement of outcome objectives. Records can also be kept about the extent to which process objectives have been operationalized. An examination of the relationships between the process objectives and the outcomes can clarify the reasons for success or failure in achieving the outcome and can provide estimates of the effort and costs of doing so.

The list below provides examples of measurable objectives for several of the goals of Atlanta's Jewish educating system. Each objective specifies a desired outcome. Accompanying each of these desired outcomes are some process objectives likely to lead to achieving that outcome.

1. Desired outcome: Increase the number of individuals--children, families adults-- involved in Jewish learning by xx%.

Process objectives:

- *Increase each agency's efforts to identify target learners
- *Increase methods for ascertaining the needs/interests of learners
- *Increase the funds/staff time spent on marketing by xx%
- *Increase the funds/staff time spent on developing new initiatives by xx%

2. Desired outcome: High quality supplementary schools and day schools

Process objectives:

- Synagogues/schools/ day schools should develop a written plan which
- *Identifies areas for improvement or describes unmet needs
- *Proposes school improvement plans with budget and timeline
- *Receives funding to implement plan
- *Implements plan
- *Provides evidence of improvement

3. Desired outcome: Intensification of family Judaism

Process objectives:

- *Increase number of educators receiving training in family education
- *Increase number of lay leaders on family education committees
- *Increase school sponsored family oriented courses/ programs/ events
- *Increase congregational, school and AJCC sponsored family oriented programming
- *Increase attendance at family education classes, events by xx%
- *Increase number of family oriented programs attended by a family
- *Increase levels of participant satisfaction, knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors

4. Desired outcome: Increase in number of teens involved in Jewish educating programs and experiences by xx%. Intensified impact on the lives of teenagers

Process objectives:

- *Increase hours of training for youth professionals by xx%
- *Increase number of teen outreach efforts by xx %
- *Increase coordination among teen programs
- *Increase evaluation of teen programs

5. Desired outcome: Increase in number of adults participating in Jewish study by xx%. Increase in participants' level of satisfaction, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors.

Process objectives:

- *Increase types of available lectures, classes, courses, seminars, retreats, chavurot, study groups.
- *Establish financial or degree incentives for study
- *Increase number of opportunities for informal learning by xx %
- *Create information and referral system
- *Increase invitations to academics and other learned individuals by xx%

6. Desired outcome: Creation of supportive climate for the frank discussion of important problems; Increase in quality of inter-agency cooperation

Process objectives:

- *Increase intra and inter-institutional communication channels
- *Increase opportunities for informal contacts among stakeholders