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"Goals for Jewish Education in Lead Communities",
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GOALS FOR JEWISH EDUCATION IN LEAD COMMUNITIES

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America avoided dealing with the issue of goals for Jewish education in order to achieve consensus. However, it was clear that when the recommendations of the Commission would be acted upon, it would be impossible to avoid the issue of goals for Jewish education. Now that the work in Lead Communities is beginning, working on goals can no longer be delayed. This is so for several reasons: 1) It is difficult to introduce change without deciding what it is that one wants to achieve; 2) researchers such as Marshall Smith, Sara Lightfoot and David Cohen have effectively argued that impact in education is dependent on a clear vision of goals; 3) the evaluation project in Lead Communities cannot be successfully undertaken without clear articulation of goals.

In Lead Communities goals should be articulated for each of the institutions that are involved in education and for the community as a whole. At present there are very few cases where institutions or communities have undertaken a serious and systematic consideration of goals. It will be necessary to determine what is the state of affairs in the Lead Communities. There may be institutions (schools, JCCs) that have undertaken or completed a serious systematic consideration of their goals. It is important for us to learn from their experience and to check as to whether an attempt has been made to develop their curriculum and teaching methods in a manner that is coherent with their goals. In the case of those institutions where little has been done in this

area, it is crucial that the institutions be encouraged and helped to undertake a process that will lead them to the articulation of goals.

RRC? The CIJE should serve as catalyst in this area. It should serve as a broker between the institutions that are to begin such a process and the various resources that exist in the Jewish world. By resources we mean scholars, thinkers and institutions that have concerned themselves and developed expertise in this area. The institutions of higher Jewish learning in North America (Y.U., J.T.S.A. and H.U.C.), the Melton Centre at the Hebrew University and the Mandel Institute in Jerusalem have all been concerned and dealing with this matter. Furthermore, these institutions have been alerted to the fact that the institutions in Lead Communities will probably need to be assisted in this area. They have expressed an interest and a willingness to help.

The Mandel Institute has particularly concentrated efforts in this area through its project on alternative conceptions of the educated Jew. The scholars involved in this project are: Prof. Moshe Greenberg, Prof. Menahem Brinker, Prof. Isadore Twersky, Prof. Michael Rosenak, Prof. Israel Scheffler and Prof. Seymour Fox. Accompanied by a group of talented educators and social scientists they have completed several important essays offering alternative approaches to the goals of Jewish education as well as indications of how these goals should be applied to educational settings and educational practice. These scholars would be willing to work with the institutions of higher Jewish learning

and thus enrich the contribution that these institutions can make to this effort in Lead Communities.

It is therefore suggested that the CIJE advance this undertaking in the following ways:

1. Encourage the institutions in Lead Communities to consider the importance of undertaking a process that will lead them to an articulation of goals for their institutions.
2. Continue the work that has begun with the institutions of higher Jewish learning so that they will be prepared and ready to undertake consultation if and when they are turned to.
3. Offer seminars whose participants would include representatives from the various Lead Communities where the issues related to undertaking a program to develop goals would be discussed. At such seminars the institutions of higher Jewish learning and the Mandel Institute could offer their help and expertise.

The problem of goals for a Lead Community as a whole, as well as the question of the relationships of the denominations to each other and to the community as a whole will be dealt with in a subsequent memorandum.

GOALS FOR JEWISH EDUCATION IN LEAD COMMUNITIES

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America did not deal with the issue of goals for Jewish education in order to achieve consensus. However, the Commission knew that it would be impossible to avoid the issue of goals for Jewish education, when the recommendations of the Commission would be implemented.

With work in Lead Communities underway, the issue of goals can no longer be delayed for several reasons;

- 1) It is difficult to introduce change without deciding what it is that one wants to achieve.
- 2) Researchers such as Marshall Smith, Sara Lightfoot and David Cohen have effectively argued that impact in education is dependent on a clear vision of goals.
- 3) The evaluation project in Lead Communities cannot be successfully undertaken without a clear articulation of goals.

Goals should be articulated for each of the institutions that are involved in education in the Lead Communities and for the community as a whole. At present there are very few cases where institutions or communities have undertaken a serious and systematic consideration of goals. It is necessary to determine the status of this effort in the Lead Communities. There may be individual institutions (e.g. schools, JCCs) that have undertaken or completed a serious systematic consideration of their goals. It is important to learn from their experience and to ascertain whether an attempt has been made to develop curriculum and teaching methods coherent with their goals. In the case of those institutions where little has been done in this area, it is crucial that the institutions be encouraged and helped to undertake a process that will lead to the articulation of goals.

The CIJE should serve as catalyst in this area. It should serve as a broker between the institutions that are to begin such a process and the various resources that exist in the Jewish world -- scholars, thinkers and institutions that have deliberated and developed expertise in this area. The institutions of higher Jewish learning in North America (Y.U., J.T.S.A. and H.U.C.), the Melton Centre at the Hebrew University and the Mandel Institute in Jerusalem have all been concerned and have worked on the issue of goals for Jewish education. Furthermore, these institutions have been alerted to the fact that the institutions in the Lead Communities will need assistance in this area. They have expressed an interest in the project and a willingness to assist.

The Mandel Institute has particularly concentrated efforts in this area through its project on alternative conceptions of "The Educated Jew." The scholars involved in this project are: Professors Moshe Greenberg, Menahem Brinker, Isadore Twersky, Michael Rosenak, Israel Scheffler, Seymour Fox and Daniel Marom. Accompanied by a group of talented educators and social scientists, they have completed several important essays offering alternative approaches to the goals of Jewish education as well

as indications of how these goals should be applied to educational settings and practice. These scholars would be willing to work with the institutions of higher Jewish learning and thus enrich their contribution to this effort in Lead Communities.

It is therefore suggested that the CIJE advance this undertaking in the following ways:

1. Encourage the institutions in Lead Communities to consider the importance of undertaking a process that will lead to an articulation of goals.
2. Continue the work that has begun with the institutions of higher Jewish learning so that they will be prepared and ready to undertake community-based consultations.
3. Offer seminars whose participants would include Lead Community representatives where the issues related to undertaking a program to develop goals would be discussed. At such seminars the institutions of higher Jewish learning and the Mandel Institute could offer help and expertise.

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