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AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MS-831: Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980–2008.

Series C: Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE). 1988–2003.

Subseries 3: Lead Communities, 1988–1997.

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Lead Communities at Work, 1992-1993.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
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Mandel Institute

מכון מנדל

Tel. 972-2-617 418; 618 728

Fax: 972-2-619 951

Facsimile Transmission

To: Jack Weles & Jim Nees Date: 30/6/92
From: Annette Hahner & Seymour Fox No. Pages: 7
Fax Number: _____

Dear Jack and Jim,

In order to facilitate our conversation later today we are forwarding a most incomplete draft-in-progress of the document we are preparing on the lead communities. We will complete a draft by Friday, as we undertook to do. It will include in addition to what is outlined here a brief executive summary, details about the CIJE's role and about the launch and the first year.

Talk to you later,

Annette

draft for discussion only ----- draft for discussion only

June 29, 1992

LEAD COMMUNITIES AT WORK

DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION -- PREPARED BY S.FOX AND A.HOCHSTEIN

A. Introduction

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America completed its work with five recommendations. Lead communities is one of them, but it is also the means or the place where the other recommendations will be played out and implemented. Indeed, a lead community will demonstrate locally, how to:

1. Build the profession of Jewish education and thereby address the shortage of qualified personnel.
2. Mobilize community support by recruiting top community leaders to the cause of Jewish education;
3. Develop a research capability: the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project in lead communities will contribute to establish the knowledge base and the research capability; the best practices project will set norms and standards of quality by pointing to good practice in existing programs.
4. Establish an implementation mechanism -- the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, to be a catalyst for the implementation of these recommendations.
5. The fifth recommendation is, of course, the lead community itself, to function as a local laboratory for Jewish education.

B. The program will involve the implementation of an action plan in the areas of building the profession of Jewish education and mobilizing community support. This will be undertaken in programmatic areas such as day schools or Israel experience programs.

C. The scope of the project

1. A Lead Community will be an entire community engaged in a major development and improvement program of its Jewish education. Three model communities will be chosen to demonstrate what can happen when there is an infusion of

outstanding personnel into the educational system, when the importance of Jewish education is recognized by the community and its leadership and when the necessary resources are secured to meet additional needs.

The vision and programs developed in Lead Communities will demonstrate to the Jewish Community of North America what Jewish education at its best can achieve.

2. The Lead Community project will involve all or most actors of Jewish education in that site. It is expected that lay leaders, educators, rabbis and heads of educational institutions of all ideological streams and points of view will participate in the planning group of the project, to shape it, guide it, take part in decisions.

3. The Lead Community project will deal with the major educational areas -- those which most people attend:

- Supplementary Schools
- Day Schools
- JCCs
- Israel programs
- Early Childhood programs

In addition to these, areas of interest to the specific communities will also be included, e.g. a community might be particularly interested in:

- Adult learning
- Family education
- etc...

4. Most or all institutions of a given area will be involved in the program (e.g. most or all supplementary schools)

5. A large proportion of the Community's Jewish population will be involved.

E. Vision:

A lead Community will be characterized by its ongoing interest in the goals of the project. Educational, rabbinic and lay leaders will project, over time, a vision of what the community hopes to achieve several years hence, where it wants to be in terms of the Jewish knowledge and behavior of its members, young and adult (e.g. all adolescents have a good command of spoken Hebrew; intermarriage decreases; many adults study classic Jewish texts;; educators are qualified and engaged in ongoing

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 optional additions.

training; supplementary school attendance has increased dramatically; a locally produced Jewish history curriculum is changing the way the subject is addressed in formal education, the local Jewish press sets the tone, nationally, in terms of the level and nature of its coverage of key issues).

The vision, the goals, the content of Jewish education will be addressed at two levels:

1. At the Communal level the leadership will develop and articulate a notion of where it wants to be, what it wants to achieve
2. At the level of single institutions or groups of institutions educators and clients will articulate the educational goal of that institution

It is anticipated that these activities will create much debate and ferment in the community, that they will focus the work of the Lead Communities on core issues facing the Jewish identity of North American Jewry; that they will demand of communities to face complex dilemmas and choices. At the same time they will re-focus the educational debate on the content of education

3. The Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning, the denominations, the national organizations will join in this effort. to develop alternative visions of Jewish education. First steps have already been taken to engage institutions and organizations to participate in this endeavor.

F. Building the profession of Jewish education

Communities will want to address the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education in ways such as:

1. Hire 2-3 outstanding educators to bolster the strength of educational practice in the community and to energize the thinking about the future .
2. Create several new positions, as required in order to meet the challenges. For example: a director of teacher education or curriculum development, or a director of Israel programming.
4. Develop ongoing in-service education for most educators in the community, by programmatic area or by subject matter (e.g. the teaching of history in supplementary schools, adult education in community centers)
5. Invite training institutions and other national resources

to join in the effort, and invite them to undertake specific assignments in lead communities. (e.g. the Jewish Theological Seminary might assume responsibility for the in-service education of all conservative supplementary school staff)

6. Develop a thoughtful plan to improve the terms of employment of educators in the community (including salary and benefits, career ladder, empowerment and involvement of front-line educators in the process.)

G. Simultaneously with the work of lead communities, the CIJE has undertaken to deal with continental initiatives to improve the personnel situation. For example it works with foundations to expand and improve the training capability in North America.

H. Developing community support

This will be undertaken as follows:

1. Establishing a wall to wall coalition including the Federation, the congregations, day schools, JCC's, Hillel etc..
2. Identify a lay "Champion" who will recruit a leadership group that will drive the Lead community process.
3. Increase local funding for Jewish education
4. Develop a vision for Jewish education in the community
5. Involve the professionals in a partnership to develop this vision and a plan for its implementation
6. Establish a local implementation mechanism with a professional head
7. Encourage an ongoing public discussion of and advocacy for Jewish education.

I. The remainder of this document should be viewed as only an incomplete topic outline to be completed this week. It is meant to facilitate tonight's conversation.

J. The role of the CIJE in establishing lead communities:

the CIJE, through its staff, consultants and projects (best practices and monitoring and evaluation) will facilitate implementation of programs and will ensure continental input into the Lead Communities. The CIJE will make the following available:

1. Best Practices

(insert)

2. Monitoring Evaluation Feedback

The CIJE will establish an evaluation project (unit). Its purpose will be three-fold:

1. to carry out *ongoing monitoring of progress* in Lead Communities, in order to assist community leaders, planners and educators in their daily work. A researcher will be commissioned and will spend much of his/her time locally, collecting and analyzing data and offering it to practitioners for their consideration. The purpose of this process is to improve and correct implementation in each LC and between them.
2. to *evaluate progress* in Lead Communities—assessing, as time goes on, the impact and effectiveness of each program, and its suitability for replication elsewhere. Evaluation will be conducted in a variety of methods. Data will be collected by the local researcher and also nationally if applicable. Analysis will be the responsibility of the head of the evaluation team with two purposes in mind: 1) To evaluate the effectiveness of individual programs and of the Lead Communities themselves as models for change, and, 2) To begin to create indicators and a data base that could serve as the basis for an ongoing assessment of the state of Jewish education in North America. This work will contribute to the publication of a periodic "state of Jewish education" report as suggested by the Commission.
3. *The feedback-loop*: findings of monitoring and evaluation activities will be continuously channelled to local and central planning activities in order to affect them and act as an ongoing corrective. In this manner there will be a rapid exchange of knowledge and mutual influence between practice and planning. Findings from the field will require ongoing adaptation of plans. These changed plans will in turn, affect implementation and so on.

3. Professional services:

- a) Educational consultants to help introduce best practices
- b) Planning assistance as required
- c) Community processes

4. Funding facilitation

5. Links with purveyors or supporters of programs

K. Launching the Lead Community

1. Establish a local planning group, staffed, with wall to wall representation, etc...

L. Negotiate an agreement CIJE-LC that includes:

1. Mutual obligations
2. Process
3. Funding
4. etc...

M. Lead Community -- Year One

During the first year (1992/93) the project will include gearing up activities (e.g. planning activities (year one plan; self study; five year plan); locating and hiring three outstanding educators from outside the community to begin work the following year); preliminary implementation (pilot projects resulting from prior studies, interests, communal priorities)

[[* The Educational Self Study

Most communities have recent social and demographic studies. Some have begun to deal with the issue of Jewish continuity and have task-force reports on these. Teacher studies exist in some communities.

All of these will be inputs into the self-study. However the study itself will focus specifically on Jewish Ed

Qualitative and quantitative assessment of where the community is at

- participation rate
- e.g. assessing the educators in the community
- how well are specific programs doing
- Assessment of needs and of target groups (clients)
- what content and level are taught/achieved

There will be a link between the MEFP (monitoring, evaluation, feedback project) and the self study. Some of the definition of the study and some of the data-collection will be undertaken with the help/by the MEFP field researcher.

N. Lead Communities -- years two to five]

Draft for site visit teams

July 2, 1992

LEAD COMMUNITIES AT WORK

A.Hochstein and S. Fox

A. INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America completed its work with five recommendations. The establishment of Lead communities is one of those recommendations, but it is also the means or the place where the other recommendations will be played out and implemented. Indeed, a lead community will demonstrate locally, how to:

1. Build the profession of Jewish education and thereby address the shortage of qualified personnel;
2. Mobilize community support to the cause of Jewish education;
3. Develop a research capability which will provide the knowledge needed to inform decisions and guide development. In Lead Communities this will be undertaken through the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project;
4. Establish an implementation mechanism at the local level, parallel to the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, to be a catalyst for the implementation of these recommendations;
5. The fifth recommendation is, of course, the lead community itself, to function as a local laboratory for Jewish education.

B. THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

1. A Lead Community will be an entire community engaged in a major development and improvement program of its Jewish education. Three model communities will be chosen to demonstrate what can happen where there is an infusion of outstanding personnel into the educational system, where the importance of Jewish education is recognized by the community and its leadership and where the necessary resources are secured to meet additional needs.

The vision and programs developed in Lead Communities will demonstrate to the Jewish Community of North America what Jewish education at its best can achieve.

2. The Lead Community project will involve all or most Jewish education actors in that community. It is expected that lay leaders, educators, rabbis and heads of educational institutions of all ideological streams and points of view will participate in the planning group of the project, to shape it, guide it and take part in decisions.

3. The Lead Community project will deal with the major educational areas -- those in which most people are involved at some point in their lifetime:

- Supplementary Schools
- Day Schools
- JCCs
- Israel programs
- Early Childhood programs

In addition to these areas, other fields of interest to the specific communities will also be included, e.g. a community might be particularly interested in:

- Adult learning
- Family education
- Summer camping
- Campus programs
- etc...

4. Most or all institutions of a given area will be involved in the program (e.g. most or all supplementary schools).

5. A large proportion of the community's Jewish population will be involved.

C. VISION

A Lead Community will be characterized by its ongoing interest in the goals of the project. Educational, rabbinic and lay leaders will project a vision of what the community hopes to achieve several years hence, where it wants to be in terms of the Jewish knowledge and behavior of its members, young and adult. This vision could include elements such as:

- adolescents have a command of spoken Hebrew;
- intermarriage decreases;
- many adults study classic Jewish texts;
- educators are qualified and engaged in ongoing training;
- supplementary school attendance has increased dramatically;
- a locally produced Jewish history curriculum is changing the way the subject is addressed in formal education;
- the local Jewish press is educating through the high level of its coverage of key issues

The vision, the goals, the content of Jewish education will be addressed at two levels:

1. At the communal level the leadership will develop and articulate a notion of where it wants to be, what it wants to achieve.
2. At the level of individual institutions or groups of institutions of similar views (e.g., all Reform schools), educators, rabbis, lay leaders and parents will articulate the educational goals.

It is anticipated that these activities will create much debate and ferment in the community, that they will focus the work of the Lead Communities on core issues facing the Jewish identity of North American Jewry, and that they will demand of communities to face complex dilemmas and choices (e.g., the nature and level of commitment that educational institutions will demand and aspire to). At the same time they will re-focus the educational debate on the content of education.

The Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning, the denominations, the national organizations will join in this effort, to develop alternative visions of Jewish education. First steps have already been taken (e.g., JTS preparing itself to take this role for Conservative schools in Lead Communities).

D. BUILDING THE PROFESSION OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Communities will want to address the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education in the following ways:

1. Hire 2-3 additional outstanding educators to bolster the strength of educational practice in the community and to energize thinking about the future.
2. Create several new positions, as required, in order to meet the challenges. For example: a director of teacher education or curriculum development, or a director of Israel programming.
3. Develop ongoing in-service education for most educators in the community, by programmatic area or by subject matter (e.g. the teaching of history in supplementary schools; adult education in community centers).
4. Invite training institutions and other national resources to join in the effort, and invite them to undertake specific assignments in lead communities. (E.g. Hebrew Union College might assume responsibility for in-service education of all Reform supplementary school staff. Yeshiva University would do so for day-schools)
5. Recruit highly motivated graduates of day schools who are

students at the universities in the Lead Community to commit themselves to multi-year assignments as educators in supplementary schools and JCCs.

6. Develop a thoughtful plan to improve the terms of employment of educators in the community (including salary and benefits, career ladder, empowerment and involvement of front-line educators in the Lead Community development process.)

Simultaneously the CIJE has undertaken to deal with continental initiatives to improve the personnel situation. For example it works with foundations to expand and improve the training capability for Jewish educators in North America.

E. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This will be undertaken as follows:

1. Establishing a wall to wall coalition in each Lead Community, including the Federation, the congregations, day schools, JCCs, Hillel etc..
2. Identify a lay "Champion" who will recruit a leadership group that will drive the Lead community process.
3. Increase local funding for Jewish education.
4. Develop a vision for Jewish education in the community.
5. Involve the professionals in a partnership to develop this vision and a plan for its implementation.
6. Establish a local implementation mechanism with a professional head.
7. Encourage an ongoing public discussion of and advocacy for Jewish education.

F. THE ROLE OF THE CIJE IN ESTABLISHING LEAD COMMUNITIES:

The CIJE, through its staff, consultants and projects will facilitate implementation of programs and will ensure continental input into the Lead Communities. The CIJE will make the following available:

1. Best Practices

A project to create an inventory of good Jewish educational practice was launched. The project will offer Lead Communities

examples of educational practice in key settings, methods, and topics, and will assist the communities in "importing," "translating," "re-inventing" best practices for their local settings.

The Best Practices initiative has several interrelated dimensions. In the first year (1991/92) the project deals with best practices in the following areas:

- Supplementary schools
- Early childhood programs
- Jewish community centers
- Day schools
- Israel Experience programs

It works in the following way:

a. First a group of experts in each specific area is recruited to work in an area (e.g., JCCs). These experts are brought together to define what characterizes best practices in their area, (e.g., a good supplementary school has effective methods for the teaching of Hebrew).

b. The experts then seek out existing examples of good programs in the field. They undertake site visits to programs and report about these in writing.

As lead communities begin to work, experts from the above team will be brought into the lead community to offer guidance about specific new ideas and programs, as well as to help import a best practice into that community.

2. Monitoring Evaluation Feedback

The CIJE has established an evaluation project. Its purpose is three-fold:

a. to carry out ongoing monitoring of progress in Lead Communities, in order to assist community leaders, planners and educators in their work. A researcher will be commissioned for each Lead Community and will collect and analyze data and offer it to practitioners for their consideration. The purpose of this process is to improve and correct implementation in each Lead Community.

b. to evaluate progress in Lead Communities -- assessing, as time goes on, the impact and effectiveness of each program, and its suitability for replication elsewhere. Evaluation will be conducted by a variety of methods. Data will be collected by the local researcher. Analysis will be the responsibility of the head of the evaluation team with two purposes in mind: 1) To evaluate the effectiveness of individual programs and of the Lead Communities themselves as models for change, and 2) To begin to create indicators (e.g., level of participation in Israel programs; achieve-

ment in Hebrew reading) and a database that could serve as the basis for an ongoing assessment of the state of Jewish education in North America. This work will contribute in the long term to the publication of a periodic "state of Jewish education" report as suggested by the Commission.

c. *The feedback-loop:* findings of monitoring and evaluation activities will be continuously channeled to local and CIJE planning activities in order to affect them and act as an ongoing corrective. In this manner there will be a rapid exchange of knowledge and mutual influence between practice and planning. Findings from the field will require ongoing adaptation of plans. These changed plans will in turn, affect implementation and so on.

During the first year the field researchers will be principally concerned with three questions:

(a) What are the *visions* for change in Jewish education held by members of the communities? How do the visions vary among different individuals or segments of the community? How vague or specific are these visions?

(b) What is the extent of *community mobilization* for Jewish education? Who is involved, and who is not? How broad is the coalition supporting the CIJE's efforts? How deep is participation within the various agencies? For example, beyond a small core of leaders, is there grass-roots involvement in the community? To what extent is the community mobilized financially as well as in human resources?

(c) What is the nature of the *professional life* of educators in this community? Under what conditions do teachers and principals work? For example, what are their salaries and benefits? Are school faculties cohesive, or fragmented? Do principals have offices? What are the physical conditions of classrooms? Is there administrative support for innovation among teachers?

The first question is essential for establishing that specific goals exist for improving Jewish education, and for disclosing what these goals are. The second and third questions concern the "enabling options" decided upon in *A Time to Act*, the areas of improvement which are essential to the success of Lead communities: mobilizing community support, and building a profession of Jewish education.

3. Professional services:

The CIJE will offer professional services to Lead Communities, including:

a. Educational consultants to help introduce best practices.

- b. Field researchers for monitoring, evaluation and feedback.
- c. Planning assistance as required.
- d. Assistance in mobilizing the community.

4. Funding facilitation

The CIJE will establish and nurture contacts between foundations interested in specific programmatic areas and Lead Communities that are developing and experimenting with such programs (e.g., the CRB Foundations and youth trips to Israel; MAF and personnel training; Blaustein and research).

5. Links with purveyors or supporters of programs

The CIJE will develop partnerships between national organizations (e.g., JCCA, CLAL, JESNA, CAJE), training institutions and Lead Communities. These purveyors will undertake specific assignments to meet specific needs within Lead Communities.

6. LAUNCHING THE LEAD COMMUNITY -- YEAR ONE

During its first year (1992/93) the project will include the following:

1. Negotiate an agreement with the CIJE that includes:
 - a. Detail of mutual obligations;
 - b. Process issues -- working relations within the community and between the community, the CIJE and other organizations
 - c. Funding issues;
 - d. Other.
2. Establish a local planning group, with a professional staff, with wall-to-wall representation.
3. Gearing-up activities, e.g., prepare a 1-year plan, undertake a self-study (see 6 below), prepare a 5-year plan.
4. Locate and hire several outstanding educators from outside the community to begin work the following year (1993/94).
5. Preliminary implementation of pilot projects that result from prior studies, interests, communal priorities.

6. Undertake an educational self-study, as part of the planning activities:

Most communities have recently completed social and demographic studies. Some have begun to deal with the issue of Jewish continuity and have taskforce reports on these. Teachers studies exist in some communities. All of these will be inputs into the self-study. However, the study itself will be designed to deal with the important issues of Jewish education in that community. It will include some of the following elements:

- a. Assessment of needs and of target groups (clients).
- b. Rates of participation.
- c. Preliminary assessment of the educators in the community (e.g., their educational backgrounds).

The self-study will be linked with the work of the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project.

Some of the definition of the study and some of the data collection will be undertaken with the help of that project's field researcher.

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



August 12, 1992

LEAD COMMUNITIES AT WORK

A. INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America completed its work with five recommendations. The establishment of Lead communities is one of those recommendations, but it is also the means or the place where the other recommendations will be played out and implemented. Indeed, a lead community will demonstrate locally, how to:

1. Build the profession of Jewish education and thereby address the shortage of qualified personnel;
2. Mobilize community support to the cause of Jewish education;
3. Develop a research capability which will provide the knowledge needed to inform decisions and guide development. In Lead Communities this will be undertaken through the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project;
4. Establish an implementation mechanism at the local level, parallel to the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, to be a catalyst for the implementation of these recommendations;
5. The fifth recommendation is, of course, the lead community itself, to function as a local laboratory for Jewish education.

(The implementation of recommendations at the continental level is discussed in separate documents.)

B. THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

1. A Lead Community will be an entire community engaged in a major development and improvement program of its Jewish education. Three model communities will be chosen to demonstrate what can happen where there is an infusion of outstanding personnel into the educational system, where the importance of Jewish education is recognized by the community and its leadership and where the necessary resources are secured to meet additional needs.

The vision and programs developed in Lead Communities will demonstrate to the Jewish Community of North America what Jewish education at its best can achieve.

2. The Lead Community project will involve all or most Jewish education actors in that community. It is expected that lay leaders, educators, rabbis and heads of educational institutions of all ideological streams and points of view will participate in the planning group of the project, to shape it, guide it and take part in decisions.
3. The Lead Community project will deal with the major educational areas — those in which **most people** are involved at some point in their lifetime:
 - *Supplementary Schools*
 - *Day Schools*
 - *JCCs*
 - *Israel programs*
 - *Early Childhood programs*

In addition to these areas, other fields of interest to the specific communities could also be included, e.g. a community might be particularly interested in:

- *Adult learning*
 - *Family education*
 - *Summer camping*
 - *Campus programs*
 - *Etc...*
4. **Most or all institutions** of a given area might be involved in the program (e.g. most or all supplementary schools).
 5. A large proportion of the community's Jewish population would be involved.

C. VISION

A Lead Community will be characterized by its **ongoing interest in the goals** of the project. Educational, rabbinic and lay leaders will project a vision of what the community hopes to achieve several years hence, where it wants to be in terms of the Jewish knowledge and behavior of its members, young and adult. This vision could include elements such as:

- *adolescents have a command of spoken Hebrew;*
- *intermarriage decreases;*
- *many adults study classic Jewish texts;*
- *educators are qualified and engaged in ongoing training;*
- *supplementary school attendance has increased dramatically;*

- *a locally produced Jewish history curriculum is changing the way the subject is addressed in formal education;*
- *the local Jewish press is educating through the high level of its coverage of key issues.*

The vision, the goals, the content of Jewish education would be addressed at two levels:

1. At the communal level the leadership would develop and articulate a notion of where it wants to be, what it wants to achieve.
2. At the level of individual institutions or groups of institutions of similar views (e.g., all Reform schools), educators, rabbis, lay leaders and parents will articulate the educational goals.

It is anticipated that these activities will create much debate and ferment in the community, that they will focus the work of the Lead Communities on core issues facing the Jewish identity of North American Jewry, and that they will demand of communities to face complex dilemmas and choices (e.g., the nature and level of commitment that educational institutions will demand and aspire to). At the same time they will re-focus the educational debate on the content of education.

The Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning, the denominations, the national organizations will join in this effort, to develop alternative visions of Jewish education. First steps have already been taken (e.g., JTS preparing itself to take this role for Conservative schools in Lead Communities).

D. BUILDING THE PROFESSION OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Communities may want to address the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education in some of the following ways:

1. Hire 2-3 additional outstanding educators to bolster the strength of educational practice in the community and to energize thinking about the future.
2. Create several new positions, as required, in order to meet the challenges. For example: a director of teacher education or curriculum development, or a director of Israel programming.
3. Develop ongoing in-service education for most educators in the community, by programmatic area or by subject matter (e.g. the teaching of history in supplementary schools; adult education in community centers).

4. Invite training institutions and other national resources to join in the effort, and invite them to undertake specific assignments in lead communities. (E.g. Hebrew Union College might assume responsibility for in-service education of all Reform supplementary school staff. Yeshiva University would do so for Orthodox day-schools.)
5. Recruit highly motivated graduates of day schools who are students at the universities in the Lead Community to commit themselves to multi-year assignments as educators in supplementary schools and JCCs.
6. Develop a thoughtful plan to improve the terms of employment of educators in the community (including salary and benefits, career ladder, empowerment and involvement of front-line educators in the Lead Community development process.)

Simultaneously the CIJE has undertaken to deal with continental initiatives to improve the personnel situation. For example it works with foundations to expand and improve the training capability for Jewish educators in North America.

E. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This could be undertaken as follows:

1. Establishing a wall-to-wall coalition in each Lead Community, including the Federation, the congregations, day schools, JCCs, Hillel etc...
2. Developing a special relationship to rabbis and synagogues.
3. Identify a lay "Champion" who will recruit a leadership group that will drive the Lead Community process.
4. Increase local funding for Jewish education.
5. Develop a vision for Jewish education in the community.
6. Involve the professionals in a partnership to develop this vision and a plan for its implementation.
7. Establish a local implementation mechanism with a professional head.
8. Encourage an ongoing public discussion of and advocacy for Jewish education.

F. THE ROLE OF THE CIJE IN ESTABLISHING LEAD COMMUNITIES

The CIJE, through its staff, consultants and projects will facilitate implementation of programs and will ensure continental input into the Lead Communities. The CIJE will make the following available:

1. *BEST PRACTICES*

A project to create an inventory of good Jewish educational practice was launched. The project will offer Lead Communities examples of educational practice in key settings, methods, and topics, and will assist the communities in "importing," "translating," "re-inventing" best practices for their local settings.

The Best Practices initiative has several interrelated dimensions. In the first year the project deals with best practices in the following areas:

- * *Supplementary schools*
- * *Early childhood programs*
- * *Jewish community centers*
- * *Day schools*
- * *Israel Experience programs*

It works in the following way:

- a. First a group of experts in each specific area is recruited to work in an area (e.g., JCCs). These experts are brought together to define what characterizes best practices in their area, (e.g., a good supplementary school has effective methods for the teaching of Hebrew).
- b. The experts then seek out existing examples of good programs in the field. They undertake site visits to programs and report about these in writing.

As lead communities begin to work, experts from the above team will be available to be brought into the lead community to offer guidance about specific new ideas and programs, as well as to help import a best practice into that community.

2. *MONITORING EVALUATION FEEDBACK*

The CIJE has established an evaluation project. Its purpose is three-fold:

- a. To carry out ongoing monitoring of progress in Lead Communities, in order to assist community leaders, planners and educators in their work. A researcher will be commissioned for each Lead Community and will collect and analyze data and offer it to

practitioners for their consideration. The purpose of this process is to improve and correct implementation in each Lead Community.

- b. To **evaluate progress** in Lead Communities — assessing, as time goes on, the impact and effectiveness of each program, and its suitability for replication elsewhere. Evaluation will be conducted by a variety of methods. Data will be collected by the local researcher. Analysis will be the responsibility of the head of the evaluation team with two purposes in mind: 1) To evaluate the effectiveness of individual programs and of the Lead Communities themselves as models for change, and 2) To begin to create indicators (e.g., level of participation in Israel programs; achievement in Hebrew reading) and a database that could serve as the basis for an ongoing assessment of the state of Jewish education in North America. This work will contribute in the long term to the publication of a periodic “state of Jewish education” report as suggested by the Commission.
- c. The feedback-loop: findings of monitoring and evaluation activities will be continuously channeled to local and CIJE planning activities in order to affect them and act as an ongoing corrective. In this manner there will be a rapid exchange of knowledge and mutual influence between practice and planning. Findings from the field will require ongoing adaptation of plans. These changed plans will in turn, affect implementation and so on.

During the first year the field researchers will be principally concerned with three questions:

- (a) What are the **visions for change** in Jewish education held by members of the communities? How do the visions vary among different individuals or segments of the community? How vague or specific are these visions?
- (b) What is the extent of **community mobilization** for Jewish education? Who is involved, and who is not? How broad is the coalition supporting the CIJE’s efforts? How deep is participation within the various agencies? For example, beyond a small core of leaders, is there grass-roots involvement in the community? To what extent is the community mobilized financially as well as in human resources?
- (c) What is the nature of the **professional life of educators** in this community? Under what conditions do teachers and principals work? For example, what are their salaries and benefits? Are school faculties cohesive, or fragmented? Do principals have offices? What are the physical conditions of classrooms? Is there administrative support for innovation among teachers?

The first question is essential for establishing that specific goals exist for improving Jewish education, and for disclosing what these goals are. The second and third questions concern

the "enabling options" ^{outlined} decided upon in *A Time to Act*, the areas of improvement which are essential to the success of Lead communities: mobilizing community support, and building a profession of Jewish education.

3. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The CIJE will offer professional services to Lead Communities, including:

- a. Educational consultants to help introduce best practices.
- b. Field researchers for monitoring, evaluation and feed-back.
- c. Planning assistance as required.
- d. Assistance in mobilizing the community.

4. FUNDING FACILITATION

The CIJE will establish and nurture contacts between foundations interested in specific programmatic areas and Lead Communities that are developing and experimenting with such programs (e.g., the CRB Foundations and youth trips to Israel; MAF and personnel training; Blaustein and research).

5. LINKS WITH PURVEYORS OR SUPPORTERS OF PROGRAMS

The CIJE will develop partnerships between national organizations (e.g., JCCA, CLAL, JESNA, CAJE), training institutions and Lead Communities. These purveyors could undertake specific assignments to meet specific needs within Lead Communities.

G. LEAD COMMUNITES AT WORK

The Lead Community itself could work in a manner very similar to that of the CIJE. In fact, it is proposed that a local commission be established to be the mechanism that will plan and see to the implementation and monitoring of programs.

What would this local mechanism (the local planning group) do?

- a. It would convene all the ^{participants} actors;
- b. It would launch an ongoing planning process; and
- c. It would deal with content in the following manner.

1. It could make sure that the content is articulated and is implemented.
2. Together with the team of the Best Practices project and with the Chief Education Officer, it would integrate the various content and programmatic components into a whole. For example: it could integrate formal and informal programs.

It could see to it that in any given area (e.g., Israel experience) the vision piece, the goals, are articulated by the various actors and at the various levels:

- *by individual institutions*
- *by the denominations*
- *by the community as a whole.*

In addition, dealing with the content might involve having a "dream department" or "blues-kying unit," aimed at dealing with innovations and change in the programs in the community.

H. LAUNCHING THE LEAD COMMUNITY — YEAR ONE

During its first year (1992/93) the project will include the following:

1. Negotiate an agreement with the CIJE including:
 - a. Detail of mutual obligations;
 - b. Process issues — working relations within the community and between the community, the CIJE and other organizations
 - c. Funding issues;
 - d. Other.
2. Establish a local planning group, with a professional staff and with wall-to-wall representation.
3. Gearing-up activities, e.g., prepare a 1-year plan, undertake a self-study (see 6 below), prepare a 5-year plan.
4. Locate and hire several outstanding educators from outside the community to begin work the following year (1993/94).
5. Preliminary implementation of pilot projects that result from prior studies, interests, communal priorities.
6. Undertake an educational self-study, as part of the planning activities:

Most communities have recently completed social and demographic studies. Some have begun to deal with the issue of Jewish continuity and have taskforce reports on these. Teachers studies exist in some communities. All of these will be inputs into the self-study. However, the study itself will be designed to deal with the important issues of Jewish education in that community. It will include some of the following elements:

- a. Assessment of needs and of target groups (clients).
- b. Rates of participation.
- c. Preliminary assessment of the educators in the community (e.g., their educational backgrounds).

The self-study will be linked with the work of the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project.

Some of the definition of the study and some of the data collection will be undertaken with the help of that project's field researcher.

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LEAD COMMUNITIES AT WORK

A. INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America completed its work with five recommendations. The establishment of Lead communities is one of those recommendations, but it is also the means or the place where the other recommendations will be played out and implemented. Indeed, a lead community will demonstrate locally, how to:

1. Build the profession of Jewish education and thereby address the shortage of qualified personnel;
2. Mobilize community support to the cause of Jewish education;
3. Develop a research capability which will provide the knowledge needed to inform decisions and guide development. In Lead Communities this will be undertaken through the monitoring, evaluation and feedback project;
4. Establish an implementation mechanism at the local level, parallel to the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, to be a catalyst for the implementation of these recommendations;
5. The fifth recommendation is, of course, the lead community itself, to function as a local laboratory for Jewish education.

(The implementation of recommendations at the continental level is discussed in separate documents.)

B. THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

1. A Lead Community will be an entire community engaged in a major development and improvement program of its Jewish education to demonstrate what can happen where there is an infusion of outstanding personnel into the educational system, where the importance of Jewish education is recognized by the community and its leadership and where the necessary resources are secured to meet additional needs.

The vision and programs developed in Lead Communities will demonstrate to the Jewish Community of North America what Jewish education at its best can achieve.

2. The Lead Community project will involve all or most Jewish education actors in that community. It is expected that lay leaders, educators, rabbis and heads of educational institutions of all ideological streams and points of view will participate in the planning group of the project, to shape it, guide it and take part in decisions.
3. The Lead Community project will deal with the major educational areas — those in which **most people** are involved at some point in their lifetime:
 - *Supplementary Schools*
 - *Day Schools*
 - *JCCs*
 - *Israel programs*
 - *Early Childhood programs*

In addition to these areas, other fields of interest to the specific communities could also be included, e.g. a community might be particularly interested in:

- *Adult learning*
 - *Family education*
 - *Summer camping*
 - *Campus programs*
 - *Etc...*
4. **Most or all institutions** of a given area might be involved in the program (e.g. most or all supplementary schools).
 5. A large proportion of the community's Jewish population would be involved.

C. VISION

A Lead Community will be characterized by its **ongoing interest in the goals of the project**. Educational, rabbinic and lay leaders will project a vision of what the community hopes to achieve several years hence, where it wants to be in terms of the Jewish knowledge and behavior of its members, young and adult. This vision could include elements such as:

- *adolescents have a command of spoken Hebrew;*
- *intermarriage decreases;*
- *many adults study classic Jewish texts;*
- *educators are qualified and engaged in ongoing training;*
- *supplementary school attendance has increased dramatically;*

- *a locally produced Jewish history curriculum is changing the way the subject is addressed in formal education;*
- *the local Jewish press is educating through the high level of its coverage of key issues.*

The vision, the goals, the content of Jewish education would be addressed at two levels:

1. At the communal level the leadership would develop and articulate a notion of where it wants to be, what it wants to achieve.
2. At the level of individual institutions or groups of institutions of similar views (e.g., all Reform schools), educators, rabbis, lay leaders and parents will articulate the educational goals.

It is anticipated that these activities will create much debate and ferment in the community, that they will focus the work of the Lead Communities on core issues facing the Jewish identity of North American Jewry, and that they will demand of communities to face complex dilemmas and choices (e.g., the nature and level of commitment that educational institutions will demand and aspire to). At the same time they will re-focus the educational debate on the content of education.

The Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning, the denominations, the national organizations will join in this effort, to develop alternative visions of Jewish education. First steps have already been taken (e.g., JTS preparing itself to take this role for Conservative schools in Lead Communities).

D. BUILDING THE PROFESSION OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Communities may want to address the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education in some of the following ways:

1. Hire 2-3 additional outstanding educators to bolster the strength of educational practice in the community and to energize thinking about the future.
2. Create several new positions, as required, in order to meet the challenges. For example: a director of teacher education or curriculum development, or a director of Israel programming.
3. Develop ongoing in-service education for most educators in the community, by programmatic area or by subject matter (e.g. the teaching of history in supplementary schools; adult education in community centers).

4. Invite training institutions and other national resources to join in the effort, and invite them to undertake specific assignments in lead communities. (E.g. Hebrew Union College might assume responsibility for in-service education of all Reform supplementary school staff. Yeshiva University would do so for Orthodox day-schools.)
5. Recruit highly motivated graduates of day schools who are students at the universities in the Lead Community to commit themselves to multi-year assignments as educators in supplementary schools and JCCs.
6. Develop a thoughtful plan to improve the terms of employment of educators in the community (including salary and benefits, career ladder, empowerment and involvement of front-line educators in the Lead Community development process.)

Simultaneously the CIJE has undertaken to deal with continental initiatives to improve the personnel situation. For example it works with foundations to expand and improve the training capability for Jewish educators in North America.

E. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This could be undertaken as follows:

1. Establishing a wall-to-wall coalition in each Lead Community, including the Federation, the congregations, day schools, JCCs, Hillel etc...
2. Developing a special relationship to rabbis and synagogues.
3. Identify a lay "Champion" who will recruit a leadership group that will drive the Lead Community process.
4. Increase local funding for Jewish education.
5. Develop a vision for Jewish education in the community.
6. Involve the professionals in a partnership to develop this vision and a plan for its implementation.
7. Establish a local implementation mechanism with a professional head.
8. Encourage an ongoing public discussion of and advocacy for Jewish education.

F. THE ROLE OF THE CIJE IN ESTABLISHING LEAD COMMUNITIES

The CIJE, through its staff, consultants and projects will facilitate implementation of programs and will ensure continental input into the Lead Communities. The CIJE will make the following available:

1. *BEST PRACTICES*

A project to create an inventory of good Jewish educational practice was launched. The project will offer Lead Communities examples of educational practice in key settings, methods, and topics, and will assist the communities in "importing," "translating," "re-inventing" best practices for their local settings.

The Best Practices initiative has several interrelated dimensions. In the first year the project deals with best practices in the following areas:

- * *Supplementary schools*
- * *Early childhood programs*
- * *Jewish community centers*
- * *Day schools*
- * *Israel Experience programs*

It works in the following way:

- a. First a group of experts in each specific area is recruited to work in an area (e.g., JCCs). These experts are brought together to define what characterizes best practices in their area, (e.g., a good supplementary school has effective methods for the teaching of Hebrew).
- b. The experts then seek out existing examples of good programs in the field. They undertake site visits to programs and report about these in writing.

As lead communities begin to work, experts from the above team will be available to be brought into the lead community to offer guidance about specific new ideas and programs, as well as to help import a best practice into that community.

2. *MONITORING EVALUATION FEEDBACK*

The CIJE has established an evaluation project. Its purpose is three-fold:

- a. To carry out ongoing monitoring of progress in Lead Communities, in order to assist community leaders, planners and educators in their work. A researcher will be commissioned for each Lead Community and will collect and analyze data and offer it to

practitioners for their consideration. The purpose of this process is to improve and correct implementation in each Lead Community.

- b. To **evaluate progress** in Lead Communities — assessing, as time goes on, the impact and effectiveness of each program, and its suitability for replication elsewhere. Evaluation will be conducted by a variety of methods. Data will be collected by the local researcher. Analysis will be the responsibility of the head of the evaluation team with two purposes in mind: 1) To evaluate the effectiveness of individual programs and of the Lead Communities themselves as models for change, and 2) To begin to create indicators (e.g., level of participation in Israel programs; achievement in Hebrew reading) and a database that could serve as the basis for an ongoing assessment of the state of Jewish education in North America. This work will contribute in the long term to the publication of a periodic “state of Jewish education” report as suggested by the Commission.
- c. The feedback-loop: findings of monitoring and evaluation activities will be continuously channeled to local and CIJE planning activities in order to affect them and act as an ongoing corrective. In this manner there will be a rapid exchange of knowledge and mutual influence between practice and planning. Findings from the field will require ongoing adaptation of plans. These changed plans will in turn, affect implementation and so on.

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