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COUNCIL FOR INITIATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

LEAD COMMUNITIES CONSULTATION

May 11 - 12, 1993

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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 supplemen- tary 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

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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" 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 actors;

b. It would launch an ongoing planning process; and

c. It would deal with content in the following manner.

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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:

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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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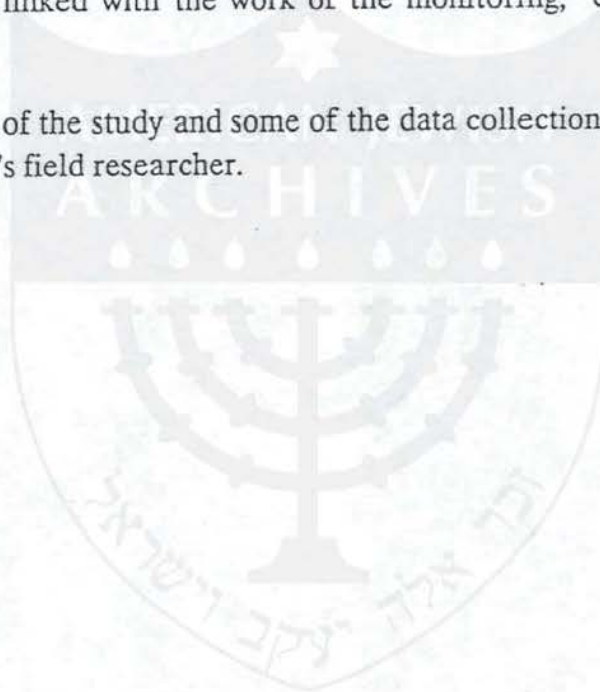
THE CHALLENGE OF SYSTEMIC REFORM:
LESSONS FROM THE NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE FOR THE CIJE

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THE CHALLENGE OF SYSTEMIC REFORM:
LESSONS FROM THE NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE FOR THE CIJE

In 1988, the Annie E. Casey Foundation committed about $40 million over a five-year

period to fund community-wide reforms in four mid-sized cities: Dayton, Ohio; Little Rock,

Arkansas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Savannah, Georgia.[1] The reforms were aimed at

radically improving the life-chances of at-risk youth, and at the core of the agenda were changes

in educational systems and in relations between schools and other social service agencies. Despite

major investments, not only financial but in time, energy, and good will, from participants as well

as the Foundation, the New Futures Initiative has made little headway in improving education.

According to a three-year evaluation:

> The programs, policies, and structures implemented as part of New Futures have not
> begun to stimulate a fundamental restructuring of schools. For the most part,
> interventions were supplemental, leaving most of the basic activities and practices of
> schools unaltered. At best, these interventions have yet to produce more than superficial
> change (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 51).

This is not a matter of failing to allow time for programs to take effect, nor is it the problem that

weak outcome indicators prevented recognition of the benefits of innovative programs. Rather,

the programs themselves have been weakly conceived and poorly implemented.

There are striking similarities between the action plans of New Futures and the CIJE's

lead communities project. Consideration of the struggles of New Futures therefore provides

important lessons for the CIJE which may allow us to avoid the pitfalls that New Futures has

encountered. In this paper, I will describe the design and implementation of New Futures, and

show its similarities to the CIJE's agenda. Next, I will summarize New Futures' successes and

frustrations.[2] Finally, I will explore the implications of the New Futures experience for the CIJE.

The Design of New Futures

Just as the CIJE was born out of dire concern for the fate of American Jewry, the New Futures Initiative emerged in response to a sense of crisis in urban America. Like the CIJE, New Futures is concentrating major assistance in a few locations, and emphasizing community-wide (or systemic) reform, rather than isolated improvements. At the heart of New Futures' organizational plan are community collaboratives: local boards created in each of the New Futures cities which are supposed to build consensus around goals and policies, coordinate the efforts of diverse agencies, and facilitate implementation of innovative programs. These collaboratives began with detailed self-studies which served both as part of their applications to become New Futures cities, and as the groundwork for the agendas they developed subsequently. Each city developed a management information system (MIS) that would gauge the welfare of youth and inform policy decisions. Like the CIJE, the Casey Foundation listed certain areas of reform that each city was required to address, and encouraged additional reforms that fit particular contexts.[3]

Another similarity between New Futures and the CIJE is the decision to play an active part in the development and implementation of reforms. Unlike the sideline role played by most grant-givers, New Futures provided policy guidelines, advice, and technical assistance. New Futures has a liaison for each city who visits frequently. According to the evaluators, "the Foundation attempted to walk a precarious line between prescribing and shaping New Futures efforts according to its own vision and encouraging local initiative and inventiveness" (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 8).

The New Futures Initiative differed from the CIJE in that it began with clear ideas about what outcomes had to be changed. These included increased student attendance and achievement, better youth employment prospects, and reductions in suspensions, course failures, grade retentions, and teenage pregnancies. New Futures recognized, however, that these were

long-term goals, and they did not expect to see much change in these outcomes during the first few years. The three-year evaluation focused instead on intermediate goals, asking five main questions (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 17):

1. Have the interventions stimulated school-wide changes that fundamentally affect all students' experiences, or have the interventions functioned more as "add-ons"...?

2. Have the interventions contributed to...more supportive and positive social relations...throughout the school?

3. Have the interventions led to changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment...that generate higher levels of student engagement in academics, especially in problem solving and higher order thinking activities?

4. Have the interventions...give(n teachers and principals) more autonomy and responsibility...while also making them more accountable...?

5. Have the interventions brought to the schools additional material or human resources...?

Although Wehlage and his colleagues observed some successes, notably the establishment of management information systems, and exciting but isolated innovations in a few schools, by and large the intermediate goals were not met: interventions were supplemental rather than fundamental; social relations remained adversarial; there was virtually no change in curriculum and instruction; and autonomy, responsibility, and community resources evidenced but slight increases.

New Futures' Limited Success

New Futures' greatest achievement thus far may be the "improved capacity to gather data on youths" (Education Week, 9/25/91, p. 12). Prior to New Futures, the cities had little precise information on how the school systems were functioning. Basic data, such as dropout and achievement rates, were not calculated reliably. Establishing clear procedures for gathering information means that the cities will be able to identify key areas of need and keep track of progress. For example, the data pointed to sharp discrepancies between black and white

suspension rates, and this has made suspension policies an important issue. The outcome indicators showed little change over the first three years, but they were not expected to. New Futures participants anticipated that data-gathering will pay off in the future.

The intermediate outcomes, which were expected to show improvement from 1988 to 1991, have been the source of frustration. None of the five areas examined by Wehlage's team showed major improvement. For example, the most extensive structural change was the rearrangement of some Little Rock and Dayton middle schools into clusters of teachers and students. This plan was adopted to personalize the schooling experience for students, and to offer opportunities for collaboration among teachers. Yet no new curricula or instructional approaches resulted from this restructuring, and it has not led to more supportive teacher-student relations. Observers reported:

> (A)t cluster meetings teachers address either administrative details or individual students. When students are discussed, teachers tend to focus on personal problems and attempt to find idiosyncratic solutions to individual needs. They commonly perceive students' problems to be the result of personal character defects or the products of dysfunctional homes. "Problems" are usually seen as "inside" the student and his/her family; prescriptions or plans are designed to "fix" the student. Clusters have not been used as opportunities for collaboration and reflection in developing broad educational strategies that could potentially address institutional sources of student failure (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 22).

The failure to take advantage of possibilities offered by clustering is symptomatic of what the Wehlage team saw as the fundamental reason for lack of progress: the absence of change in the culture of educational institutions in the New Futures cities. Educators continue to see the sources of failure as within the students; their ideas about improvement still refer to students' buckling down and doing the work. The notion that schools might change their practices to meet the needs of a changed student population has yet to permeate the school culture.

Another example of unchanged culture was manifested in strategies for dealing with the suspension problem. As New Futures began, it was not uncommon for a third of the student

body in a junior high school to receive suspensions during a given school year. In some cases, suspended students could not make up work they missed; this led them to fall further behind and increased their likelihood of failure. In response, several schools began programs of in-school suspensions. However, out-of-school suspensions remained common, and in-school suspensions were served in a harsh and punitive atmosphere that contradicted the goal of improving the schools' learning environments.

The newspaper account of New Futures' progress focused on a different source of frustration: the complexity of coordinating efforts among diverse social agencies, schools, and the Foundation. This task turned out to be much more difficult than anticipated. The article quotes James Van Vleck, chair of the collaborative in Dayton: "As we've sobered up and faced the issues, we have found that getting collaboration between those players is a much more complicated and difficult game than we expected" (p. 12). Part of the difficulty lay in not spending enough time and energy building coalitions and consensus at the outset. Otis Johnson, who leads the Savannah collaborative, is quoted as saying: "If we had used at least the first six months to plan and to do a lot of bridge-building and coordination that we had to struggle with through the first year, I think it would have been much smoother" (p. 13).

The push to get started led to an appearance of a top-down project, though that was not the intention. Teachers, principals, and social workers--those who have contact with the youth-- were not heavily involved in generating programs. Both the news account and the evaluation report describe little progress in encouraging teachers and principals to develop new programs, and school staff appeared suspicious about whether their supposed empowerment was as real as it was made out to be (see Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 31).

Inherent tensions in an outside intervention contributed to these difficulties. The use of policy evaluation has made some participants feel "whip-sawed around" (Education Week, 9/25/91,

p. 15). A Dayton principal explained, "We were always responding to...either the collaborative or the foundation. It was very frustrating for teachers who were not understanding why the changes were occurring" (Education Week, 9/25/91, p. 15). Another tension emerged in the use of technical assistance: While some participants objected to top-down reforms, others complained that staff development efforts have been brief and limited, rather than sustained.

According to the evaluation team, the New Futures projects in the four cities have suffered from the lack of an overall vision of what needs to be changed. How, exactly, should students' and teachers' daily lives be different? There seem to be no answers to this question.

Implications: How Can the CIJE Avoid Similar Frustration?

The New Futures experience offers four critical lessons for the CIJE: (1) the need for a vision about the content of educational and community reforms; (2) the need to modify the culture of schools and other institutions along with their structures; (3) the importance of balancing enthusiasm and momentum with coalition-building and careful thinking about programs; and (4) the need for awareness of inherent tensions in an intervention stimulated in part by external sources.

The importance of content. Although New Futures provided general guidelines, no particular programs were specified. This plan may well have been appropriate in light of concerns about top-down reform. Yet the community collaboratives also failed to enact visions of educational restructuring, and most new programs were minor "add-ons" to existing structures. Wehlage and his colleagues concluded that reforms would remain isolated and ineffective without a clear vision of overall educational reform. Such a vision must be informed by current knowledge about education, yet at the same time emerge from participation of "street-level" educators--those who deal directly with youth.

This finding places the CIJE's "best practices" project at the center of its operation. Through a deliberate and wide-ranging planning process, each lead community must develop a broad vision of its desired educational programs and outcomes. Specific programs can then be developed in collaboration with the CIJE, drawing on knowledge generated by the best practices project. In addition to information about "what works," the best practices project can provide access to technical support outside the community and the CIJE. This support must be sustained rather than limited to brief interventions, and it must be desired by local educators rather than foisted from above. In short, each lead community must be able to answer the question, "how should students' and educators' daily lives be different?"; and the best practices project must provide access to knowledge that will help generate the answers.

Changing culture as well as structure. Jewish educators are no less likely than staff in secular schools to find sources of failure outside their institutions. Indeed, the diminished (though not eradicated) threat of anti-semitism, the rise in mixed-marriage families, disillusion with Israel, and the general reduction of spirituality in American public and private life,[4] all may lower the interests of youth in their Jewishness and raise the chances of failure for Jewish education. Thus, Jewish educators would be quite correct to claim that if North American youth fail to remain Jewish, it is largely due to circumstances beyond the educators' control. But this is besides the point. At issue is not external impediments, but how educational and social agencies can respond to changing external circumstances. In New Futures cities, educators have mainly attempted to get students to fit existing institutions. If CIJE communities do the same, their likelihood of failure is equally great. Instead, lead communities must consider changes in their organizational structures and underlying assumptions to meet the needs of a changing Jewish world.

How do CIJE plans address this concern? The intention to mobilize support for education, raising awareness of its centrality in all sectors of the community, is an important first step, particularly since it is expected to result in new lay leadership for education and community collaboration. New Futures' experience shows that this tactic is necessary but not sufficient. In New Futures cities, community collaboratives galvanized support and provided the moral authority under which change could take place. Yet little fundamental change occurred. Educators have not experimented much with new curricula, instructional methods, responsibilities or roles, because their basic beliefs about teaching and learning have not changed.

It is possible that the CIJE's strategy of building a profession of Jewish education address this problem. Perhaps unlike the secular educational world, where methods are well-entrenched, professionalization in Jewish education will carry with it an openness to alternatives, encouraging teachers to create and use new knowledge about effective programs. Professionalization may bring out the capacity to experiment with "best practices" and a willingness to adopt them when they appear to work.

Balance enthusiasm with careful planning. Those involved in New Futures believe they should have spent more time building coalitions and establishing strategies before introducing new programs. Douglas W. Nelson, executive director of the Casey Foundation, regrets that more time was not taken for planning. He observed: "We made it more difficult, in the interest of using the urgency of the moment and the excitement of commitment, to include and get ownership at more levels" (Education Week, 9/25/91, p. 13). Again, it is not just the structure that requires change--this can be mandated from above--but the unspoken assumptions and beliefs that guide everyday behavior which require redefinition. Institutional culture cannot be changed by fiat, but only through a slow process of mutual consultation and increasing commitment.

Lead communities also need a long planning period to develop new educational programs that are rich in content and far-reaching in impact. This process requires a thorough self-study, frank appraisal of current problems, discussions of goals with diverse members of the community, and careful consideration of existing knowledge. If "lead communities" is a twenty-year project, surely it is worth taking a year or more for preparation. Deliberation at the planning stage creates a risk that momentum will be lost, and it may be important to take steps to keep enthusiasm high, but the lesson of New Futures show that enthusiasm must not overtake careful planning. The current schedule for the lead communities project (as of January, 1992) appears to have taken account of these concerns.

Awareness of unavoidable tensions. New Futures' experience highlights tensions that are inherent to the process of an outside intervention, and the CIJE must be sensitive so the effects of such tensions can be mitigated. The CIJE must recognize the need for stability after dramatic initial changes take place. The CIJE's evaluation plan must be developed and agreed upon by all parties before the end of the lead communities' planning period. Technical support from the CIJE must be sustained, rather than haphazard. While the CIJE cannot hold back constructive criticism, it must balance criticism with support for honest efforts. Many of these tactics have been used by New Futures, and they may well account for the fact that New Futures is still ongoing and has hopes of eventual success, despite the frustrations of the early years.

Conclusion

The New Futures Initiative, the Casey Foundation's effort to improve the lot of at-risk youth in four American cities, has been limited by supplemental rather than fundamental change, the inability to modify underlying beliefs even where structural changes occur, and by the complexities of coordinating the work of diverse agencies. Although it will be difficult for the CIJE to overcome these challenges, awareness of their likely emergence may help forestall them

or mitigate their consequences. In particular, the CIJE should help lead communities develop

their visions of new educational programs; think about cultural as well as structural change;

ensure a thorough self-study, wide-ranging participation, and careful planning; and remain

sensitive to tensions that are unavoidable when an outside agent is the stimulus of change.

> Lo alecha ha-m'lacha ligmor, v'lo ata ben horin l'hibatel mi-menah. Ha-yom katzar v'ha-m'lacha m'rubah, v'ha-poalim atzeylim, v'ha-sahar harbeh. U-va'al ha-bayit dohek --- Pirke Avot.

> (It is not your responsibility to finish the task, but neither are you free to shirk it. The day is short and the task is large, the workers are lazy, and the reward is great. And the Master of the House is pressing --- Sayings of the Fathers.)

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Lawrence, Massachusetts, was originally included as well, with an additional $10 million, but it was dropped during the second year after the community failed to reach consensus on how to proceed.

2. This account relies largely on two sources. One is an Education Week news report by Deborah L. Cohen, which appeared on Sept. 25, 1991. The second is an academic paper by the Casey Foundation's evaluation team: Gary G. Wehlage, Gregory Smith, and Pauline Lipman, "Restructuring Urban Schools: The New Futures Experience" (Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, May 1991).

3. The reforms required (or "strongly encouraged") by the Casey Foundation were site-based management, flexibility for teachers, individualized treatment of students, staff development, and community-wide collaboration. This list is longer than the CIJE's, whose required elements are building the educational profession and mobilizing community support.

4. On the decline of spirituality in America, see Robert N. Bellah et. al, Habits of the Heart (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

August 1, 1992

MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND FEEDBACK IN LEAD COMMUNITIES -- TENTATIVE PLAN OF WORK FOR 1992-93

I.   CONTENT

For Lead Communities, 1992-93 will be a planning year. The agenda for the evaluation project is to raise questions that will (a) stimulate and assist the planning process; (b) enumerate the goals that Lead Communities intend to address; and (c) identify current practice so that progress towards goals can be assessed in the future. Broadly, the field researchers will raise three questions:

(1)   What are the visions for change in Jewish education held by members of the communities? How do the visions vary across different individuals or segments of the community? How vague or specific are these visions? To what extent do these visions crystallize over the course of the planning year (1992-1993)?

(2)   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 manpower?

(3)   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 their degree of satisfaction with salaries? 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?

Visions of reform. The issue of goals was not addressed in A Time To Act. The commission report never specified what changes should occur as a result of improving Jewish education, beyond the most general aim of Jewish continuity. Specifying goals is a challenging enterprise given the diversity within the Jewish community. Nonetheless, the Lead Communities project cannot advance -- and it certainly cannot be evaluated -- without a compilation of the desired outcomes.

For purposes of the evaluation project, we will take goals to mean outcomes that are desired within the Lead Communities. We anticipate uncovering multiple goals, and we expect persons in different segments of the community to hold different and sometimes conflicting preferences. Our aim is not to adjudicate among competing goals, but to uncover and spell out the visions for change that are held across the community. To some extent, goals that emerge in Lead Communities will be clearly stated by participants. Other goals, however, will be implicit in plans and projects, and

the evaluation team will need to tease them out. The evaluation project will consider both short-term and long-term goals.

Another reason for focusing on visions is that a lack of clear goals has hindered the success of many previous reform efforts in general education. For example, the New Futures Initiative, an effort by the Casey Foundation to invigorate educational and community services in four inner-city communities, was frustrated by poor articulation between broad goals and specific programs. Although the communities were mobilized for reform, the connections between community leaders and front-line educators did not promote far-reaching programs for fundamental changes. New programs were generally supplemental, and they tended to produce superficial changes.

Questions related to visions include asking about anticipated obstacles, about overcoming barriers between segments of the Jewish community, and about how participants foresee moving from goals to implementation. By asking questions about visions, the evaluation project will not only document goals, but will help persons at all levels of the Lead Communities project -- lay leaders, parents, educators, and other Jewish professionals -- to think about their visions of the future. This process may lead to interactive thinking about goals, and may help the communities avoid purely top-down or bottom-up strategies.

It will be important to consider the concreteness of the visions in each community. Do the visions include a concept of implementation, or do ideas about goals remain abstract? Do participants recognize a link between their visions of change and the structure they have established to bring about change?

Community mobilization. According to A Time To Act, mobilizing community support for Jewish education is a "building block" of the Lead Communities Project, a condition that is essential to the success of the endeavor. This involves recruiting lay leaders and educating them about the importance of education, as well as increasing the financial resources that are committed to education. The Report quotes one commissioner as saying, "The challenge is that by the year 2000, the vast majority of these community leaders should see education as a burning issue and the rest should at least think it is important. When this is achieved...money will be available to finance fully the massive program envisioned by the Commission (p.64)."

Recent advances in educational theory also emphasize the importance of community-wide, "systemic" reform instead of innovations in isolated programs. Educational change is more likely to succeed, according to this view, when it occurs in a broad, supportive context, and when there is widespread consensus on the importance of the enterprise. Hence, an important issue for the evaluation of Lead Communities is the breadth and depth of participation in the project. What formal and informal linkages exist among the various agencies of the community? Which agencies participate in the visions of change that have been articulated?

As part of their applications Lead Communities are proposing planning processes for the first year of work. In studying mobilization in the communities, we need to observe how this planning process unfolds. Is the stated design followed? Are departures from initial plans helpful or harmful? Is there broad participation? Are the planners developing thoughtful materials? We will need to describe the decision-making process. Is it open or closed? Are decisions pragmatic or wishful?

The professional lives of Jewish educators. Enhancing the profession of Jewish education is the second critical building block specified in A Time To Act. The Report claims that fundamental improvement in Jewish education is not possible without radical change in areas such as recruitment, training, salaries, career tracks, and empowerment of educators. Hence, the evaluation project will establish baseline conditions which can serve as standards for comparison in future years.

Field research may center on characteristics and conditions of educators including background and training, salaries, and degree of satisfaction with salaries; school facilities; cohesiveness of school faculties; administrative support for innovation; and so on. Additionally, we will observe a subset of educational programs that are in place as the Lead Communities project begins. These observations will be used as baseline data for comparative purposes in subsequent years. We will try to consider programs which, according to the visions articulated in the community, seem ripe for change.

II. METHODS

In the long term (e.g., four years?), it is possible to think about quantitative assessment of educational change in Lead Communities. This assessment would involve limited surveys that would be administered in 1993-94 and repeated perhaps every two years. For the present, the evaluation project will make only limited use of quantitative data, relying mainly on information gathered by the community itself, such as participation rates, trends in funding, teacher turnover, etc. The bulk of the assessment carried out by the evaluation project, at least during the first two years, will emphasize qualitative assessment of the process of change in Lead Communities. The main methodological tools will be interviews and observations.

Snowball sampling for interviews. A "snowball" technique for selecting interview respondents appears appropriate here. In this approach, the researcher identifies an initial group of respondents, and adds to the list of subjects by asking each interviewee to suggest additional respondents. At some point in an interview, for example, the researcher might ask, "Who else is involved in (program x)? Who else is a leader in this area in this community?" Subsequently, the researcher interviews some of those named by previous subjects, particularly if new subjects are named by more than one previous informant.

In the snowball approach, it is important to begin with multiple starting points, so that one does not become confined to a narrow clique within the community. We might use the following three starting points from which we would snowball outward:

(1)　Key actors identified in the Lead Communities proposal from each community.

(2)　A list of leaders of all community organizations that are involved in education, possibly prepared by the head of the local Jewish federation. The list must include leaders of any organizations that are not participating in the Lead Communities project.

(3)　Random samples of educators and lay persons not included in (1) or (2).

These samples should clarify the social ecology of the Jewish community.

Aims of evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation, especially in the first two years, is weighted more towards developing policy than towards program accountability. Feedback on the process is seen as much more important than summative evaluation at the present time. We suspect that most Jewish educators recognize that Jewish education is not succeeding, and will understand that the field researchers are not there to document their failures. Instead, the field researchers can serve the educators and their communities by helping them reflect on their situations and by serving as mirrors in which their programs can be viewed alongside their goals.

In one sense, the evaluation project does emphasize accountability. By the end of the first year, Lead Communities are expected to have well-articulated visions for change, and implementation plans developed. The evaluation project will help judge whether the processes within the Lead Communities are leading towards these outcomes, and will assess progress toward these general goals in the spring of 1993.

Update from Adam Gamoran

January, 1993

RATIONALE FOR THE PROJECT

How will we know whether the lead communities have succeeded
in creating better structures and processes for Jewish education?
On what basis will CIJE encourage other cities to emulate the
programs developed in lead communities? Like any innovation, the
lead communities project requires a monitoring, evaluation, and
feedback component to document its efforts and gauge its success.

By <monitoring> we mean observing and documenting the planning
and implementation of changes. <Evaluation> means interpreting
information in a way that will strengthen and assist each
community's efforts to improve Jewish education.   <Feedback> will
occur in the form of oral and written responses to community members
and to the CIJE.

Two aspects of educational change need to be addressed: The
<process> of change and the <outcomes> of change.   At present, we
are in much better position to study the process of change, because
the outcomes have not yet been defined.   What results are we
expecting?   Increased participation?   Gains in Judaic knowledge?
More ritual practices?
Better affect towards Jewish institutions? We will use our study of

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the process of change to elicit the goals of the project that are particular to the three communities taking part.

The lead communities project is a direct result of A TIME TO ACT. Although that document provided the essential blueprint for the project, it was silent on the question of outcomes.
One contribution of the early stages of the evaluation project will be to enumerate the variety of specific goals envisioned within the lead communities.

Despite the ambiguity about goals at present, there are a few uncontroversial outcomes. For example, all would agree that increased participation in Jewish institutions by the Jews of the community is desirable. This type of measure can be monitored from the outset.

FIELD RESEARCH IN LEAD COMMUNITIES

Studying the process of change in lead communities should be a major component of the CIJE strategy. Documenting the process is especially important because the effects of innovation may not be manifested for several years. For example, suppose Community X manages to quadruple its number of full-time, professionally-trained Jewish educators. How long will it take for this change to affect cognitive and affective outcomes for students? Since the results cannout be detected immediately, it is important to obtain a qualitative sense of the extent to which the professional educators are being used effectively.

Studying the process is also important in the case of unsuccessful innovation. Suppose despite the best-laid plans, Community X is unable to increase its professional teaching force. Learning from this experience would require knowledge of the point at which the process broke down.

It is essential to begin monitoring the process of change as soon as possible -- ideally before the change process actually begins. There are three reasons to commence this study early on:

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(1) In order to understand change, it is obviously essential to gather baseline information before the change has occurred. Baseline information means not only essential quantitative data, such as enrollment figures, but understanding of the structure and culture of the community at the outset. What ideas about Jewish education are prevalent? How are these ideas, or visions, distributed through the community? What is the nature of leadership and communication in this community? To what extent is the community mobilized for Jewish education?

What characterizes the professional
lives of Jewish educators? Answers to these questions must be chronicled to strengthen the collective memory for later comparison.
The earlier the evaluation staff is present, the sooner they can obtain a general background understanding of the community, and can also establish a positive rapport with community members. That way they are less likely to miss or misinterpret changes that occur once the implementation begins.

(2) The early presence of evaluation staff can help stimulate new visions for Jewish education and can heighten the mobilization of the community. Lead communities have the opportunity to consider dramatically restructured approaches to

Jewish education in addition to modifications of existing programs. By asking community members about their visions for

the future, and by providing feedback that facilitates communication about such visions, the evaluation project can encourage a constructive dialogue within the communities.

(4) The CIJE is a long-term enterprise, not a one-shot deal. There is every chance that more lead communities will be created in the next three, five, or ten years. We need to learn about the launching
and gearing-up process so other communities can learn from this

experience. For example, very little is known about mobilizing lay persons in support of education. We need to watch how this occurs so other communities can follow.

To carry out this task, we have hired a team of three FIELD RESEARCHERS.
One researcher is based in each community, but they will all spend time in all three communities. This is because they have complementary strengths -- they differ in their expertise as researchers, and in their knowledge of Jewish education -- and because keeping more than one pair of eyes on a situation provides both a check and a stimulus for deeper interpretation.

The design of the lead communities project calls for each community to carry out a self-study, which presumably would include information on community composition, population trends, and enrollment figures. The field researchers are prepared to assist in this process, but they cannot be its primary agents, lest they have no time for their other activities.

For next year, we are proposing a survey component to the evaluation

project, which would gather baseline data on affective, behavioral, and cognitive outcomes, probably from a selected youth cohort within each community. We hope to proceed with the surveys despite the lack of consensus about goals, because of the overriding importance of gathering some form of baseline data on outcomes which can be tracked over the years. The surveys would incorporate community input into their design.

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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

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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.

The issue 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.

Seymour Fox & Daniel Marom

To: CIJE Interested Parties
From: Barry W. Holtz
Re: **Pilot Projects**
February 22, 1993

We have spent some time talking about the concept of the "Pilot
Projects" for the Lead Communities. In this memo I will put down
some ideas that Shulamith Elster and I have been thinking about that
may help our discussions about the Pilots.

A Pilot Project is an initiative undertaken by a Lead Community in
its start-up phase, even before the planning process is completed.
The purpose of the Pilots is to "jump start" the process for change
in the Lead Communities as well as to build local enthusiasm for the
Lead Communities Project. In addition Pilot Projects can help in
the planning process or test on a small scale what may later be at-
tempted in a larger context.

All Pilot Projects should be centered around the two main "direc-
tives" of the CIJE, as stated in **A Time to Act**: a) build community
support for Jewish education; b) build the personnel of the profes-
sion of Jewish education.

Shulamith and I have conceptualized three different "cuts" into the
Pilots (which we call Pilot A, B and C), all or some of which can be
launched in each Lead Community.

Pilot A

Pilot A is a series of consultations-- an ongoing educational
seminar-- by the CIJE and its guest consultants developed for the
Lead Community Commission. Its purpose is to help the Lead Com-
munities plan, envision and launch the implementation of educational
change. These consultations would, in essence, form the beginnings
of the "content" side of the planning process outlined in the **Lead
Communities Planning Guide** (see specifically pp. 31-33).

The "curriculum" of these consultations would be based on the work
of the Best Practices Project. Shulamith and I would lead (or ar-
range for other consultants to lead) a presentation and discussion
about each of the areas in the project: supplementary schools, early
childhood Jewish education, the Israel Experience, JCCs, day
schools, the college campus, adult education, camping, and
community-wide initiatives (those programs in training, recruitment,
board development, etc. that have been done at the community level
such as Federation or BJE). In addition, we will devote sessions to
the process of implementing change in educational settings.

Where the publications of the Best Practices Project are available
(e.g. the supplementary school), we will use those volumes as the
"text"; where they are not available, experts in the field who are
working on the project will present to the group.

The seminar will also include presentations from educators in the Best Practices sites and visits by the Lead Communities Commission (or relevant task forces within it) to actual Best Practices sites.

Pilot B

Pilot A works at the level of community leadership; Pilot B aims at the educational leadership in the local Lead Community. It focuses on the introduction of new ideas into the the community. Here we could imagine a similar approach to Pilot A, but with a different audience: sessions with relevant educational leaders based around the Best Practices Project; visits to sites; visits from Best Practices practitioners.

Pilot C

Pilot C aims to be less oriented on planning and more focused on practical skills, for a number of different potential populations:

#1: The Rabbis Seminar for supplementary schools. Based on Joseph Reimer's work for the Commission, this would be a mini-course for local rabbis on improving their supplementary school. It would include visits by rabbis the Best Practices Project supplementary schools. This could be organized by the denominations or trans-denominationally.

#2: The Supervisor Level: a mini-course oriented toward the principals of schools or agency directors around some skills important for their work-- leadership in education, supervision, board relations, etc.

#3: The "front line soldier": a project oriented for the teachers in the field. This might include an inservice project for early childhood teachers, an Israel oriented program etc. It is likely that these could come from national training and service organizations.

Examples:

The Melton Research Center/JTS has proposed an intensive program on teaching using the arts for the Baltimore BJE. This project could serve as a Pilot C, #3 project.

The Hebrew University's Melton Centre has proposed developing a number of options for Lead Communities teachers-- a) sending a teacher from each community to the Senior Educator program; b) using the Melton Mini-School in the Lead Communities to provide Jewish content knowledge for early childhood educators, etc. c) A Seminar in Israel could be arranged for principals of Lead Communities dayschools to prepare them for bringing their staff the next summer.

Yeshiva University could be approached to offer a program for Lead Communities day school teachers.

coped with others. Teachers and students will bargain to ease the effects of the requirements. A second consequence, typically ignored by school reformers, is that educational requirements piled onto high schools cannot substitute for real economic and social incentives for study. If many demanding and rewarding jobs awaited well-educated high school graduates, lots of students who now take it easy would work harder. If college and university entrance requirements were substantial, many students who now idle through the college track would step on the gas. But when real incentives that make hard work in high school rational for most students are absent, requirements alone have an Alice-in-Wonderland effect, crazily compounding the problems that schools already have. For the requirements fly in the face of what everyone knows, inviting disbelief and evasion, creating a widespread sense that the enterprise is dishonest — and this sense is fatal to good teaching and learning.

Still, there is a certain logic to the requirements. It is easier to criticize high schools than it is to criticize great corporations. It is easier to impose educational requirements on high schools than it is to press higher education to devise and enforce stronger entrance requirements — especially when many colleges and universities are hungry for bodies. And it is easier to press requirements on public institutions than it is to repair labor market problems that arise in that diffuse entity called the private sector.

One encouraging feature of the eighties debate about high schools is that it presented an opportunity to raise these questions. But one discouraging fact is that they were raised so infrequently. It seems plain enough that apathy, a sense of irrelevance, and compulsion are not the ingredients of good education. It seems plain that compounding this stew of sentiments with more requirements cannot improve education much; it may only further corrupt it. But if all of this is well known to educators, few voices were raised to question their corrupting effects. Nor did many commentators point out that even if problems in labor markets and higher education will not be addressed, there are other ways to cope with youth who see nothing for themselves in secondary studies. One is a national youth service, open to students of high school age. Another is lifetime educational entitlements for those who cannot make good use of secondary school on the established schedule. Still another

is a lowered school-leaving age. These ideas have all been advanced before, and in one way or another America has had experience with each. Yet they found little place in the eighties debate. Whether or not schools are the appropriate target for reform, they are available, visible, and easy to hit. They are an easy mark for officials who feel they must respond to popular dismay about education, but who have not the time or inclination to probe a little into the sources of dismay.

It seems odd that educators have failed to make these arguments and have instead insisted again that high schools can meet all students' needs. They repeated the old litanies about programs that are practical, interesting, and relevant. They urged that dropouts be pressed back into school. And they pleaded only that more money was required. In part this is a reflex of tradition: educators have long been committed to the evangelical notion that schools have something for everyone. In part it is self-serving: most school systems get state aid based on the number of students attending. And in part it is political strategy: educators have rarely pointed out the misdirection of reform efforts because they want to capitalize on public interest — even critical interest. Promising to do more has long been a way to avoid disappointing constituents while squeezing out more money, hiring more teachers, gaining more esteem, or improving working conditions. The strategy makes sense from one angle — appropriations to education have increased over the decades. But it has also been foolish, because the added resources have remained modest in comparison to the promises that educators have made and the demands that they have embraced. What the high schools delivered for most students therefore has always been much thinner and less effective than what was advertised. By promising to do everything well for everyone, educators have contributed to the growing sense that they can do nothing well for anyone.

There is one last, unhappy reason that educators have not pointed to certain misdirections in the current crop of reforms: one cannot point to an incorrect direction without some sense of the correct one. But American schoolpeople have been singularly unable to think of an educational purpose that they should not embrace. As a result, they never have made much effort to figure out what high schools could do well, what high schools should do, and how they

could best do it. Secondary educators have tried to solve the problem of competing purposes by accepting all of them, and by building an institution that would accommodate the result.

Unfortunately, the flip side of the belief that all directions are correct is the belief that no direction is incorrect — which is a sort of intellectual bankruptcy. Those who work in secondary education have little sense of an agenda for studies. There is only a long list of subjects that may be studied, a longer list of courses that may be taken, and a list of requirements for graduation. But there is no answer to the query, Why these and not others? Approaching things this way has made it easy to avoid arguments and decisions about purpose, both of which can be troublesome — especially in our divided and contentious society. But this approach has made it easy for schools to accept many assignments that they could not do well, and it has made nearly any sort of work from students and teachers acceptable, as long as it caused no trouble.

Another way to put the point is to say that most of the foundation work of decent secondary education still remains to be done, seven or eight decades after the system began to take shape. High schools seem unlikely to make marked improvement, especially for the many students and teachers now drifting around the malls, until there is a much clearer sense of what is most important to teach and learn, and why, and how it can best be done. This is an enormous job, one that is never finished but should long ago have been started. We watched hundreds of teachers at work, but in most cases no sense of intellectual purpose shone through. The most common purposes were getting through the period or covering the material, or some combination of the two. But why does one cover the material? If the only answer is that it has been mandated, or that it is in the book, then how can the material be taught well, or learned more than fleetingly?

Americans will never completely agree on educational purposes. But educators could, through study and debate, have made some decisions to guide them in public argument and professional work. They might have decided, for instance, that their chief purpose was to produce students who could read well and critically, who could write plainly and persuasively, and who could reason clearly. Reading, writing, and reasoning are not subjects — they are intellec-

tual capacities. They can be taught by studying academic disciplines, but only if the teachers possess the capacities in good measure, if they are trying to teach those capacities rather than to cover the material, and if the materials for study are arranged so as to cultivate those capacities — as opposed, say, to the capacity to remember a few facts, or write down disjointed bits of information.

We do not imply that these capacities are content-free, as so many approaches to "basic skills" seem to suggest today. But neither are these capacities the same thing as subjects or disciplines. In fact, the capacities we mention probably could better be cultivated if teachers were able to range across disciplines. Critical reading ability is as crucial to learning English as to learning history, and clear reasoning is no more the special province of mathematics than it is of physics or philosophy. Cutting the curriculum up into subjects makes it easy for students and teachers to forget the capacities that ought to be cultivated, and easier to pursue the illusion that education is a matter of covering the material. All of the standard academic subjects are good material for cultivating these capacities, but that is rather a different way of looking at them than as content to be learned.

This brief formulation leaves out a good deal, but it does reveal how much work remains to be done if high schools are to improve substantially. If educators could agree on such purposes, they would be better armed for debating about education and for deciding that some things cannot be done because others are more important. In addition, they would be in a position to think seriously about pedagogy — that is, about how to achieve educational purposes. Amazingly, high school educators have yet to take up this work as a profession. They have inherited a few catch phrases from the progressives: making studies practical; meeting students' needs; building the curriculum around activities — but even these have not been much developed. Perhaps there is little to develop. At the moment we don't know, because a pedagogy for high schools remains to be created.

There have been some beginnings, but most have remained very limited, or have fallen into disuse, or both. From time to time, various reformers have tried to reformulate educational purposes and to sketch out suitable pedagogy, usually from the perspective

of one discipline or another. Many of these efforts — most recently, the 1950s curriculum reforms — have been promising. But these never spread very far, or cut very deep. Only a small number of teachers ever used the new materials as the basis for working out a pedagogy for secondary studies, and all reports suggest that most of these efforts have since been abandoned. Of course, every teacher has an approach to her or his craft, but each approach is practiced in isolation and does not contribute to a body of shared professional knowledge about how to teach. These separately practiced versions of the teacher's trade do not contribute to developing the skills of those entering the profession, or to deciding about when teaching is good enough, or to improving teaching when it is not good enough. This is an unfortunate list, one that many teachers regret. For every teacher must solve the problem of how to teach. But because the schools have embraced so many purposes, they have impeded the development of a body of professional knowledge about how to teach well. The high schools' many successes have helped to produce this failure.

What we outline is a tall order. We do so partly in the hope that it may help a little in current efforts to improve the schools. But our brief discussion of purposes and pedagogy also reveals just how far high schools are from such improvement. The high schools' greatest strength has been their embracing capacity to avoid these issues, to cope with many contrary visions of education by promising to pursue all of them. That has produced institutions that are remarkably flexible, ambitious, and tolerant, capable of making room for many different sorts of students and teachers and many different wishes for education. They are institutions nicely suited to cope with Americans' fickle political and educational sensibilities. All are important strengths, but they have had crippling effects. They have stunted the high schools' capacity to take all students seriously. They have blocked teachers' capacity to cultivate those qualities long valued in educated men and women — the ability to read well and critically, to write plainly and persuasively, and to reason clearly. And they have nurtured a constrained and demeaning vision of education among Americans, a vision that persistently returns to haunt the profession that helped to create it.

Conclusion: Renegotiating the Treaties

DEEPLY IMBEDDED in American history and deeply reflective of American preferences, the shopping mall high school is likely to withstand efforts to dismantle it: too many teenagers are served in the way they want to be served, and too many school professionals willingly provide the services. Many students are served very well indeed, and most graduate. Those are historic achievements. Whatever school participants and the public in general may think about high schools in the abstract, they seem generally satisfied with or tolerant of the educational accommodations made in their own local schools. Much of what is proposed as educational reform is thus designed to make the mall more appealing to sellers and shoppers alike, rather than to alter the educational assumptions on which it is based.

In most communities and for most students, the mall works well because it is so exclusively governed by consumer choice. Learning is voluntary: it is one among many things for sale. The mall's central qualities — variety of offerings, choice among them, and neutrality about their value — have succeeded in holding most teenagers on terms they and their teachers can live with. The will to learn is perceived, in a deceptively sensible formulation, simply as the responsibility of students and their families. Students who want to learn generally can do so, especially if they seek out or are sought

GROUP PORTRAIT

SARA LAWRENCE LIGHTFOOT, The _op HIGH SCHOOL : PORTRAIN of CHARACTER AND CULTURE (NY, BASIC BOOKS, 1983

On Goodness in High Schools

and learn the difference between my own inhibitions and fears and the real warnings of danger. Perceptions of today's high schools, therefore, are plagued by romanticized remembrances of "the old days" and anxiety about the menacing stage of adolescence. Both of these responses tend to distort society's view of high schools and support the general tendency to view them as other than good.

PERMEABLE BOUNDARIES AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL

The standards by which schools define their goodness are derived from internal and external sources, from past and present realities, and from projected future goals. One is struck by how much more control private schools have over definitions and standards of goodness than their public school counterparts. In St. Paul's, for example, there is a sustained continuity of values and standards that is relatively detached from the mercurial changes in the wider society; it is a continuity that is internally defined. Surrounded by acres of magnificent woods and lakes and secluded in the hills of New Hampshire, it feels faraway from the harsh realities faced by most public secondary schools. The focus is inward and backward. Movement towards the future is guided by strong and deeply rooted historical precedents, ingrained habits, and practiced traditions. The precedents are fiercely defended by alumni who want the school to remain as they remember it, old and dedicated faculty who proudly carry the mantle of traditionalism, and the rector who sees the subtle interactions of historical certainty and adventurous approaches to the future. It is not that St. Paul's merely resists change and blindly defends traditionalism, but that it views history as a solid bedrock, an anchor in a shifting and turbulent sea.

In addition, St. Paul's faces changes with a clear consciousness and great control over the choices it creates. The changes are deliberate, calculated, and balanced against the enduring habits. Ten years ago, for example, St. Paul's became coeducational, a major change in the population and self-perception of the institution. Certainly, there are ample examples of lingering sexism. Women faculty are few and experience the subtle discrimination of tokenism. But one is more impressed with the thorough integration of boys and girls, the multiple leadership roles girls play in the life of the school, and the easy, comfortable relationships that

seem to develop between the sexes. Although the decision to become coeducational represented a critical and potentially disruptive change in school culture, the planning was carefully executed, the choice was self-imposed, and the negotiations were internally controlled.

Highland Park offers an example of a largely reactive institution with standards imposed from the outside. One is immediately aware of the school's permeable boundaries and sees the ways in which internal structures and goals reflect shifts in societal trends. The control of standards largely originates within the immediate community, which receives and interprets messages from the wider society. The waves of change reverberate within the school and administrators and faculty are often put in the position of trying to resist the shifts, negotiate a middle ground, or offer alternative views. The principal describes his role as largely reactive. Poised between the often opposed constituencies of parents and teachers, he acts as an interpreter and negotiator, and not as a visionary or initiating leader. He remarks sadly that the school is no longer at the moral center of the community; that it has become a "satellite" in the lives of students. The "real world" defines what is important and the school lags closely behind or it risks obsolescence.

The curriculum and academic structure of Highland Park, for example, have closely followed the trends of progressivism and liberalism that dominated social attitudes during the late 1960s and 1970s, and reverted back to the conservatism that resurfaced in the early 1980s. When feminist rhetoric was at its height, it was not uncommon to see boys in the home economics and interior design courses and many girls clamoring for courses in auto repair and industrial arts. Now the traditional sex-related patterns have been largely re-established and the increased competition, rigid status hierarchies, and return to subjects that will "pay off" echo the resurgence of conservative attitudes abroad in society. An old-timer on the Highland Park faculty, who has watched the shifting trends for almost three decades, refuses to become invested in the newest wrinkle. She wishes the school leadership would take a firmer, more conscious position on the school's intellectual goals and the moral values that guide them, and looks with sympathy at her younger colleagues who ride the waves of change not knowing where the tide will land.

Brookline, faced with many of the same shifts in standards and morality as Highland Park, has responded differently. Certainly it experiences similar societal reverberations within its walls, but it has also taken a more deliberate, initiating stance in relation to them. In the mid-to-late 1970s, the increased diversity of the student body caused factionalism, divisiveness, and eruptions of violence in the school. A counselor speaks

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of these harsh encounters as distinct echoes of the racial strife in the wider Boston community. Under the new leadership of Bob McCarthy, school violence was no longer tolerated. First, McCarthy helped his teachers express their long-suppressed rage at the inappropriate student behavior; second, there were immediate and harsh punishments handed down to all of the aggressors; and third, the school began to look upon "the problem" of diversity as a rich resource. The battle against factionalism is not won. The shifts in consciousness are elusive and difficult to implant in community life. Everyone continues to speak of the stark divisions among racial and ethnic groups; but now those students who manage to move across the boundaries tend to be perceived as strong and unthreatened. There is a clear admiration for their risk taking and their versatility. The social worker who once saw the school as an echo of the inequalities and injustices of the community, now says it serves as an asylum for many; a place of safety from violence; a place to learn different patterns of behavior; a place to take risks.

Headmaster McCarthy's attempts at restructuring patterns of authority in Brookline High are also aimed at undoing behaviors and attitudes learned in the wider world and marking the distinctions between school and society. Adolescents are offered a piece of the power in exchange for responsible action. It is an uphill battle. Many students prefer a more passive, reactive role and resist the demands of responsibility and authority; others are suspicious of bargaining with any adult and do not trust McCarthy's rhetoric. But the school's efforts are conscious and deliberate, designed to counteract the cultural, ideological sweeps of contemporary society and make clear decisions about philosophical goals and moral codes.

In these three examples we see great variations in the ways in which boundaries are drawn between the school and the community. St. Paul's high standards, goals, and values are most protected from societal imperatives, most preciously guarded, and most thoroughly ingrained. They are chosen and defended. Highland Park mirrors the societal shifts, sometimes offering resistance but rarely initiating conscious counter plans. Brookline lies somewhere between these approaches to the outside world. Its walls are not impenetrable, but neither are they invisible. Brookline has permeable boundaries that provide intercourse with and separation from society. Attempts are made to defend the school from the severity of societal intrusions, define educational goals and standards through internal consensus, and build resilient intellectual and moral structures.

Kennedy High School resembles Brookline in its conscious and de-

liberate attempts to define boundaries between inside and out. Bob Mastruzzi recognizes the need to be knowledgeable about the social, economic, and cultural patterns of the surrounding community; the need to have a heightened visibility in the neighborhood; and the need to be a keen observer of and participant in the political networks of the borough, city, and state. His role as "community leader" is designed to assure Kennedy's survival in a skeptical, sometimes hostile, community. Without his devoted community work, Mastruzzi fears the school would face politically debilitating negativism from neighborhood forces. But Mastruzzi does not merely reach out and embrace the community, he also articulates the strong contrasts between neighborhood values and priorities and those that guide the school. It is not that he capitulates to community pressure. Rather, he sees his role as interpreter and negotiator of the dissonant strains that emerge in the school-community interface. Sometimes he must engage in calculated, but intense, battles where the differences flare into heated conflicts. He was ready and willing to fight when he believed the Marblehead residents in the nearby working-class neighborhood did not adhere to the negotiated settlement both parties had reached.

However, Mastruzzi's concern with defining workable boundaries is not limited to establishing relationships with the wider community. He is at least as preoccupied with negotiating the bureaucratic terrain of the New York City school system. There are layers of administrators and decision makers in the central office whose priorities and regulations affect the internal life of Kennedy. These external requirements are felt most vividly by the principal and assistant principals, who must find effective and legal adaptations of the prescribed law. Once again, Mastruzzi does not passively conform to the regulations of the "central authorities." He tries to balance the school's need for autonomy and the system's need for uniform standards. He distinguishes between the spirit and the letter of the law, sometimes ignoring the latter when the literal interpretation is a poor match for his school's needs. He also serves as a "buffer" against the persistent intrusions of the wider system in order to offer his faculty and staff the greatest possible freedom and initiative.[7]

Institutional control is a great deal easier for schools with abundant resources, non-public funding, and historical stability. It is not only that private schools tend to be more protected from societal trends, divergent community demands, and broader bureaucratic imperatives; they are also more likely to have the advantage of the material and psychological resources of certainty. In many ways, these six schools seem to exist in different worlds. The inequalities are dramatic, the societal injustices fla-

grant. One has feelings of moral outrage as one makes the transition from the lush, green 1,700 acres of St. Paul's to the dusty streets of the Carver Homes where the median income is less than $4,000 a year. How could we possibly expect a parity of educational standards between these pointedly different environments? Of course, St. Paul's enjoys more control, more precision, more subtlety. Of course, life at St. Paul's is smoother and more aesthetic.

Yet despite the extreme material contrasts, there are ways in which each institution searches for control and coherence. Gaining control seems to be linked to the development of a visible and explicit ideology. Without the buffers of land and wealth, Carver must fashion a strong ideological message. It is not a surprising message. Even with the newly contrived rhetoric of "interfacing" and "networking" used by Dr. Hogans, the ideological appeal is hauntingly similar to the messages given to many Carver student ancestors. Several generations ago, for example, Booker T. Washington, one of Hogans's heroes, spoke forcefully to young Black men and women about opportunities for advancement in a White man's world. He urged them to be mannerly, civilized, patient, and enduring; not rebellious, headstrong, or critical. They were told of the dangers of disruption and warned about acting "uppity" or arrogant. Although they were encouraged in their patience, these Black ancestors recognized the profound injustices, the doors that would be closed to them even if they behaved admirably. Industriousness was the only way to move ahead and ascend the ladders of status, but Black folks recognized that the system was ultimately rigged.

Carver's idelogical stance, enthusiastically articulated by Hogans, echoes these early admonitions—be good, be clean, be mannerly, and have a great deal of faith. Recognize the rigged race but run as hard as you can to win. School is the training ground for learning skills and civility, for learning to lose gracefully, and for trying again in the face of defeat. Education is the key to a strong sense of self-esteem, to personal and collective power. Hogans's rhetoric, old as the hills and steeped in cultural metaphors and allusions, strikes a responsive chord in the community and serves as a rallying cry for institution building. His ideological message is reinforced by the opportunities Hogans creates for the immediate gratification of success and profit and to the connections he reinforces between education and religion. When Carver students, in their gleaming white Explorer Jackets, cross the railroad tracks and enter the places of money and power in downtown Atlanta, their eyes are open to new life possibilities. Hogans tells them their dreams can come true. The work programs at Carver provide the daily experiences of industry,

punctuality, and poise; and the immediate rewards that keep them involved in school.

The connections to church and religion, though less clearly etched, underscore the fervor attached to education by generations of powerless, illiterate people. The superintendent of Atlanta uses spiritual metaphors when he urges parents and students to join the "community of believers."[8] Carver faculty and administrators reinforce the religious messages and link them to themes of self-discipline, community building, and hard work at school. Hogans's rhetoric is culturally connected, clearly articulated, and visibly executed in student programs, assemblies, and reward ceremonies. The ideology is legible and energizing to school cohesion.

One sees a similar enthusiasm and ideological clarity at Milton Academy. Humanism and holistic medicine are broad labels that refer to a responsiveness to individual differences, to a diversity of talent, and to the integration of mind, body, and spirit in educational pursuits. Headmaster Pieh offers a subtle and complex message about providing a productive and nurturant ethos that will value individual needs; the registrar develops a hand-built schedule so that students can receive their first choices of courses, and teachers know the life stories and personal dilemmas of each of their students. Underneath the New England restraint of Milton, there is a muted passion for humanism. Students talk about the special quality of relationships it provides ("They want us to be more humane than human beings in the real world"), teachers worry over the boundaries between loving attention and indulgence, and the director of admissions offers it as the primary appeal of Milton, a distinct difference from the harsh, masculine qualities of Exeter. Although Carver and Milton preach different ideologies, what is important here is the rigorous commitment to a visible ideological perspective. It provides cohesion within the community and a measure of control against the oscillating intrusions from the larger society.

Highland Park lacks this clear and resounding ideological stance. The educational vision shifts with the times as Principal Benson and his teachers listen for the beat of change and seek to be adaptive. Although the superb record of college admissions provides institutional pride, it does not replace the need for a strong ideological vision. Rather than creating institutional cohesion, the quest for success engenders harsh competition among students. The persistent complaints from many students that they feel lost and alone is in part a statement about the missing ideological roots. Without a common bond, without a clear purpose, the school fails to encompass them and does not take psychological hold on their energies. The director of counselling at Highland Park observes

students reaching out to one another through a haze of drugs in order to reduce feelings of isolation and dislocation. Drugs are the great "leveler," providing a false sense of connection and lessening the nagging pain. A minority of students are spared the loneliness and only a few can articulate "the problem," but it is visible to the stranger who misses "the school spirit."

Ideological fervor is an important ingredient of utopian communities. Distant from the realities of the world and separated from societal institutions, these communities can sustain distinct value structures and reward systems. In his book *Asylums*, Erving Goffman makes a distinction between "total institutions" that do not allow for any intercourse with the outer world and organizations that require only a part of a person's time, energy, and commitment. In order to sustain themselves, however, all institutions must have what Goffman calls "encompassing tendencies" that wrap their members up in a web of identification and affiliation, that inspire loyalty.[9]

Schools must find way of inspiring devotion and loyalty in teachers and students, of marking the boundaries between inside and outside, of taking a psychological hold on their members. Some schools explicitly mark their territories and offer clear rules of delineation. Parochial schools, for instance, are more encompassing than public schools because they vigorously resist the intrusions of the outer world and frame their rituals and habits to purposefully contrast with the ordinary life of their students. Parents who choose to send their children to parochial schools support the values and ideological stance of the teachers and the clear separation between school life and community norms.[10] Quaker schools often mark the transition from outside to inside school by several minutes of silence and reflection at the beginning of the school day. After the noise, energy, and stress of getting to school, students must collect themselves and be still and silent. Those moments separate them from nonschool life and prepare them to be encompassed by the school's culture.

Although I am not urging schools to become utopian communities or total institutions, I do believe that good schools balance the pulls of connection to community against the contrary forces of separation from it. Administrators at Kennedy vividly portray their roles as a "balancing act." They walk the treacherous "tightrope" between closed and open doors, between autonomy and symbiosis. Schools need to provide asylum for adolescents from the rugged demands of outside life at the same time that they must always be interactive with it. The interaction is essential. Without the connection to life beyond school, most students would find the school's rituals empty. It is this connection that motivates them.

For Carver students, it is a clear exchange. "I'll commit myself to school for the promise of a job . . . otherwise forget it," says a junior who describes himself as "super-realistic." Milton Academy symbolizes the attempts at balance between separation and connection in its public relations material. The catalogue cover pictures the quiet, suburban campus with the city looming in the background. The director of admissions speaks enthusiastically about the meshing of utopian idealism and big-city realities. The day students arrive each morning and "bring the world with them." The seniors speak about the clash between the school's humanitarian spirit and the grueling requirements of college admissions. The protection and solace good schools offer may come from the precious abundance of land, wealth, and history, but they may also be partly approached through ideological clarity and a clear vision of institutional values.

FEMININE AND MASCULINE QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

The people most responsible for defining the school's vision and articulating the ideological stance are the principals and headmasters of these schools. They are the voice, the mouthpiece of the institution, and it is their job to communicate with the various constituencies. Their personal image is inextricably linked to the public persona of the institution.

The literature on effective schools tends to agree on at least one point—that an essential ingredient of good schools is strong, consistent, and inspired leadership.[11] The tone and culture of schools is said to be defined by the vision and purposeful action of the principal. He is said to be the person who must inspire the commitment and energies of his faculty; the respect, if not the admiration of his students; and the trust of the parents. He sits on the boundaries between school and community; must negotiate with the superintendent and school board; must protect teachers from external intrusions and harrasment; and must be the public imagemaker and spokesman for the school.[12] In high schools the principals are disproportionately male, and the images and metaphors that spring to mind are stereotypically masculine. One thinks of the military, protecting the flanks, guarding the fortress, defining the territory. The posture is often seen as defensive, the style clear, rational, and focused.

within the state. We assume, along with current restructuralists, that if we are to significantly alter student outcomes, we must change what happens at the most basic level of education – in the classrooms and schools. However, we see in this process a more proactive role for the centralized elements of the system – particularly the states – one which can set the conditions for change to take place not just in a small handful of schools or for a few children, but in the great majority.

Our discussion is divided into four parts. First, we present a picture of the organizational goal of the reforms: a successful school. This is followed by an analysis of the administrative, governance, resource, and policy barriers to effective schooling in the USA. In the third section, we pose a strategy for transforming the system at all levels – but primarily at the state level – so that it will facilitate rather than inhibit the improvement of schools on a broad and continuing basis. Finally, we relate this strategy to other issues and proposals currently under discussion in the educational reform movement.

A successful school

If our goal is to improve student outcomes and we believe that to accomplish this goal we must change what happens in the school itself, one obvious place to begin a discussion of strategy is with a picture of the kind of schools we would like to see in the future. While personal images of the 'successful school' will differ considerably in detail, both research and common sense suggest that they will have certain characteristics in common. These include, among other things, a fairly stable staff, made up of enthusiastic and caring teachers who have a mastery both of the subject matter of the curriculum and of a variety of pedagogies for teaching it; a well thought through, challenging curriculum that is integrated across grade levels and is appropriate for the range of experiences, cultures, and learning styles of the students; a high level of teacher and student engagement in the educational mission of the school – not just for the high achievers but the vast majority of students; and opportunities for parents to support and participate in the education of their children (Purkey and Smith 1983).

Beyond – or perhaps underlying – these resources available to the student, the most effective schools maintain a schoolwide vision or mission, and common instructional goals which tie the content, structure, and resources of the school together into an effective, unified whole (Coleman and Hoffer 1987, Purkey and Smith 1983). The school mission provides the criteria and rationale for the selection of curriculum materials, the purposes and the nature of school-based professional development, and the interpretation and use of student assessment. The particulars of the vision will differ from school to school, depending on the local context; indeed, one of the goals of 'choice' advocates is to enable individual schools to establish unique identities and purposes (Chubb and Moe 1990, Elmore 1986). However, if the school is to be successful in promoting active student involvement in learning, depth of understanding, and complex thinking – major goals of the reform movement – its vision must focus on teaching and learning rather than, for example, on control and discipline as in many schools today (McNeil 1986). In fact, the very need for special attention to control and discipline may be mitigated considerably by the promotion of successful and engaging learning experiences. For these experiences and this focus to be fully successful, however, new research suggests that they must embody a different conception of content and different pedagogical strategies than those in conventional use (Resnick 1986, Lampert 1988, Peterson 1987).

Finally, the literature on effective schools has found that successful schools have not

only a vision but also an atmosphere – or 'school climate' – that is conducive to teaching and learning. Minimally, this means freedom from drugs, crime, and chaotic disruptions within the school and a sense of mutual respect among educators and students (Purkey and Smith 1983, Coleman and Hoffer 1987). More positively, it means the construction of a school workplace for teachers and students that both contains the resources and embodies the common purpose and mutual respect necessary for them to be successful. This same literature as well as that on school restructuring further suggests that the common vision and positive school climate can best be promoted by a system of shared decision-making and shared responsibility where the instructional staff, in particular, have an active voice in determining the conditions of work. This might involve shared control not only over how the school is organized in time and space to advance learning and teaching, but also over such things as the hiring of new staff and the expenditure of school discretionary funds.

.While other commonalities may exist among successful schools, let us assume that these characteristics – a schoolwide vision and school climate conducive to learning, enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers, a high quality curriculum and instructional strategies, a high level of engagement, shared decision-making, and parental support and involvement – taken together form the core of the successful school. The obvious question then becomes, why aren't more of our schools like this? Certainly we can all think of a handful, or probably more, of schools that exemplify this quality of education – that have coherent and challenging instructional programs, that genuinely engage all or at least most of their students, and that promote high achievement in their students. Yet these remain the exception rather than the rule in US education.[3] Their very existence represents tremendous commitment, expertise, and effort on the part of school and perhaps district personnel. Moreover, even with all that effort, the stability and future of such schools are at base quite fragile. Changes in principal, staff, school population or district policy may serve to undermine a hard-built but nonetheless tenuous foundation. The question remains: why are these schools so exceptional and so vulnerable?

It is our contention that systemic barriers in the organization and governance of our educational institutions inhibit such schools from developing in most areas and serve to marginalize and undermine successful schools when they do emerge. We also argue that even the very best of these schools are not accomplishing what they could do if (a) the organizational environment were sufficiently supportive; and (b) the instructional content were truly directed toward complex thinking and problem-solving. In the next section we discuss the systemic barriers to effective schooling in the USA. Then, in the third section, we present one possible strategy for developing the supportive organizational environment and challenging content needed for the next generation of students.

Systemic barriers to educational change

Most traditional explanations of poor schooling in the USA focus on low standards and inadequate resources. Yet the history of school reform demonstrates that even when standards are raised and more or better resources are allocated, little lasting change occurs in the classroom (Cuban 1984, 1990, Elmore and McLaughlin 1988). Recognizing this, some critics argue that the teaching profession itself is inherently conservative and resistant to change, or that the increasing diversity of the US student population makes broad-based achievement gains unattainable. Of course, such reasoning ignores the exciting examples of creative and successful schooling situated in unfriendly environments among students most often identified as 'at risk' for school failure. We present here a somewhat different

of resources and services among districts became an important part of the nation's agenda.

Finally, the states are in a unique position to provide a coherent leadership, resources, and support to the reform efforts in the schools. States not only have the constitutional responsibility for education of our youth, but they are the only level of the system that can influence all parts of the K–12 system: the curriculum and curriculum materials, teacher training and licensure, assessment and accountability. In addition, the states, at least in theory, could productively affect the way in which the state system of higher education might operate to help the K–12 educational system. Finally, because of the size of the markets they represent, the states are also in the best position to effectively leverage other aspects of education that are outside the system itself, such as textbook and materials development.

We do not mean to suggest that such leadership will come easily to all or even to most states. The nation's tradition of local control had often led to passive, conservative behavior by state departments of education. Party politics and conflicting agendas in state legislatures and governors' offices often impede collective action. And states differ considerably in their technical capacity to implement many of the suggestions we make below. Yet there is a basis for optimism. More and more, policymakers are beginning to understand the interconnectedness of the system, and cooperative endeavors such as the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Educational Commission of the States provide mechanisms for sharing technical resources among states of varying capacity.

A unifying vision and goals

In order for a state to fulfill this unique role -- that is, for it to provide a coherent direction and strategy for educational reform throughout the system – it must have a common vision of what schools should be like. Any vision will have a variety of facets. One straightforward conception is that all of our children should be able to attend a 'successful school', in the terms we described earlier. Another view of the vision suggested here is that schools within a state should operate within a coherent set of policies and practices that encourage and support a challenging and engaging curriculum and instructional program. State vision statements would clearly go far deeper than these general statements.

It is important to emphasize that underlying any coherent conception will be important sets of values. We see two such sets of values as particularly significant. One set is the collective democratic values critical to our society: respect for all people, tolerance, equality of opportunity, respect for the individual, participation in the democratic functions of the society, and service to the society. A second set has to do with the tasks and attitudes of the teacher and learner -- to prize exploration and production of knowledge, rigor in thinking, and sustained intellectual effort. We believe that these values already exist in a latent form in the minds of most Americans, and especially teachers, when they think about the educational system. But they need to be awakened and to permeate and guide the system and the schools. Held in common, these values can help nourish and sustain over time environments in the schools that can intellectually stimulate and engage ALL children in the way that we should expect. The crisis rhetoric that has prompted many of the recent reforms often has not been productive in this regard. It has instead fostered project-oriented, 'magic bullet' solutions that satisfy immediate political ends, without substantively changing the core of the educational process. The new reforms must cut deeper; to do so they need to be derived from a deeper system of shared beliefs.

Broad conceptions and values, however, will not be enough. We need goals that can be communicated and measured if we are to mobilize the political support necessary to sustain the reforms over time. A carefully selected set of goals and a related system of indicators would give those within the system and the general public a sense of purpose and direction and a basis on which to evaluate progress. Some of the goals could address desired changes in the nature or quality of educational inputs, such as the quality of the teaching force or of the curriculum used in the schools.

Other (and we argue more powerful) goals would be those related to students. Statewide student outcome goals may be an extension and particularization of the national goals developed recently by the governors. They could cover more than academic achievement, including such things as ensuring school readiness, developing students' self-th and promoting collective responsibility. We believe that the goals should focus primarily on the core functions of the system; that is, on teaching and learning. To meet the demands of the future, however, they must go well beyond the 'basic skills' goals of the 1960s, '70s and early '80s. They must provide a standard that challenges the public and the educational system to prepare our youth to grapple thoughtfully with those problems that defy algorithmic solutions and to be skilled and confident learners in school and later on. Moreover, the goals and indicators must address not only the average level of opportunity and student achievement in the state but also the variation. Justice requires that the goals of the state promote equality as well as quality.

Given an agreed upon direction for reform, we suggest a two-pronged approach for attaining the established goals. The first prong of the strategy is to create a coherent system of instructional guidance, the purpose of which is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire a core body of challenging and engaging knowledge, skills, and problem-solving capacities.[10] Implementing this will require overcoming the fragmentation of the system through coordinating three key functions affecting instruction: curriculum, pre- and in-service teacher training, and assessment. The actual ordination of these functions, we argue, can best be handled on the state level, but it must be linked to the second prong of the strategy: an examination of the responsibilities and policies of each level of the governance structure so that all levels operate in support of each other and of the implementation of the reforms.

A coherent system of instructional guidance

The first step in developing a coherent system of instructional guidance is to work toward agreement on what students need to know and be able to do when they leave the system. The second is then to maximize the probability that all or most students will acquire the desired capacities by ensuring at the very least that they have the opportunity to do so — that is, by ensuring that students are exposed to the requisite knowledge and skills through the highest quality, most appropriate human and material resources possible. For the statewide instructional guidance system to work would thus require coordination among state curriculum frameworks, the more specific curricula of the schools, pre-service and in-service professional development and teacher certification, and system level assessment and monitoring mechanisms. Each of these aspects of the system is discussed briefly below.

Curriculum frameworks: The basic drivers of the instructional guidance system would be curriculum frameworks which set out the best thinking in the field about the knowledge,

CIJE / LEAD COMMUNITIES MAY CONSULTATION

AGENDA

Desired outcomes:

- *To continue joint planning and intensify partnership.*
- *To foster and develop relationships within and across Lead Communities and with the CIJE*
- *To agree upon the role , content , and method of implementation of each element involved in the Lead Communities project.*
- *To develop an integrated joint action plan and calendar for each L.C ("within ") and for the three L.C. (" across ") and the CIJE*

I) Overview

Partnership and joint planning

Examples of issues to be covered:

      a) Issues related to launching a Lead Community.
      b) How to coordinate and integrate the Communities' agenda and the CIJE agenda.
      c) The relationship of the CIJE to funding and fundraising in L.C.
      d) Different visions of the project by the various partners.
      e) CIJE chain of command.
      f) Partnership issues, e.g.:
            1) Relationship within and across the L.C. and with the CIJE.
            2) The denominations, the L.C. and the CIJE.
            3) Relationship with major institutions, e.g. JESNA, JCCA, CJF

II) Draft Action Plan..

A) The three Lead Communities together and the CIJE.

- Jointly draft a 18/24 months calendar / action plan for the 3 Lead Communities and the CIJE.

Related reading material:
1) Commission on Jewish Education in North America: Background materials for the meeting of February 14th 1990: " Community Action Sites " pp 18-25

B) Elements:

1) Systemic change

a) The concept

b) The role of enabling & programmatic options.

c) Personnel:
- Educators' survey
- Addressing the shortage of qualified personnel
- Strategies to recruit and train personnel (short & medium term)

d) Community mobilization:
- The concept
- Wall to wall coalition - lay leaders, rabbis, educators, professionals, & academics..
- Building strategies for Community mobilization

2) Support projects

Comprehensive and planned approaches to content , scope & quality.

a) Best Practices:
- Best Practices as an inventory of " success stories " in Jewish Education.
- Pre-conditions for replicating Best Practices
- Initial areas in which Best Practices will be developed.
- Best Practices in the Supplementary school : Initial findings and implementation.
- Pilot Projects and Best Practices

b) Goals
- The role of Goals for education
- Articulate goals for effective evaluation
- Participants in the deliberation on Goals

c) Monitoring Evaluation and Feedback (MEF)
- MEF as a tool to document the entire L.C. project and gauge its success.
- Developing the feedback loop
- The role of the Field Researchers
- Relationship of the Field Researchers to the Lead Communities

C) Individual Lead Communities and the CIJE

- Each community's strategy and action plan

III) Synthesis:

II)A and II)C integrated into a joint action plan / calendar

IV) Open issues

Concluding discussion