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What Does Research Teach Us About Jewish Education?



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JEWISH EDUCATION UPDATE featuring Highlights from the 1993 Biennial
SPECIAL PULL-OUT SUPPLEMENT: The Compass Idea Book

BEST PRACTICES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

by Barry W. Holtz

Those of us in the field of Jewish education are often overwhelmed by tales of failure. Jewish education is blamed for many of the woes of contemporary Jewish life, in particular the intermarriage rates as reported in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey. Of course, we all know that Jewish education has had its failures. Sometimes these failures have been due to the lack of support, both financial and moral, that education has received from the organized Jewish community. Sometimes, truth be told, these failures have been due to our own errors or lack of vision.

And yet, we also know that "failure" is not the only story. We all have seen Jewish education that works, both for children and adults. Perhaps it is time to document the good news about Jewish education and find ways to learn from the tales of success. That underlying concept—to record the examples of success in Jewish education and to learn from those examples—is the basic thrust of the Best Practices Project of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE), which has been at work since 1991.

The CIJE is the small implementation organization created by the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.

The Commission met from 1988 to 1990, chaired by the noted philanthropist and communal leader Morton L. Mandel of Cleveland. It included some of the leading religious and philanthropic figures in the continental Jewish community. Among the recommendations of its report *A Time to Act* was a call for the creation of "an inventory of best educational practices in North America."¹

The primary purpose of this inventory is to aid the CIJE in its

What do we mean by "best practice"? One recent book about this concept in general education states that it is a phrase borrowed "from the professions of medicine and law, where 'good practice' or 'best practice' are everyday phrases used to describe solid, reputable, state-of-the-art work in a field."²

It is important, however, to be cautious about what we mean by the word "best" in the phrase "best practice." The contemporary literature in general educa-



work as a "catalyst for change" for North American Jewish education. It will do this in two ways: (1) by helping create a larger "knowledge base" for Jewish education by documenting outstanding educational work that is currently taking place and (2) by offering a guide to Jewish educational success that can be adapted for use in local communities.

tion points out that seeking perfection when we examine educational endeavors will offer us little assistance as we try to improve actual work in the field. In an enterprise as complex and multifaceted as education, these writers argue, we should be looking to discover "good" not ideal practice.

"Good" educational practice is what we seek to identify for



Jewish education, that is, models of excellence. Essentially we are looking to document the "success stories" of contemporary Jewish education.

We should be clear, however, that effective practical use of the Best Practices Project is a complex matter. Observing a "best practice" in one community does not guarantee that other communities will be able to succeed in implementing it in their localities. Successful curriculum or early childhood programming in Denver or Cleveland is dependent upon a whole collection of factors that may not be in place when we try to introduce those ideas in other places. The issue of translation from the "best practice" site to another community is one that will require considerable imagination.

Of course "best practice" does not exist in the abstract. There is only "best practice" of "X" particularity: the supplementary school, JCC, curriculum for teaching Israel, etc. The first problem that the Best Practices Project encountered was the defining of areas for the inventory's particular categories. We could have addressed the problem in a number of different ways. We could, for example, have looked at some of the sites in which Jewish education takes place, we could have focused on some of the subject areas that are taught in such sites, or we could have looked at the specific populations served. There were numerous other possibilities as well.

Our answer to the question of cutting into the problem of best practices was to focus on the venues in which we find Jewish

education conducted. Eight different areas were identified: supplementary schools, early childhood programs, JCCs and Ys, day schools, the Israel experience, college campus programming, camping/youth programs, and adult education.

Obviously there are other areas that could have been included and there were other ways that the project could have been organized. We chose, for example, to include family education within the relevant areas above—that is, family education programs connected to synagogue schools, day schools, JCCs, etc.—rather than identify it as a separate area.

We later chose to add a ninth area called community-wide initiatives. These were programs, usually based in a BJE or Federation, that were intended to have a large-scale communal impact on Jewish education, such as a plan to relate teacher's salaries to in-service education credits.

The first area that the Best Practices Project chose to explore was the supplementary school. The "Version 1" volume was published by the CIJE in February 1993. While the research for that volume was in progress, we launched the second area, early childhood Jewish education. The method that we followed was very similar in both cases. A group of experts gathered to discuss the issue of "best practice" in each particular area. Based on that meeting and other consultations, we developed a *Guide to Best Practices*.

The guides prepared for the volumes on supplementary schools and early childhood Jewish education represented the wisdom of experts concerning success in each arena. We did not expect to find schools or programs that scored high in every measure, but the guides were to be used as an outline or



a checklist for writing reports.

A team of report writers was assembled and was given the following assignment: Using the *Guide to Best Practices*, locate good settings or successful individual programs. The researchers were asked to write short descriptive reports for inclusion in the volumes.

We believed that working in this fashion would give us reliable results in a reasonable amount of time. We also knew from the outset that the Best Practices Project was created to fulfill a pressing need for assistance that both the practitioners of Jewish education and the leaders of North American Jewry agree must be met. We did not have the luxury of creating a research project that would have to wait many years before its results could be made available.

The model that we have employed relies on the informed opinion of expert observers. The reports written by our researchers were based on a relatively short amount of time spent in particular schools or observing individual programs. To facilitate the process, we tried to use researchers who began the process with a "running start," that is, they had some familiarity with their sites

and could use that prior knowledge to move the process along quickly.

BEYOND "VERSION 1": THE NEXT STEPS FOR "BEST PRACTICE" RESEARCH

It is important to remember that the CIJE has always viewed the Best Practices Project as an enterprise with important long-range implications. The first two volumes have been consciously labeled "Version 1." We believe that these reports can give serious assistance to local communities that are seeking to improve the quality of Jewish education in North America, but we also know that more work can and should be done. We view the reports included in these volumes as the first "iteration," in the language of social science researchers—the first step in a process that needs to evolve over time.

We envision developing the research in two ways. First, the research can be broadened. We have only included a handful of examples in each report. The simple fact is we have no idea how many successful supplementary schools or early childhood Jewish education programs are currently operating in North America. We have

certainly heard our share of bad news about Jewish education over the past twenty-five years, but we have heard very little about the success stories. The "first editions" of our reports have included only a tiny sample. "Version 2" of these reports should include more examples.

A second way of expanding the research would be to increase the depth of the reports. In reports this short it is impossible to get more than a basic description of a program and a feel for the flavor of an institution. What needs to be added is the detail and elucidation that a longer report would allow. I have elsewhere called this the difference between writing a "report" and writing a "portrait" or study of an institution. As further iterations of the best practices volumes develop, we would like to see more in-depth portraits of educators, schools, and programs.

We hope to develop these and other ideas and plans as the Best Practices Project evolves during its next stages. At the same time new "Version 1" volumes will be published covering the other areas of contemporary Jewish education mentioned earlier in this article. We are currently at work on studies of "best practice" in day schools, Jewish Community Centers, and college campuses. These, too, will be the first stages in an evolving process of research that will be linked with action projects in the field. Thus research can fuel new thinking for the living practice of contemporary Jewish education. ■

Notes

1. Commission on Jewish Education in North America, *A Time to Act* (University Press of America, 1991), p. 69.
2. Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels, and Arthur Hyde, *Best Practice* (Heinemann, 1993), pp. vii-viii.

Best Practices and the Challenge of Replication

By Barry W. Holtz

When the Commission on Jewish Education in North America finished its work in 1990, it issued a major report, *A Time to Act*, calling for a number of reforms in Jewish education throughout the continent as a means of insuring meaningful Jewish continuity. To help support this enterprise and to serve as a catalyst for change, the Commission created the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE).

One project launched by the CIJE is the Best Practices Project, which has at its heart two goals. First, the project seeks to widen the research base about Jewish education by documenting "what works" in Jewish education. The Best Practices Project, in other words, aims to tell the success stories of Jewish education. The second goal of the project is to move from research to action, to take what we know about successful practice and to use that knowledge as a way of helping to affect change.

The Best Practices Project is a long-term research effort which plans to issue a series of reports about many areas of Jewish education, surveying both formal and informal domains. So far two reports have been issued—a volume detailing examples of successful practice in the area of the supplementary school and a second volume that examines early childhood Jewish education. Six other areas of Jewish education are also being explored: Jewish education in the Jewish Community Center arena, Jewish camps and youth movements, day schools, the Israel experience, adult education, and Jewish education on the college campus. Elsewhere! I have written about the documentation side of this project; in this article I would like to make some preliminary comments about the implementation side of the project, particularly as the CIJE is seeing this in its work with various local communities.

What I wish to look at is what might be called the limits of replication. In what way is it difficult to take "best practice" and move it from a successful site, say in Topeka, to another locale where one wishes to introduce the same practice? I believe that it is possible to learn a great deal from examples of success but we should do so with an awareness of the difficulties and dangers of any such replication process. What I wish to look at here are impediments to replication in the way the word replication is conventionally used and to explore a different perspective on how replication may indeed work.

Any attempt to parachute in a project from one location to another is subject to difficulties. To begin with and most obviously, institutions are unique. Settings are specific and the attempt to model the work in one setting based on what succeeds in another setting is subject to factors that are both complex and difficult to recognize from the outset. In the CIJE Best Practices Project, we have spoken often about *adopting* and *adapting*. Both elements are important. If one wishes to *adopt* a best practice and implement it in



Riverside, quiet refuge from the strains of the big city, a three minute walk from the gates of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Photo by Edy Rauch.

one's own setting whether it be a camp, a school or a trip to Israel, one needs to consider what it means to *adapt* that best practice for the local situation.

The reasons are both obvious and subtle. The obvious reasons that both institutions and programs are not replicable have to do with two key areas, finances and personnel. Clearly a program that is successful in one location because the level of funding available is extraordinary would be difficult to adapt to another location where funding may be more difficult to secure. Perhaps even more difficult, the personnel dimension of successful practice cannot ever be underestimated. It may be possible to raise the necessary funds in a local setting but finding the personnel capable of implementing a program may be the greatest impediment to success. Anybody working in the field of Jewish education today at the national level is familiar with the myriad number of requests that one receives in which the issue of locating appropriate people to run programs, lead day schools, teach, direct camps, etc. is almost overwhelming. It is much easier to raise funds for exciting projects than it is to invent the people who can run those projects, and until Jewish education is able to solve the crisis of personnel and attract the appropriate number of quality people into the field of Jewish education, it will be very difficult to advance no matter how much money becomes available on the national or local scene. The factors of finances and personnel availability are obvious impediments to the replication process, but the subtle reasons may be even more significant. Let me list three:

1. The People Who Aren't Important Are Important

Whenever we look at an educational institution either formal or informal we

tend to look at the obvious players in that situation—we look at the teachers or the administrators. But often what really makes a program run are the people behind the scenes who are pace setters in institutions as a whole yet not obviously apparent when one examines the *specific* program. One might, for example, look at an outstanding program for teaching prayer in a supplementary school in a congregation located in the Midwest and think that that project could easily be translated to a congregational school in Boston or Philadelphia. Let's say even that the financial issues are not difficult to resolve and that we have the appropriate people to run the program, yet because the people who aren't important are important, the program may fail. We may not realize that the kinds of volunteers in the synagogue that make this program run in the congregation in the Midwest may not be found when we try to replicate it elsewhere. We may not notice that the rabbi or chairman of the school committee or key board members in that successful congregation are the people that really drive the process forward and when we try to replicate it elsewhere we may be amazed to discover that the project just won't work. Thus, because it is not always easy to recognize the subtle factors behind success, we may miss the point and seek to adopt a program that really cannot work in the new setting unless we take the whole structure that makes it successful in its home base.

2. The Power of an Institution's Culture

We know from a considerable amount of research that every institution has its own particular culture. The famous study by Michael Rutter² and his associates in the 1970's about successful schools in England demonstrated quite clearly that the major difference between schools that are effective and schools that are not has to

do with what Rutter called the "ethos of the particular institution." This is true in any educational institution. When we try to adapt a best practice from one setting to another, it is important to recognize that the particular institutional climate, sometimes consisting of factors that are almost impossible to enumerate, will have a profound impact on the way that that practice works in its real life situation. Translating a practice from one setting to another may be impeded by the subtle factors of institutional culture that cannot be replicated no matter how much we wish to do so.

3. Getting It but Not Getting It

The program adopted has to be understood "from the inside," not just from its trappings. Often we think we're understanding it—we think we're "getting it"—but really we're not understanding the practice at all. We see the outside and not the inside of the educational project. We see the accoutrements, but not the core. People for example may look at that very successful Tzedakah Project at one day school and see only the cute tee shirts or hats that the students are given. When they come to replicate the project in their own setting they spend hours working on the hats and tee shirts and think that that will guarantee the project's success. Yet the program fails. What really has to be understood is the *inside* of the educational process.

My favorite example of this from the non-educational world is the Steve's Ice Cream analogy. In the mid-1970's I was fortunate enough to be living not far away from a store that in its time became a legend; a small ice cream shop in Somerville, Massachusetts run by a young man with a passion for the taste of authentic ice cream. Steve's became a monumental success story in a community which takes

continued on page 41

its ice cream quite seriously indeed. Steve had investigated various approaches to making ice cream and he settled on a set of recipes and a process which tried to emulate the old-fashioned taste of hand churned ice cream. To give his shop in Somerville some charm, he found an old player piano, an old ice cream-making machine which sat in the window and various other kinds of decorative touches that added to the atmosphere of Steve's Ice Cream. Soon there were lines around the block and soon after that Steve's Ice Cream was written up by *Time* magazine and featured on the business pages of the *New York Times*. Steve had become an entrepreneur. Some time later he sold Steve's Ice Cream, the store and its name, to a large chain, and eventually across the country one could find Steve's Ice Cream shops, and even today, Steve's Ice Cream is packaged in cartons and available in your local supermarket.

But the Steve's Ice Cream that you taste in the local supermarket and the Steve's Ice Cream in all those malls across America does not, I assure you, taste like the original Steve's Ice Cream. Something very significant got lost in the translation. What one did find in many of those Steve's Ice Cream shops after the first became franchises were the *accoutrements* of the old original Steve's place in Davis Square, Somerville. A broken down player piano, an old ice cream machine, the right kind of benches, the right kind of tables and lights. But none of that had anything to do with the ice cream or its flavor, and as time passed even those accoutrements began to fall away and now we have one more ice cream like many other ice creams, but certainly not the original Steve's.

Now the people that tried to adapt the best practice in ice cream called Steve's thought that they could do it by taking the

decorations but not the inner core, the old-fashioned way of making ice cream that made Steve's for a brief amount of time famous throughout America. We do the same thing in educational projects when we duplicate the trappings and not the essence. If we want to really replicate success we have to think about what really matters.

So what does all of this mean about what we can really learn from best practice? Does this mean that one cannot learn from what works? I believe that we can. First, seeing examples of success can always help us because examples of success stimulate our own imaginations. We see the new idea for teaching Genesis, we see a new or interesting approach to running a camp program around Israel and it inspires our own imagination. We think to ourselves, ah we could do that or we could do something like that. But I think more than that the important word to remember is "learning" from best practice. The Best Practices Project presents, in Seymour Fox's phrase, a "curriculum for change." What that means is the results of the Project need to be studied, discussed and understood from the inside. In other words we need to grasp the principles underneath. Indeed the Best Practices Project recalls to mind one of the perennial issues in philosophy of education: How can you teach someone to be a good person when every day people are confronted with *so many different* ethical decisions? You can't possibly deal with every decision that might come up, so what is the teacher to do? A similar problem is raised by R. S. Peters' in his classic essay "Reason and Habit": How does the adult teach the child to behave in a moral and rational way, when the psychology of child development teaches us that children must learn morality first by the "oppressive" non-rational practice

of habit and rules?

The answer is that you take some specific cases and try to understand the principles underlying the cases. Or, in Peters' example, you blend the specificity of habit and with the generality of rational understanding. Working in this way, one does something else as well: you teach people something else. You teach them the art of being a reflective ethical human being.

It's that habit of reflection, self-analysis and self-criticism that characterizes all successful institutions. The study of best practice leads us to emulate examples of self-reflection ourselves by examining and exploring various practices in Jewish education that work. Educational institutions can move toward improvement and start along the path of change. Certainly they will learn from the specific findings, but more than that they will learn a way of thinking about their own progress and development. If this is accomplished, the Best Practices Project will have the potential to influence not only by its documentation but by its impact on the field in the real world of Jewish Education. *

NOTES

1. See the introductions to the Best Practices volumes: "Supplementary School" (CJJE, 1993) and "Early Childhood Jewish Education" (CJJE, 1993). Also, "Best Practices In Jewish Education," *Compass*, 16:2 (Winter-Spring, 1994).
2. Michael Rutter, et al., *15,000 Hours* (Harvard University Press, 1979).
3. R. S. Peters, "Reason and Habit," in *Moral Education in a Changing Society*, edited by W. R. Niblett (Faber and Faber, 1963).

The Milwaukee Journal, Wednesday, October 5, 1994.

\$500,000 grant boosts Jewish education programs in city

By MARIE ROHDE
Journal religion reporter

A fledgling organization aimed at improving Jewish education in Milwaukee has been awarded \$500,000 over the next five years by the Helen Bader Foundation.

"This is seed money and doesn't solve our funding needs," said Jane Gellman, a co-chairwoman of the organization, Lead Community Initiatives. "But this gift seems to make everything possible."

Lead Community Initiatives was formed about two years ago by Cleveland philanthropist Mort Mandel. Mandel is intensely concerned about the state of Jewish education in North America and finding ways to improve it, Gellman said.

Through Mandel, organizations in Milwaukee, Atlanta and Baltimore were formed with the intent that they would come up with ways to improve Jewish education that could serve as a model for other communities in the nation.

"He was ahead of his time," Gellman said. "He believes that Jewish education is an essential ingredient in getting people to live active lives in the Jewish community."

CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT REPORT

Mandel's concerns predated a national report issued in 1990 that quantified the trend of Jews marrying non-Jews. The report jolted leaders in Jewish communities across the country as observers predicted that a continuation of the trend would result in

a dilution of Jewish identity, both cultural and religious.

Jewish education has widely been seen as a way of maintaining both cultural and religious identity.

But even before the national report was issued, a dramatic growth in Jewish education programs began. Now about a third of area Jewish children are in Jewish day schools and countless others are involved in other religious education programs.

Gellman says her group is in the midst of planning projects to improve education. Key elements of what needs to be done involve building community support for education and improving personnel.

Louise Stein, who co-chairs the Lead Community Initiatives steering committee with Gell-

man, said much work thus far had been aimed at mobilizing the Jewish community and creating a base of volunteer leadership.

"We have a 4,000-year-old heritage that has a value system that has a lot to say about living today," Stein said.

She also noted that Milwaukee's Jewish community strongly supported educational efforts. More than half the money raised in the Milwaukee Jewish Federation's annual fund drive goes to educational efforts, and the bulk of that goes to the day schools.

MORE TEACHERS NEEDED

The Jewish schools have been fortunate in attracting high quality teachers who are dedicated to Jewish education, but more needs to be done to attract and

retain teachers, Gellman said.

"The teachers we have are doing a wonderful job," she said. "But the fact is that every year when school starts, we don't have enough of them."

Certainly there are those who truly believe in Jewish education, but Gellman added: "I don't know that an institution can exist forever with just true believers."

There haven't been any options, Gellman said.

Although no project has been given a go-ahead, she discussed several that have been proposed, including a co-educational high school and a program to assist teachers obtain a master's degree in Jewish education through Cleveland College of Jewish Studies.

Cover Story

U.S. JEWRY PINS ITS FUTURE ON EDUCATION

America's Jewish leadership is trying to salvage the future of the community by revamping education. But the revolution is moving slowly, and it's hampered by a central unresolved question: Should teaching aim to combat intermarriage, or to bring the children of intermarried couples into the fold?

PHOTOS BY ANDREW SCHUL

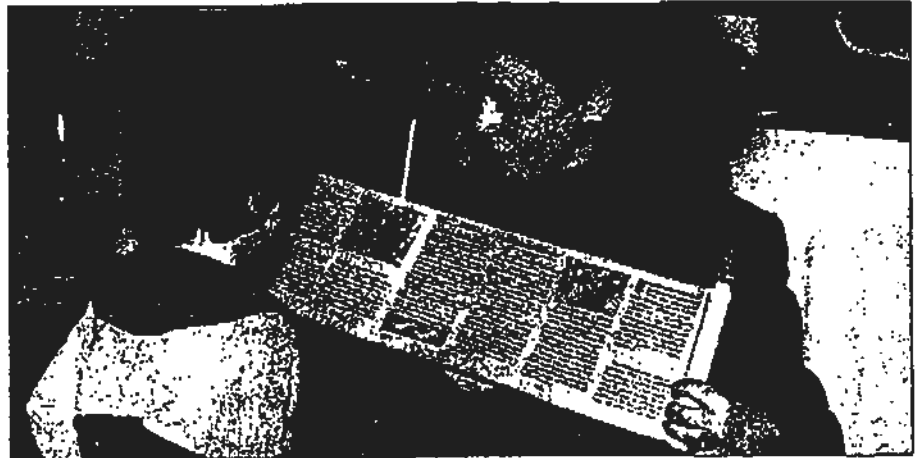
J.J. GOLDBERG New York

Daniel Nemser likes Hebrew school. Nolan Klein hates it. Nolan is a fifth-grader with an "A" average in public school. He goes to Hebrew school because his parents make him, and "his attitude is so bad that he may not learn what he has to for his bar mitzvah unless we get him a tutor," says his mother Susan, a biochemist. Daniel, a ninth-grader, is still at religious school a year after his bar mitzvah and, he says, "it's pretty interesting."

Nolan spends five hours a week at Temple B'nai Shalom in suburban Elmont, Long Island. "Mostly they do Bible stories," he says, "and I just don't believe them." Daniel studies two hours a week at Congregation Kehillat Israel in the university town of East Lansing, Michigan. His classes include discussions of the Holocaust, ethics, comparative religions and "how different rabbis interpret the Bible."

And one more difference: Daniel's Hebrew school is taught entirely by volunteers from the congregation, which received a \$69,000 grant three years ago from the New York-based Covenant Foundation to train the volunteers and build a curriculum.

The soft revolution at Kehillat Israel is one small part of an effort sweeping American Jewry to rebuild religious education. The effort, which began at a local level over two decades ago, turned into a nationwide cause just four years ago —



A parent-child day in New York: What kind of Jews are schools supposed to produce?

when the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey showed that 52 percent of all U.S. Jews were marrying outside the faith (see sidebar, page 28). "That figure served as a wake-up call to the American Jewish leadership," said John Ruskay, director of Jewish continuity programs at UJA-Federation of New York.

To fight assimilation, that leadership is putting its main weapon, money, into innovative education programs from Boston to Honolulu. Many, like the one at Daniel's school, seem to be working, at least in the immediate terms of getting young people interested in learning about being Jewish. But countless Jewish kids have yet to see their schools made any more engaging; so far, the revolution hasn't reached them. What's more, the

kind of education professional educators say works best — Jewish day schools — is considered treif by the majority of American Jews. And most basically, it's nearly impossible to agree on what Jewish education is supposed to do, even on whether it's supposed to cut intermarriage — or get the children of the intermarried to see themselves as Jews.

Since the Population Survey's release by the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF), educational reform and its cousin, "Jewish continuity," have become the biggest growth industry in organized Jewish life. In Cleveland, the local Jewish federation has nearly doubled its funding to Jewish schools in a decade, up from \$1.9 million in 1984 to \$3.5 million this



Eyes down at Manhattan's Ramaz School: Day schools are the growth sector of Jewish education, but the cost to parents is often prohibitive

year — a third of its domestic budget. Other federations are catching up. In New York, UJA-Federation last year brought all its far-flung educational and cultural programs — half the total domestic budget — under the control of a single "Jewish continuity" department, headed by Ruskay, who received an extra \$2.5 million a year for experimentation grants.

The results are visible in innovations, like Kehillat Israel's volunteer-teacher experiment, being introduced in cities and towns from coast to coast. In Detroit, the old, citywide United Hebrew School has been decentralized, broken up and handed over to individual synagogues to run, in hopes of involving students in congregation life. In New Jersey, the Jewish Federation of MetroWest has created a "family education" program that helps teach families simple Jewish practices for the home. In Florida, local Jewish federations have begun to advertise their teen Israel tours on rock radio stations.

Much of the momentum comes from a handful of wealthy Jews who are putting their own money into a crusade to push reform. The acknowledged leader is Cleveland multi-millionaire Morton Mandel, an industrial-parts wholesaler and one-time CJF president, who created the Council on Initiatives in Jewish Education in 1990. Mandel's council now spends nearly \$1 million a year on a 2-pronged campaign. Its main goals: promoting better teacher training and building public support for more federation spending on

education. "Community leaders have begun to recognize this as a growing crisis," says Mandel. "During the 1980s it was conversation. Now it's money."

Another private effort is the Covenant Foundation, funded by Chicago's Crown family, heirs to the General Dynamics defense contracting fortune. It awards grants to synagogues and schools with innovative education programs that can be replicated elsewhere. About two dozen grants have been given out since 1991, like the one to Daniel Nemser's synagogue in East Lansing. Smaller awards programs exist locally in a few cities, like the Samis Foundation of Seattle, which gives out yearly prizes for teacher excellence.

Yet another family foundation, the CRB Foundation, headed by Montreal's Charles R. Bronfman, chairman of Seagram (and a member of The Jerusalem Report board of directors), spends close to \$1 million a year on efforts to boost teen travel to Israel. CRB has funded marketing studies, developed ways to improve tour programs themselves, and created a savings program with the United Jewish Appeal and Bank Leumi to help families save for youngsters' "Israel experience."

Biggest of all are the two foundations created in the mid-1980s by billionaire Ohio retailer Leslie Wexner at a personal cost of some \$8 million a year. One, the Wexner Foundation, gives out scholarships to would-be rabbis, teachers and community leaders. The other, the Wex-

ner Heritage Foundation, conducts Jewish studies lessons, free of charge, for hand-picked groups of young lay leaders around the country, in hopes of creating a national leadership that is more learned — and more supportive of Jewish education. About 500 have graduated the program so far.

To press for change nationwide, the CJF last year set up the North American Commission on Jewish Continuity. It brings together educators and leaders from Orthodox to Reform to secular, in what could be the broadest Jewish coalition since the founding of the Soviet Jewry movement in the 1960s. But after a year-and-a-half of meetings, the commission has yet to develop concrete proposals for action.

Is all this making a difference? Here and there, yes. Daniel Nemser's Jewish education was the better for it. So was Allison Cohen's. A 16-year-old from Cincinnati, she quit Hebrew school in disgust at age 12, right after her bat mitzvah: "I had bad teachers, I didn't really learn anything, and I thought it was a waste of time." But last year, she went on an "Israel Experience" tour sponsored by the local federation, and came home feeling far more positive. "Everyone should go to Israel at least once to see what it's like to be in a place where Judaism is dominant," she says.

Some reforms are mixed blessings. Detroit's decentralization experiment, for

THE INTERMARRIAGE MYTH?

Nothing has spurred support in the last generation for Jewish education like the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey — particularly its finding that U.S. Jews were marrying outside the faith at a rate of 52 percent.

That figure — representing the percentage of Jews wed in the previous five years who married non-Jews — was only one of the survey's shockers. The study, conducted by the Council of Jewish Federations, also found more than half-a-million Jews who said they were practicing another religion. The Jewish community it portrayed was far more Reform and far less Orthodox than any other recent survey had shown. It also found an enrollment in Jewish schools of just 264,000 children, far below previous estimates of 400,000.

But it was the intermarriage figure that hit home. In the past four years, "52 percent" has inspired emergency task forces, conferences and angry sermons.

Nevertheless, it's probably wrong.

"My estimate for the intermarriage rate is about 12 points lower, or 40 percent," says sociologist Steven M. Cohen of Queens College and Hebrew University, the survey's most persistent critic. "That's bad enough anyway. It was 24 percent back in the late 60s."

Cohen's main criticism lies with the survey's methods: "In any survey there are certain types of people we know will be underrepresented, because they don't respond to surveys." To correct the bias, social scientists use standard ratios, or "weights," to overvalue responses from an underrepresented group.

The trouble is, Cohen says, that the standard American weights were applied to the National Jewish Population Survey. Cohen believes this inflated the numbers of Jews in "weighted" groups — poor, uneducated, rural and Southern. Since those very Jews are less likely than others to light Sabbath candles, teach their children Hebrew or marry other Jews, Cohen says, "the weighting system tends to overestimate those Jews

with weaker Jewish identities." Remove the weights, he says, and the Jewish community looks much the way it does in other studies: more Orthodox, with more youngsters learning Hebrew and far fewer "practicing another religion."

CJF survey director Barry Kosmin concedes the weighting was imperfect. "If we'd spent \$2 million or \$3 million we could have knocked that error down a bit," he says. "We only had \$370,000." Kosmin says the margin of error in the survey's total sample, representing 5.5 million Jews and their households, was a respectable 2 to 3 percent. But, he cautions, the margin rises as researchers study sub-

groups like the survey's 1.1 million children.

Brooklyn College sociologist Egon Mayer, an associate of Kosmin's, notes each of the survey's 2,441 respondents represents 1,300 theoretical Jews. Thus 1.1 million children merit only 840 survey entries, giving an error margin of some 10 percent — too high to draw firm conclusions about Hebrew school enrollment.

cent — too high to draw firm conclusions about Hebrew school enrollment.

As for the intermarriage figure, it is based on a sample of fewer than 200 respondents. The margin of error? "Pretty high," Mayer conceded. Perhaps 20 percent? "Maybe more." So intermarriage could easily be 40 percent, as Cohen insists. There's no way to know.

Does any of this matter? Not really, most experts insist. The 52-percent figure may be high, says Brown University sociologist Calvin Goldscheider, but "it's had a very positive effect" by forcing Jews to reexamine their values.

The figure has also boosted public support for Jewish education. Whether it's accurate doesn't matter, educators say — they're not convinced schooling can prevent intermarriage anyway.

"I don't think you can equate levels of intermarriage with success in Jewish education," says Mark Gurvis of Cleveland's Jewish Education Center. "But it's intermarriage that has motivated a lot of the community concern."

J.J.G.

The 52-percent intermarriage figure is based on a sample of fewer than 200

example, eliminated job security and many of the teacher benefits that went with a large bureaucracy, leaving educators demoralized. And last spring, the UJA was rebuffed when it asked the Jewish Agency and the Israeli government to join it in a \$30-million partnership to promote youth travel to Israel.

Ironically, no one knows how far the reforms have reached, for American Jews have an estimated 2,600 separate Jewish schools, with nearly no central supervision. Teachers number some 20,000. Total yearly budgets are estimated at \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion.

No one even knows for sure how many students there are: Numbers range from 264,000 to 450,000, depending on who's counting. One widely accepted figure, from a 1988 census of U.S. Jewish schools by Hebrew University demographer Sergio Della Pergola, puts the total at around 386,000 enrolled students, age 6 to 17, in an estimated population of 710,000.

Those statistics contain good news and bad. True, only half of all school-age Jewish children are enrolled in Jewish schools. But in the 10-12 age group, preceding bar and bat mitzvah, enrollment tops 75 percent. It drops to 48 percent among 14-15-year-olds and barely 25 percent after that.

In other words, three-quarters of all American Jewish youngsters attend Hebrew school at some point. But there are schools and schools. About two-thirds of all enrolled students attend "supplementary schools" like Nolan Klein's and Daniel Nemser's. Most are operated by synagogues and meet evenings and Sunday mornings, typically three times a week in Conservative congregations, twice a week in Reform ones.

The rest of the kids are in all-day Jewish schools: 150,000 young people in 540 institutions. And day schools are clearly the growth sector of Jewish education. They've doubled their enrollment in the last quarter century, while the overall Jewish population has remained stable.

Much of the day schools' growth comes from the Orthodox community, which has all but abandoned after-hours Hebrew schooling in the last generation. But close to a quarter of the Orthodox schools' students are not Orthodox. And non-Orthodox day schools, virtually non-existent in 1970, now make up 30 percent of the total, and their share is growing.

For most Jewish educators, the growth is pure good news. "The Jewish day school is the sine qua non for Jewish living," says Rabbi Robert Hirt, a vice president of Yeshiva University. "Without it you can't acquire the tools to survive as a



Nolan and his mother: "Mostly they do Bible stories, and I just don't believe them"

Jew in the American melting pot."

Several studies have indeed shown dramatically lower intermarriage rates among day-school graduates. One soon-to-be-published Yeshiva U. study shows an intermarriage rate among day-school graduates — Orthodox and non-Orthodox combined — of just 4.5 percent. Then again, only the most motivated families send their children to day school in the first place.

The biggest builder of non-Orthodox day schools is the Conservative movement, with about 17,000 students in its 70 Solomon Schechter schools (named for the seminal figure in the movement's history). A handful are affiliated with Reform Judaism, with just over 2,000 students in 16 schools. Most of the rest are "community schools" operated by local federations or parent groups, like New York's acclaimed Abraham Joshua Heschel School.

"We integrate the child's world," says Peter Geffen, founding director of the Heschel School. "If your worlds are separated, you're making an implicit statement that you have to choose between them. If the worlds are together, being Jewish is part of your being."

Not all the day-school growth comes from rising Jewish fervor. A big part results from parents fleeing public-school decay. Jonathan Moreno, a professor of bioethics in Washington, D.C., frankly admits he chose to send his son Jarrett, 8, to a day school because of "convenience and a reputation for good schooling."

"I don't have a big stake in the religious thing, though it wasn't a minus," Moreno said. "My sense was that he was going to get as intensive an education there as he would get at a secular private school, for half the money."

Still, cost is a major day-school drawback: Tuition averages \$6,000 to \$8,000

per student, going as high as \$11,500 at places like Manhattan's toney Ramaz School. Almost none of the cost is government-subsidized or even tax-deductible, because of court rulings on church-state separation. Most day schools offer scholarships to low-income families. But middle-income families are left in a squeeze.

"It's very, very expensive to send kids to day school," says David Twersky, a New Jersey journalist with two children in a Schechter school. "We want our kids to know something about Jewish culture and Jewish languages. But we're paying \$6,000 per kid this year. That's a very large percentage of our disposable income."

What's more, most day schools are small institutions that can't offer everything that a public school does. Josh Kopp, an 11th grader in Columbus, Ohio, attended a local Orthodox day school until eighth grade, then transferred to a public high school. "If I'd gone to Hebrew high school I wouldn't have had a social life," he says. "Plus I wanted sports, and there was nothing there."

Many advocates of educational reform say the answer to all these problems is simple: Stop talking and start spending. "Day schools are the best thing we've got," says Rabbi Herbert Friedman, one-time national chief of the United Jewish Appeal, now head of the Wexner Heritage Foundation. "The community's leadership should convene and decide what they want to do about it — that X number of schools will be built, that tuition will be set at \$7,000 and the rest will be borne by the community."

Things are moving in that direction, if less dramatically than Friedman wants. Federations nationwide now spend about 24 percent of their domestic budgets — some \$100 million in all — on Jewish education, half of it on day schools.

Money, even lots of it, won't bring most American Jewish kids into day schools, though. "Most Jews consider them parochial and anti-American," says Brown University sociologist Calvin Goldscheider. "Day schools will never cover more than 20 percent of the Jewish population."

Washington attorney Lee Levine confirms that view. He says he and his wife "have never at all considered sending our children to a Jewish school as their regular school." Levine's two children attend an afternoon Conservative Hebrew school. "In public school," Levine says, "my children get to know and interact with people of different cultures, different backgrounds, races and religions. It parallels the world they're likely to enter when they grow up."

So outside the Orthodox community, educators accept that the day schools are a minority choice. "We assume that afternoon schools will continue to exist and continue to have a majority of Conservative kids in them, and that they have to be as good as they can be," says Rabbi Robert Abramson, education director of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. "And my experience is that there are many places where the synagogue schools succeed."

Perhaps. But the failings of after-hours Jewish education — dull classes; ill-trained teachers; bored, unruly students — are the stuff of legend, much of it true. "Many people we interview tell us that Hebrew school permanently alienated them from Judaism," says sociologist Gary Tobin of Brandeis University.

It's no surprise. Teachers remain underpaid. Attendance is spotty, as Hebrew

educational material pour out continually from research institutes in Los Angeles, New York, Jerusalem and elsewhere.

But it's all a drop in the bucket. "In a country with perhaps 20,000 positions in Jewish education, the training institutions are turning out about 70 professionals a year," says Alan Hoffman, a professor of education at Hebrew University's Melton Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora, currently heading the Council on Initiatives in Jewish Education.

Hoffman's council is running pilot programs in three cities (Milwaukee, Baltimore and Atlanta) to test ways of improving Jewish teaching, through field training, recruitment and pay hikes. No one has yet put a price-tag on the reforms needed nationwide, though. Just the immediate needs — building more day schools, endowing scholarships, recruiting better teachers, adding training insti-

Once the Russian immigration is completed in a decade or so, they say, Israeli institutions like the Jewish Agency can be reshaped to the education needs of American Jewry. "One has to think broadly about how Israel might become a place for training North America's Jewish teachers," says Alan Hoffman. (The Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization currently spend about \$40 million a year — less than 8 percent of their combined budget — on Diaspora education. Barely 10 percent of that sum serves Jews in the U.S., with the rest providing youth leaders and teachers in South America, Europe and elsewhere.)

The problems of cash-flow and teacher-training, however, hide a more basic question: What's the purpose of expanding Jewish education?

Not surprisingly, the answers divide U.S. Jewry down the middle. Orthodox and some Conservative Jews urge the community to invest its resources in helping the most committed Jews resist assimilation. "Jewish education has got to be a counter-cultural movement in American society," says Yeshiva University's Hirt.

At the very least, says Abramson of the United Synagogue, that means teaching young Jews they shouldn't marry non-Jews: "If we're not talking about ways to make sure that kids are in-married and continue to be Jewish, we're being stupid and naive."

The problem with this approach is that so many Jews are already married to non-Jews. "It's no longer a question of trying to stop intermarriage," says Barry Komin, research director at the Council of Jewish Federations. "Intermarriage has already happened. We estimate that more than a quarter-million children have one Jewish parent. Even if you're Orthodox, at least half of them are Jewish, because their mother is Jewish. That's 130,000 Jewish children we could be writing off. The challenge is to encourage them to be Jewish."

At the opposite pole, the Reform movement is actively embracing intermarried families, hoping to induce them to raise their children as Jews. Intermarried families are streaming into Reform congregations as a result. And many Reform synagogue schools have given up trying to teach that Jews should seek to marry other Jews. "We're very careful not to make judgments in our classrooms, because we have a large number of kids who come from intermarried families," says Gloria Aronson, education director at Seattle's Temple Beth Am.

"I don't tell them it's wrong to intermarry," says Deborah O'Connor, a Temple Beth Am teacher who is herself mar-



But the statistics just don't compute: Nobody really knows how many children go to Jewish schools in America

school must compete with sports, dance and other pursuits. Curriculum supervision is haphazard, and content often consists of learning the Hebrew characters to perform bar mitzvah prayers, plus rudimentary Bible and holiday lessons. Most students drop out right after bar mitzvah.

The results can be read between the lines of the 1990 Population Survey. The product of Hebrew school is today's American Jewish life, with its low affiliation, high intermarriage and rampant ignorance of Jewish law and lore.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent over the years to upgrade Jewish supplementary schools. The Reform and Conservative seminaries turn out dozens of trained educators each year. New curricula, teaching aids and

tutions — would come to hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

It is hard to see where this would come from, especially as ongoing government cutbacks strain overworked Jewish welfare agencies. "It's very difficult to shift dollars because you're always competing with what already is," says Cleveland federation director Stephen Hoffman.

The one current idea that might free up serious money for Jewish education is the hotly debated proposal by Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin to take UJA cash now going to Israel and divert it to American needs. Fundraisers warn that a UJA campaign without Israel at the top might not attract donors at all. Still, some suggest that the two goals — aiding Israel and teaching young Jews — might be combined.

A SCHOOL FOR DIVERSITY

From the outside, the Solomon Schechter Upper School in West Orange, New Jersey, looks like any suburban public high school: a squat yellow brick building with a parking lot in front and sports fields behind.

Once inside, the visitor finds Hebrew artwork on the walls, volumes of Talmud on the shelves and yarmulkes on the boys' heads, and decides this is actually a standard private Jewish day school.

Look again. Schechter is a day school, but it's not standard. It's one of just half a dozen non-Orthodox Jewish high schools in America; most liberal Jewish day schools end at grade 6 or 8. Here diversity and questioning of beliefs are encouraged, and girls and boys are treated with full equality, from the sports field to morning prayers in most of the pluralistic school's several morning minyanim. It's an institution whose values resemble those of the broad American Jewish public.

And with two affiliated elementary schools in West Orange and nearby Cranford, plus a network of five other Schechter grade schools that feed graduates from the surrounding counties into the high school, the Solomon Schechter schools of New Jersey could be called the closest thing in America to a Jewish public school system.

"I'm trying to create a Jewish community in this school where students are comfortable learning and growing Jewishly, which includes everything from prayer to community service," says Ruth Ritterband, overall head of the West Orange-Cranford complex. "And at the same time, we're creating a community that's fully involved in the American way of life."

Part of the nationwide network of Solomon Schechter day schools of Conservative Judaism, the West Orange complex got its start in 1965 with a single kindergarten class. It now has a combined student body of 900 on its three campuses. The high school, which will graduate 48 youngsters next spring, received its own \$7-million facility in 1991. The five other Schechter elementary schools around the state, which are administratively separate, have another 1,100 children for a total Schechter system

Solomon Schechter is the closest thing in America to a Jewish public school system

population of about 2,000.

Maintaining Schechter's religious pluralism is a tricky balancing act. The administration and a minority of families are committed to halakha, or rabbinic law, as liberally interpreted by the Conservative rabbinate. Most families are not. "There are a lot of people in the Schechter community with lots of ideas about their Jewishness, and how Jewish they want to be, and for me that's a plus," says photographer Ginny Tweraky, who has two children here.

Observant families say the school's rapid growth in the last decade has brought growing diversity, a mixed blessing. "It used to be a like-minded community of parents, but it's turning into a sort of Jewish public school," says Rabbi Daniel Allen, who has four children in Schechter. "Now you have kids planning parties on Shabbat,

which excludes half the class. You've got debates over equality for girls in the morning minyan — and the newcomers don't even have an opinion. If you're sending your kid to school just to get 'an exposure to Judaism,' you don't care about the nuances I do."

Similar tensions surface regularly in Schechter schools across the country, as growing numbers of unaffiliated families enter, then seek to lower the schools' religious level. "As the schools grow, there's got to be some implications for observing less," says the national Schechter schools chief, Rabbi Robert Abramson. "In an atmosphere as pluralistic as ours, the principal tends to be much more susceptible to pressure."

The tensions are not just internal. As it is non-Orthodox, Schechter's sports teams are not permitted to compete in the Metropolitan New York Yeshiva League. Instead, they play in a league of New Jersey prep schools and Catholic schools.

The school's 12th grade semester-Israel program is in a similar bind. Because of the school's kosher-food-only policy, youngsters spend the kibbutz segment of their stay at a religious kibbutz. But many rebel against Orthodox restrictions they've never faced before. The problem has not yet been solved.

And yet, while the great debates of Judaism and modernity swirl around them, Schechter's students seem to have achieved something that was once considered an exclusively Zionist dream: Jewish normalcy. "We've been doing this all our lives, and I don't feel I'm missing anything," says 12th grader Sarah Allen, a lifelong Schechter student. "It's sort of normal for all of us."

J.J.G.

ried to a non-Jew. "I do tell them it's wrong to tear a kid in half and give mixed messages. I tell them I'm Jewish and I believe in it very firmly, and for me it's the best religion there is."

With such opposing strategies at work, efforts to forge a national consensus are leading to fireworks.

Agudath Israel of America, the main body of ultra-Orthodox Judaism, refused to join the North American Commission on Jewish Continuity when it was formed last year. Agudath Israel's Rabbi Moshe Sherer told the commission in a letter that asking the Reform movement to help stop assimilation was "like asking the arsonist

to help put out the fire."

Officials of the CJF's continuity commission hope to bridge the gaps by encouraging individual movements and institutions to formulate their own goals, then coming together to agree on ways the overall community can help achieve them. "It's one of the realities that people have different goals for Jewish education," says commission director Jonathan Woocher. "One of our critical pieces is encouraging people to be more goal-conscious."

But some say the entire notion of using schools to change a community may be misguided. "People assume that if you

teach somebody Hebrew for six years, they'll become more Jewish," says CJF researcher Kosmin. "Nobody assumes that if you study Japanese for 10 years you'll become Japanese. I learned Latin for years, but I never became a Roman. The problem is that this whole area of Jewish education and what it achieves is under-researched."

In other words, the body of organized Jewry may be willing to boost its spending on Jewish education, and the spirit of reform may be strong. But the community hasn't agreed on what kind of Jewish future the schools are supposed to build — or whether schools can do the job at all. □

A Gift to Help American Jews Preserve an Identity

Continued From Page B1

75, beginning in September 1996, and to hire three new full-time faculty members, bringing their total to 10.

In addition to the new graduate school, the endowment will be used to inaugurate continuing education for professionals as well as to start a center for research on Jewish education. (The seminary is not the first school to receive money from Mr. Davidson, who has been the chairman of the United Jewish Appeal for Detroit and is also a past president

of Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield. In 1992, his \$30 million gift endowed the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan Business School, which is dedicated to helping nations in Eastern Europe develop free-market economies.)

Nationwide, Dr. Schorsch said, some 30,000 people work in Jewish education, with only 5,000 of them serving in full-time positions. Training is varied and in many cases, not very thorough.

"A huge number of teachers have not much more education than the

students they are teaching," said Alan Hoffmann, the executive director of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education. "Most of them are, at best, graduates of Jewish supplementary programs."

Citing a report that will be released next month, Mr. Hoffmann said his group surveyed three cities — Baltimore, Atlanta and Milwaukee — and found that only 30 percent of teachers in supplementary schools graduated from Jewish day schools. Almost a third received no further Jewish education after their bar mitzvah, and only a quarter of them received one day a week of instruction after their bar mitzvahs.

Those kinds of data are fueling an intense re-examination of priorities in the American Jewish community, which has responded with commissions, task forces and philanthropic involvement at all levels. Some of those discussions have looked at how to make the profession of Jewish education more attractive.

"The failure for most American Jews is that Judaism is a closed book," said Steven Bayme, national director of Jewish Communal Affairs at the American Jewish Committee. "We always prided ourselves as being people of the book. Unfortunately today our capacity to read a Jewish book in the original language has been sharply diminished. We insist on the highest standards in our secular education, but we have yet to transmit that to our Jewish education."

Approaches have ranged from greater emphasis on sending young people to Israel to initiating synagogue programs for the education of young adults who are starting to have children.

Previous efforts to stimulate Jewish education have included gifts by the Wexner Foundation, which provides fellowships for students in Jewish studies courses.

In New York City, the UJA-Federation is for the first time providing grants directly to synagogues to develop new programs, especially for families. It is part of a larger grant plan to develop programs for camps, community centers and students.

The topic of Jewish continuity will also be a major focus of discussions and workshops at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, which is to take place next month in Denver. And after years of studying how they could best help Israel, some of the conference participants will try to learn how Israel can help them, as they listen to an address by the Israeli Minister of Education.

"It's part of a broader question of renegotiating the traditional relationship where Israel was the one in need of help and the wealthy diaspora was coming to Israel's aid," Mr. Hoffmann said. "This area is one where there are huge resources of intelligence and spiritual resources in Israel that could be helpful in the training of educators and strengthening the diaspora community."



Joyce Culver/The New York Times

A gift of \$15 million from the industrialist William Davidson, left, will support graduate studies in Jewish education at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, whose chancellor is Dr. Ismar Schorsch, right.

American Jews Focus on Preserving Their Identity

A New Gift of \$15 Million for Graduate Studies in Jewish Education Should Help

By DAVID GONZALEZ

For American Jews, the most unsettling news these days doesn't always come from the Middle East. It's a lot closer to home.

One of two Jews now marry outside the faith. Less than half of all American Jews belong to synagogues. And even if the children of Jewish parents do take classes in Judaism, they are likely to be taught by teachers whose own training stopped when they were bar mitzvahed.

Against this background of erosion in the identity of American Jews, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America has received a \$15 million gift for a graduate school of Jewish education.

The gift, by William Davidson, a Michigan industrialist who is the majority owner of the Detroit Pistons basketball team, is the largest donation ever made to a single institution of Jewish education in this country.

Dr. Ismar Schorsch, the seminary's chancellor, said he hoped that the gift, to be officially announced today, would send a strong signal that it was time for Jews in America to focus on their own future.



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The logo of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

"This is where the battlefield for Judaism is, not the Middle East," Dr. Schorsch said. "The enormous funds that American Jews sent to Israel for its welfare need to be shifted to Jewish education. The most pressing problem for

the survival of world Jewry is the survival of American Jewry."

How to deal with the loss of a distinct identity among American Jews, particularly those of Conservative and Reform backgrounds, has received increased attention from Jewish groups since a 1990 survey found that 52 percent of Jews who married after 1985 did so outside their faith. The survey also showed that only 28 percent of the children of such interfaith unions were being raised as Jews.

Dr. Schorsch said other research shows that only 45 percent of American Jews belong to a synagogue, which is where the vast majority of Jewish children receive education in Judaism in supplementary, or after-school, programs until they reach 13 years of age and are bar or has mitzvahed.

And a survey to be released next month concludes that many of the teachers in those programs have not continued their own education in Judaism after their bar mitzvahs.

"The teaching ranks are thin and poorly prepared," Dr. Schorsch said. "Yet they are the backbone to cultivate and deepen Jewish identity in American

society."

Mr. Davidson, 71, who is the chairman and president of Guardian Industries, the world's fifth-largest glass manufacturing concern, with annual sales of \$1 billion, as well as the majority owner of the Pistons, said he chose to make his gift to the Jewish Theological Seminary because it had already demonstrated a commitment to Jewish education.

The seminary, at Broadway and West 122d Street on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, already has professional programs for rabbis and cantors, as well as an undergraduate college and a general graduate school.

"They have the students and the access to those who would want to do graduate work," Mr. Davidson said. "But they have not up to this point had adequate financing."

Seminary officials said the endowment would be used to build on existing graduate studies in Jewish education; they plan to increase the number of students enrolled in graduate studies in Jewish education to 150 from the current

Continued on Page B10

Educator Survey
P.R.

Setting A New Course

Will \$15 million gift rejuvenate Jewish education?

ARTHUR J. MARRAS SCHOLAR EDITOR

New York — In what is billed as the largest gift ever made to a single institution of Jewish education, Detroit businessman and philanthropist William M. Davidson has given \$15 million to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

The funds will be used to create the largest graduate school of Jewish education in the country. JTS officials are hopeful the new school will elevate the status and prestige of educators in Jewish day and congregational schools around the nation.

In effect, seminary officials are using the gift as a challenge to local federations to boost their funding for Jewish education and put teachers and administrators in Jewish educational institutions on a parity with those in private secular schools.

"Education is the key to Jewish continuity and the key to Jewish education is training more senior personnel," said Rabbi Isaac Schorsch, the seminary's chancellor. "To win this war, we need more troops. This gift lets us put more troops in the world. It will also have a ripple effect throughout Jewish communities by challenging local federations to properly fund the teaching profession, which is a beleaguered, undervalued and underpaid profession."

Rabbi Roy L. Rosenbaum, the seminary's vice president for development, agreed. "This," he said, "is about making Hebrew school teachers as good as any in the United States."

On Oct. 8, Mr. Davidson told the chancellor that the seminary would be the beneficiary of the gift. The funds, according to Rabbi Schorsch, will come to JTS "in several large sums."

The Detroit businessmen said he "believes" that with this gift the seminary can revitalize the field of Jewish education and make it, once again, an attractive career choice for our best and brightest young people. I believe

the seminary is uniquely qualified to achieve that goal and make a tremendous, lasting difference in the future of the American Jewish community."

As had Rabbi Schorsch, Mr. Davidson also portrayed the gift as "an invitation and a challenge to others to redouble their efforts to create still greater resources for



William Davidson (above). Aims to "revitalize" Jewish education.

Rabbi Isaac Schorsch (right). "Education is the key to Jewish continuity."

Jewish education programming and professional training."

Rabbi Schorsch said he has "tremendous rapport" with Mr. Davidson, whom he has known for five years and who owns the Detroit Pistons basketball team. But the rabbi did concede that he "know(s) just enough about basketball to talk no more than five minutes about it."

In addition to owning the Pistons, Mr. Davidson, 70, owns Guardian Industries, which is reportedly the fifth largest glass manufacturer in the world and has helped place Mr. Davidson on Forbes magazine's list of the 400 wealthiest Americans with assets of over \$200 million.

Among Mr. Davidson's overseas investments is a \$100 million glass factory in Israel's Galilee, which, with 400 employees, is the largest single undertaking of private industry in that country.

He also is a former chairman of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit's Allied Jewish Campaign. In 1992, he was the re-

Baltimore Jewish Times
10/14/94

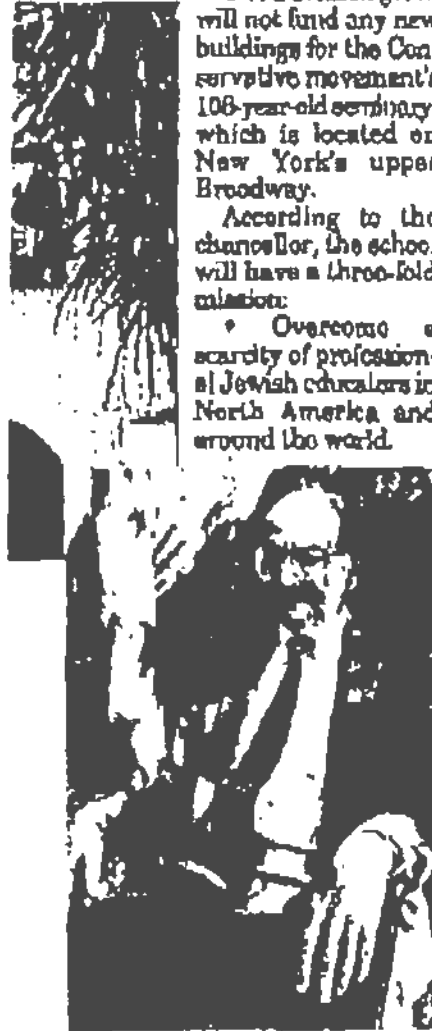
ipient of the Detroit federation's highest accolade, the Fred M. Butzel Memorial Award for Distinguished Community Service.

The gift, which is exactly double the size of a donation that Mr. Davidson gave in 1992 to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to help train business people from the Third World, will let JTS move from a department of Jewish education to a graduate school. It also will double the department's student enrollment to about 160, and increase its faculty from its present seven. The new school will begin classes in September 1996.

The Davidson grant will not fund any new buildings for the Conservative movement's 106-year-old seminary, which is located on New York's upper Broadway.

According to the chancellor, the school will have a three-fold mission:

- Overcome a scarcity of professional Jewish educators in North America and around the world.



- Support local Jewish education efforts by developing new teaching curricula and materials.

- Conduct "the most extensive academic research yet undertaken" in the field of Jewish education.

Reaction to the Davidson gift among Jewish educators around the country was mixed. One president of a Jewish university, noting that graduate programs already exist in Jewish education, first said, "Why invent something new?" then added that "anything that upgrades education is fine."

In Baltimore, Norma Furst, president of the local Hebrew University, was concerned that JTS

at decent pay" upon graduating from the Davidson program. She cited a study done in Philadelphia a few years ago that revealed that Jewish educators in that city were paid from \$10,000 to \$15,000 less than those in private secular schools.

Jewish educators in Baltimore fare no better. A report compiled about a year ago by Dr. Chaim Botwinick, the executive director of the Association's Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education, determined that teachers in local day schools earn up to 25 percent less than those in private secular schools in Maryland and as much as 35 percent below the salaries of those in similar positions in Baltimore County public schools.

The Botwinick report also stated that the benefits package for local day school teachers was "substantially" below that offered in Baltimore County schools and in private secular schools throughout the state.

Of the Davidson gift to JTS, Dr. Botwinick said, "The personnel crisis in Jewish education is a real one — and will remain one until Jewish communities intensely invest in resources and training. Fifteen million dollars is a lot of money, but it doesn't necessarily guarantee you will make teachers who are more effective or more charismatic or who are better communicators with kids.

"The challenge," said Dr. Botwinick, "is how will the \$16 million be spent to enhance the quality of teacher personnel in the community. I would like to believe that the recipient of these funds has a broad enough vision to guarantee the scope, quality and content of any teacher training or in-service program it will provide.

"Moreover," he added, "this grant has the potential to positively impact upon the nature and the scope of teacher training and hopefully serve as a model for other teacher-training programs throughout North America."

And Sam Lee, director of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education at the Los Angeles campus of Hebrew Union College, said "the good news" of the Davidson endowment will be that it might "stimulate others to make significant donations to such institutions as the Baltimore Hebrew University. But just producing teachers is not enough. We have to be engaged in helping other educational institutions — day schools, congregational schools, adult institutes — transform themselves into being more effective and vibrant." □

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JEWISH COMMUNITY CLU.

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SURVEY FINDS JEWISH EDUCATORS ARE COMMITTED, BUT NOT TRAINED FOR FIELD

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Nov. 8 (JTA) -- Finally, some good news about the state of Jewish education: Most teachers in Hebrew schools, day schools and Jewish preschools see their job as a career, even if they are only working part-time.

That is one finding of a study, conducted by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, based on questionnaires filled out by more than 80 percent of the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

The study also found, however, that only a small percentage of those teachers had any formal training as Jewish educators.

"This goes part of the way to explain why people's supplementary (Hebrew school) experience was the way it was," said Alan Hoffman, executive director of CIJE.

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Less Than A Third Trained In Jewish Studies

The survey found that two-thirds of the educators had been teaching for more than five years. Even among part-time teachers, more than half consider Jewish education their profession. Only 7 percent are Israeli, dispelling another common myth about these educators.

But only 31 percent of the teachers had been trained in Jewish studies, and just more than half had professional education training. A third had training in neither field.

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Mandel, whose foundation largely funds CIJE, will present the survey along with the researchers and Israeli Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein.

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Rita Wiseman, principal of Baltimore's Beth Tfiloh Hebrew School, agrees that training makes a difference in the caliber of teachers.

One-Shot Workshops Not The Solution

"You can only impart as much knowledge as you have," said Wiseman, who taught Hebrew school for 25 years before becoming principal this year.

While supplementary school teachers are less likely to have general education training than their day school or preschool counterparts, nonetheless 41 percent have a university degree in education.

Sixty-two percent of preschool teachers, and 60 percent of day school educators, have a degree in education.

But if Jewish educators start off with a degree, they can expect little professional support for their continuing education.

The officials at CIJE say that one-shot workshops are not the solution.

"One has to target specific populations and think of systematic training that has norms and standards built into it," said Hoffman.

One finding that particularly disturbed the CIJE researchers was the clear gap in Jewish background among the preschool teachers.

Since Jewish preschool education is being hailed as a great way of getting parents involved in the Jewish community, the findings indicate that an opportunity is being squandered.

"Parents of young children will send their kids to Jewish settings not only because they're Jewish but because they have heard the best early childhood program happens to be in the synagogue down my street," explained Barry Holtz, senior education officer at CIJE.

But the goal of turning the Jewish preschools into a "holistic Jewish education" runs up against the fact that more than half the preschool educators had no Jewish education after age 13.

For Hoffman, this is one more reason for the Jewish community to take to heart the powerful lesson that "if one invests in teachers, that pays very high dividends."

Hebrew Watchman, Memphis, TN, November 10, 1994

Major new study of Jewish educators finds serious lack of training alongside significant commitment

NEW YORK²³⁷⁶—A new in-depth study of all the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore, and Milwaukee reveals that classroom teachers have far less professional background and in-service training than is commonly expected of teachers in general education. And yet the majority of teachers in day schools, supplementary schools, and pre-schools are strongly committed to Jewish education as a career.

According to the policy brief on the "Background and Professional Training of Teachers in Jewish Schools," which will be released formally by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) on November 17 at the Council of Jewish Federation's General Assembly in Denver, the findings offer a powerful first step in the Jewish community's

continuity crisis: investment in comprehensive in-service training for current Jewish educators.

"Now every Jewish community can know where to start and what to do," said Alan Hoffmann, executive director of CIJE. "This is a major opportunity for North American Jewry."

Among the findings:

- Over 80 percent of the teachers surveyed lacked professional training either in education or in Judaica—or in both.

- Almost 30 percent of teachers in supplementary schools had no Jewish schooling after the age of 13.

- Ten percent of the teachers in Jewish pre-school programs are not Jewish; in one community, the figure is as high as 21 percent.

- Forty percent of Judaica teachers in day schools have neither a degree in Jewish studies nor certification as Jewish educators, yet they attend fewer than two in-service workshops a year on average. (This is one-sixth the requirement for state-licensed teachers in the state of Wisconsin, for example.)

- And yet, almost 60 percent of the

teachers view Jewish education as their career. Only six percent plan to seek positions outside Jewish education in the near future.

The policy brief, the first of a series based on the CIJE Study of Educators, outlines a plan for action that every North American Jewish community can undertake to improve its teaching personnel.

The complete study, conducted by Dr. Adam Gamoran, professor of sociology and educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin, and Dr. Ellen Goldring, professor of educational leadership and associate dean of Peabody College of Education at Vanderbilt University, will be available in 1995 from CIJE.

CIJE's chair, Morton L. Mandel, of Cleveland, Ohio, is a former president of the CJE and a leading philanthropist in the field of Jewish education.

"Although some of these statistics correspond to what we may have suspected anecdotally," said Mr. Mandel, "there are also distinct surprises. We believe that Jewish communities should be able to replicate this research method, extrapolate from these conclusions, and begin to address the personnel needs of Jewish education in a meaningful way."

CIJE was established to implement the conclusions of the influential Commission on Jewish Education in North America (1988-90). The Commission's final report determined that the revitalization of Jewish education will depend upon building the profession of Jewish education and mobilizing community support for Jewish education.

In undertaking research with implications for communal policy, CIJE's goal is to be a catalyst for systemic change within communities by providing the hard data that will allow thoughtful planning for building the profession of Jewish educators. CIJE also initiates educational reform by working in partnership with a wide range of communal and continental organizations, foundations, universities, and denominational movements.

When commitment is not enough

Dedicated Jewish educators need training

By LARRY YUDELSON

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That is one finding of a study, conducted by the Council of Initiatives of Jewish Education (CIJE), based on questionnaires filled out by more than 80 percent of the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

The study also found, however, that only a small percentage of the teachers had any formal training as Jewish educators.

"This goes part of the way to explain why people's supplementary [Hebrew school] experience was the way it was," said Alan Hoffman, the council's executive director.

Hoffman insists that the twin findings "offer a huge opportunity for the Jewish community."

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Such moves toward professionalizing Jewish education will be boosted by the survey, which dispels an image of Jewish educators as transient.

The survey found that two-thirds of the educators had been teaching for more than five years. More than half of even the part-time teachers consider Jewish education their profession. And only 7 percent are Israeli, dispelling another common myth about the educators.

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HR

Survey finds Jewish educators are committed, but not trained for field

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By Larry Yudelson

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Rita Wisen
Baltimore's
School

Sentinel, Chicago, IL, December 1, 1994

NATIONAL

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SEE EDUCATORS PAGE 27

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Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Baltimore

BALTIMORE JEWISH TIMES

NOVEMBER 11, 1994

Jewish Education Survey

Study finds teachers in Jewish schools dedicated but undertrained.

LISA S. GOLDBERG STAFF REPORTER

Results from a survey of teachers in Baltimore's Jewish schools show that while they are highly committed to Jewish education, they are often poorly compensated and undertrained.

The study, which was presented Wednesday to the board of directors of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, was prepared under the auspices of the New York-based Council of Initiatives in Jewish Education.

Baltimore, along with Atlanta and Milwaukee, agreed to participate in the study as one of the CIJE's three "Lead Communities," or model communities for Jewish education.

Among the findings of the survey were that of Baltimore's 575 Judaic studies teachers, only 23 percent have higher education training in Jewish subjects and education.

In an interview with JTA, Rita Wiseman, principal of Beth Tfiloh Hebrew School, emphasized that training makes a difference in the caliber of teachers. "You can only impart as much knowledge as you have," said Ms. Wiseman, who taught Hebrew school for 25 years before becoming principal this year. Ms. Wiseman, who has a degree from Yeshiva University's Stern College, has taken both education and Jewish studies courses throughout the years, and is now enrolled in a master's program in Jewish education at the Baltimore Hebrew University.

About half of the surveyed teachers said they would like more instruction in Hebrew language and Jewish history. Teachers also said they attend only a handful of workshops every two years, with Orthodox day and preschool teachers attending the fewest.

Salaries, the study found, seldom provide the main source of income for a teacher's family, although more than 50 percent said it is an important addition. And Jewish studies teachers are more often than not part-time, with 40 percent teaching less than 10 hours per week. Few receive health, pension or disability benefits, the survey stated.

The lack of benefits, the study

found, is particularly troublesome in local Orthodox day schools. Nearly 60 percent of teachers in those schools reported that their salary is the main source of the family's income, but only 34 percent were offered benefits.

And Baltimore's Jewish educators say there are few opportunities for career advancement beyond teaching, with some qualified instructors indicating that they plan to leave Jewish education for full-time employment in other areas.

"The community has to take a look at levels of compensation" and in-service training, said Chaim Botwinick, executive di-

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rector of the Associated's Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education. "We have to recognize the fact that quality education personnel hold the key to effective Jewish education."

The results of the survey, he said, were not surprising.

"If anything, it validates the need to address personnel issues," he said. "The findings really address a compelling argument ... by and large, the insufficient preparation of teachers."

Dr. Botwinick said the Associated is developing focus groups with principals, rabbis and community leaders to study survey findings.

Another work group, he said, will draft a plan to address the "challenges" identified in the CIJE report by the end of the current school year. □

The GA in Denver • Once This Century

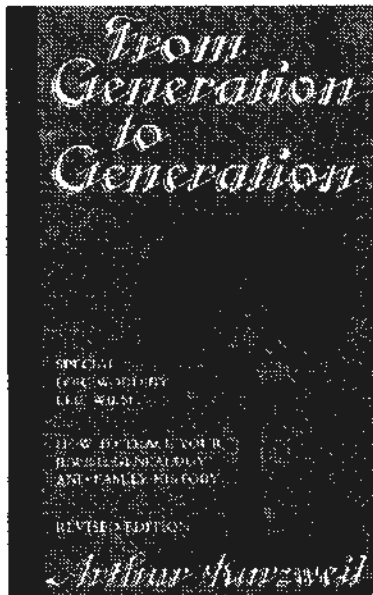
Joys of Jewish genealogy Still more ways to trace Jewish roots

By CHRIS LEPPEK
IJN Assistant Editor

Tracing one's family history is a challenging task for anyone, especially once the "easy" side of the job — tracing the American side of the family — is done. Mak-

From Generation to Generation

By Arthur Kurzweil
Harper Collins



ing the leap to the country of origin is where things tend to get tough.

For Jews, this can be especially daunting. As detailed in *From Generation To Generation*, a revised text of a well-received 1980 guide, European pogroms and the Holocaust destroyed not only Jewish lives but also many records of lives. Jewish communal records, cemetery records and steamship passenger lists — all basic genealogical building blocks — are often unreliable or unavailable sources for the Jewish researcher.

This book, however, is nothing if not a source of hope. Kurzweil, who has done much to inspire the budding Jewish genealogical boom currently underway, has developed a

highly practical guide for tracing one's European's ancestry. He has already done much of the difficult footwork himself, providing a rich resource of historical societies, libraries, governmental agencies, archives, genealogical societies — in the US as well as a host of European nations.

Such references are pretty much the stock-in-trade of the serious genealogical researcher, of course, but Kurzweil draws upon his own lengthy experience in climbing the family tree to come up with a number of novel and highly useful approaches.

One involves the use of "Yizkor"

or memorial books, which many small and medium European Jewish communities prepared. *From Generation To Generation* offers a long list of such books, complete with information on how to access such texts. Often rich in historical, biographical and photographic detail more general histories overlook, these Yizkor books can prove

to be a valuable source for scarce information and material.

Another useful — and very interesting — section focuses on oral history interviews with one's own relatives. Kurzweil provides a fascinating primer on the do's and don'ts of what can sometimes be a sensitive and tricky business.

Originally published 14 years ago,

From Generation To Generation has been updated with a forward by Elie Wiesel and an invaluable section focusing on obtaining information about Eastern European branches of Jewish families.

Even more than its first printing, this edition is an indispensable tool for the serious student of his or her own ancestry.

CIJE: Jewish teacher training needed

A new in-depth study of all the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee reveals that classroom teachers have far less professional background and in-service training than is commonly expected of teachers in general education. And yet the majority of teachers in day schools, supplementary schools, and pre-schools are strongly committed to Jewish education as a career.

According to the policy brief on the "Background and Professional Training of Teachers in Jewish Schools," to be released formally by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) Nov. 17 at the General Assembly in Denver, the findings offer a powerful first step in the Jewish community's continuity crisis: investment in comprehensive in-service training for current Jewish educators.

"Now every Jewish community can know where to start and what

to do," said Alan Hoffman, executive director of CIJE. "This is a major opportunity for North American Jewry."

Among the findings:

- Over 80% of the teachers surveyed lacked professional training either in education or in Judaica — or in both.

- Almost 30% of teachers in supplementary schools had on Jewish schooling after the age of 13.

- Ten percent of the teachers in Jewish pre-school programs are not Jewish; in one community, the figure is as high as 21%.

- Forty percent of Judaica teachers in day schools have neither a degree in Jewish studies nor certification as Jewish educators, yet they attend fewer than two in-service workshops a year on average. (This is one-sixth the requirement for state-licensed teachers in the state of Wisconsin, for example.)

- And yet, almost 60% of the

teachers view Jewish education as their career. Only 6% plan to seek positions outside Jewish education in the near future.

The policy brief, the first of a series based on the CIJE Study of Educators, outlines a plan for action that every North American Jewish community can undertake to improve its teaching personnel.

CIJE's chair, Morton L. Mandel, of Cleveland, Ohio, is a former president of the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) and a leading philanthropist in the field of Jewish education.

"Although some of these statistics correspond to what we may have suspected anecdotally," said Mandel, "there are also distinct surprises. We believe that Jewish communities should be able to replicate this research method, extrapolate from these conclusions, and begin to address the personnel needs of Jewish education in a meaningful way."

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UP FRONT

Survey finds Jewish educators are committed, but not trained for field

By Larry Yudelson
Jewish Telegraphic Agency

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Continued on Page 11A

Most Jewish educators surveyed lack background

Continued from Page 3A

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One finding that particularly disturbed the CIJE researchers was the clear gap in Jewish background among the preschool teachers.

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Study Finds:

Jewish Teachers Poorly Trained

1376 FRONT PAGE

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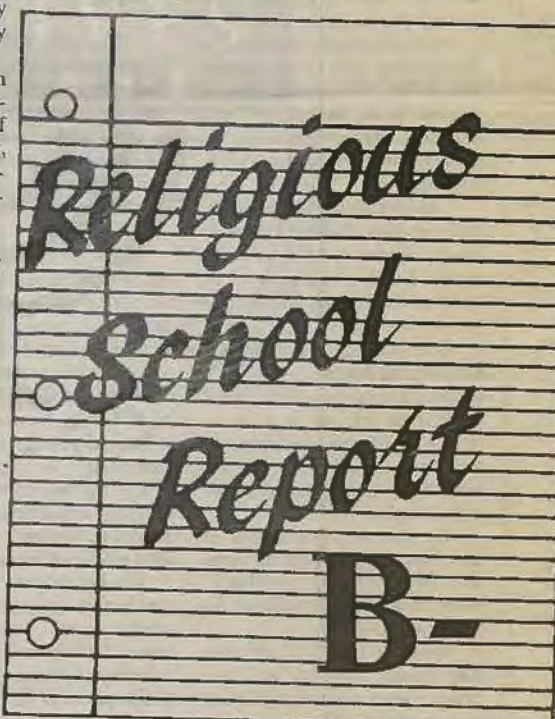
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Continued on

Dade Jewish Journal

Week of NOVEMBER 17 - NOVEMBER 23, 1994

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Continued from Page 3

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2376
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THE JEWISH COMMUNITY NEWS

Exploring Jewish Life At WPC And Ramapo

1376

By Susan Sher

What is the Jewish population at Ramapo College in Mahwah? One can't tell from the college applications for they do not include religious affiliation. How then do the Jewish students find each other? There is an appealing visibility on campus through Hillel as well as

a chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi, a Jewish fraternity, and Delta Phi Epsilon, a Jewish sorority, all of which act as a link and source of solidarity among the students.

According to Phyllis Roberts, Hillel advisor on campus, the Hillel meetings and other activities attract both observant and non-observant Jews, commuters

as well as residents. A mix of cultural and religious programming is offered to ease the students' expression of Jewish identity and help them feel pride in who they are.

Meetings, on Tuesdays at 5:30 PM, provide a round-table for event planning and community building. Social opportunities run the gamut

from movie nights to catered Shabbat dinners held twice each semester that incorporate timely discussions with topics chosen by the students. Coming up are a lecture on cults, sponsored by Jews for Judaism, and a dialogue on interfaith dating and marriage led by a professor from Yeshiva University.

All events are open to the entire student body and are joint efforts with Bergen Community College and Fairleigh Dickinson University, also located in Bergen County. Often, yeshiva students from nearby Monsey, NY will come to these events, particularly the Shabbat dinners. This Hillel is part of an Alliance which coordinates one event per semester involving all the Jewish college organizations in New Jersey.

In November, there was a commemoration of Kristallnacht and a Chanukah party will take place on the 29th. Reaching further afield, there have been field trips to the National Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. and to Ellis Island. Each one of these activities is a building block to

is the seed of their Jewish consciousness and activism.

The campus is home to a Center for Holocaust and Genocide Study and offers a minor in Jewish Studies as part of the curriculum.

William Paterson College is home to the Jewish Students' Association (JSA) which is under the auspices

ty outreach encompasses the Y in Wayne also, where fun can be had painting Chanukah pictures on the windows.

During the campus-wide multi-cultural week once a year, the JSA participates with the Catholic Campus Ministry and the Christian Fellowship in an ecumenical

"Jewish geography" is an important step in opening doors for young Jewish adults to meet and socialize, as well as learning to become activists

of Berna Bader, program director of the YM-YWHA of North Jersey.

This active group hosts a weekly open house, "Bagels and More." The "more" is often an informal speaker who carries on a dialogue with the students on a topic of his/her interest or field of expertise. Lisa Constants, the Association's advisor, helps to plan Shabbat dinners, a model seder and a Chanukah party, to name just a few events, all of

service. The JSA members say Kaddish for any students or teachers who have died during the previous year. Various programs are carefully prepared; last year, they showed an Anti-Defamation League film on the differences among students and how they can live together harmoniously on campus. An upcoming lecture, accompanied by slides, is open to the entire campus, and will focus on bias crimes.

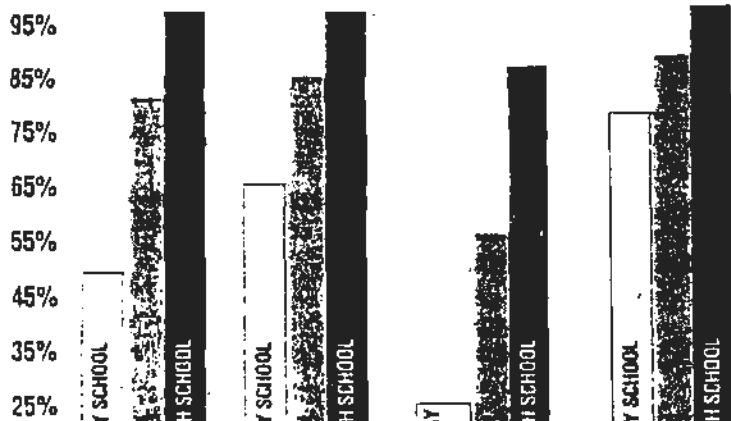
KEEPIN' THE FAITH

Day school students with non-observant parents seem to get the religious support they need from Jewish educational institutions. While post-high school studies dramatically increase observance, even elementary school can have a profound influence...

THE JEWISH WEEK INDEX

Compiled & created by Jay Bailey

Source: David J. Arnell
Graduate Institute of Jewish
Education and Administration,
Yeshiva University



There's good news—and bad—about state of Jewish education

2376
By Larry Yudelson
Jewish Telegraphic Agency

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But if Jewish educators start off with a degree, they can expect little professional support of their continuing education.

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Survey *5*

Continued from page B-13

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Jewish educators committed but poorly trained

By Larry Yudelson 2376

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"It's a very involved process; we have to be patient," said Louise Stein, co-chair of Milwaukee's Lead Community Project. "But there's enthusiasm in Milwaukee."

She said her community is looking into creating a master's degree in Jewish education.

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Study finds serious teachers with poor training

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Local program to train teachers

The local Jewish Educators Council is looking to enhance the pool of qualified teachers for religious schools and Hillel Academy, and has come up with its own innovative plan to do so.

According to Rabbi Mark Raphael, the need to establish permanent faculty is acute — so many of the teaching positions in the Hebrew or religious schools are held by Binghamton University students who are temporary. Future continuity, he says, depends on people in the community becoming involved in teaching.

To that end, the Council has gone before the Allocations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Broome County with a proposal for a paid internship. The council hopes to identify someone in the community with either expertise in some kind of Jewish studies but lack of teaching experience and techniques, or expertise in teaching but lack of knowledge in Jewish Studies.

With \$900 obtained from the Federation, it then proposes to make this person an intern with several experienced teachers in the religious schools and Hillel Academy.

This person would be paid over a year's time to prepare materials, work one-on-one in the classroom with students, teach classes, learn at home etc., according to Roberta Matz, chairwoman of the Council. The person would float between the three local schools and be supervised by the principals and faculty of each.

The hope, said Matz, is that at the end of a year this intern would turn into a regular teacher and the process might begin again to continue to build up permanent faculty for the schools.

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Continued from page 4

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When commitment is not enough

Dedicated Jewish educators need training

By LARRY YUDELSON

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Jewish teachers failing, 2-year study reveals

By IRA RIFKIN

RELIGION NEWS SERVICE

DENVER — American Jewish leaders — fighting escalating intermarriage and declining religious affiliation — have long touted a solid Jewish education as the best assurance of keeping young Jews within the fold.

But a study released by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish



Mandel

Education shows Jewish educators to be woefully ill-prepared for the task. The two-year study of Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee revealed that more than 80 percent lack professional training in either Jewish studies or classroom education.

Council chairman Morton L. Mandel, a Cleveland businessman, said equally ill-prepared educators can probably be found "in every (Jewish) community in America."

"Education is our best shot for insuring Jewish continuity. Yet Jewish education in America is in a state of disarray. . . . This report is like a bombshell."

Mandel's comments came during the annual general assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, the North American umbrella group for 189 local federations coordinating Jewish fundraising and social services for the estimated 6.1-million Jews in the United States and Canada. More than 3,000 delegates attended the four-day meeting in Denver that ended Saturday night.

As has been the case each year since the 1990 release of a Council of Jewish Federations study detailing the rapid rate of Jewish assimilation into the secular mainstream, this year's general assembly revolved around the issue of "Jewish continuity."

Particular attention was paid to young people. A parade of speakers said the current generation of young people may well be the community's last hope for ensuring the survival of a distinctly Jewish community in America.

But as the council's survey showed, organized efforts to slow the erosion of Jewish religious observance still have a long way to go. One piece of evidence: More than half of all young people raised as Jews marry outside the faith.

"Most students come to college with a 12th-grade understanding of the humanities, but with a sixth-grade understanding, at best, of Jewish subjects," said Rabbi Richard Levy of the Los Angeles Hillel Council, a campus outreach program for Jewish university students.

Levy said college-age American Jews often are so embarrassed by their lack of Jewish knowledge that they shy away from anything on campus relating to Judaism.

"Intermarriage figures are well known," added Edgar M. Bronfman, World Jewish Congress president, "but our lack of knowledge about what Judaism is all about is not so well known."

In his general assembly keynote address, Bronfman, who also is chairman of Seagram's, the Montreal-based distiller, called for reallocation of Jewish communal dollars because Jewish education "must receive a massive infusion of money."

But an estimated 28 percent of the more than \$1 billion in donations collected annually by local Jewish federations and other agencies already is spent on education. Despite that, educators working in Jewish day school, supplemental afternoon and Sunday schools, and even pre-schools remain insufficiently prepared, the council's study noted.

According to the survey, 40 percent of the teachers working in day schools have neither a degree in Jewish studies nor certificates as Jewish educators. That figure rose to 80 percent for supplemental schools, which educate the bulk of American Jews who receive any kind of formal Jewish education.

"One of the most startling findings," said the report, "is that many pre-school teachers are teaching Jewish subject matter to Jewish children — but are not themselves Jews. Overall, 10 percent of the teachers in Jewish pre-schools are not Jewish."

The study also concluded that a lack of in-service training is compounding the situation. On average, teachers attend no more than four workshops over a two-year span. Jewish day schools also tended to have higher standards for secular studies teachers than for those involved in Jewish studies.

Mandel, who is chairman of Premier Industrial Corp., agreed that Jewish education needs additional funding. But where it may be needed most, he said, is not in funding new educational programs but in teacher training.

"There has not been a sufficient investment in building the quality of Jewish educators," he said.

Even if the Jewish community were to invest immediately in training educators, it would still take years before Jewish educators are better prepared.

In the meantime, Mandel noted, additional young Jews will be lost to the community through assimilation because they have received an inadequate Jewish education.

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"One has to target specific populations and think of systematic training that has norms and standards built into it," he said.

One finding that particularly disturbed the CJIE researchers was the clear gap in Jewish background among the preschool teachers.

Since Jewish preschool education is being hailed as a great way of getting parents involved in the Jewish community, the findings indicate that an opportunity is being squandered.

"Parents of young children will send their kids to Jewish settings, not only because they're Jewish, but because they have heard the best early childhood program happens to be in the synagogue down my street," explained Barry Holtz, senior education officer at CJIE.

But the goal of turning the Jewish preschools into a "holistic Jewish education" runs up against the fact that more than half the preschool educators had no Jewish education after age 13.

Fully 10 percent were not Jewish, with that figure 21 percent in one of the three communities.

For Hoffman, this is one more reason for the Jewish community to take to heart the powerful lesson that has emerged from the field of general teacher education in the last decade: "If one invests in teachers, that pays very high dividends." 2

NOV 25 1994

BURRELLE'S

HR

READERS WRITE

2376 Education I'm study - Costly Lesson

Jonathan Mark's criticism of Jewish day schools (Media Watch, Nov. 18-24) is undeserved. He compares tuitions with those at Catholic parochial schools. Despite the report in the New York Post, Catholic schools nationwide are failing financially, and closing their doors as a result. They have always relied heavily on volunteer and near-volunteer labor, which is disappearing as more women enter the job market.

In contrast, Jewish day schools have much higher costs, given their mandate to provide a first-rate secular education while teaching their students Hebrew and basic Torah skills.

Until day schools are free, there will always be parents who com-

plain about paying tuition. No day school receives \$9,000 a year from each student. Every school has a scholarship committee to determine how much a family can afford. When I was the finance vice president of SAR Academy several years ago, 68 percent of the students received financial aid; some paid no tuition at all. The shortfall was always made up by appeals to the community.

Please don't "hold the Jewish education community's feet to the fire." They need those feet to continue raising scholarship funds so that every Jewish child that wants a day school education can have one.

George R. Berman
Yonkers, N.Y.

tion have been trying to get through for at least two decades.

Hopefully, now that the lines of communications may have opened up somewhat, there is hope for the future.
Ellen Singer
Youngsville

Day School Promoting Adult Jewish Education

As it does yearly, Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, flew by with the blink of an eye. It left us with the taste of latkes in our mouths and an important message in our hearts.

The Maccabees clearly understood the significance of Jewish education for the perpetuation of the Jewish people. Every child who receives a Jewish education strengthens the Jewish people and ensures its continuity.

Every child who receives a Jewish education strengthens the Jewish

Education Too Long A Low Priority

eration of committed Jews.

In addition to changing funding patterns, we need to change our attitudes about Jewish education and whose responsibility it is.

Jewish Educators cannot, and should not, be expected to be the sole shapers of the next generation. Jewish parents must actively reinforce at home Jewish education their children receive in school.

In cases where parents feel inadequate to fulfill this responsibility, either due to not growing up Jewish, or to their own poor Jewish educational experiences, the community needs to provide nurturing non-patronizing educational opportunities for them.

The 1990 National Jewish Population Survey may have served as a "wake-up call to the American Jewish leadership," but it was a call that

NEW YORK JEWISH WEEK

NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 110,000

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Not Just Schools

2376

The Yeshiva University survey concludes that day school education is key to Jewish survival ("Stay In School," Oct. 28-Nov. 3). I certainly agree that the more Jewish education, the better.

However, while Jewish education is highly important, it is not the panacea, the key, nor the magic formula for survival. Merely possessing a firm intellectual grasp

of Jewish material is not sufficient for religious teaching. Previous researchers concluded that education has little effect unless the home environment promotes acceptance of norms taught at the school. So although the school goal is to reinforce existing values, it is the home environment that stresses these values and instills them into the youngster as he grows up.

While Jewish education may play a role in reinforcing religious and social value, without the support of the home environment, formal Jewish education appears to have minimal influence on socialization.

Rabbi Bernhard H. Rosenberg
Education Director
Congregation Beth El
Edison, N.J.

The following is a copy of a letter sent to The Jerusalem Post. It was also submitted to the Star because of its relevance to this issue's theme: Jewish Education.

As a Jewish educator, I would like to commend J.J. Goldberg on his article, "U.S. Jewry Pins Its Future on Education," Jerusalem Post, October 6). It is about time the Jewish community quit merely whining and wringing its hands about the future generations of Jews and began to do something.

Jewish educators have too often been too low on the priority list when funds have been distributed in the Jewish community.

But as Goldberg points out at the end of the article, increasing funding of Jewish schools is no guarantee that we will create a new gen-

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NATIONAL

Survey finds Jewish educators are committed but not trained for field

2376

By LARRY YUDELSON

NEW YORK (JTA) — Finally, some good news about the state of Jewish education: Most teachers in Hebrew schools, day schools and Jewish preschools see their job as a career, even if they are only working part-time.

That is one finding of a study, conducted by the Council of Initiatives of Jewish Education, based on questionnaires filled out by more than 80 percent of the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee. The study also found, however, that only a small percentage of those teachers had any formal training as Jewish educators. "This goes part of the way to explain why people's supplementary (Hebrew school) experience was the way it was," said Alan Hoffman, executive director of CIJE. Taken together, Hoffman insists the twin findings "offer a huge opportunity for the Jewish community."

"You have teachers in classrooms for whom investment in their professional backgrounds, both as educators and as Jews, will have immediate payoff," he said.

Currently, according to the survey, day school teachers receive only a sixth of the amount of continuing

education as Wisconsin mandates for public school teachers. Most of the supplementary school teachers have had little or no Jewish education since their Bar or Bat Mitzva. And the majority of preschool educators had no more than one day a week of Jewish education as children.

In the three cities surveyed, discussion has already begun on what to do in light of the data. One emerging possibility is the creation of master's degree programs in Jewish education in communities which now lack them. Such moves professionalizing Jewish education will be boosted by the survey, which dispels an image of Jewish educators as transient.

The survey found that two-thirds of the educators had been teaching for more than five years. Even among part-time teachers, more than half consider Jewish education their profession. Only 7 percent are Israeli, dispelling another common myth about these educators. But only 31 percent of the teachers had been trained in Jewish studies, and just more than half had professional education training. A third had training in neither field.

Jewish News, Cleveland, OH, December 2, 1994

Teaching our children diligently

Results of a recent ²³⁷⁴ ~~study~~ ^{education} show that Jewish educators are ill-prepared, with 80% lacking professional training.

While this may be part of the reason we are losing our youth through intermarriage and such movements as "Jews for Jesus," something else must be addressed besides throwing more money into training educators.

Part of the blame rests with parents. How many of us have instilled a love for Judaism in our children? Do we light candles on Shabbat? Do we teach our children to recite the *Shema* at bedtime? If they don't read or understand Hebrew, let them read the Bible in English before some missionary comes along and makes the young person believe it was original with Jesus.

I number myself among those who did not fulfill the Mosaic commandment: "And you shall teach them diligently to your children."

HAROLD W. SUSSMAN
Cleveland Heights

Reading, Writing And ... Uncle Sam

Here and across the country, Jews are beginning to debate the issue of school vouchers. Is a shift under way?

2376 Education To survive
STEWART AIN
STAFF WRITER

Jews throughout America who have long opposed government funding of parochial schools have begun re-examining their position, according to Jewish leaders from coast to coast.

Spurring this reconsideration is the quest for Jewish continuity and the success of Jewish day schools in fostering children who will become practicing Jews.

Coupled with a perception of a deteriorating public school system, longtime opponents are finding it harder to reject state and national initiatives for tax-funded vouchers to support parochial schools.

Consider:

■ According to Larry Rubin, the executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, "There appears to be grassroots movement and some leadership stirring about re-examining these issues. But as of yet, there is no organized effort. ... I think the concern about Jewish continuity has sharpened and intensified the debate."

■ John Ruskay, executive director of Education and Community Services for UJA-Federation of New York, also is urging such a review, "given the challenge of continuity now facing the American Jewish community."

■ The national director of the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, said all the talk about vouchers has convinced him to ask his directors to review their opposition to vouchers when they meet in February. "We owe it to ourselves not to rely on a policy that we set 40 or 50 years ago," he said.

■ A former president of UJA-Federation, David Sacks, said he is a "great believer" in public schools but that because of the "terrible state of public education in the United States, I don't see anything wrong with the school voucher system. ... If there was a school voucher system in the U.S., more Jewish kids would go to day schools."

Although tuition voucher proposals have been resoundingly



These students at Yeshivah of Flatbush would be among those to benefit from tax-funded vouchers. Photo by Zion Ozeri

defeated since 1990 in referendums in Oregon, Colorado and California, they are expected to be debated here next year.

Lawmakers in New Jersey may introduce as early as next week legislation that would give parents in Jersey City tax-funded vouchers toward tuition at private or parochial schools. If adopted, Jersey City would become the first community in the nation to permit the use of vouchers at parochial schools, according to Carl Golden, director of communications for New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman.

And a spokesman for George Pataki said the governor-elect

plans to fulfill his campaign pledge to introduce a voucher plan as a "pilot program" in New York State and to model it after Jersey City's.

The amount of the vouchers to be proposed in Jersey City is yet to be determined, with suggestions ranging from \$900 to \$1,300 annually.

The director of the Community Relations Committee of the United Jewish Federation of Metro West, David Mallach, said there are no Jewish day schools in Jersey City, and his orga-

Continued on page 46

SCHOOL VOUCHERS

Continued from page 10

nization is against vouchers on constitutional grounds.

In addition, Mallach said, it is fallacious thinking to believe that a \$1,300 voucher would have an "appreciable impact" on attendance at Jewish day schools because the tuition at such schools is between \$6,000 and \$10,000. And he said that once the schools accept public money, they are subject to government supervision of teachers and admissions.

"The law would probably require open admissions based on clear academic standards and not on ethnic grounds," he said. "What happens to that school if 25 to 30 percent of its students are not Jewish? We would be deluding ourselves greatly if we thought we could get government money with no strings."

A recent Gallup Poll found that 64 percent of Jews opposed government funding for non-public or church-related schools.

Rubin said he detected a renewed interest in vouchers at the Council of Jewish Federations' General Assembly of 3,000 Jewish leaders in Denver two weeks ago. He suggested that it might have been even more pronounced had the school prayer issue not been making headlines at the time of the convention.

"That may have caused people to pause before rushing headlong to pursue public dollars for sectarian Jewish services," he said. "Many people saw in the school prayer debate the problem of government involvement in the religious sphere."

Morton Mandel, the wealthy Cleveland industrialist whose foundation is funding studies of Jewish education, said though he has church-state concerns, he is not opposed to vouchers. "If there are federal funds for it, let's do it," he said.

Alvin Schiff, the Distinguished Professor of Education at Yeshiva University and former executive director of the Board of Jewish Education in New York, said he has long favored public support of parochial schools.

"Jewish schools that provide excellent general studies programs should be supported," he said.

The reassessment talk has been a joy to many in the Orthodox community who send their children to day schools in large numbers and have long backed government funding for parochial schools.

"Since there has been a hue and cry in the general Jewish community for increased Jewish education, there needs to be more funding of Jewish education," said the executive director of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregation's Institute for Public Affairs, Betty Ehrenberg. "But where is the money going to come from? ... A voucher plan can be properly written to fund just the secular portion of the day school education."

The board of UJA-Federation has not taken an official position on the issue, but its government relations committee voted last December to reaffirm its traditional stance for maintaining a separation between church and state. The action came at a time when the New York State Board of Regents was considering a request by the New York State Catholic Conference to adopt a statewide voucher plan. It rejected the request.

California has been a hotbed of debate on the issue since voters rejected a statewide referendum on vouchers in 1993. Rabbi Douglas Kahn, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council in San Francisco, said he believes that Jews who send their children to urban public schools are "growing increasingly impatient" with the quality of education.

Jewish voters largely opposed the 1993 referendum because of its wording, but the rabbi said that with "a less-flawed referendum, it would be more difficult to maintain the consensus position within the Jewish community of opposing vouchers. And that seems likely to happen when a new referendum is introduced, possibly in June 1996."

A survey conducted a few years ago found that fewer than two out of 10 Jewish families in San Francisco would have sent their children to Jewish day schools even if they had been subsidized.

Officials of both the American Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Committee said they would expect their organizations to join as friends of the court any lawsuit filed to challenge the proposed New Jersey and New York voucher plans. The U.S. Supreme Court has never ruled on the constitutionality of tax-funded vouchers for religious schools.

The legal counsel for the AJCongress, Marc Stern, said such voucher systems would "hurt public education" and tear down the wall between church and state.

The traditional arguments against such government funding were voiced by the legal director of the AJCommittee, Samuel Rabinove, in a recent position paper. He argued that the Jewish community — not the public treasury — should be tapped to ensure that every Jewish child is afforded the opportunity to have a day school education.

Although vouchers would make tax dollars available to Jewish day schools, he said, "vastly more tax dollars would flow to other religious schools whose beliefs and teachings may be deeply antithetical to the beliefs and teachings of Judaism, or to the best interests of American Jews." □



B'nai Brith Messenger, Los Angeles, CA, December 2, 1994

■ EDUCATORS HAVE THE PASSION -- ONLY
New York -- The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education has found that 80 percent of those in Jewish education are committed, even if they are only working part time. But most of those same teachers have little or no Jewish education. • But only 31 percent of the teachers had been trained in Jewish studies and little more than half even had professional education training.²

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History and Herstory, part 2

Abraham Flexner, Flexner Report, Institute for Advanced Studies

2376

By ABRAHAM FLEXNER

The Flexner Report, and the
Institute for Advanced Studies

Part II

American medical "colleges" at the turn of the century "generally operated in the manner of today's institutes of high-fashion modeling, computer repair, or advanced semi-trailer trucking. That is to say, they took your money, gave you a class or two, and handed you an enormous diploma with your name in extremely large Old English script. These bogus medical schools sprang up everywhere, like weeds. There were 42 of them in the state of Missouri, and 14 in the city of Chicago alone. Classes, of course, were optional. You paid your tuition and a year later you were a doctor, no muss, no fuss." (*)

In order to make the study, Flexner visited the School of Medicine at his beloved Johns Hopkins, and also the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York City, where his brother, Simon Flexner, was director of laboratories. Using their programs as paradigms of what medical education might and ought to be, he set off to visit the 155 "medical" schools across the United States and Canada. He found that some schools had no charts, no apparatus — nothing in a classroom but a teacher's desk, a small blackboard and some chairs.

Flexner's report was first published as "Bulletin No. 4" of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Later it became known simply as "The

Flexner Report," and with its publication, Flexner even received threats on his life. But he had won the battle for medical education.

Many of the colleges that were severely criticized by Flexner closed soon after publication of the report; others initiated extensive revisions of their policies and curricula. Flexner has been called "the hanging judge of American higher education" by writer Ed Regis.

In the fall of 1929, while Flexner was in the midst of writing a new book, *Universities: American, English, German*, based on a series of lectures he had given at Oxford, he received a phone call asking him to meet with two men who represented Louis Bamberger and his sister,

Caroline (Mrs. Felix) Fuld, who had a considerable amount of money to invest in starting a medical school in Newark. Since Bamberger and Mrs. Fuld, who were Jewish, were convinced that "existing medical institutions discriminated against Jews in both staff and students," the college was to give preferential treatment to Jews.

Flexner, who was Jewish himself, didn't buy this opinion, since he was convinced that medical schools did not discriminate, and that a good medical school would have to be attached to a major university and a good hospital, neither of which existed in Newark at the time. And he could not compromise his highest professional standards in the selection of either students or personnel.

"On the other hand, these men represented a fortune of some \$30 million." In order not to turn them away, Flexner proposed an alternative idea, his dream of a free

stopped entertaining plans for a medical school. Instead they met for lunch regularly with Flexner who wrote up a set of working papers outlining how they could utilize their fortune to endow an institution of higher learning in or near the City of Newark, named "an Institute of Higher Learning or Advanced Studies."

The Institute was formally incorporated on May 20, 1930 as the Institute for Advanced Study; it opened its doors three years later in Princeton, N.J., with Flexner as its first director. Flexner was convinced that Princeton's location was ideal — removed from big-city distractions, but within close proximity of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington. The university already possessed one of the world's greatest mathematics departments, and a good library to which Institute members would have visiting privileges.

Flexner was then faced with the problem of faculty

December 5, 1994

To: CIJE Staff
From: Nessa

The attached three items went to Mort today by fax. As I said to him, it was a banner Shabbat for CIJE; this is "major coverage in a key market," home of almost all the national Jewish organizations, and we should feel good!

Please think through with me who should see this immediately--rather than, for example, the board, who should probably get a more complete packet at the appropriate strategic moment.

I've sent it to Mort, Chuck, Steve and Seymour. Ginny has seen it, en route to Mort. (Richard says he'll happily see stuff when everything is compiled later.) What do you think? This can be part of Wed.'s discussion of policy brief dissemination and good news.

Nessa



CIJE

Council
for
Initiatives
in
Jewish
Education

Chair

Morton Mandel

December 5, 1994

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Isadore Twersky
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Dear Mort:

It was a banner Shabbat for CIJE. Here, by fax, is a full-page article by Stewart Ain, who attended our press conference on behalf of New York's Jewish Week. In addition, CIJE was the source of The Jewish Week's Index, a weekly box of compelling statistics that appears on the first inside page—and is read with much interest.

It was also very gratifying to find that Steve Hoffman's response to the "Forward Fifty" was the lead letter to the editor of The Forward. Not only that: The quote that was "called out" on the editorial page was taken from Steve's letter.

Alan thought you would be interested in knowing how the Plain Dealer piece came about. The reporter, Ira Rifkin, works for the Religion News Service, a wire service based in Washington and recently acquired by Newhouse. Rifkin attended our press conference and followed up with a call to me and then, at my suggestion, a call to Adam. (Your photo is in the piece because I extracted as many photos as I could from Premier, took them to the GA, and stood at the door at the end of the press conference, distributing them—along with press releases, policy briefs, and brochures—to every reporter I could!)

As we have now subscribed to a clipping service, I will be able to compile and disseminate appropriately a complete report of our press coverage, whose results appear daily on my desk.

We don't look at these efforts as public relations; we consider them necessary community education!

Best,

Nessa

Nessa Rapoport

Executive Director
Alan Hoffmann

Teachers Aid

Israel offers its expertise in training Jewish American educators — a badly needed service, according to a recent report.

STEWART AIN
STAFF WRITER

Denver — Israel's educational resources and expertise have been offered to North American Jewry as another tool to help ensure Jewish continuity.

The offer was made here by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein to 3,000 delegates attending the Council of Jewish Federation's General Assembly two weeks ago.

Rabin said Israel's destiny is not just to serve as a refuge for Jews but to "assist Jewish communities to maintain their Jewishness. We need to cooperate. ... We have to strengthen Jewish education. And we in Israel are ready to cooperate, to help bring teachers to [learning] centers in Israel so they can be prepared for you."

Rubinstein said in separate remarks that he foresees the establishment of a "world center [in Israel] for the training of senior educators" who number about 1,500. He said they would serve as the heads of the departments of education of the religious denominations, professors of Jewish education and the principals of key Jewish schools and community centers.

He pointed out there are two existing one-year and two-year programs in Israel that have graduated 200 educators who now hold leading positions in the field of Jewish education worldwide. These programs are the Jerusalem Fellows and the senior educators program at the Melton Centre at Hebrew University.

"We believe that we should, that we can, enlarge and deepen these programs as well as introduce shorter term programs for the in-service education of senior educators," said Rubinstein. "Let us together form our new alliance with programs for senior educators because they determine so much of what takes place in education."

Rubinstein said he was only laying out the framework for his proposal and that he wanted Jewish leaders to work with him in developing the partnership.

The executive director of education and continuity for UJA-Federation of New York, John Ruskay, said he welcomed the statements of Rabin and Rubinstein.

"They reflect the apparent readiness on the part of the Israeli government to make available its prodigious resources to the challenges we face in strengthening Jewish education throughout North America," he said. "Given the urgent need to strengthen the quality of Jewish educators, all initiatives are welcomed and deserve the most serious attention."

The executive director of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE), Alan Hoffmann, said he has already begun assembling a committee of top North American educators to respond to the offer. He said Ruskay and Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president of the Jewish Education Service of North America, are among about a dozen educators who are being asked to serve.

CIJE was founded to implement the 1990 recommendations of the Commission on Jew-



Amnon Rubinstein: "Senior educators determine so much of what takes place in education." Photo by Yelene Haik

ish Education in North America chaired by Morton Mandel, a billionaire Cleveland industrialist. A key finding of the commission was that there is a "shortage of well-trained and dedicated educators for every phase of Jewish education."

To assess the educational background of Jewish educators today, the CIJE surveyed preschool, supplementary school and day school teachers in Atlanta, Milwaukee and Baltimore. Its questionnaire, which was completed by more than 80 percent of the teachers, revealed that most supplementary school teachers had little or no Jewish education since their bar or bat mitzvah.

Other highlights:

■ A majority of preschool teachers had no more than one day a week of Jewish education as children — and 10 percent of them were not even Jewish. In one community, that figure was 21 percent.

■ Fully 40 percent of day school Judaica teachers and 80 percent of supplementary school teachers had neither a degree in Jewish studies nor certification as Jewish educators.

■ Day school Judaica teachers averaged fewer than two in-service workshops each year. Supplementary school teachers reported that in-service opportunities were infrequent.

The study, which was released at the GA, pointed out that research has found that "carefully crafted in-service can improve the quality of teaching" and thereby make a "decisive difference." In addition, it said that although there are state requirements regarding the training necessary to be a general studies teacher, there are none for Judaica teachers.

Ironically, fully 69 percent of the full-time day school teachers surveyed said they viewed Jewish education as their career. More than half of those who worked only part-time gave the same answer. In supplementary schools, where virtually no teacher is considered full-time, 44 percent considered Jewish education their career. □

The Jewish Week, New York, NY, December 2, 1994

BAD MARKS

THE JEWISH WEEK

INDEX

Compiled & created by Jay Bailey

An intensive, two-year study of Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee yields some surprising data about teachers in our day schools, supplementary schools and pre-schools.

Only 19%
have training
(a degree or certificate from a university, college, seminary, etc.)
in both Jewish Studies and Education.

34%
had training
in neither.

17% of teachers majored in Jewish Studies.
22% are certified in Jewish Education.

10%
of teachers
in Jewish
pre-schools are
not Jewish.

84%
of teachers
are female.

38% of Jewish school teachers
have taught for over 10 years.
6% have taught for under a year.



Source:
Council for
Initiatives in
Jewish
Education
(CIJE) Study
of Educators
Survey

The Forward, New York, NY, December 2, 1994

How Dare You! ... and Other Reactions

To 'The Forward Fifty' Listing of Jewish Leaders to Watch in 1995

Morton Mandel is indeed a Jewish leader to watch in the year ahead, as the "Forward Fifty" indicates, but his influence is not confined to the Democratic party (*Forward*, Nov. 18). Since the early 1980s, when he first chaired the Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency, and stimulated the first world conference on Jewish education in Jerusalem in 1984, Mr. Mandel has arguably been the leading Jewish philanthropist who recognizes centrality of Jewish education to the future of the Jews.

It is Mr. Mandel's foundation that

convened the influential Commission on Jewish Education in North America, the first continental, interdenominational commission to examine ways of improving the scope, standards and quality of Jewish education. Mr. Mandel's commitment has led to the founding of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) to implement the commission's recommendations; to a national reconstitution of the Jewish Community Centers movement's role in furthering Jewish education and identity in its programs; and to millions of dollars in grants to Yeshiva University, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Hebrew Union College for the training of Jewish educators, which helped each of these institutions focus on strategic reassessments of their roles in the training of Jewish educators. In the city of Cleveland, he personally stimulated a community-wide reassessment of Jewish education and continuity efforts, pioneering a very productive new endeavor equally shared between the federation and the congregational movements in Cleveland. Mr. Mandel has also made important contributions to the training of senior Jewish educators in Israel.

Mr. Mandel's emphasis on strategic planning and on long-term vision for Jewish education has begun to

transform the North American Jewish community's approach to solving problems in this sphere. The *Forward* itself recognized his leadership when in the same issue you named him as instrumental in the turnaround of priorities within federations in favor of Jewish education ("The Jewish Wars — Five Not So Easy Pieces").

Stephen H. Hoffman
Executive Vice-President
The Jewish Community Federation
of Cleveland
Cleveland, Ohio

Unenviable Task

How I do not envy you the task of choosing just 50 Jewish leaders to profile! We are blessed with so many people of talent and vision, and they all deserve to be celebrated for their commitment to the Jewish people and watched as role models for all of us.

There are two people in particular who I would feel ashamed of myself not to suggest that you add to your list ("Forward Fifty," Nov. 18). One is Richard Joel, who, after years of service in the Orthodox community, took on the daunting and definitely unsexy task of reshaping the role of Hillel on college campuses. The needs of the campus (which in reality is the third largest Jewish community in

Agudah Convention Filled the Garden

The criteria used for selecting the *Forward*'s 50 "bigs" are not spelled out. What is apparent and disconcerting, however, is the absence of any representatives of a group that wields more influence and is doing more for Jewish continuity than virtually any of the anointed. In fact, your feature news story of the next issue highlighted the glaring deficiency: Edgar Bronfman ruffled feathers and, it is hoped, set a few minds whirring with his call for more emphasis on Jewish education and fewer organizations and "leaders" issuing press releases.

Where among the featured 50

Jewish News, Cleveland, OH, December 9, 1994

Don't blame it all on religious school teachers

A recent article in The Plain Dealer was headlined "Jewish teachers failing, 2-year study reveals." The article goes on to explain that our youth are being poorly educated in their heritage and that with this lack of education comes the inevitable assimilation, intermarriage and loss of identity.

Once again, the religious school teacher is about to take the fall for all that ails us. As someone who has spent the past 14 years trying to instill Jewish knowledge and identity into students at our local religious schools, I am unwilling to shoulder that burden alone.

I believe that there are others conspiring to do more harm to Jewish education than its few dedicated lay teachers.

Any Sunday morning my class at Park Synagogue is missing students whose parents have been seduced by ice skating, horseback riding, hockey, soccer, and apathy. Art Modell lures more students out of Sunday school early than any teacher can hope to attract. Parents who can't seem to get their children to Sunday school on time have no problem explaining how important it is to take a child out of class early to make the "kick-off."

Weekend Jewish religious schools, which account for most of Jewish education, meet on average 30 times a year for not more than three hours each. If it is failing, and it is, it is because it is based upon a failed premise. One simply cannot transmit 4,000 years of heritage in weekly three-hour doses. Particularly when it competes with other more pressing studies like horseback riding.

Weekend schools fail for another reason.

Jewish parents look to the schools to fulfill their parental obligations. No matter how well thought out the curriculum and how well trained the teachers, a home devoid of Jewishness works at cross purposes with the schools.

The first paragraph of the *Shema* ("Hear O Israel") tells parents to teach their children. Parents who don't place value on their Jewishness effectively pass that on. Children want to be like their parents. If their parents find no value in being Jewish, the children will not either.

Conversely, no teacher, no matter how poorly trained, can take away a sense of Jewishness from a child whose family members actively value their faith. Faith is something that is transmitted by experience, not by education alone.

There is a way to resolve our Hellenistic desire for sports with our traditional educational values. It is through Jewish day schools. In these environments, the secular and the sacred can coexist and it is the only environment where parents can actually be assimilated into Judaism. The Roman Catholic Church saw early on in America the need to have a school system when it declared, "Give me a child for the first eight years of their schooling and I will give you a Catholic for life." But then, Catholic day schools are not prohibitively expensive like their Jewish counterparts.

KEEVIN BERMAN
South Euclid

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If They Could See Us Now

Hebrew school educators at White Plains conference say the wonder they're making are going unnoticed.

2376

JUDITH NAOMI FISH
JEWISH WEEK CORRESPONDENT

Cookie Markhoff has a ready response for those who claim that supplementary Hebrew schools aren't fulfilling the needs of the Jewish population.

"They ought to come here and see what's going on," said the president of the Westchester Association of Temple Educators, or WATE.

Markhoff was referring to the recent annual in-service conference for 380 Jewish educators that she co-chaired.

For the second consecutive year, the Westchester Association of Hebrew Schools, or WAHS, which represents Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist synagogues, and the Reform's WATE joined with the New York Board of Jewish Education to present an assortment of workshops for professional growth.

From art to prayer, values to learning theory, classroom management to spirituality, numerous interests were represented.

At one end of the Solomon Schechter School of Westchester, music teacher Carole Rivel instructed a class in teaching Jewish songs using American Sign Language for the deaf. Joan Yankow's signs, to the strains of Rivel's "Halleluyah," were carefully mimicked by the teachers of elementary students, drawing the room together with flowing hands and smiles.

"Signing is another way of enhancing the music," Rivel says. "The signs themselves are pictures and something to focus on for younger children."

Across the White Plains campus, Ann Rosen was leading a workshop on "Adolescent Years — Are They Always Trouble?" A



Intent on their lessons, educators at a recent conference learn to say "Shabbat Shalom" in American Sign L

for the conference, which is required by the Hebrew schools, increased this year, indicating a greater number of teachers hired. Lustgarten's school in Dobbs Ferry grew this year by 7 percent.

rector of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, told a group of lay leaders that the impact of religious school education is directly related to the number of years of school attendance. For

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Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, December 9, 1994

Educate the educators

¹³⁷⁶ ~~The Council of Initiatives of Jewish Education's~~ ^{EDITORIAL} Lead Communities Project has performed a valuable service with its study of the working conditions and educational levels of our community's Jewish educators.

This study shows that Milwaukee and the other two participating communities, Atlanta and Baltimore, are in much the same leaky Jewish educational boat. All have teachers that show commendable dedication to their tasks but are woefully underpaid, under-respected, and under-educated for their vital work.

Judaic teachers
must be the
best possible.

The latter is something that can be improved most readily. The majority — 85 percent — of Milwaukee Judaica teachers are college graduates, and one-third of them have graduate or professional degrees. They are intelligent people who know the value of study. But only 54 percent have training in education; and 70 percent lack high level training in Jewish studies, the subject they are teaching. While self-study can accomplish much, it usually can't provide the kind of background necessary to create a top notch teacher. And if Jewish education constitutes the front line in the struggle to maintain a shrinking U.S. Jewish community, then Judaic teachers must be the best possible.

This study already has communal minds pondering solutions. Louise Stein, co-chair of Milwaukee's Lead Community Project, indicated that Milwaukee is contemplating creating a master's degree program in Jewish education. We second the motion. This state and its immediate environs have abundant resources handy to create such a program — at the University of Wisconsin campuses in Milwaukee and Madison (and possibly Marquette University if its plans for a Jewish studies program come to fruition), in Chicago and elsewhere in the Midwest. All the idea needs is a workable plan and community support. We hope both will be forthcoming.

Jewish educators underpaid, ill-trained, says study

2376 FRONT PAGE
By Larry Yudelson

New York (JTA) — Most teachers in Hebrew schools, day schools and Jewish preschools view their jobs as careers, even if they are working part-time, according to a study, conducted by the Council of Initiatives of Jewish Education.

The study, based on data from over 80 percent of the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee, also found that only a small percentage of those teachers had any formal training as Jewish educators.

"This goes part of the way to explain why people's supplementary (Hebrew school) experience was the way it was," said Alan Hoffman, executive director of CJIE.

Hoffman insists the findings "offer a huge opportunity for the Jewish community.

"You have teachers in classrooms for whom investment in their professional backgrounds, both as educators and as Jews, will have immediate payoff," he said.

Most of the supplementary school teachers have had little or no Jewish education since their bar or bat mitzvah. And the majority of preschool educators had no more than one day a week of Jewish education as children.

In the three cities surveyed, discussion has already begun on what to do in light of the data. One emerging possibility is the creation of master's degree programs in Jewish education in communities which now lack them.

The survey found that two-thirds of the educators had been teaching for more than five years. Only 7 percent are Israeli, dispelling another common myth.

But only 31 percent of the teachers had been trained in Jewish studies, and just more than half had professional education training. A third had training in neither field.

The 983 teachers surveyed — 84 percent of whom were women — were almost evenly divided between day school, supplementary school, and preschool teachers.

The survey was conducted by Adam Gamoran, professor of sociology and educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Ellen Goldring, professor of educational leadership and associate dean of Peabody College of Education, Vanderbilt University.

The survey was undertaken as part of CJIE's Lead Communities Project, which intends to use the Jewish educational systems in the three communities as laboratories for revamping Jewish education.

Hoffman of CJIE believes the results can be generalized across America, noting the similarity results in the different cities — as similarities to previous studies of teachers in Miami and Los Angeles.

Improving teacher training is a mandate for CJIE, which was created in 1990 as an outgrowth of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.

Headed by Morton Mandel, a former Cleveland industrialist and former president of the Council of Jewish Federations, the commission had warned in its final report of "a shortage of well-trained and dedicated educators for every phase of Jewish education."

The new survey was officially released at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, held in November in Denver.

Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, Milwaukee, WI, December 9, 1994

Increased benefits, in-service will improve local Jewish teachers

2376

By Mardee Gruen

of the Chronicle staff

Milwaukee's Jewish teaching force is dedicated to Jewish education despite insufficient knowledge of Jewish subject matter, part-time employment and meager benefits.

These local findings support those recently released by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, which surveyed Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

According to Ruth Cohen, Ph.D., Milwaukee Lead Community project director, "Statistics show these communities are surprisingly similar, despite varying-sized populations and resources.

"Baltimore is a more established community with 98,000 Jews and a college of Jewish studies. Atlanta, with 75,000 Jews, is a newer community which is still evolving and creating institutions. Milwaukee, with only 30,000 Jews, is stable, but smaller. However, it appears we are all facing similar problems. We need to strengthen the Judaica knowledge of our educators.

"We have dissected the survey results and found there are 215 persons who teach Judaic subject matter in Jewish day schools, supplementary schools and pre-schools in Milwaukee."

Of that group 80 percent are American-born women; 4 percent immigrated from Israel and 2 percent from Russia. Forty-five percent of the teachers are Reform, while 24 percent are

Orthodox, 19 percent are Conservative and 6 percent are Traditional. The remaining 6 percent are divided among Reconstructionist, secular and other.

A majority of educators have been teaching more than 6 years and plan to continue in the profession.

Only 25 percent of local Jewish educators work full-time. Half work fewer than 10 hours per week in Jewish education. A third of Judaic and Hebrew teachers in day school and 46 percent of pre-school teachers work full-time.

Cohen called the situation "problematic" and said Milwaukee's Jewish leaders should consider ways to increase the proportion of full-time teachers in the community. She suggested creating full-time positions by coordinating part-time work in several institutions; by instituting lead teachers who could train other teachers; and by creating new positions."

Earnings from Jewish education are the main source of household income for only 34 percent, since the positions are part-time.

These part-time positions do not carry health and pension benefits. Benefits are scarce even for full-time teachers — half of the pre-school teachers work full-time, but only 8 percent are offered benefits.

Statistics also revealed that 75 percent of teacher work at one school, 21 percent at two schools, and 4 percent at three or

four schools. Most of those who work at more than one school are still unable to put together full-time hours and receive no benefits.

Sixty percent of the survey respondents earn less than \$10,000 teaching at one school and 44 percent earn less than \$5,000. Nineteen percent earn more than \$20,000 annually.

About 85 percent of Milwaukee's Judaica teachers are college graduates, and one-third have graduate or professional degrees. Yet only 54 percent have degrees in education.

Moreover, 70 percent of teachers lack collegiate or professional training in Jewish studies or Jewish education. Only 19 percent of teachers are prepared in Jewish subject matter and education. Thirty-one percent have had no formal Jewish education after bar or bat mitzvah, and 20 percent of pre-school teachers are not Jewish.

Cohen admitted that "Aside from a twice-annual teacher's conference and a few courses offered at institutes, there is essentially no system of in-service training for day school or supplementary school teachers here."

Milwaukee Judaic and Hebrew teachers, most of whom are only partially prepared to begin with, receive as little as one-sixth the in-service training required of licensed teachers in Wisconsin, according to the survey.

Cohen said, "The study provides information about the

(See page 6)

Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle

Teachers

(From page 1)

characteristics and working conditions of teachers in Milwaukee Jewish schools. Its purpose is to stimulate discussion about personnel issues, leading to the development of a community action plan for the improvement of personnel in Milwaukee.

"We have to improve the teachers' ability to transmit Judaica knowledge to our children."

Cohen anticipates having improved in-service training available by September. Louise Stein, co-chair of Milwaukee's Lead Community Project noted that the community is looking into creating a master's degree in Jewish education.

Another suggestion, she said, is a long-distance program with the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, or for the UW-Madison or UWM to offer such a program, using its education and Jewish studies faculties.

DEC 9 1994

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Continuity commission urges Jews to help their bretheren grow in "Jewishness"

2376

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA)—American Jews are being urged to help their fellow Jews for Shabbat meals, organize study groups and more havrutot.

These efforts at spreading Jewish identity and helping "other Jews grow in their Jewishness" are among the recommendations contained in a 10-page draft report of the North American Commission on Jewish Identity and Continuity.

The draft was presented at a meeting of the commission on Nov. 16 in Denver at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations.

The 88-member commission brought together leaders from all walks of Jewish life—federations and synagogues, seminaries and national Jewish organizations, rabbis and academics—to map out new directions as the American Jewish community shifts focus from rescuing endangered Jews abroad to strengthening Jewish life at home.

The draft, reflecting a year's discussion of the commission and four constituent working groups, described Jewish identity as "the bedrock of Jewish continuity."

It said the community's goal must be to make Jewish identity more central and meaningful for all Jews, not just for the sake of the community's future, but because Judaism's life-enriching power.

But the report did not define Jewish identity.

Discussing the draft at the recent commission meeting, Rabbi David Woosher said it was "disturbing" that the commission came up with neither a description of what a Jewish identity entails, nor the building blocks for creating one.

If the report was talking about enhancing health, we would expect recommendations, such as, 'Identify

next year.

Proposals range from the abstract, such as calls for greater cooperation between institutions, to the more concrete, such as suggestions that communities make a concerted effort to keep teens involved in Jewish life after their Bar- or Bat-Mitzvah celebrations.

As an amalgam of reports from the four separate working groups, the report contains some inconsistencies.

While one group was urging that the high school, college and young-family years be seen as the prime focus of new efforts, the working group on "reaching and involving Jews outside the intensely affiliated core" zeroed in on young people out of college and not yet married.

Which should be the priority?

"That's a real issue," said Jonathan Woosher, executive vice president of the Jewish Education Service of North America, who compiled the report. "It will be resolved not by a commission, but community by community, institution by institution. For any national commission to come out and say, 'here is the rank order of priorities' would be counterproductive."

In one of its strongest messages of how money should or should not be spent, the draft report insists that Jewish identity must be built through both ongoing "formative" experiences, such as family life, Jewish schooling and summer camps, and through "transformative" experiences such as Israel trips.

"We see a tendency in continuity to value transformative over formative, to put the big bucks on the singular experiences," said Joseph Reimer, director of the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service at Brandeis University, summarizing the report of the working group he helped lead.

"We're proceeding with a plan of

advancing the Jewish continuity agenda.

They include:

- "Vigorous advocacy to make and maintain Jewish identity— and community-building as priority concerns."

- "Basic research and ongoing program evaluation" to learn what is effective in enhancing Jewish identity.

- "Sharing knowledge and resources more effectively"

- "Focusing more intently on the needs and growth paths of individual Jews, rather than on institutional needs and accustomed ways of doing business."

Whatever effect the report may eventually have, the unusual grouping of religious and communal leaders in one commission has already yielded some positive results, according to participants.

Rabbi David Teutsch, president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, has begun talking with a federation director about placing rabbinical students with an interest in community organizing and outreach with the federation as interns.

"Such ideas have become much more acceptable as a result of the attention this issue has gotten," said Teutsch.

"One of the things this means is places like RRC purposely training rabbis who will serve far beyond the boundaries of the Reconstructionist movement, and entering partnerships with institutions far beyond those boundaries," he added.

And the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism is taking seriously the discussions about keeping teens involved in Jewish life.

"I've learned from the commission that this is an important time in people's lives that we're not capturing enough," said United Synagogue Executive Vice President Martin Kraar.

not presenting a cure-all," in the words of Ronne Hess, a CJF board member from Birmingham, Ala.

"This is not a problem which you solve," said Woosher. "It's not as if you can work three years, stop intermarriage and turn your attention to other issues. This is part of the fabric of a mature Jewish community in an open American society."

The draft report presented last month is the first product of the national commission, which was announced in November 1992, but took nearly a year to convene its first meeting.

It was convened by CJF, which assigned two senior staff members to work with the commission. Most of the staff work for the commission was undertaken by Woosher of JES-NA, which is located in CJF's offices.

But CJF insisted that it did not "own" the commission, which instead belonged to the entire community.

Half in and half out, CJF was criticized by some commissioners as dominating the panel, and by others for not taking an active enough role.

CJF is now considering starting its own implementation committee to begin acting on the commission's recommendations. Like the commission, the new body would also include representatives of the synagogue movements.

Meanwhile, the national effort is being mirrored on the local level by more than 40 federations, which have launched similar local committees to plan continuity and identity initiatives.

"In every community in North America there's action taking place," said CJF Executive Vice President Martin Kraar.

"Some is good action, some I think is flawed, and we need some

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The Jewish Chronicle of

Either 'reJEWvenate' or pack it in

FRONT PAGE

2376 Education

By JOEL ROTEMAN, Executive Editor

Edgar Bronfman, chairman of the Board of Governors of The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, minces no words about his feelings on Jewish continuity, which he prefers to call "rejuvenation".

"We are either going to disappear or we are not," he told a luncheon crowd at Carnegie Mellon on Monday, Dec. 5.

Bronfman, who is also president of the World Jewish Congress and chairman of Seagram's, told the audience of students, faculty and Jewish community leaders and professionals that what is needed "is a Diaspora re-

juvenation or renewal and the only way it can be achieved is through study, on a zero-sum basis all the way from Day Schools through campus to the so-called real world."

While a key portion of the rejuvenation is sending every Jewish youth to Israel, if he or she desires to go, he also feels that we need to try a "released



EDGAR BRONFMAN
A major commitment.

time" system.

"All school systems have release time, after hours and non-compulsory times when kids could go and spend two hours a week studying their Jewish heritage."

Primary in this release time project is letting the parents know about it and finding competent teachers, he feels.

If this two hours a week project doesn't work, then Jewish schools won't work. Let's test it out."

Later, after the luncheon, Bronfman told the Chronicle in a private interview that a "great deal of money is required. But we need to walk before we can run. If this released time project works, we are talking about a major community commitment."

He feels the only real expense involved in the released time project is teachers' pay and textbooks. "I believe that teachers deserve reasonable pay."

"While I feel that a trip

to Israel for young people is the most important thing we can do, I believe in the concept that every Jewish child who wants a Jewish education should have one, regardless of costs. I am talking Day Schools here and a cost of about \$50 million or more."

Asked if the people worried about church-state separation will be concerned about the released time project, he replied,

(Continued on Page 31, Col. 1.)

people who go to schools or colleges with no Jewish population. If you want to practice your Judaism, go to a college with Jews."

Queried about the high rate of assimilation on campus, Bronfman responded, "If you come to school without a Jewish background, you opt out. For collegians, it is their first time away from home on their own—with freedom. So, if they meet a non-Jewish partner, why not?

Penn State.

"If that place doesn't change, I'll take out ads saying, 'caution: this campus not safe for Jews.'"

Bronfman feels "we have a great religion. We have an identity headstart on everyone else. We know who we are. We have a certain nobility—if we do the things we are supposed to—study!"

He noted that 70% of non-Jews "think we make good marriage partners."

Texas Jewish Post, Fort Worth, TX, December 15, 1994

Survey Finds Jewish Educators Are Committed, But Not Trained for Field

By Larry Yudelson

New York — Finally, some good news about the state of Jewish education: Most teachers in Hebrew schools, day schools and Jewish preschools see their job as a career, even if they are only working part-time.

That is one finding of a study, conducted by the Council of Initiatives of Jewish Education, based on questionnaires filled out by more than 80 percent of the Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

The study also found, however, that only a small percentage of those teachers had any formal training as Jewish educators.

"This goes part of the way to explain why people's supplementary (Hebrew school) experience was the way it was," said Alan Hoffman, executive director of CJIE.

Taken together, Hoffman insists the twin findings "offer a huge opportunity for the Jewish community."

"You have teachers in classrooms for whom investment in their professional backgrounds, both as educators and as Jews, will have immediate payoff," he said.

Currently, according to the survey, day school teachers receive only a sixth the amount of continuing education as Wisconsin mandates for public school teachers.

Most of the supplementary school teachers have had little or no Jewish education since their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. And the majority of preschool educators had no more than one day a week of Jewish education as children.

In the three cities surveyed, discussion has already begun on what to do in light of the data. One emerging possibility is the creation of master's degree programs in Jewish education in communities which now lack them.

Such moves toward professionalizing Jewish education will be boosted by the survey, which dispels an image of Jewish educators as transient.

The survey found that two-thirds of the educators had been teaching for more than five years. Even among part-time teachers, more than half consider Jewish education their profession. Only 7 percent are Israeli, dispelling another common myth about these educators.

But only 31 percent of the teachers had been trained in Jewish studies, and just more than half had professional education training. A third had training in neither field.

The 983 teachers surveyed, 84 percent of whom were women, were almost evenly divided between day school, supplementary school, and preschool teachers.

The survey was conducted by Adam Gamoran, professor of sociology and educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Ellen Goldring, professor of educational leadership and associate dean of Peabody College of Education, Vanderbilt University.

The survey was undertaken as part of CJIE's Lead Communities Project, which aimed to use the Jewish educational systems in the three communities as laboratories for revamping Jewish education. Hoffman of CJIE believes that the results can be generalized across North America, noting the similarity of the results in the different cities — as well as their similarities to previous studies of Jewish teachers in Miami and Los Angeles.

Improving teacher training has been a central mandate for CJIE, which was created in 1990 as an outgrowth of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.

Headed by Morton Mandel, a billionaire Cleveland industrialist and former president of the Council of Jewish Federations, the commission had warned in its final report of "a shortage of well-trained and dedicated educators for every phase of Jewish education."

The new survey will be officially released at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, being held in Denver next week.

Mandel, whose foundation largely funds CJIE, will be joined in presenting the survey by the researchers and by Israeli Minister of Education Amnon Rubinstein.

CJIE officials hope that against the backdrop of continuing concerns over Jewish continuity in America, and the endorsement of that agenda by Israeli officials, the time has come for American Jews to turn their Jewish educational system around.

"It's a very involved process; we have to be patient," said Louise Stein, co-chair of Milwaukee's Lead Community Project. "But there's enthusiasm in Milwaukee."

She said her community is looking into creating a master's degree in Jewish education.

Among the suggestions, she said, is a long-distance program with the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, or for the University of Madison to offer such a program, using its education and Jewish studies faculties.

Rita Wiseman, principal of Baltimore's Beth Tiloh Hebrew School, agrees that training makes a difference in the caliber of teachers.

"You can only impart as much knowledge as you have," said Wiseman, who taught Hebrew school for 25 years before becoming principal this year.

Wiseman, who has a degree from Yeshiva University's Stern College, has taken both education and Jewish studies courses throughout the years, and is now enrolled in a master's program in Jewish education at the Baltimore Hebrew University.

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Sixty-two percent of preschool teachers, and 60 percent of day school educators, have a degree in education.

But if Jewish educators start off with a degree, they can expect little professional support for their continuing education.

The officials at CJIE say that one-shot workshops are not the solution.

"The worst thing that would happen is for people to respond to the data and say, 'We had X amounts of episodic training opportunities; we will now make it X plus 50 percent,'" said Hoffman.

"One has to target specific populations and think of systematic training that has norms and standards built into it," he said.

One finding that particularly disturbed the CJIE researchers was the clear gap in Jewish background among the preschool teachers.

Since Jewish preschool education is being hailed as a great way of getting parents involved in the Jewish community, the findings indicate that an opportunity is being squandered.

"Parents of young children will send their kids to Jewish settings, not only because they're Jewish, but because they have heard the best early childhood program happens to be in the synagogue down my street," explained Barry Holtz, senior education officer at CJIE.

But the goal of turning the Jewish preschools into a "holistic Jewish education" runs up against the fact that more than half the preschool educators had no Jewish education after age 13.

Fully 10 percent were not Jewish, with that figure 21 percent in one of the three communities.

For Hoffman, this is one more reason for the Jewish community to take to heart

see EDUCATORS p. 20

Educators

cont. from p. 3

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invests in teachers, that pays very high dividends.

"That means investing their self-image, compensation, and thinking through their role in the community but it also means investing in their training and the upgrading," said Hoffman.

"We think the North American Jewish community ought to be galvanized by this."

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Larry Yudelson is a JTA correspondent.

Survey finds Jewish educators committed, not trained

2376
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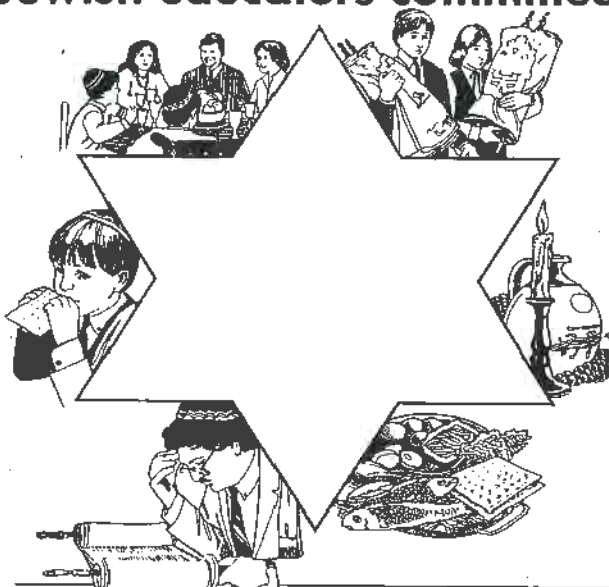
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Little education

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In the three cities surveyed, discussion has already begun on what to do in light of the data. One emerging possibility is the creation of master's degree programs in Jewish education in communities which now lack them.

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Revamping education

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Turn to EDUCATORS, next page

Educators

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Learning stops

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For Hoffman, this is one more reason for the Jewish community to take to heart the powerful lesson that has emerged from the field of general teacher education in the last decade: "If one invests in teachers, that pays very high dividends."

"That means investing in their self-image, compensation, and thinking through their role in the community, but it also means investing in their training and their upgrading," Hoffman said.

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MANHATTAN

Education As Exploration

At the Beit Rabban day school, the secular and the religious come together in an environment of experimentation.

SUSAN JOSEPHS
STAFF WRITER

2376

When Devora Steinmetz and her husband had children, they worried, like most parents, where to educate them.

Unlike most parents, Steinmetz, a teacher of Jewish studies with a doctorate in comparative literature from Columbia University, decided to start her own school.

Located on the second floor of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue on West 70th Street, Beit Rabban, founded in 1991, is a coed Jewish day school that is pioneering the way in "trying to bring the Jewish and secular worlds closer together," says Alan Hoffman, executive director of the Coalition for Initiatives in Jewish Education.

Like the Abraham Joshua Heschel School, another Upper West Side day school, Beit Rabban "is not denomina-

tionally based," says Steinmetz, although it professes a strong commitment to tradition and the majority of the students come from Modern Orthodox homes. "I don't think denominations have been good for the Jews, and they're certainly not for little children," she adds.

Beit Rabban is a "no-frills school," with small quarters and smaller budget, according to Steinmetz. Yet in this cramped space, the 26 students in kindergarten through second grade are encouraged to "have all these ideas," says Steinmetz, and in the process, acquire "tons of skills."

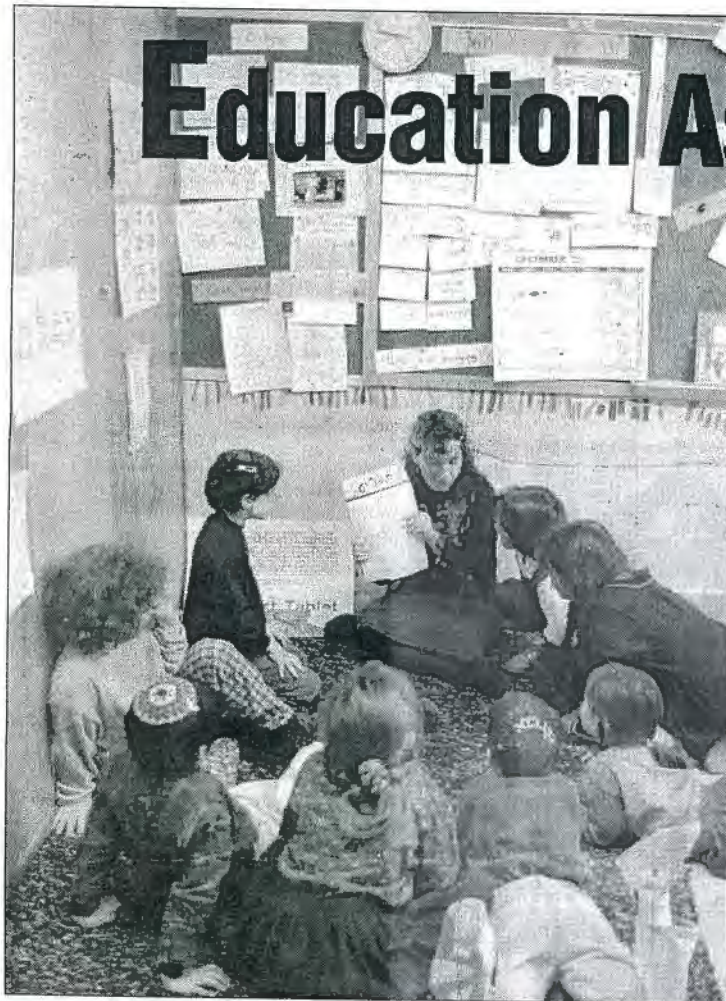
Friday mornings, for example, feature "exploration sessions," when the students pick and pursue an activity from a menu of choices or expand on an idea entirely their own. Last week Tal Akabas, 5, decided to create a sea turtle, while several of his classmates seated nearby conducted water displacement experiments, putting paper clips and pennies into a clay boat to determine its floating capacity. "You can pick what you want to do," says Tal, who thinks exploration time is one of the best things about school.

In the first-second grade classroom Miriam Krule, 7, and two friends have started a Beit Rabban greeting card industry. Offering get well and holiday greeting cards at prices ranging from a dime to 50 cents, Miriam says whatever gets sold will go to charity. With a bit of pride, she demonstrates her latest creation—a get well card proclaiming: "I feel beter."

"Better check the spelling," advises Steinmetz.

These exploration sessions, and everything else on Beit Rabban's curriculum, can be seen as a "holistic" way of educating, "of teaching skills in context," says Steinmetz.

This means hiring teachers who can teach both Jewish and general studies; using Hebrew when speaking about "secular" topics and vice versa; applying analytic skills to both math and Chumash (Bible study); interdisciplinary units that

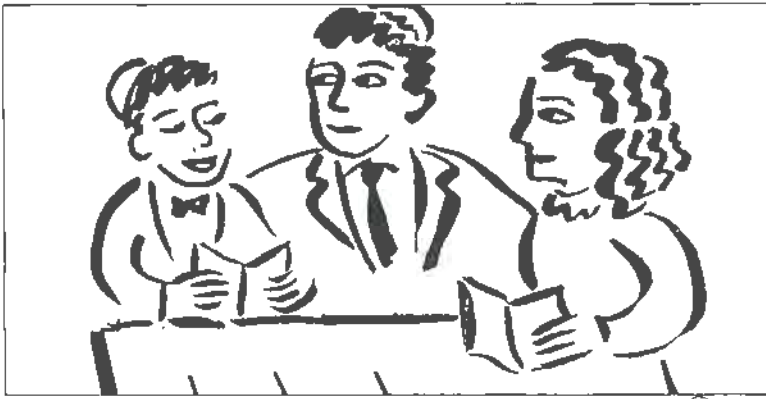


Nehama Edinger, teacher of the first and second grade class, goes over the "tafrit," or menu of activities, that the students can pursue during exploration time.

Photos by Michael Datikash



Rabbi Nahum Spirn instructs his pupil, Akiva Steinmetz-Silber, age 9. Akiva, the only fourth-grader at Beit Rabban, either learns with Rabbi Spirn or studies independently.



Tragically, rather than serving as the lynchpin of forming Jewish identity, parents have become the missing link. Let's take the bar or bat mitzvah. Most children are prepared for this potentially powerful ceremony by well-meaning professionals. For the child, the process tends to be very lonely. Often the youngster receives a tape to work with and is then mechanically "checked" by the cantor or an assistant weekly for 10-15 minutes.

Symbolic role

In the typical bar or bat mitzvah, parents play a symbolic role at best. They are called to the Torah, they put a *talit* (prayer

Parents have become the missing link.

shawl) on their child's shoulders or place the Torah in his or her arms. In a crunch, they help with the speech.

The sad truth is that at this emotional moment of initiation, parents are left with little more to teach than how to plan a good party. At the very point when children pledge to assume greater responsibility as Jews, parents have all but abdicated their responsibilities as teachers and role models. Is it any wonder that, for most children, the ceremony signifies an end rather than a beginning?

In order for the ritual's impact to last, the child's act of commitment must be mirrored by corresponding actions by his or her parents. That teaches children the difference between a one-time performance and a genuine rite of passage; between a relationship with Judaism that is fixed and one that continually evolves. When this parental mirroring or anchoring is absent, the ritual falls short of its enduring transformational potential.

The experience would change dramatically were parents given the following message from their synagogue (and from every other synagogue to which they would no doubt flee for an easier deal):

"We are delighted that you and your child anticipate the bar or bat mitzvah with such joy. Because we view the act of parents teaching children as central to the continuity of the Jewish

(See page 18)

Parents

(From page 16)

people, we will teach you — Mom or Dad — the Torah and/or haftarah portions, blessings, etc., so that you can teach your child all he or she needs to know for this great *simcha*. You are the best teacher your child could possibly have."

The approach works

I've had firsthand experience with this approach, preparing a Jewishly unaffiliated nephew for a bar mitzvah. For a year-and-a-half we read and discussed (mostly by phone) history, holidays, ethics and Hebrew reading. He chanted his haftarah and portion from the Torah in Hebrew.

Words cannot describe the power of this event. Suffice it to say, it has been profoundly transformative for all involved.

When my younger son

received the date for his bar mitzvah, his immediate response was to ask me to start working with him. Believe it or not, my son, who attends a Conservative supplementary school, learned his haftarah in about two months with never more than 10 minutes of work a day.

Typically, we'd curl up on the couch for a few minutes before he left for school or went to bed. Occasionally we even grabbed a few minutes in the car. Then we worked on the Torah portion.

How did I learn to teach the chanting of Torah and haftarah? From the same tape recordings generally given to kids.

This is one example of what could extend to virtually every aspect of Jewish education, holidays and life-cycle events.

Empower parents

The logical place to begin giving parents the tools they

need to become teachers is the synagogue and its school. But restructuring the nature of the congregational and educational experience is a tall order. Simply allocating more communal resources to Jewish education will not solve the problem of building Jewish identity. Increasing the quantity and quality of Jewish educators will not suffice. First and foremost, their goals must change.

Rabbis, cantors and teachers must empower members of their community to assume more of the roles filled by professionals. Ultimately, this requires changing how the professionals in our schools and synagogues are trained, and gradually rewriting their job descriptions. This, in turn, would attract a different sort of person to the profession — one who feels more comfortable promoting the growth of others rather than simply teaching classes, delivering lectures,

know how."

Strengthening Jewish identity on a broad scale represents an enormous and complex challenge. No single program, institution or approach contains the complete solution. All have merit, but not all interventions deserve equal attention. Meeting the challenge requires identifying the fundamental deficit and concentrating resources upon the most strategic point of intervention.

Empowering mothers and fathers to take back some of the teaching responsibilities they have abdicated transforms missing links into powerful transmitters of Jewish identity.

David Arnow, a psychologist, serves on the New York UJA Federation Community Commission, the Council on Initiatives in Jewish Education and the National Commission for Jewish Continuity and Identity.

What about all those parents who seem not to care? Some really don't. But as author and educator Ron Wolfson observes, it's much easier for a parent to say "I don't care" than "I don't

Turning parents into teachers

The only way to guarantee American Jewish continuity

By David Arnow

New York Jewish Week

All the programs and commissions to promote Jewish continuity will accomplish little unless they recognize that U.S. Jewry's creative survival requires dramatically increasing the extent to which parents transmit Jewish identity to their chil-

dren

It is no accident that Deuteronomy's command to "teach your children diligently" (6:7) places the responsibility for Jewish continuity precisely where it belongs — on the shoulders of parents rather than on tribal leaders, priests or teachers.

Helping a child first to formulate and then answer the question "Who am I?" is too fundamental a responsibility to delegate to professionals. In teaching their children, parents impart more than content. They model the essence of handing down a heritage from one generation to the next. In the process, Jewish content and continuity are fused, thereby creating the core of cultural survival.

Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle

MANHATTAN

take a subject like "oceans" and examine it from a variety of perspectives and academic disciplines; or learning about punctuation from reading a book as opposed to simply filling out a worksheet.

Hoffman, complimenting the integrated curriculum, notes the tendency of day schools to "bifurcate" Jewish and secular studies. "With a dual curriculum, what often happens is that there's not much space for experimental ideas," he says. "I think Beit Rabban deserves a great deal of credit for taking this issue on."

Ultimately, a holistic approach means "there are no questions that can't be discussed," says Steinmetz. Otherwise "how do you expect [the children] to be engaged [in learning]?"

Steinmetz refers to an unspoken notion she considers prevalent among some Jewish day schools — that "you can ask anything about math but not Chumash. It's so wrong to the [Jewish] tradition to pretend there's one way; it's educationally devastating," she says.

Devra Lehmann, assistant director of Beit Rabban, agrees with Steinmetz. In other schools it's fine to "have a critical approach to literature, but God forbid you should have this approach to Chumash," she says. In terms of developing analytic thinking, "you end up leading a double life."

Besides encouraging their students to approach their word problems, reading assignments and Chumash homework with equal rigor, Beit Rabban teachers focus on "how to be a mensch in the classroom," says Steinmetz.

Recently, Steinmetz recalls, students discussed the two versions of the creation story in the book of Genesis, politely agreeing, disagreeing and carefully backing up their questions and assertions from the original Hebrew text.

Six- and 7-year-olds?

"I swear, it happens," says Steinmetz.

Nehama Edinger, who teaches the first- and second-graders, says, "This is a really open environment for both teachers and kids ... so the kids are always asking amazing questions."

Behind these learning methods lurks Beit Rabban's primary goal — to teach children how to be "lifelong learners."

Sure, every school has adopted this term, to the point of cliché, concedes Steinmetz. "It's politically correct [for schools] to say 'lifelong learning,' but look at the practices of those schools. At our school, whatever decisions we make about the curriculum have to match our philosophy."

For this reason, Beit Rabban uses written evaluations rather than letter grades to assess progress, and students are encouraged to learn from, rather than compete with, each other. "Telling teachers what they want to hear is wrong," says Steinmetz. "There's no right or wrong answer — that's antithetical to the goal of lifelong learning."

Steinmetz mentions Emily Belfer, a second-grader who upon receiving the results of her spelling test noticed she got a word right because she guessed correctly. "She asked the teacher if it was OK if she put an X next to the word because she had guessed so she hadn't really learned the word," says Steinmetz.

Michelle Friedman Belfer, Emily's mother, "is bowled away" by her daughter's educational development since she began Beit Rabban three years ago. "Emily started off as shy and tentative and we worried she'd be a good-girl wallflower who doesn't raise her hand. Now she's become a confident learner who can really think," says Belfer.

Having enrolled her daughter Sarah in Beit Rabban's kindergarten this year, Belfer considers herself "pretty involved" with the future of the school. "I know Devora [Steinmetz] and the kind of clarity and vision she has," says Belfer, who is acquainted with Steinmetz through Drisha Institute for Jewish Education, a pioneering yeshiva for women founded by Steinmetz's husband, Rabbi David Silber. "We knew those kids [who attended Beit Rabban] would be educated, and learning for the sake of learning would be imparted," she adds.

While Beit Rabban may not suit every Jewish child, "there is a need for this school," says Rose Landowne, who had enrolled her son in Beit Rabban but discovered he would fare better at the Heschel School. "He needed a larger environment," says Landowne. But Beit Rabban is needed, she emphasizes, because "they have learning styles that are innovative, and what she [Steinmetz] does is different than the traditional school."

In its fourth year, Beit Rabban subsists on tuition and "a couple of friends."

Cutting costs however, has not deterred Steinmetz from translating an educational vision into each school day.

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To be (a Jew) or not to be (a Jew)

Continuity commission talks tachlis...almost

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By LARRY YUDELSON

American Jews should organize study groups, form havurot and host their fellow Jews for Shabbat meals.

These efforts at spreading Jewish identity and helping "other Jews grow in their Jewishness" are among the recommendations contained in a 36-page draft report from the North American Commission on Jewish Identity and Continuity.

The draft was presented Nov. 16 in Denver at a meeting of the commission at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations.

The 88-member commission includes rabbis, academics and leaders from all walks of Jewish life: federations, synagogues, seminars and national Jewish organizations. It is attempting to map out new directions for the American Jewish community as it shifts focus from rescuing endangered Jews abroad to strengthening Jewish life at home.

The draft, reflecting a year's discussion among commission members and four constituent working groups, describes Jewish identity as "the bedrock of Jewish continuity."

It says the community's goal "must be to make Jewish identity more central and meaningful for more Jews, not just for the sake of the community's future, but because of Judaism's life-enriching power."

The reports makes no attempt to define Jewish identity, and that disturbs some people. Discussing the draft at the recent commission meeting, Rabbi David Elcott said it was

Draft report suggests new directions for the American Jewish community



Jonathan Woocher



commission to come out and say 'here is the rank order of priorities' would be counterproductive."

In one of its strongest messages of how money should or should not be spent, the draft report insists that Jewish identity must be built through both ongoing "formative" experiences, such as family life, Jewish schooling and summer camps, and "transformative" experiences such as Israel trips.

"We see a tendency in continuity to value transformative over formative, to put the big bucks on the singular experiences," said Joseph Reimer, director of the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service at Brandeis University, summarizing the report of the working group he helped lead.

"We're pleading with planners of Jewish continuity to find the right balance between formative and transformative. The formative takes that moment of high intensity and turns it into a regularized part of our Jewish life," Reimer said.

In its introduction, the report cited several broad requirements for advancing the Jewish continuity agenda.

They include:

- "Vigorous advocacy to make and maintain Jewish identity and community building as priority concerns."
- "Basic research and ongoing program evaluation" to learn what is effective in enhancing Jewish identity.
- "Sharing knowledge and resources more effectively"

Atlanta Jewish Times, December 16, 1994

Editorial

Point Zero On Education

EDITORIAL

Passion is the good part of the message about Atlanta's Jewish studies teachers. What's disturbing is that most of them come into the classroom uneducated themselves. Such were the inescapable conclusions of a new report on Jewish studies teachers in Atlanta.

As Assistant Editor David Holzel reports in "Judaic Teachers Get Low Grades," on page one, Atlanta's approximately 400 Jewish studies teachers are under trained and have had few opportunities to improve. The report was prepared by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, a national group monitoring the three "lead Jewish communities" — Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

The Atlanta Jewish Federation hopes to use these grim numbers to poke community activists and philanthropists to channel more energy and money into on education — starting with making our teachers better teachers.

The Federation's own commitment to education has increased in recent years. Allocations to day schools and Jewish Educational Services in 1993-94 were \$1.4 million — 25 percent of local allocations. Compare that to day schools and the old Atlanta Bureau of Jewish Education allocation in 1989-90: \$1 million — 17 percent of local allocations. Other boosts are Janice Alper's arrival in 1993 to head JES, the 1994 hiring of education planner/consultants at the Federation and the Atlanta Jewish Community Center, and the continuing expansion of Tichon Atlanta, the evening com-

munity high school program.

Educators say the level of training reflected in the CIJE report was below where it should be because the survey was taken at the low ebb in Jewish education here, while the Atlanta Board of Jewish Education and then the JES were administered by the Federation without professional leadership. Although perhaps needed for long-term improvement, clearly the slow restructuring of Jewish education here since 1991 has been damaging in the short term.

The CIJE report pulls together what other Federation-funded Jewish education reports have concluded since 1989 — Atlanta's education delivery system needs help. Now that the foundation has been strengthened, the walls are in desperate need of support. The CIJE report offers a baseline for improvement. Tossing money at the problem is only part of the answer. Atlanta's Jewish community — parents, educators and spiritual leaders, must ac-

knowledge this problem without being defensive. Our education system is filled with committed teachers. Now our community is obligated to give them the tools to deliver a positive, lasting knowledge-base about the depth of a Jewish life.

Making our teachers better will not solve the much ballyhooed continuity crisis. That will only come from more committed Jewish homes. At best, more qualified teachers will make for better schools and, hopefully, more Jewishly knowledgeable students. That's a worthwhile end in itself. □

Atlanta's Jewish community must acknowledge the problem without being defensive.

Atlanta Jewish Times, December 16, 1994



Jewish classroom: Almost no one disputes the findings.

PHOTO BY CHARLES RAASHOON

Judaic Teachers Get Low Grades

Survey shows a minority have training in Jewish studies and education.

DAVID HOLZEL ASSISTANT EDITOR

In Jewish lore, a cherished rung in purgatory is reserved for the Hebrew school teacher — that badly prepared pedagogue who has turned generations against Jewish learning. In Atlanta, that image of an undertrained educator isn't total fantasy, a new survey shows.

Circulated among school heads last week, the draft report paints an unflattering statistical portrait of

Atlanta's Jewish studies teachers. (Secular studies teachers were not included.) It shows that most of the 400 teachers surveyed are largely untrained — both in Judaism and as educators. And while teachers at synagogue supplementary schools scored the lowest, the study casts a shadow over the glossier images of Jewish preschools and day schools.

What's noteworthy is that almost

no one is disputing the findings.

"It's nothing new to the educators," said Steven Grossman, director of Ahavath Achim Synagogue's supplementary school. "We've been saying we need serious staff training for a long time."

What is new is the report, for the first time, puts hard numbers to what people long have suspected. It also

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provides a baseline to measure improvement in teacher training, said Steven Chervin, director of the Atlanta Jewish Federation's council for Jewish continuity, an education planning body.

Only 13 percent of Judaic teachers in Atlanta are professionally trained in both education and Jewish content areas, according to the report, prepared by the New York-based Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, following two years of information gathering.

high level of commitment to Jewish education as a career.

"Most educators are attracted to Jewish education for intrinsic rewards, such as transmitting the joy and enthusiasm for Judaism to children," the report stated.

"The data show these people are stable and by investing in their professional development, it is not wasted money," said Mr. Chervin of the Federation.

Coming up with a plan to raise the quality of Jewish

education, and they're hungry for having more," said Cheryl Finkel, head of the Epstein School, a Conservative day school. To improve teaching quality, "we need to have pre-service opportunities, internship opportunities, mentorships and study courses on several different levels of knowledge," she said.

Any action plan from the Federation will comprise a set of guidelines — rather than binding rules — for raising the professional level of teachers, Mr. Chervin said. The report calls this approach "moral suasion."

"It means we might say to the schools, 'This is the expectation for working conditions' or 'This is the level of in-service training,'" Mr. Chervin said. "It's using the Federation and other agencies as a bully pulpit which, one would hope, people would respond to on a voluntary basis."

\$1 million needed?

The Federation and educators are looking to Jewish Educational Services, Atlanta's Jewish teacher-training agency, to execute the action plan. Adding academic programs, periodic workshops and incentives to study will cost money. With a budget of \$213,000, the agency, created two years ago to raise the level of teaching professionalism, already runs at a deficit, said Janice Alper, director of JES.

How much money is enough to do the job?

"If the community put \$1 million into a fund that says training is important, we could have the best trained teachers in the country," she said.

Some educators warn against a gloomy interpretation of the report.

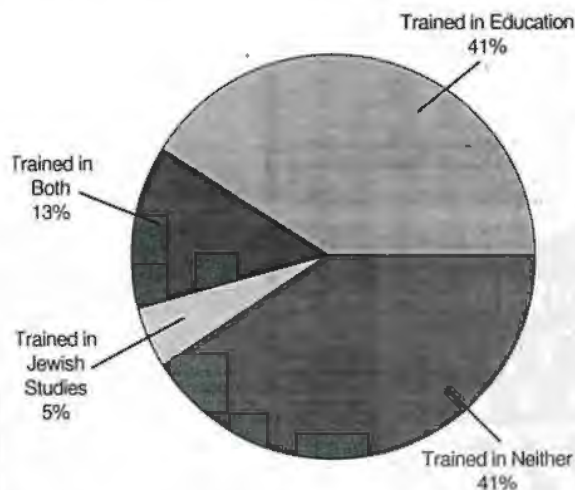
"I don't see in this community a sick system," said Richard Wagner, headmaster of the Greenfield Hebrew Academy, a traditional day school.

The fact that a minority of Jewish studies teachers are cer-

tified "is more indicative of national failure to encourage and require licensure," he said.

"The survey was taken during a transition period, so what was true then is out of date already," said Linda Weinroth, director of Congregation Etz Chaim's religious school.

She referred to a two-year period following the 1991 resignation of Leon Spotts as director of the Atlanta Bureau of Jewish Education, precursor to JES. Until Ms. Alper was hired to



Extent of professional training in education and Jewish studies.

While expected, the report's findings can still shock. "It's disconcerting how little Judaic education people have," Moira Frank, director of Congregation B'nai Torah's preschool, said after reading the report, "but they're teaching Judaism."

Among the report's findings:

- Atlanta teachers have more formal Jewish education than the average for American Jewish adults, but they are not well educated in their field compared to other types of teachers.

- Atlanta's day school teachers — many of whom are not fully prepared before they begin teaching — receive just over one quarter of the in-service training (periodic and ongoing study) that is required for state certification of public school teachers.

- Despite limited backgrounds in Jewish studies and infrequent in-service training, most teachers do not engage in formal study of Judaism in other contexts.

- Few benefits, such as health, disability and pension, are available to teachers.

Surprising loyalty

The one bright spot in the report came as a surprise to researchers: Jewish studies teachers, the vast majority of whom are part-time, show a

teachers is the council for Jewish continuity's next task, Mr. Chervin said.

"Hopefully in six months we'll have the criterion of a personnel action plan for high-quality staff development. After that, we'll set up bench marks and see how we're progressing," he said.

Addressing the issue of benefits is a longer-term goal, he said.

"The study shows teachers have little formal Jewish edu-

Teacher Profile

Atlanta's Jewish studies teachers are predominantly female (87 percent) and American-born (84 percent).

- In religious affiliation, 37 percent say they are Reform, 29 percent Conservative, 17 percent Orthodox and 11 percent Traditional. Six percent list other preferences, such as secular.

- Among day school teachers, 32 percent are trained in both education and Jewish studies, and 18 percent are not trained in either. Of supplementary school teachers, 9 percent are formally trained in both and 51 percent are not trained in either. Among preschool teachers, 6 percent have degrees or certification in both and 40 percent lack formal training in both areas.

- Sixty percent have visited Israel and 52 percent of those lived in Israel for at least three months.

From "The Teaching Force of Atlanta's Jewish Schools."



Steven Grossman:
Findings are nothing new.

head JES in the fall of 1993, staff development slowed to a near halt.

The report is a product of Atlanta's participation as one of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education's three "lead communities," or education laboratories. The CIJE conducted teacher interviews in each lead community, including Baltimore and Milwaukee. In addition, each lead community administered a teacher survey in 1993.

Combined findings went into a national policy brief, released last month. Those findings were nearly identical to Atlanta's profile, although Atlanta scored lower than the national aggregate in some areas, Mr. Chervin said.

"Atlanta is probably more typical of U.S. [Jewish communities], because we don't have the resources," such as post-graduate Jewish studies programs and a Jewish teachers college, he said.

Atlanta educators hope the report will be a wake-up call for those who don't know the system is in need of improvement.

"It's a policy and planning document that needs to be taken seriously," Dr. Wagner said.

The next step in evaluating the quality of Jewish education in Atlanta will come in the spring of 1995, with a report on school administrators. □

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Which is the best college from Jewish standpoint?

2376 *Education I w survey*

NEW YORK — The first major study of Jews on college campuses by a national Jewish organization concludes that four factors determine the extent to which students behave Jewishly.

The survey was made by the American Jewish Committee, which commissioned the Ukeles Associates to do a 12-month study with 155 students from eight colleges as diverse as Harvard and Indiana University, Reed College and UCLA.

The survey found that Jewish Density, Strength of Jewish Campus Organizations, Leadership of Campus Organizations and Campus Culture were the determining factors.

The higher the density of Jewish students on campus the more activities for them and the easier to be Jewish and to meet other Jews thereby facilitating in-marriage, the study found.

As for the strength of Jewish campus organizations, they must be in place to meet the needs of students, and Hillel was mentioned.

The third factor was leadership of campus Jewish organizations while the fourth was campus culture which includes region, size competitiveness, remoteness and whether a campus is commuter or residential, factors which define the mood on campus, which can encourage or discourage organized Jewish involvement.

The report identifies four types of Jews found on campus — activists, empathizers, ambivalent and invisible.

It learned that 74 percent of activists had been to Israel compared to 46 percent of empathizers and 24 percent of the ambivalent. The most actively Jewish students were the best educated Jewishly although many did not come from observant homes.

The report concluded that "creating opportunities for Jewish enrichment on the college campus is challenging, difficult, and in many ways goes against the tide." It added that "the broader American society is not supportive of the efforts of the organized Jewish community to strengthen Jewish commitment and identity among young people".

Among the policy recommendations of the report were that the campus must become a communal priority, the communal presence on campus needs to be more responsive to real diversity, brochures should be produced with a "Jewish" ranking of schools and parents should encourage their children to learn about the Jewish quality of the campus before they choose where to go.

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Day School grads show they do not intermarry

2376

NEW YORK — While the rate of intermarriage generally in the U.S. Jewish community is just over 50 percent, for graduates of Jewish day school the rate is only 4.5 percent.

This was determined by a comprehensive survey conducted by researchers at Yeshiva University here. Surveyed were more than 3,600 alumni, ages 20 to 40, of 26 elementary and secondary level day schools.

The new figures disputes those found by the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey which put the figure at 18 percent of day school graduates intermarrying.

Of the 4.5 percent who did intermarry, according to the survey, a little more than half of the spouses converted. 2.

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Day schools: A 'continuity' success story

Special to the Jewish Exponent

2376 Education

EDITOR'S NOTE: In 1992, the Jewish Educational Service of North America (JESNA) conducted a survey of federation allocations to day schools. The following summary of the main points of the survey, released as a report in May, is reprinted from The Jewish Parent Connection, a publication of Torah U'Mesorah.

By now, Jewish day schools are widely accepted as one of the most valuable tools to stem the "Jewish continuity crisis" that has come to public attention in recent years.

At present, 625 day schools of all streams and ideologies exist in the United States. Many Jewish leaders attended day school or have children or grandchildren who attend, and total enrollment has grown from 60,000 in 1962 to 181,000 in 1992. Of this number, approximately 140,000 are affiliated with Orthodox institutions.

"The current consensus across virtually all segments of the community is that the day school is the most effective formal Jewish educational mode, and will continue as such in the foreseeable future," states the JESNA report.

Allocations have increased

In keeping with these findings, federation allocations to day schools have increased steadily: Local federations allocate about 25 percent of their resources to education, and about half of that goes to day schools.

The federations that participated in the 1992 survey are of the opinion that, overall, they have been quite responsive to day schools' needs and interests. Schools, however, still find that funding often falls short of the amount necessary for high-quality Jewish and secular education.

Educators who reviewed the data are also concerned that high tuitions still prohibit many families from choosing that option for their children.

In response, federations emphasize that education competes with other communal concerns. Of the money that is allocated, federations are beginning to seek greater fiscal accountability from schools and to require more formalized methods of determining scholarship eligibility.

Teachers unfairly blamed for Jewish education woes

²³⁷⁶ It distressed me to read the headline "Jewish educators underpaid, ill-trained, study says" on the first page of the Dec. 9 Chronicle. Then to read the two articles that evaluated the Jewish teachers of Milwaukee brought on anger, sadness and a certain *deja vu*.

Teachers are depreciated unfairly each time a study is made of the state of Jewish education. I recall three such studies here since 1951.

The articles say that teachers have little or no Jewish education. Alan Hoffman, executive director of the Council of Initiatives for Jewish Education, claims that Jewish educators are responsible for the situation we find in Hebrew schools.

Not the rabbis. Not the school principals. Not the Jewish leaders.

The teachers are responsible, we are told. That is not fair.

Who are the most important role models for a child? In the 44 years I have been teaching, I was never able to impress or to inspire a child with values or direction that the parents were not willing to provide first.

What is the description of a Jewish educator? What criteria are used by the rabbis and principals when hiring teachers? Has the teacher been given a curriculum, a statement of goals and objectives? There need to be a description and standards to be used when the process of hiring begins.

What opportunities do the children have to use their Jewish skills learned from the units about Sabbath, the siddur (prayerbook), the Bible, Jewish history, Zionism and Israel in their daily lives with the family?

The majority of teachers who

have been teaching in the synagogues for more than 15, 20 or 30 years do not have pension plans or health insurance. Many do not receive the hourly wage of a secretary.

Are the rabbis and boards of directors willing to invest in what will be needed to advance the development and professionalism of the Jewish educator?

Many Jewish educators are required to develop their own curricula. Teachers are not seen as consultants or part of the decision-making process in the community.

Our children need role models who demonstrate the values of our Jewish tradition, our Jewish learning. Our children need to witness the respect of the Jewish community for the Jewish teacher.

Our community must facilitate, encourage and participate in education and advancement opportunities for Jewish educators. Families must actualize their children's studies to give the school and the teacher validity and dignity.

The Jewish educator wants to teach successfully in a partnership with the family and the community. What we require is the educated leadership of the rabbis, the principals, the boards of directors and community leaders.

Ateret Cohn
Milwaukee

Ateret Cohn has taught Hebrew and religious school at Milwaukee-area synagogues and currently teaches Holocaust history at the Milwaukee Jewish Day School. She won the first Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education Teacher of the Year Award and the first National Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Jewish Bulletin of Northern California, December 23, 1994

A must: training for Jewish educators

The good news is that many Bay Area religious school teachers are committed Jews with a dedication to Jewish education and a penchant for relating to children.

The bad news, according to a national survey, is that the vast majority of them lack the proper training to teach Judaism.

According to the survey, by the Cleveland-based Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, those teachers have had little or no education since their bar or bat mitzvahs — and have not received sufficient, updated training in either education, Judaica, or both.

That doesn't mean they're bad teachers. It just means some of them could be a lot better.

The Bureau of Jewish Education in San Francisco and the East Bay's Agency for Jewish Education should be commended for recognizing the need for improvement, and for formulating teacher-enrichment programs aimed at imparting Jewish knowledge and innovative teaching methods.

Wisely, both the Bureau's *laatid* program and the Agency for Jewish Education's *shoresh* project offer financial incentives for

teachers completing a certain amount of credits. Because those teachers cannot generally support themselves through such jobs alone, the incentives should help attract more participants to those important programs.

Religious school principals would be wise to follow the example of local Jewish education agencies by consistently exposing their teachers to a broad range of educational methods and materials. Although teachers may have an abundance of knowledge, they sometimes need help delivering it so that children will understand and remember.

Ultimately, religious school teachers, together with parents, are some of the most pivotal figures in a child's Jewish life. Teachers have the power to turn a child on, or off, to Jewish culture and ideas, and ultimately to determine whether a child will have a Jewish future.

By sending their children to religious school, parents are sending the message that they want their children to have a Jewish education. As a community, we should do everything possible to ensure that our children's education is the best it can be.

Bay Area tackles problem

Religious teachers: They're inspired but under-trained

LESLEY PEARL
Bulletin Staff

Four of every five teachers in synagogue religious schools don't have the proper training to teach Jewish students, according to a recent national study.

Most of them, in fact, have had little or no Jewish education since their bar and bat mitzvahs and lack sufficient, up-to-the-moment training in education, or Judaica or both.

These were the determinations of a policy brief released by the Cleveland-based Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education last month.

The problem, says S.F. Congregation Emanu-El educator Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan, is that "we have entered a time when we have the greatest need and the smallest available pool of qualified teachers."

While the data seem dismal, there are some bright spots on the education horizon.

The majority of teachers surveyed over the course of two years in Milwaukee, Atlanta and Baltimore, for example, do view

their jobs — mostly part-time and without benefits — as careers.

And in the Bay Area, even though religious schools and their students suffer many of the same educational ills that plague educational institutions across the country, local agencies have responded more quickly.

The Bureau for Jewish Education has addressed the issues to some degree in San Francisco, Marin and Sonoma counties, and on the Peninsula, with its five-year-old *laatid* ("to the future") program.

East Bay's Agency for Jewish Education and the San Jose federation have been working together to offer the *shoresh* ("roots") project, which started two years ago.

Both are teacher-enrichment programs. They include a variety of seminars and workshops that range in scope from how to



Educator Sarah Haselkorn reads a story to students at an assembly at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills.

Photo — Michael Schwartz

talk about God in the classroom to innovative methods for teaching Hebrew. And both offer a financial incentive for instructors completing a certain number of credits.

Those programs, local educators say, are a beginning, but certainly not a solution.

Nationally, educators agree that parents have sent a clear message: They want to give their children a Jewish education yet feel incapable. Indeed, they want a better education for their offspring than they received.

Educators across the country have responded by trying to institute family-education programs and innovative and entertaining ways of learning.

Still, the bottom line with most Jewish education programs is a lack of money.

Allan Hoffman, CIJE executive director, believes funding is absent because most federation campaigns — which many educational institutions depend on for large

See MONEY, Page 34

Money is stumbling block to training Jewish teachers

Continued from Page 1

chunks of their funding — have been flat in recent years.

"It's not because there isn't money," he says, pinpointing a recent \$15 million donation Detroit philanthropist William Davidson made to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. "It's that no compelling arguments are being made" to obtain the money from private contributors for Jewish education.

Another problem, according to Emanu-El's Wolf-Prusan, is how

the money that is available is used.

"We know the problems, and we even know some of the solutions," he says. "The money is being spent in the wrong places. The dollars flow upwards to studies and consultants. We need it to go on the line, to the teachers. I know what I want, and I know what these kids need."

Teacher Sarah Haselkorn, of Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, knows too, having spent the last two decades in the trenches called classrooms.

When she and her husband moved to the United States from their native Israel 20 years ago, Haselkorn presumed she would teach Hebrew in a synagogue religious school — just because she was fluent.

And despite her having had little education training, she was "thrown right in" to a classroom anyway.

The early years of her career, at Temple Beth Jacob in Redwood City and Congregation Kol Emeth in Palo Alto, "were especially difficult" because of the cultural differences between Israel and the United States, Haselkorn remembers.

Now, however, she is completely comfortable in her role. Students even vie for spots in her fourth- and fifth-grade Hebrew classes at Beth Am.

New teachers, she believes, have an easier time starting out today than she did. That, she says, is due to efforts by the BJE and AJE to tackle the sorts of problems cited in the CIJE report.

About one-third of eligible teachers complete the *laatid* or *shoresh* programs and earn a financial bonus. Even more enroll in the workshops but do not log enough hours to qualify for the money.

"This is an opportunity to talk to each other, hear new theories, find out what others are doing," says Haselkorn. "This program is imperative, especially for new

teachers."

How to inspire congregation-school instructors and keep them motivated is a difficulty, partly because of the part-time nature of the job and partially because many of the teachers must maintain another, primary job and, therefore, have little time to devote to enrichment.

"We need money to provide support and allow teachers to do the kind of work they want to do," says Bob Sherman, San Francisco's BJE executive director. "We provide workshops and seminars. Teachers come and get excited and motivated, but there is no one to really help them implement these new ideas and techniques."

With improved funding, Sherman says, medical benefits could be offered to instructors, adding legitimacy to Jewish education as a career choice, and field supervisors could be hired to give individualized assistance.

"It's like coaching. It's not enough to just teach someone how to bat. It's the constant cheerleading, watching the performance, giving feedback. Right now we're stopping short of that," Sherman says.

To date, though, the kind of concrete ideas proposed by Sherman and others in the field are not getting

through to those in positions of financial and political strength.

So for now, educators such as Helene Holley, principal of the religious school at Congregation Rodef Shalom in San Rafael, must remain content making "the best choices possible."

Holley admits not all 41 of her teachers are both scholarly on Jewish issues and capable of relating well with young people. They are, however, "all committed Jews," she says.

"They might not all be as knowledgeable as I'd hope for, but they all feel a sense of *Am Yisrael*. And if the teachers are dedicated, they'll do the necessary research to teach properly."



Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan teaches at Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco.

Photo — Mike Richmond



Robert Sherman

Critical Thought

Acclaimed Reforms Of U.S. Education Are Popular but Unproved

Ted Sizer's Methods Stress
Reasoning Over Rote;
Gains Aren't Measurable

Ambiguity and Faculty Spats

By STEVE STECKLOW

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
PROVIDENCE, R.I. — In the crusade to revitalize high schools, no one has attracted more attention — or money — than Theodore R. Sizer, professor of education at Brown University and creator of the Coalition of Essential Schools.

But as Dr. Sizer's adherents and donations pile up, so, too, does research challenging the effectiveness of coalition schools. Five recent, little-publicized studies, including a five-year research project sponsored by the coalition itself, suggest that Dr. Sizer's ideas may be a lot more workable in theory than in practice.

Founded in 1984 and based here at Brown University, the coalition is a fast-growing network of more than 800 public and private schools that follow Dr. Sizer's "Common Principles" of education, stressing deeper, more self-directed learning to get students to think critically.

"What is especially troubling is the low level of their reasoning skills, the abilities of analysis and synthesis," Dr. Sizer wrote in his acclaimed book "Horace's Compromise—The Dilemma of the American High School," published in 1984. "While students seem to be improving in rote-level, concrete learnings — vocabulary recognition and, in mathematics, simple addition, for example — their ability to think critically and resourcefully is lamentably weak and is continuing to weaken."

Not since John Dewey, whose writings shaped the 20th-century U.S. curriculum, has one person's philosophy taken hold in so many classrooms, educators say. More than \$100 million has poured in from education foundations and donors such as AT&T, Exxon and Citicorp. Anecdotal evidence from some coalition schools points to improved attendance rates, lower dropout rates, better test scores or more students going on to college.

'Just Different'

But even coalition officials concede such evidence is spotty. They also haven't tried to determine comprehensively whether coalition students are learning more, despite pressure to do so from some benefactors. Grant Wiggins, the coalition's former research director, says he remains unconvinced that coalition schools are better. "It has always been my sense that it's not better, it's not worse, it's just different," explains Dr. Wiggins, who says he quit the coalition in 1998 because of "a combination of burnout and frustration."



Theodore R. Sizer

The five research studies — based on visits, interviews and questionnaires at more than two dozen coalition schools — describe schools traumatized by political infighting between teachers divided over the change efforts, ambiguity over the coalition's guiding principles and higher-than-expected costs, among other problems.

"What you were left with, after our five years of studying, were a few teachers who were still continuing to try to do things in their individual classroom or in small teams, but very little schoolwide had changed," says Donna Muncey, an anthropologist who examined eight of the schools as part of the coalition's own study. Sam Stringfield, a Johns Hopkins University researcher, studied five schools in a different evaluation. "For anyone to say that this is a reform that has been proven to work is simply not true," he says.

Dr. Sizer doesn't flinch at such findings, saying they only demonstrate the difficulty of his mission. He also says overhauling high schools may take decades. "Let us never underestimate for anybody the difficulty of what we're doing," he told 3,500 coalition schoolteachers last month in Chicago at a meeting marking the coalition's 10th anniversary.

Bored and Docile

Dr. Sizer, 62, is a former dean of Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. He left Harvard in 1972 and became headmaster of Phillips Academy at Andover, Mass. The job gave him a chance to work directly with teens and to undertake a five-year academic study of secondary schools.

The result was "Horace," a story of a fictional high-school English teacher beaten down by an inflexible system that provided too little time to work individually with students. The traditional curricular jumble of 52-minute, mostly unrelated classes, the book argued, was breeding bored and docile students with poor reasoning skills.

"Horace" was an immediate hit with teachers and administrators, who found themselves described as overworked and underpaid. The timing was right nationally, too; an alarming federal study called "A Nation At Risk" recently had lambasted America's educational system, par-

Please Turn to Page A5, Column 1

Critical Thought: Plan to Reform Education Is Drawing Skepticism

Continued From First Page
ticularly high schools.

After reading an excerpt of "Horace," Debbie Meier, founder of an innovative elementary school in New York's East Harlem, invited Dr.Sizer to help design a new high school she was planning. "I had great suspicion of New England WASPs from Harvard," says Ms. Meier. "But he's been one of the small number of people I've met in life whom I can completely trust and respect."

Education foundations invited Dr. Sizer to apply for grants to try out his ideas on a small network of public and private schools. "Ted had a vision," Dr. Wiggins says. "He can promote that vision as well as anybody I've ever seen. He can get people to open their wallets on the spot."

Rather than create a specific model for schools to copy, Dr. Sizer developed a set of common principles to serve as guidelines. Schools should focus on getting students to use their minds well and meet the needs of every group of adolescents. Principals and teachers should act as generalists, not experts in one particular discipline. Teaching and learning should be personalized, with no teacher having more than 50 students. Teachers should act as coaches, provoking students to learn, and thereby learn themselves.

As for students, Dr. Sizer recommended they study a limited number of skills and subjects in depth and earn a diploma by demonstrating mastery — ideally not via a test. Per-pupil costs should not exceed traditional schools by more than 10%.

Coalition schools have implemented his ideas in a variety of ways. Pasadena High School in Pasadena, Calif., divided its 2,000 students into four separate "houses" to make the school more personal and introduced double-length periods for humanities classes, so topics could be studied in more depth. At Reynoldsburg High School in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, many students attend classes taught by interdisciplinary teams of teachers and work in small groups. Extensive research projects are a focus at Chatham High School in Chatham, N.Y., where 17-year-old Jason Wilber is designing an entire ski area — including trails, main lodge, lifts, snow guns and cost analyses — for his senior-year exhibition.

Because such reforms are difficult to implement all at once, many coalition schools choose to introduce them in phases or in an experimental "school within a school" for a limited number of students and teachers. But what often ensues, researchers found, is a battle between teachers and administrators who support the coalition and those who don't.

Jealous Teachers

Portland High School in Portland, Me., was one of the first schools to join the coalition. In 1986, after a year of preparation, Portland opened a school-within-a-school to serve as a test site for broader implementation. About 100 ninth-graders, a mix of honors and average achievers, were selected and team-taught. Teachers were allowed to stretch classes for up to four periods.

Within a year, serious problems surfaced. Not all the teaching teams worked well together. Some teachers not involved in the project became jealous over the extra preparatory time the coalition teachers were given. "Other teachers walking by would say, 'My God, they're doing what I'm doing and they get two free periods a day,'" says Barbara Anderson, the school's principal at the time.

Debra Smith, one of the coalition teachers, says some of the faculty refused to speak to her. "They felt the principal was favoring this small group of teachers and pouring resources into this small pro-

gram and wasn't valuing the strengths of the rest of the faculty and the needs of the rest of the school," she says. "It was a disaster."

After its second year, the project was disbanded, and the school eventually quit the coalition. Ms. Smith left the school, disillusioned. John T. Johnson, who taught history in the project, stayed on, but says the experience was so divisive that many teachers now are skeptical of any kind of change. Mrs. Anderson, now retired, says she thinks maybe the only way to implement the coalition principles is "to create a whole new school."

Questions From Community

In Amherst, N.H., the community did just that — but still meets resistance. Souhegan High School, a brand-new, \$12 million structure, opened as a coalition school two years ago. It handpicked its teaching staff and hired a principal from another coalition school.

Souhegan eliminated grouping students by ability, installed team teaching, extended class periods and required students to present a "final exhibition of mastery" after each study unit. Lisa Hopwood, a 17-year-old senior, says she likes the interdisciplinary teaching. "What I'm doing in math now has some relevance to what I'm doing in physics," she says. Teachers spend more time working individually with students than at her previous high school, where "a lot of kids would just sit in the back and never be bothered. . . . No one gets left out here at all," she says.

But not everyone is so pleased. Donna Zablouli, who has two children at the school and belongs to its parent advisory group, objects to the elimination of D's and F's in the grading system and to teachers who accept work handed in late. "There's such an emphasis on helping the kids feel good about themselves and helping them succeed that we're not holding them accountable for their own work," she says. "I don't want my children to fail, but I also want them to understand the consequences of their actions."

Meanwhile, a vocal minority has challenged everything from eliminating tracking to plans to implement sex education.

Robert Mackin, the principal, seems weary by the constant fights, which he estimates consume at least 10% of his time.

Coalition supporters say high schools are so entrenched in their ways — from rigid schedules to veteran teachers' reluctance to change classroom practices — that opposition is no surprise. But some also believe that the coalition itself shares some blame, partly for its own reluctance to evaluate itself. Dr. Sizer disdains standardized testing, arguing it doesn't measure critical thinking: "To base the success or failure of our schools on tests that don't test [critical thinking] doesn't get us very far."

But the coalition has yet to come up with an alternative. Edward F. Ahnert, executive director of the Exxon Education Foundation, which has given \$2.9 million to Dr. Sizer, says, "A number of folks who work with the coalition pushed on them about doing a very comprehensive, long-term assessment of learning gains or the absence thereof." But when Dr. Sizer proposed a plan, the cost was so high Exxon and several other foundations "got sticker shock and the project has never gotten off the ground," Mr. Ahnert says.

Mr. Ahnert says he is disappointed, but remains convinced the coalition is a success and hopes to give it more money. "Most of the anecdotal reports that we hear report a better learning climate, a more civil or humane environment in the schools, better adult-student relations," he says. "I think all of those things matter."

Not every benefactor is so enthusiastic. Citibank gave the coalition \$3 million to train 100 teachers at Brown University, with the idea that they would return home and spread the coalition's ideas into many schools. But Paul M. Ostergard, Citibank's director of corporate contributions, now thinks that there are too few to spark widespread change and that funding individual schools is a wiser investment.

'Just Jumping-Off Points'

Looking back at his years with the coalition, Dr. Wiggins says the group was too quick to urge schools to implement its nine principles before proving they work. "They're just jumping-off points, and to argue that they've been proven to be of value, which I have seen in some later coalition material, that's crap," he says. Some of the principles are so general, he adds, that "it's very easy to deceive yourself that you're meeting them."

Dr. Sizer rejects creating a recipe book for implementing the principles, despite demands from many schools to do so. "There is no such thing as a distinct, detailed blueprint for a fine school, any more than there is such for a successful family," he has written. But Dr. Wiggins says the coalition should at least offer teachers lengthy case studies of effective implementations: "If you don't have user-friendly material that gives them some guidance and feedback and trouble-shooting assistance, then they're just learning to swim by being thrown in the water."

Back at his modest, exposed-brick office in Providence, Dr. Sizer continues to take the long view. He notes that some of the coalition's notions, such as exhibitions of mastery, were considered "cuckoo" a decade ago, but now are regularly discussed by educators. As for the difficulty the coalition has encountered trying to change schools, he concedes it has been "vexing" but adds, "Show me any project which has dramatically changed any significant number of high schools. There isn't one. So people beat up on the coalition and I finally say, 'OK, show me the option.'"

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FLEISHMAN'S FLIGHT

Jewish education is key

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By AL FLEISHMAN

One of the bones of contention of many on the primary needs of a Jewish community has long been the subject of Jewish education.



I still remember an experience with continued shock. That was in a meeting about three years ago of the Jewish Agency in Israel, when an intensive Jewish education program was set aside. It was set aside because of the objection, or really what was the close vote, of the executive of the World Zionist Organization (defeating approval of the contemplated Jewish educational program by a single vote).

I found (tragically) that the main stumbling block was some of the written language in the program. That is, the educational program, was to be for a massive teaching program including Orthodox, Conservative and Reform.

That language was evidently objectionable. Although the Jewish Agency majority was overwhelmingly for that language, some elements (the majority of the

six pages. It told about the many forms of Jewish educational material and programs that were being offered... and why.

I couldn't let it pass, especially since it reminded me of the session in Jerusalem a few years back.

I want to repeat some of the language used by Rabbi Howard M. Graber, executive head of our institution so you can see what I mean and how enthusiastic one can get.

I ought to say that it (CAJE's) board and membership consists of all segments of Jewish life in our community. And that is a very, very big plus.

Here is part of what Rabbi Graber calls his "Primer in Jewish Education":

* "To be empowered as a Jew, you must understand Judaism.

* Jewish education is more than a matter of survival. It is a matter of life enrichment.

* Judaism has always placed an emphasis on education. The study of Torah, the dissemination of knowledge, is a foundation of our history. Over the centuries, no matter how bleak the times, our people have found salvation in learning and keeping the traditions alive.

* Jewish education fulfills our lives in many ways. It broadens our perspectives and leads to greater understanding. It provides us with

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VIEWPOINT

SURVEY OF DAY SCHOOL GRADUATES

2376

Jewish education promotes Jewish identity

The first comprehensive survey of Jewish day school graduates in America, conducted by researchers at Yeshiva University, finds that Jewish education has an overwhelmingly positive impact on adult Jewish identity and behavior — especially on marital patterns — and that the impact is much greater than previously believed.

In fact, only 4.5 percent of

the more than 3,600 respondents — alumni, ages 20 to 40, of 26 elementary and secondary level day schools representing the spectrum of Judaism — married non-Jews. This figure is in marked contrast to the findings of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, which showed an 18 percent intermarriage rate among those whose education was received in a Jewish day school and an overall 52 percent intermarriage rate among American Jews.

The new survey, "The Jewishness Quotient of Jewish Day School Graduates," was conducted by Dr. Alvin I. Schiff and sociologist Dr. Mareleyn Schneider under the auspices of YU's David J. Azrieli Graduate Institute of Jewish Education and Administration. It was funded by business and communal leader Irving I. Stone of Cleveland.

Schiff, professor of education at the university and the survey's senior researcher, is chairman of the American Advisory Council of the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education and executive vice president emeritus of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York. Schneider is associate professor of sociol-

fessional studies.

• The level of Jewish behavior — particularly Sabbath and kashrut observance — increases in proportion to the level of Jewish education. Whereas less than half of the graduates of elementary level day schools keep kosher at home, more than 75 percent of those who completed Jewish high school and 95 percent of those who continued Jewish education beyond the high school level observe kashrut at home.

Furthermore, over two-thirds of high school level graduates and over 90 percent of those who continued the Jewish studies after high school, compared to about a third of elementary-level day school graduates, keep kosher outside the home.

• More than 90 percent of Jewish day school graduates who pursued Jewish study beyond high school observe the Sabbath: performing or hearing kiddush and lighting (or see the lighting of) candles of Friday night; studying Jewish texts; attending synagogue services, and refraining from travel. This compares to 70 percent of those who completed high school level Jewish education and 37 percent who possess only an elementary

school graduates, regardless of age or educational level, observe the Sabbath.

• Day school graduates have a positive connection to Israel. Whereas only 15 percent of American Jews have visited Israel, 89 percent of day school graduates have been to the Jewish State — on average four times.

Moreover, the largest percentage of visitors to Israel come from the more Jewishly educated, regardless of age or ideology of school attended. Ninety-six percent of those who pursued Jewish education beyond high school, compared to 87 percent of high school graduates and 76 percent of elementary day school graduates, have visited Israel at least once.

• Adults with a Jewish education are involved in Jewish organizational life. Over 60 percent of day school graduates are either very active or active in Jewish communal life and another 28 percent are affiliated with a Jewish organization.

Furthermore, communal activity increases as the level of Jewish education increases. Seventy-two percent of those who continued their Jewish studies beyond high school, compared to 54 percent of those with a high school level

those with an elementary school level education, are active in Jewish communal life.

• There is a strong relationship between Jewish education and Jewish camping experiences. Eighty-five percent of Jewish day school graduates attended a Jewish summer camp an average of four summers.

"It is eminently clear that greater exposure to Jewish day school education yields more pronounced Jewish behavior and attitudes," Schiff said. "Because the data confirms that Jewish education is an indispensable tool for the formation of Jewish identity, it behooves Jewish communal agencies and educational systems to support and provide opportunities for continuing Jewish education."

Added Schneider, "Jewish day school education helps graduates retain Jewish attitudes and behavior experienced during their upbringing. It motivates graduates to be positively inclined toward Jewish values and observance while reducing negative attitudes about Jewish behavior, identity, and life they may have acquired in the larger environment."

The survey was administered to 6,673 graduates of 13 elementary schools and 12 high schools.

large and small Jewish communities in the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. Sixteen of the institutions identified themselves as centrist or modern Orthodox, five are under Conservative sponsorship, three are "trans-ideological" communal schools and two are "right-of-center" Orthodox yeshivot. For the analysis, the researchers consolidated Reform Jews with Reconstructionist Jews and agnostics with atheists and Jews who practiced no religion because of the relatively few respondents in each of these categories. Overall, the survey yielded a 55 percent response rate. A bias check found no difference between respondents and non-respondents.

The age category of 20 to 40 years was chosen, Schiff explained, because "we wanted to examine the relationship between contemporary Jewish educational experience and adult Jewish behavior. Graduates before 1965 and 1970 are more likely to reflect Jewish behaviors of an earlier period."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Copies of the survey report are available.

JEWISH EXPONENT

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**Report indicates
fewer day-school
grads intermarry**

2376
NEW YORK — Jewish education has an overwhelmingly positive impact on adult Jewish identity, behavior and marriage patterns, according to a Yeshiva University study.

A mere 4.5 percent of 3,600 Jewish day school graduates from 26 schools married non-Jews, the study found. And more than half of the spouses of the intermarried day-school graduates converted.

By contrast, the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey — widely contested in Orthodox circles — found a 18 percent intermarriage rate among those educated in Jewish day schools and an overall 52 percent intermarriage rate among American Jews.

The survey, "The Jewishness Quotient of Jewish Day School Graduates," conducted by Y.U. professors Alvin I. Schiff and Mareleyn Schiff, found that intermarriage rates were the most significant difference between Jewish day-school graduates and their peers from other schools.

The survey was administered to 6,673 graduates of 13 elementary and 13 high schools located in 19 large and small Jewish communities in the Northeast, South, Midwest and West. Respondents were aged 20 to 40.

Sixteen of the institutions identified themselves as centrist or modern Orthodox, five as Conservative, three as "trans-ideological" and two as Orthodox yeshivot.

Not only Orthodox Jews benefit from the decreased intermarried rate caused by a Jewish day school education, the study found. Only 6 percent of respondents who were raised Conservative, and 15 percent raised Reform said they intermarried.

The researchers also discovered that Jewish day school graduates:

- Tend to observe the dietary laws in proportion to the number of years they attended Jewish day schools. More than 75 percent of graduates from Jewish high schools, and 95 percent of those who continued Jew-

Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, Milwaukee, WI, December 30, 1994

MJDS teachers well-trained, says principal

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It is important to report the data on the status of Hebrew and Judaica teachers compiled by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education. This information can help the Lead Community Project to improve Jewish education in the future.

I would like to comment on the present. From the two front-page articles in the Dec. 9 Chronicle, a reader might get the mistaken impression that Milwaukee Jewish Day School faculty members are under-qualified, ineffective and underpaid.

I acknowledge the low-pay issue. Our board always is working to improve wages and benefits.

However, I want Chronicle

Letter

readers to know that MJDS teachers are qualified and effective. Of our 17 staff members teaching Hebrew and/or Judaica, seven work at MJDS full-time. All but one have undergraduate degrees and six have graduate degrees. Most have taken post-graduate courses.

Our staff includes a rabbi, a cantor and a physician. Three staff members have been named Teacher of the Year by the Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education. Several have won national teaching awards.

Nine teachers have more than 20 years of teaching experience.

These master teachers train new faculty in the most effective way — by mentoring them regularly.

MJDS alumni have begun to enrich our community. One need only attend an MJDS bar/bat mitzvah to see the highly educated, committed students from our school.

As a community, we must validate and publicly praise our teachers. I support the CIJE effort to improve educational opportunities for our teachers. But first, let's support them monetarily and professionally.

Doris Shneidman, Ph.D.

director

Milwaukee Jewish Day School

Atlanta Jewish Times, Atlanta, GA, December 30, 1994

Letters

High Standards

Editor: 2376

Your Dec. 16 issue, which reported on the recent survey of Atlanta's Judaic studies teachers, has brought to the public a complex and important issue: Recognizing that Jewish education is vital to Jewish continuity, what can our community do to enhance the knowledge and skills of our Jewish teaching force? We commend the Atlanta Jewish Times for addressing this subject.

At the same time we are writing, as educators in the community's day schools, to clarify and emphasize the high level of pre-service preparation found among day school teachers in Atlanta. A review of their personnel files reveals that all have the requisite course work and knowledge to teach the subjects of their curricula. For our schools that have become accredited, all faculty, both Judaic and general studies, meet the highest standards of professional certification.

The community's survey is instructive because it will help schools craft plans for improvement. But your headline was misleading. The survey is about pre- and in-service preparation; teacher self-image, sense of job satisfaction, and commitment to the profession. It is *not* a qualitative analysis of teacher performance; no one got "low grades." In fact, Atlanta's day school teachers convey the skills and attitudes that foster Jewish mastery and literacy.

To give this study a richer context, we must call attention to our teachers' powerful ability to energize and inspire their students. They help guide our children to a love of God, and mitzvot, Torah and Israel. They make it easy to understand why day school attendance is the single most powerful predictor of Jews marrying Jews.

As leaders of schools committed to academic excellence and continuous improvement, we endorse every effort of the community to study and strengthen our Jewish educational system. At the same time, we cannot forget the respect and admiration which all of our teachers deserve.

Rabbi Kalmen Rosenbaum
Torah Day School

Mrs. Mollie Aczel
Davis Academy

Dr. Richard Wagner
Greenfield Hebrew Academy

Mrs. Cheryl Finkel
Epstein School

Rabbi Herbert Cohen
Yeshiva High School

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On The Other Hand

Shop Talk

NEIL RUBIN MANAGING EDITOR



2376
Russia's Boris Yeltsin has his problems, and we have ours. It's relative of course, but take a spin with me through the telephone lines and daily mail of the Atlanta Jewish Times.

In recent weeks, depending on controversy *du jour*, our politics have been slammed as conservative or liberal; our religious perspective secular or Orthodox; our reporting sensationalist or biased.

The crazy thing is that we love it. It's all about letting us know what you think, which helps us forge a better community. Of course, we wish that our heads weren't always on the anvil creating that better Jewish world.

Here's the scoop on a few of the apparent controversies.

• Some Jewish families in an east Cobb subdivision were upset that the residents association asked them to put luminaries, or Christmas lamps, on their driveway. They got furious when an outspoken Jewish neighbor called to tell us about it. "We've handled the situation privately," they argued, "so we don't need any media attention."

Whoa, I explained, Jews struggling to maintain their identity in a non-Jewish world is worthy of these pages. They politely understood, but didn't want to see names and location in print.

They reluctantly bought the argument.

• We've irked some Jewish educators. We went overboard, they say, in reporting on a recent survey about teachers in our schools. It seems that only 13 percent of Atlanta's 400 Jewish day school, preschool and supplementary school teachers are trained in both education and Judaism. The good news is that the teachers are committed to the job and open to more training.

Some educators questioned the headline: "Judaic Teachers Get Low Grades." Maybe we should have written: "Great news! Only 13 percent of our teachers are trained in education and Judaism. But don't worry, on the day school level it shoots up to 32 percent!"

I agree with the educator who said the system is not sick. But teacher training *must* be improved. We write about many good things at our Jewish schools. When we explore the documented problems, it's spin doctor time.

• Some people are upset that we have not printed *their* letter to the editor.

Due to a string of news events, there have been many recent reports on Jewish homosexuals. Some letters praise this, others declare that we pay too much attention to a small group.

Sometimes I send notes to people whose letters we don't use. I thank them for taking the time to write, explaining that their point was made in letters that we printed.

One recipient of such a note called back. "I just don't understand," said the reader. "You should repeat this message as many times as possible." But if we do that, I thought, the Jewish environmentalists will yell at us for killing even more trees.

We want and need your letters. But we can't print them all. If we did, we wouldn't have space for the articles everyone screams at us to write.

• Finally, we practice "reverse discrimination," according to some members of a civic association. They proudly sent us a press release listing their new officers, most of whom were Jews. "Our People section," we said via telephone,

"seeks to recognize members of the Jewish community. Could you tell us who in the group is Jewish?"

The warmth and moisture on our end of the telephone were from the steam coming out of the ears of the group's president. He called me to express his disbelief. Then his wife called. "I'm in shock," she began. "This is simply wrong."

Her husband's last words to me: "Then throw out the press release if you won't put it all in!"

We're the *Jewish Times*, I explained. We seek to promote the good things Jews are doing in the Jewish and secular world. We write about Jewish news when it's happening to Jews and when others are creating it. That doesn't mean that we devalue non-Jews.

At press time, the wife called back. She's still upset, but significantly calmer.

As you can see, our readers' perspectives are varied. As a result, our staff just bought stock in Roloids. All jokes aside, the flared emotions mean that what's on our pages is taken seriously. So we'll keep taking the time to explain who we are and what we do. And if we don't please everyone all the time, maybe we're doing something right. □

It's been a little heated at the Jewish Times in recent weeks.

December 1994

SPECIAL EDITION

THE DENVER GENERAL ASSEMBLY FORUMS

Our Educators: The New Imperative

Results of a new in-depth study of Jewish educators in three target communities were revealed at this Forum, chaired by Morton L. Mandel of Cleveland. The study was undertaken by Adam Gamoran of the University of Wisconsin and Ellen Goldring of Vanderbilt University, under the auspices of The Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE). CIJE was established to implement the conclusions of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.

In introducing the survey's results, Mandel, the chair of CIJE, told Forum attendees, "The average level of Jewish educational process in North America is simply unacceptable. We need to infuse our educational system with a greater number of superstar teachers."

The study was undertaken in three cities — Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee — but according to Gamoran, "The results are strikingly similar for the three cities and are informative for all of us."

The findings showed that only 19 percent of teachers surveyed have received professional training in both education and Jewish studies. Of the remaining 81 percent, 35 percent have been trained in education and 12 percent in Judaica, and 34 percent have been trained in neither.

"The overall picture is of a system in need of serious upgrading, but there is a lot to build on," Gamoran said, referring to the high level of career commitment expressed by the teachers surveyed.

To address the needs of the future, the study included a follow-up action plan which proposed the launching of a joint program in teacher training between Israel and the U.S. "Let us together form a new alliance for the training of educators," exhorted Forum panelist Amnon Rubinstein, Israel's Minister of Education. "I am not announcing the establishment of a new institution. I'm not even offering a plan. We have much to do first. But I am asking you to join us in establishing a process."

Allen Hoffmann, Executive Director of CIJE, concurred. "Building the profession and mobilizing leadership is what the GA is all about. If we really want to engender systemic change, we have to put the issues on the table. That's why we called this session 'The New Imperative.'"

Jewish World Comes Together in Denver

Some 3,000 Participants Bring Variety of Views, Interests to GA

By BONNIE MEADOW
Federation Executive Director

Last month I represented the Jewish Federation of Ulster County at the General Assembly in Denver, Col. The GA, as it is commonly called, is like a convention of Jewish federations, gathering lay and professional leaders from all over North America, along with some representation from Israel and other countries throughout the world.

It is an opportunity for people



YITZHAK RABIN

involved in federations and related Jewish communal work to share, teach, learn, network and connect with one another.

It is so easy to feel isolated, especially in a small community like ours, and to forget that the same problems we face are being grappled with in communities of various sizes throughout the continent. How can we reach out to Jews that do not feel connected to the federation?

How can we continue substantial support of Israel while addressing the needs of our own communities? How can we keep young people involved in Jewish life? How can we communicate the need to raise our campaign contributions in these hard times? How can we rejuvenate, re-vitalize our programs to generate new enthusiasm in our community?



SINGER CHAVA ALBERSTEIN

These and many other questions were shared as well as the solutions that people in other federations have found successful.

Another advantage of being part of a larger whole is the access to speakers of international stature.

During the week, we were addressed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Vice President Al Gore and the minority leader of the Israeli Knesset, Benjamin Netanyahu. It is not only thrilling but profoundly informative to hear these people speak.

We are living in times where major changes take place from week to week. To hear the views of those who are on the cutting edge of policy formation is an honor and a privilege.

One of the principles that has emerged from the many studies of "Jewish continuity," or how to insure the survival of Judaism in the face of assimilation, is the importance of Jewish education. Well, if we say it is important then we should do it ourselves! This we did.

There were Beit Midrash sessions every day, and although most of them conflicted with more "practical" sessions I felt obligated to attend, one was scheduled with nothing opposing it. Three thousand G.A. participants teamed up in small groups to discuss the Torah portion of the week.

How glorious to share our insights and questions, strangers from far places with a commonality that makes our connection so very real and vital. I had the additional pleasure of sharing that session with Edith and Jerry Schapiro of this paper, and will always remember our shared learning.

So valuable did I find it, that I treated myself to another Beit Midrash session at the end of the week.

If anyone thinks they would be interested in attending the G.A. next year, please contact me at the Jewish Federation of Ulster County office, 338-8131. It will take place in Boston during the week that precedes Thanksgiving. I'd love your company!



EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION
The newly formed Council on Initiatives in Jewish Education held a well attended forum. Shown at left, chairman Morton L. Mandel, with Israel's Minister of Education, Amnon Rubinstein, talking with some students.



EVEN THE DAIS WAS PACKED At each plenary, the platform held many different dignitaries, government figures, officers and staff of CJF, committee heads, representatives of other countries and from the host community of Denver. Those above are reacting to the deadpan joking of Vice President Al Gore.

Jews Share Solutions to Common Problems

By EDITH SCHAPIRO, EDITOR

Three Jews, four opinions — right? So what happens when 3,000 Jews come together? They do a lot of listening — to Israeli and American



ALBERT GORE

can politicians, "specialists" like educators, rabbis and communal workers, and to other volunteers like themselves.

And yes, they discuss and debate ideas and issues, sometimes passionately, as they sit in forums and workshops, meet in the halls, around the lunch table or at the more formal dinner events.

The hall was just as choked when Vice President Al Gore addressed the assemblage the next morning. A smaller but still substantial crowd turned out for Benjamin Netanyahu, a Likudnik and the first "opposition" Israeli politician to be invited to address the GA. He received a more "polite" reception.

The Vice President deadpanned as he repeated jokes going the rounds — at his expense. Then, even more straight-faced, he referenced his limp (from a recent injury to his Achilles heel) to "this week's Torah portion" (Va-yishlach, in which Jacob has a similar physical impairment after wrestling with the angel). When the audience recovered from laughter, he topped himself with: "It's good to know so many of you are familiar with the Torah portion." That really hit home.

With the crowd now in his pocket, Al Gore went on to stress the Administration's commitment to Israel and the peace process, even as he side-stepped the issue of Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem, out of "respect for the delicacy of negotiations."

Negotiations were also foremost on the mind of the Prime Minister. Accompanied on the dais by his wife Leah, he had addressed the assemblage the evening before.

He was steadfastly stern as he defended his peace policy even in the face of mounting Palestinian terrorism and rising Israeli fears and despair. Appearing sad-faced but determined, he reiterated his conviction that the actions he had taken would be vindicated in time.

Netanyahu, more attuned to playing to an American crowd, exuded both confidence and adeptness. He differs sharply with the Prime Minister on the issue of American troops helping to keep whatever peace might be hammered out with Syria, but denied taking any action here to press his view. "I

intend to lobby in the Knesset, not in Congress," he said.

He then segued into this subtle statement: "I do not intend to replace the Israeli government in Washington, and I expect the same to be reciprocated in the not-too-distant future by the next opposition." He insisted, however, that he would "keep international commitments" already made as long as others kept their side of the bargain.

Both Rabin and Netanyahu eventually swung the spotlight on



BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

American Jews and the issue that permeated the entire convention, the hemorrhaging in our ranks in terms of Jewish identity. Both offered to be helpful, seeing a solution in stronger Israel-Diaspora ties, tilted toward the Jewish State as a destination for visits and study.

The GA also offered a taste of Israeli culture, with a performance by the popular singer Chava Alberstein and an enjoyable, thought-provoking lecture by the famous author, Amos Oz. Close-ups with celebrities, however, were just a piece of the action at the GA.

A shared Shabbat was also an exciting experience, with its separate services by Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Reform Jews. Yet we came together at various Friday evening dinners and at the Kiddush on Saturday hosted by the Colorado Jewish federation.

Because each person can tailor the experience to his or her interests, the GA eludes definitive description. Come see for yourself — next year in Boston.

DECEMBER 1994

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PJA expansion to middle school near certain

BY DEBORAH SELDNER

The Jewish Review

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The sounds of bouncing basketballs will give way to the pounding of hammers and the whir of drills in February when construction begins on a two-story addition that will enable Portland Jewish Academy to expand to a middle school and the Mittleman Jewish Community Center to enhance its children's programs.

There is one "if" that remains to be answered.

Portland's Jewish community needs to meet a challenge issued by the Zidell family who pledged \$250,000 for the second-story addition for PJA. Another \$200,000 has been pledged (\$100,000 from PJA board members), which leaves just \$250,000 more needed by the February groundbreaking. Funding is already set for MJCC's one-story Marian Abrams Children's Wing.

"The key is the uniqueness of this opportunity to join with the center on another project and the efficiencies it creates for the community to have a single campus," according to Steve Rosenberg, PJA board member and former president of MJCC and the Jewish Federation of Portland, as well as organizer of the PJA drive. "I'm optimistic the community will come through."

The rapid growth PJA experienced this year (from 114 in 1993-94 to 160 in 1994-95) is predicted to continue next year with 190 students expected in the fall based on the waiting list and new inquiries.

Glasgow, former MJCC president.

That addition, at the end of a wing already shared by PJA and the MJCC, has created an economically feasible opportunity for PJA to meet its rapidly growing space needs by building a second floor on the addition. Most of those involved from both MJCC and PJA are so optimistic that the community will meet the funding challenge, that the two-story addition is being spoken of as a fait-accompli.

"The fact that this project will be done jointly will provide fabulous community benefits here on the campus," said Fred Rothstein, MJCC executive director.

PJA president Sara Harwin concurs: "It's an opportunity to work in conjunction with the center on something that expands the potential of the community."

"PJA is crowded because Jewish education is a happening thing in Portland, and it's happening because people are excited about its quality — on a secular level as well as the support it provides to incorporating Judaism into our children's lives," said Harwin.

PJA executive director Ruth Gavish has made no secret of her desire to see the school expand to a middle school. She frequently quotes studies that indicate Jewish continuity is greatly enhanced by Jewish education, particularly when it extends beyond elementary.

"PJA's growth is exciting and heartening, especially at a time when communities all over the world are concerned about Jewish continu-



DEBORAH SELDNER/The Jewish Review

PORTLAND JEWISH ACADEMY will lose its basketball court (paved area at right) and the track (left) will be shortened a bit, but in return the Jewish day school will gain four classrooms, two tutor rooms and storage space if additional funds are pledged by the February groundbreaking for the MJCC Marian Abrams Children's Wing.

riage, home and school interaction, Jewish communal involvement, kashrut and Sabbath observance, Israel and Jewish summer camp experiences, with the most significant effect showing up in intermarriage rates. The 4.5 percent rate of intermarriage among Jewish day school graduates is dramatically lower than the overall rate of 52 percent revealed in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey.

The recent survey also found

that day school graduates have a very positive connection to Israel with 89 percent having visited Israel compared to the only 15 percent of American Jews overall who visit the Jewish homeland.

The study also found adults with Jewish education are involved in Jewish organizational life. More than 60 percent of day school graduates are either very active or active in Jewish communal life and another 28 percent are affiliated with a

Jewish organization. That rate of involvement increases with the level of Jewish education — post high school, 72 percent; high school, 54 percent; and elementary day school graduates 40 percent.

"It is eminently clear that greater exposure to Jewish day school education yields more pronounced Jewish behavior and attitudes," said Schiff. "It motivates graduates to be positively inclined toward Jewish values and observance while reducing negative attitudes about Jewish behavior, identity and life they may have acquired in the larger environment."

By supporting the community-wide Jewish day school expansion, Portland is meeting the nationwide call to educate Jewish youth.

Last month's General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, which focused on the issues of American Jewish identity and Jewish continuity, opened with a call for increased education funding.

"Clearly, Jewish education must receive a massive transfusion of money if the tide of opting out of Judaism is to be slowed," said Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, in the opening address at the General Assembly.

To pledge funds for the PJA addition, call PJA at 244-0126.

Quality in Education Imperative: Greater Support for Jewish Teachers

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E Although there are always exceptions "that prove the point," there is no getting away from the fact that, on the whole, the past few generations of American Jews have done a poor job of educating their children to be Jews.

How else to explain why so many Jews have lost contact with Judaism even as they retain vestiges of ethnicity. Or the repeated refrain: "it was boring, boring" as the description of "Hebrew School" classes attended.

We see no point in assessing blame, for when there is a pervasive failure, the causes are sure to be many. The drive to become "Americanized" among immigrants and first-generation nationals, followed by the easing of restrictions and social acceptance for their children as they went to college and rose in the ranks of business and the professions certainly set the stage for secularism.

Throughout the country, there has been a falling off of religiosity, although statistics point to a steeper drop among Jews than other groups.

For many who walked away, there was little knowledge of what they were walking away from. For many others, it was a case of disgust with the "hypocrisy" of having the religious school teachings ignored in the lifestyle of their homes. So Jewish "continuity" got snagged, one household at a time, adding up by now to a crisis of survival.

Many see the lifeline in "tradition," -- the tradition of education: "And you shall teach them to your children and to your children's children." (Deut. 4:9) But who is doing the teaching, to a generation of parents as well as today's youngsters? It appears to us obvious that the teaching must be of a greater excellence than in the past.

We recall from several years ago a talk by the late Eli Grad, dean of Hebrew Teachers College in Boston, in which he outlined a "renaissance" of Jewish education that would begin with greater recognition of the teachers themselves.

He bemoaned the lack of respect for the profession, shown in the generally poor remuneration they received and the meager training that was deemed acceptable for the position.

Fast forward to November, 1994. We're greeted at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, an annual gathering teeming with communal professionals and volunteer community leaders (see page 9), with a sense of urgency surrounding a highly touted forum on "Our Educators: The New Imperative." Well, not so new, just more imperative.

The forum was sponsored by the two-year-old Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE), which was presenting "dramatic findings" of a study assessing "teachers' preparation and professional development in day schools, supplementary schools and pre-schools."

The research, which focused on Jewish educators in Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee, showed that "overall only 31% of the teachers have a degree in Jewish studies or certification in Jewish education" and that "present levels of in-service training do not compensate for background deficiencies."

CIJE is developing plans of action which Jewish communities nationwide can "tailor to meet the specific needs of its own educators" and, presumably its own institutions. We urge our communal leaders to plug into these continental resources.

This is "A Time to Act," headlined a report in November 1990 from the Commission on Jewish Education in North America. It concluded that the "responsibility for developing Jewish identity and instilling a commitment to Judaism...now rests primarily with education." It continues to be a clarion call that we are just beginning to answer. Let our response include growing support for our Jewish educators, in schools and in our homes. ¹