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Goals Project. Atlanta, Ga., December 1994.

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FROM: "Dan Pekarsky", INTERNET:pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu  
TO: Alan, 73321,1220  
DATE: 12/27/94 10:37 AM

*2 pages* ① Program and  
Content file  
② Atlanta file

Re: Atlanta

Sender: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu  
Received: from VMS.HUJI.AC.IL by arl-img-2.compuserve.com (8.6.9/5.940406sam)  
id KAA26533; Tue, 27 Dec 1994 10:31:48 -0500  
Received: by HUJIVMS (HUyMail-V7a); Tue, 27 Dec 94 17:31:45 +0200  
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Tue, 27 Dec 94 17:30:15 +0200  
Received: from mail.soemadison.wisc.edu by wigate.nic.wisc.edu;  
Tue, 27 Dec 94 09:29 CDT  
Message-Id: <2F0032C0.CF87.0003.000@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>  
Date: Tue, 27 Dec 1994 09:17:00 -600  
From: "Dan Pekarsky" <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>  
Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu  
Subject: Atlanta  
To: 73321.1221@CompuServe.Com  
CC: ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il  
X-Gateway: iGate, (WP Office) vers 4.04b - 1032  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
Content-Type: multipart/mixed; BOUNDARY=BoUnD\_8KcZuX86QvYVtGo2f0024e7

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Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

Dear Barry,

In preparation for your phone call (though it might not reach you til later), attached are a few notes that I drafted concerning the matters under discussion. They are, to say the least, under-developed but may be helpful. I look forward to talking with you.

Dan

--BoUnD\_8KcZuX86QvYVtGo2f0024e7  
Content-Type: APPLICATION/OCTET-STREAM; name="HLTZDC"  
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

PREPARING FOR HOLTZ CONVERSATION RE: COLMAN AND ATLANTA

#### 1. RE: COLMAN

In principle, I have no problem drafting a short piece. It would emphasize the following developments since the summer: 1. the development of a plan of action; 2. Consultation process (e.g., Gerstein); 3. beginning to work in Milwaukee and Atlanta.

Note, though, that the Committee expressed some concern relating to Community-vision -- a theme that we've essentially put

on the back-burner. How do you want to address this?

## 2. RE: ATLANTA

A. Overly ambitious agenda. Considering the range of players coming to this program, the agenda seems way too ambitious if they really think they're going to come away "defining" their goals concerning the varied matters mentioned in that letter. Or--is this the culmination of a process that's been going on for a while? We need to know what stage they're at, to plan intelligently. We also have to discourage them from thinking that creating goals is a one-shot event.

B. A saner agenda. A saner agenda would emphasize developing an understanding of what's involved in establishing a meaningful goals-agenda; getting the beginnings of clarity; and generating a process that will facilitate further progress -- both before and after the school opens. The program could include some of the following:

1. An exercise like the one done in Milwaukee which focuses on three matters: a. the vagueness of typical goals-statements and hence their relative emptiness; b. the way in which anchoring a goal in a vision clarifies it; c. what's involved in meaningfully (as distinct from symbolically) trying to implement it.
2. An exercise designed to give them a chance to think about goals along the lines of Sizer -- what would meaningful exhibitions look like. What would you like to see your graduates able to do in different arenas? Conceivably they could be broken down into small groups for this exercise and then report back to the whole with their suggestions, opening the matter up for discussion. These groups would then evolve into Task Forces that would function beyond the day's activities.
3. An activity or a presentation that talks about the need to create an institution that encourages ongoing reflection concerning the institution's goals, the way they are and are not embodied in the life of the school, evaluation, etc.
4. An exercise like the one done on the first day of the Jerusalem seminar that focuses on the typical goals-weaknesses found in educating institutions. (This exercise overlaps #1)



532-2646

## ATLANTA JEWISH FEDERATION

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TO: Alan Hoffmann, Executive Director

FROM: Steven Chervin, Michael Rosenzweig, Steve Berman,  
and Felicia Weber

DATE: December 12, 1994

We are very pleased that CIJE will be able to help the Atlanta Jewish community in planning for a new day high school. Specifically, we are looking forward to an all-day Goals Seminar on Sunday, February 12, in Atlanta. We plan to invite approximately 50 community representatives, including parents of potential students, as well as potential donors and several key rabbis and educators. Through word of mouth we have already generated a considerable amount of interest in the retreat. We expect to send out formal invitations during the week of December 12, giving us almost two months' lead time.

In preparation for a retreat on goals, we thought it would be helpful for us to articulate some of our goals and expectations for the retreat itself. Achieving these objectives will help us in our overall planning and implementation process, and in our efforts to articulate a set of common purposes. These are critical issues that we feel must be resolved in some fashion in order for us to move to the next stages of our process: developing a board structure, marketing the school, hiring a director, fund-raising, faculty hiring, site selection, etc.

We ask that you review this proposal and call us as soon as possible. We would like to schedule a conference call during which we can discuss the actual content of the retreat.

Our primary goal for the retreat is as follows:

To clarify and define the school's religious ideology

This issue has important policy implications, including answers to the following questions:

What should the school's overall goals be in terms of graduates' Judaic knowledge, skills, and



-2-

values? What elements of commitment and observance should students be expected to demonstrate? What capacities and traits of character and menschlichkeit should students be expected to exhibit? What will the philosophy of the curriculum be with respect to the different ideological/denominational approaches in Judaism? For example, will students learn both modern as well as traditional approaches to the Torah? Will all the different Jewish denominations be presented as legitimate and valid, or will some or one be given preference? What will be the school's approach to prayer? What type of prayer book will be used? Will the school be egalitarian with respect to gender, or will religious expectations differ for boys and girls? What will be the school's approach toward Israel? What role will community service and study in Israel play?

Though we welcome the participation of all members of the CIJE staff in the retreat, we want to emphasize again that we feel strongly that the success of the program will depend on your (Alan) taking a central role in the event. We hope to speak directly with you at your earliest convenience.

Because of the ground-breaking aspects of Atlanta's high school initiative, and the implications for other communities interested in establishing non-Orthodox day high schools, we hope that CIJE will be able to commit whatever resources it has to support our efforts. We believe that the success of this endeavor is central to the Atlanta Jewish community's status as a Lead Community. Indeed we view the establishment of non-Orthodox day high schools as one of the major missing links on the national continuity agenda; a successful and well-documented high school process in Atlanta will provide a promising model for other communities.

— How will this be different from Atlanta Yeshiva  
—

12/27/24

Michael Rosenzweig, Steve Gervin.

About 50 people:

- Parents of prospective ~~students~~ students 35-40
- Father } 5-10
- Educators } handful
- Key donors }

Sunday

9-16<sup>00</sup>

primary goals for retention

Two concerns about mechanics —

Size: (a) Stay point that group said not be unwieldy  
Should include many constituents  
Do very little in group of that size.  
Bulk of program not include whole group.

(b) Ego to avoid amorphous open-ended discussion.  
Should not end up with a ~~flat~~ product.  
Need to manage the conversation.

MEMO TO: Alan Hoffmann  
FROM: Daniel Pekarsky  
RE: Additional comments re: Atlanta

A couple of addenda, one very narrow, the other more general.

First, the narrow one. In the section of the proposal in which there is reference to categories around which sub-groups could be focused, the one entitled "Prayer" might more fruitfully be formulated as "Religious outlook and Practice".

Second, I am a bit nervous about getting prematurely locked into a conceptualization of the day based on the short conversation we had, and I hope that the discussion with Chervin doesn't do this. I say this in part because as I think through the exciting challenge of this day, other possibly fruitful ways of thinking about the day come to mind. As an example, perhaps when they are broken into sub-groups to work towards a statement of the group's "framing statement", they should be given a task that is more holistic and less specialized -- i.e., less focused on a particular area. Conceivably, the different sub-groups could be given the same task, and then their different findings could be compared. A second issue with respect to the day that needs to be given more thought to is whether we are trying to do too much in a single day and whether we need to be making some choices re: emphases.

In any event, Steve's and our own continuing reactions to this proposal should help us think through these matters. If I have additional thoughts, I'll send them along. Good luck with your meetings.

D.

PLEASE NOTE: this is a somewhat revised version of the fax-material sent to CIJE last night. I recommend that you use this draft rather than the first one. DP

MEMO TO: Alan Hoffmann  
FROM: Dan Pekarsky  
RE: First Draft of the Atlanta Seminar

I hope this proves helpful in your meetings today. Conceptually it feels okay to me, but I am a bit concerned about whether there's enough time to do justice to the parts. Conceivably, they should be starting on the afternoon's activities earlier than I have them scheduled; this would allow for a more relaxed and thoughtful opportunities to react to what each sub-group does and to try to arrive at a shared statement. On the other hand, this might mean doing away with, or truncating the Dewey/Greengberg session.

I am a little concerned about the fact that the day has two very distinct purposes, both of them quite delicate - one of them being forming a community of purpose and the other being to forge a share platform of sorts. The concern is not just that each of them considered singly is very ambitious; it is also that the attempt to develop consensus around certain issues might result in the discovery of significant disagreements about certain matters. It would be important to note - and even welcome - such an outcome at the beginning of the day, making it clear that the discovery of such disagreements will be an occasion for rich discussion of a kind that should animate the life of this institution. Arriving at closure on all significant matters cannot be made the sine qua non of a successful day!

In any case, I hope this proves helpful.

I'll look forward to speaking with you later today.

Dan



## THE ATLANTA SEMINAR

What follows is a sketch of the Feb. 12 program, based on internal CIJE deliberations growing out of conversations with Atlanta. The sketch should be understood as a draft, subject to revision in light of further reflection and feedback.

## BACKGROUND

As part of its effort to launch a Community Jewish High School, Atlanta believes it important to engage in serious reflection concerning the philosophy that will inform the new institution. The need is not at this stage to arrive at a comprehensive set of goals but to define a framework, or statement of purpose, that is clear enough to offer a measure of guidance in assessing candidates for the directorship of the new institution but also flexible enough to allow the new director in collaboration with relevant constituencies to shape the direction of the new institution.

With this in mind, a February 12 seminar has been organized designed to last from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. About 50 individuals are expected to attend, including a) some 35 to 40 individuals from among prospective parents (many of whose children now attend 3 local "feeder-institutions", b) 5 to 10 rabbis and educators, and c) one or more academics (Blumenthal). Since this is the first time these varied constituencies have been brought together in relation to this project, the seminar should be designed to foster a rudimentary sense of community as well as to make progress on the agenda defined in the first paragraph. CIJE has been asked by representatives of this project to help shape and guide the seminar with attention to these concerns.

## PURPOSES OF THE SEMINAR

The seminar should be designed to accomplish the following set of purposes:

1. to enhance the awareness of participants concerning the critical role that goals can and should play in guiding an institution's efforts at education, and what criteria goals must satisfy in order to fill this role adequately.
2. to help the participants arrive at a shared, general statement concerning the Jewish orientation and aspirations of the projected institution. It will be understood that this statement represents a first iteration, to be revisited and elaborated in further deliberations under the guidance of the school's first educational director. The statement should be concrete enough to offer some guidance in efforts to recruit the right individual to this position.

3. to use this occasion for shared learning and deliberation as an opportunity to foster a shared sense of purpose and excitement focused on the enterprise of launching the new school.

4. to convey to those present that while there are certain defining moments in the development of an institution's educational philosophy, thoughtful attention to goals and their relationship to practice must not be thought of as a one-shot affair. Ways must be found to institutionalize thoughtfulness concerning such matters in the ongoing life of an educational community. Indeed, this seminar could usefully be viewed as an effort to cultivate a culture that welcomes and encourages this kind of thoughtful reflection and dialogue among stake holders.

At a very concrete level, it is expected that participants will emerge from the day with a strong first draft of a statement of purpose and conceivably also with one or more committees charged with working over and refining some of its elements in the months to come.

#### STRUCTURE OF THE DAY

##### 9-10:30 INTRODUCTORY SESSION

The day will be introduced by the leadership of the new school and of CIJE. They will jointly sketch out the background, aims, and general structure of the seminar. (Whether opportunities for the participants to introduce themselves need to be provided at this stage is something we should discuss.)

With the help of a structured exercise that may include small group work, CIJE staff will focus the attention of participants on three critical points pertaining to goals: a) what it means for goals to be seriously represented and embodied in the life of an institution; b) the amenability of typical goals-statements to multiple interpretations and the consequent need to settle on an interpretation which "feels right" and is also concrete enough to offer guidance; c) the importance of anchoring goals in some conception or vision of the kind of person and community one is hoping to nurture, and the role such a vision plays in justifying, integrating, and interpreting the institution's educational goals.

10:30-10:45 COFFEE BREAK

10:45-12 THE POWER OF GUIDING VISIONS: TWO EXAMPLES

In this session we will consider two examples of the



ways in which having a guiding vision of what one hopes to cultivate can guide the educational process. a) The ways in which John Dewey's ideas were expressed in the life of the Dewey School will be discussed; b) Moshe Greenberg's vision of an educated Jew will be summarized, with attention to its educational implications for one who took this vision seriously.

12:00-12:45 LUNCH

This might be an opportunity for individuals representing different constituencies to meet informally.

12:45-1:15 ORIENTATION TO THE AFTERNOON'S WORK

In this session, a seminar leader will remind the group that its task is to emerge with a statement that expresses a first iteration of its general framework as applied to its Jewish mission. Prior to the seminar, a number of critical areas will have been identified; divisions like Hebrew, Prayer, Israel, Jewish Texts represent one way to identify these critical areas, but another categorization, one that is less fragmenting, might prove more helpful; careful thought needs to be given to this. In any event, the challenge ahead is to articulate a general statement in each of these domains that will reflect in a general sort of way the community's shared aspirations. Even and perhaps especially at this stage it may be important to encourage participants to think of its goals/aspirations in these areas in relation to the kinds of achievements, activities they hope graduates of the school will be able and disposed to participate in upon completion of their studies.

1:15-2:30 SMALL SUB-GROUPS MEET

To address this challenge, participants will be broken down into 3 or 4 groups, each of which will be charged with addressing one of these central themes and arriving at the following: a) a statement of the issues that need to be wrestled with; b) as background to an effort at self-definition, an articulation of a broad range of positions that might be taken with respect to the way this theme should (and should not) enter into the school's understanding of its mission; c) a general goals-statement that the sub-group believes will aptly reflect the spirit or outlook of the community developing the new school; conceivably, the sub-group could be asked to tentatively identify one or more kinds of performance or exhibition (a la Sizer) in which education in this area might reasonably culminate.

## 2:30-3 COFFEE BREAK

During the coffee-break, the findings of each group are typed up and xeroxed.

## 3-3:40 REVIEWING FINDINGS OF THE SUB-GROUPS

At the end of the break, the small groups reconvene to review the findings of the other groups and to develop some feedback. They should pay special attention to the question of whether they feel comfortable with each sub-group's general statement of purpose - and, if not, how they feel it could be revised so that they would feel more comfortable with it.

## 3:40-4 CONCLUDING THE DAY

This will be a chance to summarize where the group has gone in the course of the day. If a kind of shared sense of purpose has emerged, this would be the occasion to read a draft of a general statement of philosophical purpose that integrates what has emerged from the small sub-groups and the feedback sessions. (After the session is over, a more careful statement can be drafted and circulated to participants in order to elicit further reactions.)

If the seminar suggests areas of significant disagreement, or identifies areas of importance that have not been adequately discussed, this would be the occasion to highlight these matters and to invite thoughtful participation in the effort to work through them in the months ahead. It should be stressed that surfacing such concerns at this juncture should be regarded not as a setback but as an achievement.

Time permitting, a short questionnaire should be filled out prior to leaving, inviting feedback concerning the day and issues in need of attention.



Sender: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu

Received: from VMS.HUJI.AC.IL by dub-img-2.compuserve.com (8.6.10/5.950515)

id MAA19047; Fri, 26 May 1995 12:35:39 -0400

Received: by HUJIVMS (HUyMail-V7b); Fri, 26 May 95 19:35:40 +0200

Received: by HUJIVMS via SMTP(128.104.30.18) (HUyMail-V7b);

Fri, 26 May 95 19:30:16 +0200

Received: from mail.soemadison.wisc.edu by wigate.nic.wisc.edu;

Fri, 26 May 95 11:30 CDT

Message-Id: <2FC601F4.CF87.13AA.000@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>

Date: Fri, 26 May 1995 11:23:00 -600

From: "Dan Pekarsky" <pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu>

Reply-To: pekarsky@mail.soemadison.wisc.edu

Subject: Atlanta

To: 73321.1217@CompuServe.Com

CC: 73321.1221@CompuServe.Com, ALANHOF@vms.huji.ac.il

X-Gateway: iGate, (WP Office) vers 4.04b - 1032

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; Charset=US-ASCII

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

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9  
Goals HP  
Atlanta HP

I think I neglected to pass on to you that I had a good conversation with Steve Chervin last week about our possible involvement in Atlanta with Goals-related work. Steve seemed to be looking for a way to integrate it into some ongoing activities they've launched, and he sounded quite interested. In your conversations with him, I am hopeful that you'll follow-up on this, so that we can begin moving towards something concrete. Let me know what happens.

More generally, we have yet to think through together what the appropriate constellation of Goals Seminars should be next year (regional, national, and/or local). What are your thoughts about when to have this conversation? I hope soon!

Have a good long weekend. Shabbat Shalom.

DP