



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

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

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

Subseries 6: General Files, 1990–2000.

---

Box  
50

Folder  
12

"Key Terms and Concepts of CIJE." Internal document, July 1993.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
American Jewish Archives website.

---

## MEMORANDUM

July 18, 1993

To: Annette, Seymour, and Shmuel  
From: Adam  
CC: Ellen, Roberta, Julie  
Re: Ambiguities in CIJE terms and concepts

Attached are two documents:

- (1) A **glossary** of key terms and concepts for CIJE, which you may wish to circulate.
- (2) A discussion of **ambiguities** related to these terms and concepts. This is intended as feedback to CIJE.

Here's a brief explanation of the documents:

### Glossary

At the May meetings in Cleveland it emerged that many of the key terms and concepts of CIJE were not fully clear to all participants. Consequently we decided to prepare a glossary of terms and concepts. The primary purpose of the glossary is to ensure that our own understandings are correct. However, we think the glossary might have more general usefulness. For example, you may wish to circulate it among CIJE staff, Lead Community staff, and/or lay people. I'm writing to ask the following:

- o Are our definitions accurate and reasonably complete?
- o If you wish to distribute the glossary more widely, are there other terms you'd like us to add?

### Ambiguities

Preparing the glossary provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the issues and concepts represented by these terms. We reviewed many long-standing ambiguities and raised new issues as well. Hence, another reason I'm writing is to advise you of the ambiguities we discussed. Some of these may be easily settled by you; if so, we'd appreciate your quick response. Others cannot be addressed simply, but we hope that by raising the questions we can help you prepare for future deliberations within CIJE and with the lead communities and others. Thus, the discussion of ambiguities is intended to be feedback to CIJE.

CIJE -- A GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS  
July 1993

Abbreviations used in the Glossary

- ATA: A Time to Act, The Report of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990.
- BPSS: Best Practices Project: The Supplementary School, edited by Barry Holtz, CIJE, 1993.
- CSR: "The Challenges of Systemic Reform: Lessons from the New Futures Initiative for the CIJE," by Adam Gamoran, CIJE 1992.
- GJE: "Goals for Jewish Education in Lead Communities," by Seymour Fox and Daniel Marom, CIJE 1993.
- LCAW: "Lead Communities at Work," by Annette Hochstein, CIJE 1993.
- LCC: "Lead Community Consultation", minutes of the CIJE/Lead Community meetings held in Cleveland, OH, May 12-13, 1993.
- PlaG: Planning Guide, CIJE, February 1993.
- ProG: Program Guidelines, CIJE, January 1992.

Glossary of Terms

Best Practices -- A CIJE project to develop an inventory of effective educational practices which will serve as a guide to Jewish educational success. As a resource, Best Practices can be adapted for use in particular Lead Communities.

Further reading: ATA 67, 69; PlaG 31-32; BPSS 1.

Content/Scope/Quality -- See *Lead Community Project*.

Goals Project -- A collaborative effort to stimulate a high level of discussion on the goals of Jewish education in Lead Communities. Participants include: Lead Communities, CIJE, Mandel Institute, Melton Centre at Hebrew University, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Yeshiva University, and the Jewish Theological Seminary. Papers on "The Educated Jew" serve as a resource for this discussion.

Further reading: GJE 1 - 2.



Lead Community -- A geographic community serving as a local laboratory for the development of exemplary models of Jewish education. A Lead Community sets high educational standards, raises additional funds for education, and establishes a *wall-to-wall* coalition to guide its educational reform efforts. On August 26, 1992, Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee were selected as the first three Lead Communities in North America. (See also *Lead Community Project*.)

Further reading: ATA 67 - 69; ProG 2.

Lead Community Project -- This term has been used in two ways: "THE Lead Community Project" refers to the entire CIJE/LC enterprise, a joint continental-local collaboration for excellence in Jewish education. "A Lead Community Project" refers to new programs and initiatives in Lead Communities. These programs and initiatives are characterized by: 1) wide scope, 2) high quality, 3) important content, and 4) an evaluation component.

Further reading: ProG 1; LCC 4, 9-10.

Mobilization -- Mobilization refers to organizing people and institutions for action directed towards the enhancement of Jewish education, and the financial support necessary for such action to be taken. Within Lead Communities, mobilization means involving people from differing movements and roles, and to both lay and professional leaders; a mobilized community has a "*wall-to-wall coalition*." Mobilization is one of the two essential building blocks for the improvement of Jewish education.

Further reading: ATA 50, 63-66.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback -- A component of *The Lead Communities Project* that documents its efforts and gauges its success. "Monitoring" refers to observing and documenting the planning and implementation of changes. "Evaluation" entails interpreting information in a way that will strengthen and assist each community's efforts to improve Jewish education. "Feedback" consists of offering oral and written responses to community members and to the CIJE.

Further reading: LCAW 5-7.

Partnership -- The collaborative relationship between CIJE and the lead communities, in which both partners share ideas, plans, and policies for their mutual benefit. Partnership also characterizes relationships within a Lead Community.

Further reading: LCC 2 - 3.

Personnel -- All those who work in the field of Jewish education including formal and informal education and professional and volunteer staff. Attention to personnel is one of the two building blocks necessary for the improvement of Jewish education. Personnel issues must be addressed in all *lead community projects*.

Further reading: ATA 49-50, 55-63.

Systemic Reform -- A plan for change that recognizes that one cannot improve Jewish education by reforming one element at a time. Instead, the entire enterprise must be changed in a coherent and coordinated fashion. Systemic reform requires a unifying *vision* and *goals* and a broad-based (*wall-to-wall*) *coalition* of change agents.

Further reading: CSR; also Marshall S. Smith and Jennifer O'Day, "Systemic School Reform," Politics of Education Association Yearbook 1990, 233-267.

Vision -- A desired state or process in Jewish education toward which the community as a whole or segments of the community are working; an ideal characterization of Jewish education in terms of structure, content and process.

Further reading: PlaG 26; LCC 9; LCAW 2.

Wall-to-Wall Coalition -- The *partnership* within a Lead Community among participants across denominations and levels of agencies and institutions. It includes lay people as well as professionals. (See also *Mobilization*.)

Further reading: LCAW 4; ATA 63-66.



Ambiguities and Uncertainties  
July 1993

Best Practices -- There is still a great deal of confusion in the communities on how Best Practices relate to the building blocks of personnel and mobilization. How is Best Practices supposed to be translated into action? How does it reach the educators? What sequence of events is planned?

The concerns we raised in our Summary Report of February 1993 are still relevant:

"With Best Practices under way, the central challenge lies in strengthening what is currently a vague articulation between CIJE and the communities in the content area. How, exactly, will the Lead Communities and the Best Practices project interact?...Will the communities initiate the relationship by requesting assistance in particular areas? Or will Best Practices provide them with a "menu" from which to choose? Is Best Practices to serve as a source of information, inspiration, or both?

"The link between Best Practices and the communities may become stronger and more clear after community educators have been drawn into the Lead Communities process. Presumably, contacts between Best Practices and the communities will occur with educators, not mediated by communal workers. When educators are drawn into the coalitions, they are likely to develop content-related ideas for change that fit their contexts, and to call on Best Practices to help them implement their ideas. Hence, the need for better articulation may be best addressed by mobilizing the educators" (Summary Report, Feb. 1993).

The role of Best Practices in systemic reform is also unclear. As we commented in February:

"Another concern is utilizing Best Practices in the context of systemic reform. A principal feature of the Lead Communities project is that instead of addressing isolated institutions or programs, it aims to reform the entire system of Jewish education in the communities. This feature is seen as a strength by many respondents across the three communities. Yet the Best Practices project, which focuses on particular institutions one at a time, appears to conflict with the systemic approach. How will CIJE encourage systemic use of Best Practices? Broader mobilization of the community is required to ensure that Best Practices are drawn upon in a coordinated rather than a fragmented way" (Summary Report, Feb. 1993).

This issue is a source of great confusion and uncertainty in the communities, particularly in Milwaukee and Atlanta. At the meetings in May, we came to understand that Best Practices will be a resource upon which the communities can draw as they translate their visions into site-based action. How this process will work is still not clear in the communities.

Goals Project -- This is not yet a coordinated and integrated effort, and the lead communities have not yet been involved. What will push the goals project off the drawing board? What will be the forum for discussions? Also, some community members in Baltimore and Milwaukee are wondering when they will receive the Educated Jew papers.

Lead Community -- We have observed over time, and it was clear in May, that CIJE staff use the term differently than residents of the three communities. From the community perspective, Atlanta, Baltimore, and Milwaukee are lead communities; members of the communities see their cities as models already. From the perspective of CIJE staff, they are in the process of becoming lead communities. CIJE staff know these cities were selected for their potential for radical reform in Jewish education, and the quality of current policies and programs was not the key consideration.

Thus, for example, what CIJE staff term "business as usual" in Baltimore is seen as "the lead community process" by members of that community. I may be oversimplifying a bit, but I think it's not inaccurate to say that Baltimore federation leaders see their plan, which has been progressing since 1989, as one of systemic reform, and one which is consistent with CIJE's approach. CIJE has not effectively communicated to them, or has not succeeded in convincing them, which elements are missing, and which if any elements are misdirected. The two partners have at least agreed to disagree on the pace of change: CIJE believes it is too slow, and Baltimore leaders believe it is the correct pace for effective change.

A perception held in Baltimore is that the strategic planning and visioning that is being initiated in Milwaukee, under CIJE's guidance, has already occurred in Baltimore. While this was not brought about by CIJE per se, it was very much influenced by the Mandel Commission and by A Time to Act, as one can see by the language of Baltimore's strategic planning documents.

Another ambiguity concerns the term "bottom-up" used in ATA (p.68). We found this term confusing (and omitted it from our glossary definition) in two respects. First, the logic of "bottom-up" vs. "top-down" implies a hierarchy, but more recently CIJE has described its relationship with lead communities as a "partnership." Second, "bottom-up" implies reforms generated from within the community, but thus far CIJE has specified not only the two "building blocks," but numerous structural elements such as the federation as the "central address" for the project, a new role of lead community project director, monitoring designed by CIJE, and other specific roles for consultants and CIJE staff. Best Practices also seems to come across as a "top-down" reform, although it is not intended that way.

Thus far, discussions between CIJE and the communities have mainly focused on structure. Perhaps as content becomes more central, the reform process -- and the relation between CIJE and the communities -- will be more one of partnership.



Lead Community Project -- Within the communities, there is still much uncertainty about (a) what constitutes a "lead community project" and (b) how the criteria of content, scope, and quality are to be applied. Do all lead community projects initiate with the central planning (visioning) process within the community, or can they begin from the grass-roots as long as the criteria are satisfied? (For example, a rabbi in Milwaukee wants to name his entire supplementary school a Lead Community Project.) If the latter, who is to decide when the criteria are to be satisfied? If the former, how can the good ideas of those not directly involved be included?

Planners in Baltimore and Milwaukee have expressed concerns about the "ownership" of Lead Community Projects as they think about mobilizing large donors. How will they provide a satisfactory level of recognition to donors who fund Lead Community Projects? What degree of control can be granted to donors, and what level of accountability should be worked out? I wouldn't call this a problem at present, but it is on the minds of community planners. A current example is the Machon L'Morim, a Meyerhoff-funded program for selected teachers from three day schools in Baltimore, one each from the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements. It appears likely to meet CIJE criteria, but must be clearly identified as a Meyerhoff program.

Finally, if there is room for grass-roots projects (i.e., those initiated outside the central planning process) to become Lead Community projects, how can they be incorporated into systemic reform?

Mobilization -- We are avoiding the term "enabling option" which, although it does not appear in ATA, has often been used by CIJE staff, and is the source of much confusion. "Enabling option" sounds as if one has a choice about it, but that is not so in CIJE's model. It is important that CIJE staff stop using the term "enabling option."

During the staff meeting in May, the involvement of major donors emerged as especially important during the discussion of the Milwaukee report. To our knowledge, this issue has been raised with Milwaukee participants to the extent of encouraging them to get Esther Leah Ritz involved with the Milwaukee Commission and/or Steering Committee. If the concern is a broader one, it still needs to be addressed.

From the community perspective, a difficulty in involving major donors now is the current uncertainty as to the specifics of Lead Community projects. Ordinarily, we are told, professionals in all three communities solicit major gifts for designated purposes. Without the specifics of Lead Community Projects, professionals feel they lack sufficient "ammunition" for soliciting funds. One can think about this problem as a sequencing issue: Which comes first, development of content or mobilization of funds? In May, Milwaukee participants explained that they wanted a better idea of the content of their reforms before they approached major donors about funding the reforms.



Another ambiguity is that so far, mobilization in the communities has meant representation of diverse constituencies rather than full involvement of these constituencies. At this time, Commissions are generally inclusive in the sense that they involve representatives from a wide variety of institutions. However, there is no established mechanism for these representatives to inform and galvanize support in their constituencies. We are particularly concerned with the involvement of educators. What CIJE or community resources will be devoted to involving educators, not just as representatives of institutions, but more broadly as developers and implementers of educational innovations?

Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback -- Two important uncertainties about our project both have to do with dissemination. The first concerns feedback to CIJE. Most of our reporting is directed towards Annette, yet much of what we have to say is relevant to other staff. What is the mechanism for distributing our update memos (such as this one) to other staff members?

We can conceive of two approaches to feedback: one in which our reports go to Annette, and they are then distributed as you see fit; and a second in which we report to whomever we see fit as the occasion arises, including but not exclusively Annette.

The second uncertainty concerns feedback to the communities. We have not established any regular procedure or mechanism for getting feedback disseminated outside our central contacts. We have had many informal conversations in which we provided feedback requested by community members, but as we learned in May, these do not concern the issues of central interest to CIJE.

Partnership -- Unfortunately the minutes of the May meetings did not reflect the depth of discussion on what "partnership" means, and we welcome any elaboration.

Wall-to-Wall Coalition -- Are there some absolutely essential partners (e.g., large donors)? Are some partners more essential than others?