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Series D: Adam Gamoran Papers. 1991–2008.

Subseries 1: Lead Communities and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback (MEF),
1991–2000.

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Ritz, Esther Leah. Correspondence and meeting summary, 1993-
1994.

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

January 24, 1993

Mrs. Esther Leah Ritz
Milwaukee, WI

Dear Esther Leah,

I'm looking forward to our meeting on January 28 at 9:00 a.m.
I'm writing to discuss the agenda for our meeting. I thought we
should cover the following topics:

- (1) Brief review of progress of the monitoring, evaluation,
and feedback (MEF) project since last July.
- (2) Discussion of key findings from MEF reports on personnel.
- (3) Issues to be discussed with the academic advisory
committee of the MEF project.
- (4) Agenda for the CIJE board subcommittee on Research
and Evaluation.

Please let me know if there are other issues you have in mind
that I should be prepared to discuss.

Sincerely,

Adam

P.S. Assuming we can get a babysitter, my wife Marla and I
are planning to attend your Thursday night discussion of the
situation in Israel!

COUNCIL FOR INITIATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

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July 14, 1993

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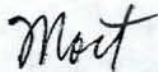
Bennett Yanowitz

Dear Esther Leah:

I hope that you will be able to attend the CIJE Executive Committee and Board meetings on Thursday, August 26 in New York. I think that we are making good progress in our work and that it should be an interesting day.

On the agenda for the Board meeting is a report by Adam Gamoran on the Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback project. I am writing to ask if you would make introductory remarks as chair of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback committee. I have asked Adam to brief you about his work in preparation for your remarks.

Please let Ginny Levi or me know if you are willing to participate in this way.



MORTON L. MANDEL -- Chair

✓ cc: Adam Gamoran

July 27, 1993

Ms. Annette Hochstein
Mandel Institute of Jerusalem
22a HaTzfira St.
Jerusalem, ISRAEL

Dear Annette,

I'm writing to report on a very productive meeting I held with Esther Leah Ritz earlier today. Although this is a very hectic time for her -- she was in the midst of moving apartments and is about to leave for a month in Europe -- she was good enough to spend nearly two hours with me. The purpose of the meeting was for me to brief her on (a) what the MEF project accomplished during 1992-93; and (b) what we have proposed to do during the coming year. (My agenda for the meeting is attached.)

In the course of my report, Esther Leah raised several important points which I want to share with you:

(1) She reminded me of the role of our project in helping the lead communities become "evaluation-minded communities;" that is, communities in which evaluation is a normal component of any ongoing project. We discussed the ways our project can contribute to this effort. I indicated that for starters, we plan to work on this in two ways:

(a) We will work with all new initiatives within the Lead Communities to ensure that each has an evaluation component built in from the start. I noted that the language of CIJE implementation now takes this into account: Originally, the criteria for lead community projects was content, scope, and quality; evaluation is now the fourth component.

(b) Our plans include support for "reflective practitioners," two educators within each community who, under the guidance of our field researchers, will reflect on their work in systematic ways over the course of the year.

As a consequence of my discussion with Esther Leah, I now plan to include "encouraging reflective communities" as a third purpose of the MEF project. (The other two purposes are for replication in the long term and for feedback in the short term.)

Finally, I would like to add this point as an addendum to the section on ONGOING MONITORING AND FEEDBACK in our proposal for work in 1993-94. I have attached the addendum to this letter.

(2) In describing our efforts to construct a feedback loop with CIJE, I noted that although we had some successes, we had not generally succeeded in providing CIJE with new information in a timely fashion. I explained some of CIJE's other ways of getting the same information we were providing. Esther Leah responded that collecting new information should not be the primary aim of our feedback to CIJE. Rather, our purpose should be to interpret and evaluate the information that comes to light. We should put it in perspective and use it to anticipate future consequences on the basis of past and ongoing situations. This should be the nature of our regular updates to CIJE.

I found this to be highly enlightening. It would free us from the paradox of reporting information that you and Seymour already know. Rather, it guides us towards emphasizing what has been most successful in our feedback so far. For example, both the summary report in February, and the oral report on Milwaukee in May, were valuable not because of the information they contained per se, but because of the perspectives they offered and the internal discussions they generated.

I am especially interested in hearing your reactions on this point.

(3) In explaining what we had studied so far, I mentioned that our work was not about education at this point, but about communities. That is, we have not had any educational reforms to study, but there has been much to say about community dynamics. Esther Leah seized on this point. She felt it was an important insight which should be emphasized. Rather than seeing it as a drawback or failing, she saw it as something we had learned and ought to contribute to the discourse about lead communities: The process starts with community reform, and only moves to include educational reform in a subsequent phase.

(4) She expressed no reservations whatsoever with our having commenced the MEF project while the implementation is still getting off the ground. In her view, evaluation starts with the planning process, so this year was the right time to start.

(5) She raised the issue of her board subcommittee: She would like to add other board members and make it into an operating committee. I responded that I want her, herself, as long as I can have her, but I had no objection to her adding a couple of additional board members with whom she and I could meet at subsequent board meetings. She said she would raise this issue with you, Seymour, and Mort.

(6) She also raised a question about the professional advisory committee for the MEF project. I described our original

committee (Coleman, Fox, Hochstein, Inbar), and she explained that this was not adequate, a conclusion which, as you know, I had already reached. She advised me to form a committee which would include not only academics, but one or two persons familiar with Jewish education systems -- formal and informal -- and with Jewish communities. I think this is sound advice, and it is consistent with the thinking within the MEF team. I will put some thought into this, and I'd appreciate any advice you may have.

As you can see, it was an enlightening meeting to me, and I think we are very fortunate to have Esther Leah as our board advisor.

Yours,

Adam

cc: Ellen Goldring
Esther Leah Ritz



Attachment A

Adam Gamoran -- MEF Briefing for Esther Leah Ritz
July 27, 1993

I. Accomplishments and Challenges, 1992-93

A. Goals for 1992-93

1. Field Researchers
2. Visions, Mobilization, and Professional Lives of Educators

B. Adjustments

1. Pace of change
2. Access

C. Products

1. Interview protocols
2. Survey of educators
3. Reports on educators
 - a. Qualitative component
 - b. Quantitative component
 - c. Integrated report
4. Feedback loop
 - a. To CIJE
 - b. To the communities

II. Proposed plan for 1993-94

A. Ongoing monitoring and feedback

1. Year 1 cumulative report
 - a. Mobilization
 - b. Visions
2. Continued feedback to CIJE and the communities
3. Follow-up reports on mobilization, visions, and educators
4. Facilitating evaluation-minded communities
5. Special topics reports

B. Community profiles

1. Claire's resignation, and her anticipated replacement
2. Changes in our scope of work

C. Proposed assessment of 6th grade Hebrew in day schools

Attachment B

Addendum to MEF Proposed Plans for 1993-94

Under ONGOING MONITORING AND FEEDBACK, please add the following:

"The field researchers will also work with community participants to encourage reflective practice. Ultimately, we would like to foster "evaluation-minded communities," that is, communities in which evaluation is a routine component of all educational and social service projects and programs. We propose to initiate this effort in 1993-94 in two ways:

- (a) We will work with all new initiatives within the Lead Communities to ensure that each has an evaluation component built in from the start.
- (b) We will work with reflective practitioners in each community. Under the guidance of the field researchers, we will invite two educators within each community to reflect on their work in systematic ways over the course of the year.



ELR

eval-minded community

Adam Gamoran -- MEF Briefing for Esther Leah Ritz
July 27, 1993

I. Accomplishments and Challenges, 1992-93

A. Goals for 1992-93

1. Field Researchers

- hired - a team

2. Visions, Mobilization, and Professional Lives of Educators

- 3 g's - M + P from ATA

- v.s. ions - what ATA did not specify - needed

B. Adjustments

1. Pace of change

- mobiliz - only Miln followed CIJE PIG

- AtI - fragmented

- Balt - steady progress on own time frame

2. Access

- Miln - open

- Balt - no edges (until July)

- only edges (until May)

- reflected in products

C. Products

1. Interview protocols

2. Survey of educators

- not orig. in our scope of work

- Ellen brought in

- we will integrate it w/ our orig. plan

3. Reports on educators

a. Qualitative component

b. Quantitative component

c. Integrated report

4. Feedback loop

a. To CIJE

- periodic rpts - no, oral

- not so much in that they don't know - AtI know all

- but an arts. dir. pers. spec.

- new to other CIJE staff

b. To the communities

- w/ CIJE's design

- w/ own dynamics

- strayed from mandate in effort to be helpful

- e.g. feedback after mtgs

not info collector
but interpret, evaluate
- put it perspective
- anticipate consequences
future events

not about educ so far, but about communities

II. Proposed plan for 1993-94

A. Ongoing monitoring and feedback

1. Year 1 cumulative report
 - a. Mobilization
 - b. Visions
2. Continued feedback to CIJE and the communities
3. Follow-up reports on mobilization, visions, and educators
4. Facilitating evaluation-minded communities
5. Special topics reports

CLP will talk to MAs
about a 6d subcommittee

B. Community profiles

1. Claire's resignation, and her anticipated replacement
2. Changes in our scope of work

purpose - to be responsive & state
for their wisdom &
refer to it, but essentially
and internal to
MEP

C. Proposed assessment of 6th grade Hebrew in day schools

would strengthen the work, & its
Advisory Committee (led by)

Board mtg agenda

acads
1/2 from rel fields of practice
- broad Jewish experiences
w/ eval of res
- Edw Kagen - informal ed
- Steve Nagat
- Rahel Pappo

no career eval w/o implem
- eval must begin w/ plan process

- current gap 3 Isra
no narrative!

ESTHER LEAH RITZ

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January 25, 1994

ADAM BANDMAN

UW - MADISON

FAX# 608-265-2140

Dear Adam:

Thanks for your fax. I'm accustomed to late evening transmissions, and I didn't get home from N.Y. last night until 11 pm.

I would like to add to the agenda a beginning discussion of the membership for a Board committee on MEF, if any, since our steering committee is proposing a broader committee structure.

I hope you can make the session Thursday night, too. My son, by the way, will drop me off at your office. I will be blessing both ways.

Cordially,

Esther Leah