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Best Practices project. Holtz, Barry. Correspondence and report drafts, 1991-1992.

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Barry Holtz

Action before the Action Plan:
Using the Best Practices Project

One of the "pilot projects" (Action before the Action Plan) that we have proposed is using the Best Practices Project in the Lead Communities. There are a number of models which are possible:

I. Best practices for lay leadership

What is it?

We envision this project as a series of presentations aimed at lay leadership concerning the findings of the Best Practices Project. The goal of this ongoing seminar is to inform communal leadership about the current "best thinking" in contemporary Jewish education: what works in supplementary schools? what factors make for a successful early childhood program? what do we know today about outstanding trips to Israel? We believe that such a seminar has a crucial role to play in the local community because the knowledge that leaders gain about best practice will help guide their decision-making and planning about Jewish education at the communal level.

We might envision a project of 6 to 8 sessions over the course of 10 to 18 months.

Aside from the presentations, we might also want to consider visits to best practices sites for small groups of participants.

For whom?

The audience for this project include, first, the members of the local commission on Jewish education or continuity. Second, relevant leadership groups in the community who might like to hear about findings of the Best Practices Project which are most connected to their own interests. For example, synagogue school committees might want to learn about the findings concerning supplementary schools; the local board of the Jewish Community Center might want to hear about the work we are doing about Jewish education in the JCC world, etc. Other specialized groups, such as rabbis, might also be developed.

By whom?

These sessions would be conducted or organized by me (Barry). In some cases I would present our findings; in other cases we would bring outside experts from our research teams. In those cases in

which our research has been published, the booklets can be shared with the group. But it is not necessary that all the best practices booklets be completed to conduct these sessions. We can bring in experts from our teams to speak to the commission even in those cases in which the work is not yet finished.

How much?

We have not really discussed the cost issue of any of this. Here the expenses would be essentially paying the airfare and any honoraria to presenters. If most of the presentations are done by me, that would eliminate the honoraria (for me), but using other consultants would require some fees. Who pays? Is this a CIJE expenses entirely?

II. Best practices for Educational leadership

What is it?

This project is an intensive leadership development and inservice education program for directors of programs and/or schools. The project can be organized either around supplementary schools or early childhood programs. Our guess is that the communities will choose supplementary schools, but either is possible.

In this model we will view the best practices booklets as only one aspect of the program, the "curriculum for change" as we have been saying. The goal of the project is to improve the quality of educational institutions through work with the leaders of those institutions. By investigating the implications of the findings of the Best Practices Project, local leadership should be able to improve their own institutions by adapting best practices to their own situations.

We will meet on a regular basis beginning with a discussion of the central issues informing the work of the participants and their major educational concerns. The curriculum for these sessions will be structured both to address their questions and to work with them to use the insights we have gained from the Best Practices Project to improve their educational work.

Another model can also be built in here: We can incorporate the idea used by the Whizin Institute's summer institute and try to organize sessions for teams of an educator, lay person, rabbi, etc. from individual institutions.

For whom?

The participants will be the directors of supplementary schools or early childhood programs, depending upon the choice of the Lead Community.

By whom?

The project will be conducted by Barry and Gail. It may also include visits by experts in the field, in particular the research team members who wrote up the best practices cases.

In any of the projects envisioned above, we can also plan meetings across the three communities to discuss common concerns.

Questions

Aside from the financial issues raised above, we must also decide: 1) what happens how much energy and person power does the CIJE have to run these projects in three different places? 2) Is it worthwhile to try to organize sessions across the communities? 3) What is the role of central agency personnel in planning and implementing these sessions?



MEMORANDUM

July 13, 1993

To: CIJE Board

From: Dr. Barry W. Holtz

Re: **Update - The Best Practices Project**

The Best Practices Project has many long-range implications. Documenting "the success stories of Jewish education" is something that has never been done in a systematic way and it is a project that cannot be completed within a short range of time. This memo outlines the way that the Best Practices Project should unfold over the next 1 to 2 years.

Documentation and Work in the Field

The easiest way to think about the Best Practices Project--and probably the most useful--is to see it as one large project which seeks to examine eight or nine areas (what we have called "divisions"). The project involves two phases of work. First is the documentation stage. Here examples of best practice are located and reports are written. The second phase consists of "work in the field," the attempt to use these examples of best practice as models of change in the three Lead Communities.

The two phases of the Best Practices Project are only partially sequential. Although it is necessary to have the work of documentation available in order to move toward implementation in the communities, we have also pointed out previously that our long-range goal has always been to see continuing expansion of the documentation in successive "iterations." Thus, the fact that we have published our first best practice publication (on Supplementary Schools) does not mean that we are done with work in that area. We hope in the future to expand upon and enrich that work with more analysis and greater detail.

In the short run, however, we are looking at the plan below as a means of putting out a best practices publication, similar to what we've done for the Supplementary School division, in each of the other areas. What we have learned so far in the project is the process involved in getting to that point. Thus it appears to be necessary to go through the following stages in each of the divisions.

The Steps in Documentation: First Iteration

Preliminary explorations:	To determine with whom I should be meeting
Stage one:	Meeting (or multiple meetings) with experts
Stage two:	Refining of that meeting, leading to a guide for writing up the reports
Stage three:	Visiting the possible best practices sites by report writers
Stage four:	Writing up reports by expert report writers
Stage five:	Editing those reports
Stage six:	Printing the edited version
Stage seven:	Distributing the edited version

Next Steps

For this memo, I've taken each "division" and each stage and tried to analyze where we currently are headed:

- 1) *Supplementary schools*: Mostly done in "iteration #1". There may be two more reports coming in which were originally promised.
- 2) *Early childhood programs*: Here we are at stage six. The volume is in print.
- 3) *JCCs*: Here we are at stage three. This will require visits, report writing, etc. The JCCA is our partner in implementing the documentation.
- 4) *Day schools*: Here we are at stage one, two or three, depending on the religious denomination. Because this involves all the denominations, plus the unaffiliated schools, this will be the most complicated of the projects for the year.
- 5) *College campus programming*: Here we are at stage three, with the national Hillel organization as a partner. One question to deal with is non-Hillel campus activities and how to move forward with that. As to Hillel programs, we need to choose report writers, visit sites, etc.
- 6) *Camping/youth programs*: Here we are at the preliminary stage. We should be able to have a stage one meeting this year. It's probably fairly easy to identify the right participants via the denominations and the JCCA.
- 7) *Adult education*: Here we are at the preliminary stage. We should be able to have a stage one meeting this year. Here gathering the right participants is probably more complex.

- 8) *The Israel experience:* We hope to move this project forward with consultation from the staff of the CRB Foundation. As they are moving forward with their own initiative, we hope to be able to work jointly on the “best practice issues” involved with the successful trip to Israel.
- 9) *Community-wide initiatives:* Finally, I have recommended that we add a ninth area—Community-wide initiatives using JESNA’s help. This refers to Jewish education improvement projects at the Federation or BJE level, particularly in the personnel or lay development area. Examples: The Providence BJE program for teacher accreditation; the Cleveland Fellows; projects with lay boards of synagogue schools run by a BJE; salary/benefits enhancement projects. This project would use JESNA’s assistance and could probably be launched rather quickly.

Lead Communities: Implementation—and How to Do It

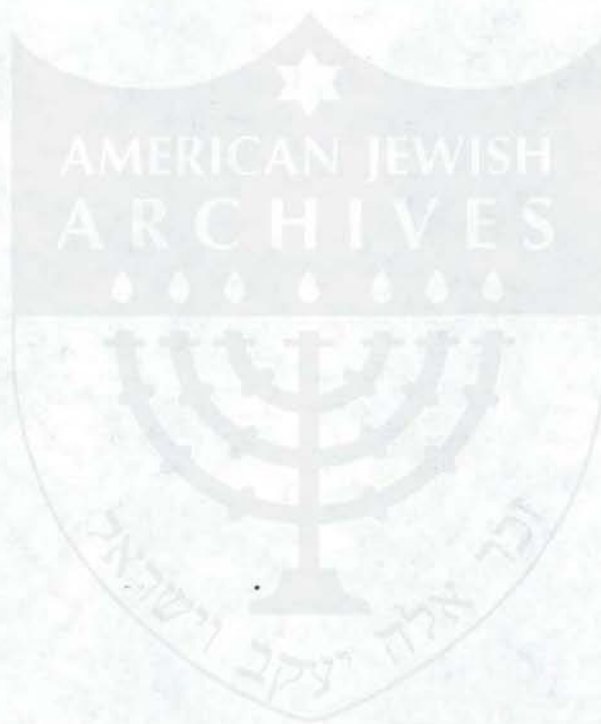
In previous reports I have quoted Seymour Fox’s statement that the Best Practice Project is creating the “curriculum” for change in the Lead Communities. This applies in particular to the “enabling options” of building community support for Jewish education and improving the quantity and quality of professional educators. It is obvious from the best practice reports that these two elements will appear and reappear in each of the divisions under study.

The challenge is to develop the method by which the Lead Community planners and educators can learn from the best practices that we have documented and begin to introduce adaptations of those ideas into their own communities. This can occur through a wide range of activities, including: presentations to the local Lead Communities’ commissions about the results of the Best Practices Project, site visits by Lead Community lay leaders and planners to observe best practices in action; visits by best practices practitioners to the Lead Communities; workshops with educators in the Lead Communities, etc. The Best Practices Project will be involved in developing this process of implementation in consultation with the Lead Communities and with other members of the CIJE staff. We have already discussed possible modes of dissemination of information in our conversations with the three communities.

How Can We Spread the Word?

The first report on supplementary schools has engendered a good deal of interest in the larger Jewish educational community. One issue that the CIJE needs to address is the best way to make the results of the Best Practices Project available. How should the dissemination of materials take place? How should the findings of this project have an

impact on communities outside of the Lead Communities? Certainly we should find ways to distribute the materials as they are produced. Perhaps we should also begin to consider a series of meetings or conferences open to other communities or interested parties, as the project moves forward.



MELTON RESEARCH CENTER

for Jewish Education

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To: Professor Adam Gamaron

At FAX Number: _____

From: Dr. Barry Holtz

Date: July 26, 1991

Total pages including this one: 11

RE: Hi Adam,

I hope your trip back went well. I've written up a version of the Best Practice business which I am enclosing here. The language is still pretty informal, but you'll get a sense of where I am at.

It seems that on the day after we left a lot of rethinking went on vis a vis the project: the question was raised about the famous personnel option from the Commission report and shouldn't that be the focus. As you'll see on pages 5-6 here I pose the question-- which direction to go in.

Any reactions?

Best,

Barry

BEST PRACTICES PROJECTS

NEXT STEPS

I Collection

- human resources (practitioners, experts in field, researches to guide/evaluate best practices)
- program resources or institutional resources
- a. list program elements for enabling options (personnel, recruitment, training etc.)
- b. prioritize programmatic options
- c. create a process for validating these options
- d. unpacking each of the high priority options
- e. recruit and solicit program exemplars
- f. preliminary analyses of submissions in (e)
- g. dissemination (?)
- h. feedback loop - quality control

11. Service to Lead Community

- a. In each programmatic area, a co-ordinator is identified who does 1, d, e, and f (above). The co-ordinator is the first contact for the lead community in this area.
- b. has resources to service the community

III Research

- a. Start thinking about research in relationship to the programmatic issues.
- b. Create and develop a programmatic research agenda
- c. Study program options for the purpose of evaluation and quality controls and translation to lead communities.

COUNCIL FOR INITIATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

July 31, 1991

Enclosed is a copy of Barry's post-Jerusalem paper. A revised version will be in the Senior Policy Advisor Packet.

Shulamith



July 24, 1991

The Best Practices Project
Barry W. Holtz

The following memo is a description of current thinking about the "Best Practices" project of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education. It is based on discussions of an early draft with the staff and consultants of the CIJE and was further modified after the meeting of the Planning Workshop in Jerusalem, July 14-18, 1991.

I Introduction

In describing its "blueprint for the future," A Time to Act, the report of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, called for the creation of "an inventory of best educational practices in North America" (p. 69). The primary purpose of this inventory would be to aid the future work of the Council, particularly in the "Lead Communities" aspect of its work. As the Lead Communities begin to develop their plans of action, the Best Practices inventory would offer a guide to successful programs/sites/curricula which could be adopted in the Lead Communities. The Best Practices inventory would become a kind of data base to which the Council staff could refer as it worked with the various Lead Communities. Thus a person from the Lead Community in "Toledo" (or wherever) could ask the Council "where is Hebrew taught well?" and the Council staff would be able to find such a program or school or site some place in the country through consulting the Best Practice inventory. It is likely that the inventory would not be a published document but a resource that the Council would keep or make available to particular interested parties.

A project to create such an inventory begins with the assumption (and this is a big assumption from the theoretical point of view, but probably justified in the realm of the practical) that we know what we mean by "Best Practice". The "we" here is the network of people we know, trust or know about in the field of Jewish education around the country. I assume that we could generate a list of such people with not too much difficulty. Let's say Best Practice is-- in the tradition of D.W. Winnicott to Sarah Lightfoot Lawrence (The Good High School) to Joe Reimer's Commission paper-- something like "good enough".

Theoretically, in having such an index the Council would be able to offer both psychological and programmatic assistance to the particular Lead Community asking for advice. "Psychological"-- because for many people (both lay and professional) there is doubt about the actual existence of "Best Practice" about many aspects of Jewish education. ("Is there really such a creature as a good Hebrew School," is a common question asked by both laypeople and professionals.) "Programmatic"-- because by viewing the Best Practice

of "X" in one location, the Lead Community could see a living example of the way that "X" might be implemented in its local.

I say "theoretically" in the paragraph above because we really don't know how this will play out in real life and certain significant stumbling blocks will have to be overcome. Do we really know, for example, that viewing the Best Practice of "X" in Boston offers psychological comfort or confidence building to the person sitting in the Lead Community of Toledo. Perhaps he or she will say: "That may be fine for Boston, but in Toledo we don't have "A" and therefore can't do "B." Of course, we could reply, learning that they don't have "A" and discovering (by seeing it in action) that they want to accomplish "B" may be the first step toward defining goals and a plan of action for a particular Lead Community.

But the programmatic side of the Best Practice model is even more problematic than the psychological issue. Knowing that Boston is able to implement a particular program and seeing that program in action does not guarantee that Toledo will be able to succeed in implementing it in their locality, no matter how good their intentions. The issue of translation from the Best Practice site to the Lead Community community site is one which will require considerable thought and occupied a good deal of the discussion in our meetings in Jerusalem.

One practical question about translation of Best Practices concerns the actual process of using the inventory. Would people from the Lead Communities visit the Best Practice program under consideration? Is the point to see it and how will seeing it lead to understanding it? One suggestion raised in our recent meetings is that Best Practices might be seen as a way of "training the trainers" rather than as something that the people from the Lead Communities would be directly involved in. In other words the purpose is not to show the program in Philadelphia to the people in Toledo; the Philadelphia Best Practice would serve as a model for those "trainers" (educational implementers) who would be working directly with the Toledo Lead Community.

"Understanding it," as mentioned above, is related to yet another question: We all know that there are many excellent practitioners who might be visited at their work sites, but who are not able to offer guidance to someone else wanting to make use of their educational practice. Some practitioners are "naturals"-- they do what they do without being able to analyze it. They sense what works without really knowing why. Others are too invested in their own particular method to be able to see its limitations and hence to be able to evaluate whether an approach to, say, teaching Hebrew in one school might or might not be appropriate to another locality.

A third question relates to the specific factors of individual places and the replicability into other settings: What makes one curriculum work in Denver is connected to a whole

collection of factors that may not be in place when we try to introduce that curriculum in Atlanta. How do we go about figuring out all these different components of successful practice?

It is obvious, then, that the Best Practices project is a complex matter. The discussions in Jerusalem attempted to find a way of organizing the work in a structured fashion that would allow it to proceed quickly, but which would also build in an approach to tackling the important and complicated issues that are inherent in this kind of endeavor.

As the workshop in Jerusalem discussed the topic, it became clear that Best Practices for Jewish education was a research project with three interrelated dimensions. First, we needed to create a list of experts in various aspects of Jewish educational practice to whom the CIJE could turn as it worked with Lead Communities. These are the consultants that could be brought into a Lead Community to offer guidance about specific new ideas and programs. For shorthand purposes we can call this "Shulamith's Rolodex." The Rolodex also includes experts in general and Jewish education who could address questions of a broader or more theoretical sort for the benefit of the CIJE staff and fellows. People such as Lee Shulman or Sharon Feiman-Nemser would not necessarily be brought into the Lead Community itself, but would help the CIJE think about the work that it is doing in the communities. Thus the first phase of the Best Practices project-- stocking the Rolodex-- has already begun. It will continue throughout the project as new people become known during the process and through the "snowball" that will begin to roll.

Second, the project will have as its primary mission the use of Best Practices for assisting the Lead Communities. For shorthand purposes we can call this "the data base." This will be described in detail in the next section of this memo below. Third, the project has implications for a much larger ongoing research project. For shorthand purposes we can call this "the 20 Year Plan." The 20 Year Plan is a major study of Best Practices in Jewish education-- locating, studying and documenting in detail the best work, the "success stories," of contemporary Jewish education. (I say "contemporary" here, but a research project of this sort might well include a historical dimension too. What can we learn about from Shrage Arian's school in Albany in the 1960s, etc.) Such a project should probably be located in an academic setting outside the CIJE. We could imagine a Center for the Study of Excellence in Jewish Education established at a institution with a strong interest in Jewish education such as JTS or HUC or Brandeis University or in a non-Jewish School of Education such as Harvard or Stanford. It's possible also that such a center be created as a "free-standing" research center. Obviously, this project intersects with the research plan that Isa Aron is developing.

"Best Practices for assisting the Lead Communities" and "the 20 Year Plan" are not mutually exclusive. The latter flows from the former. As we begin to develop a data base

for the Lead Communities, we will also begin to study Best Practices in detail. The difference between the two projects is that the Lead Communities will need immediate assistance. They cannot wait for twenty years before acting. But what we learn from the actual experience of the Lead Communities (such as through Adam Gamoran's Lead Communities assessment project) will then become part of the rich documentation central to the 20 Year Plan.

II. Best Practice and the Lead Communities

Of course there is no such thing as "Best Practice" in the abstract, there is only Best Practice of "X" particularity: the (good enough) Hebrew School, JCC, curriculum for teaching Israel, etc. The first problem we have to face is defining the areas which the inventory would want to have as its particular categories. Thus we could talk about some of the following areas:

- Hebrew schools
- Day Schools
- Early childhood programs
- JCCs
- Adult Ed. programs

Etc.-- Yes, this is beginning to get to be a long list and what's more it's only one cut into the problem. The above list is essentially a collection of "sites" in which Jewish education takes place. But you could also run another list here: subject areas.

- Bible
- Hebrew
- Israel
- etc.

(And we should also be aware of another complication: Sometimes we can find a "Best Practice" program for one subject area in a site that isn't necessarily so great overall-- for example, a not so great JCC that runs wonderful programs for early childhood.)

Hence the following question needs to be decided: What are the appropriate categories for the inventory?

Perhaps the way to answer this is to say that we will choose the categories based on a combination of the following criteria:

- a) what we think the Lead Communities will want and need based on our discussions in Israel about the Lead Communities project and b) what we can get up and running quickly

because we know the people (and maybe even some actual sites or programs) already (or can get that information very fast.)

III. Suggestions for a process

What has to be done to launch and implement the Best Practice for Lead Communities project? I would suggest the following steps:

1. Define the categories

To do this we should quickly poll a select number of advisers who have been involved in thinking about the work of the CIJE or the Commission to see what categories we can agree would be most useful for the Lead Communities.

To CIJE Friends
From Barry Holtz

Before I finish this memo up you will have to make a decision on which way you want to go. Please let me know. I've tried to map this out as best as possible. The CIJE must decide between the two following approaches to the Best Practices Project or it must decide to do both simultaneously. If it will do both, we should figure out who is going to do what:

Approach #1

We need to keep in mind the "enabling option" described by the Commission as developing personnel for Jewish education ("building the profession") and begin with a careful look at that. (A second enabling option-- mobilizing community support for Jewish education-- will be dealt with as the Lead Communities are selected and as they develop. Although in principle the "Best Practices" approach might also apply in this area--e.g. we could try to indicate those places around the country in which community support has been successfully mobilized for Jewish education-- in the meetings in Jerusalem, we decided to limit the Best Practices project to the enabling option of "building the profession." A different subgroup can be organized to investigate the Best Practices for community support option. The option of the Israel Experience, viewed as an enabling option, should also be studied by a different subgroup.)

The "building the profession" enabling option can be used as the lens through each of the chosen programmatic options (from the original list of twenty-three) are viewed. Each chosen programmatic option would be viewed specifically in the light of best practice in building the profession within its domain. For example, what is the best practice of building the profession within the domain of the programmatic option called "adult

education" or "early childhood education." One advantage of this approach is that we already have the terms of reference well defined for the analysis in the Commission report. A Time To Act (pp. 55-63) analyzes "building the profession" in the light of six subcategories: 1) recruitment, 2) developing new sources of personnel, 3) training, 4) salaries and benefits, 5) career track development, 6) empowerment of educators. These six subcategories could be the screen we use in looking at the programmatic option under consideration. Thus, if one chosen programmatic option is supplementary school education we could ask: where are the good programs for recruiting personnel to the supplementary school, who does a good job of developing new sources of personnel for the supplementary school, where is the training of personnel for the supplementary school done well, etc.

The disadvantage of this approach is that in focusing solely on the enabling option of "building the profession", we can't offer the Lead Communities a good deal of down to earth practical help in implementing programs of Jewish education when they turn to us for help. The second approach would offer a good deal more in this regard:

Approach #2:

Beyond the enabling options, during its meetings the Commission also discussed a list of twenty-three "programmatic options," including early childhood education, the day school, family education, etc. Although the Commission decided to focus its work on the enabling options because of their broad applicability to all areas of Jewish education, it is appropriate now for the Best Practices project to turn to the specific programmatic options which can be of most benefit to the Lead Communities. Thus the Best Practices project can benefit from the work done by the Commission when it first defined the twenty-three programmatic options. Indeed, it is with this list that we can begin the process of deciding what specific areas of best practice we ought to analyze.

The advisers mentioned above will help us decide which areas we ought to look at; the programmatic options can offer a broad list from which the advisers and the CIJE staff can choose. However, some of the programmatic options are so broadly stated (e.g. "the supplementary school") that it would be difficult to get a handle on what specific best practices we are looking to explore. If we are talking about the supplementary school, do we want to look at its way of teaching Hebrew, Jewish holidays or Israel? its organization? its relationship to other institutions? its in-service organization? Before we collect information for the inventory we need a clearer definition of what we are looking for. This challenge leads us to:

If we use Approach #1 the next section would need some modification. The basic principle of a definitional guide would still be in place however.

2. Commission a document (a "definitional guide") for each category.

The definitional guide is a document which is prepared for each category. It has two purposes:

- a) to break specific categories down into their component parts thereby facilitating the choices we need to make about to focus on and at the same time helping our analysis and
- b) to offer guidance as we seek to determine best (i.e. "good enough") practice within the category. It will briefly state what we are looking for when we use the term Best Practice of X.

The definitional guide is an in-house "screen" used by the "location finders" (see below) as a reference guide. Since this is an "in house" document, my guess is that we should not waste a lot of time writing fancy documents. Once we have accomplished "a" above (breaking down the programmatic options into the choice points), you don't need to hand a qualified person an abstract or detailed definitional document to ask him or her to identify 3-5 best, really good, or good enough examples of practice.

We know we want to write some kind of definitional guide: how much expertise do you need to do this? Perhaps I should say, how many experts do you need? How many people have to be involved here? I would suggest the following: First, the Commission itself has short papers on each of its twenty-three programmatic options. We can turn to those papers as the first cut of analysis, to see how they break down the problem. Second, via "the Rolodex" we know how to find out who knows about each of these areas (that is, once we've figured out what the areas are). We can commission a short statement from individuals who could write the guide for each area. These are short pieces. They should also include a suggested list of "location finders" for each area. The CIJE staff and I would react to these papers but this should be a fairly fast process.

3. Identify the location finders

Once we define a list of categories and definitional guides for each, we would then want to find a group of "location (or subject) finders" who would recognize or know about "Best Practice." It may also require a meeting of people to brainstorm places, sites, people as well. Maybe there should be a brainstorming group of well-traveled Jewish educators who could suggest the "location finders"? And maybe there is another group of people who are real generalists just because they've been around the country so much that we would be able to ask them about any of the categories: Bob Abramson, Joel Grishaver, Eliot Spack, Gail Dorph, Vicky Kelman, Betsy Katz, etc.

4. Get the lists

Once we have the "location finders" for each category and the definitional guides, we can then put together the suggested lists for each category. This could come via meetings (as mentioned above), through phone calls or simply through getting submissions of lists from the location finders for each category. Obviously, we will have to buy some time from people, but except for meetings this should not be an expensive or burdensome task for them.

Yet another approach that also be implemented would be a "bottom up" attack on this issue. Here we ought to investigate the National Diffusion Network (in general education) and how they operate. Is there any quality control? Is listing in the inventory done by RFP? We ought to learn about this.

5. Evaluate the choices

Once we receive the proposed lists in each category, are we going to implement some independent evaluation? Who would do that and is it necessary? In our meetings in Jerusalem it became clear that some kind of evaluative process must take place. Otherwise we exercise no quality control over the inventory. I propose that for this project it would be important to have outside experts at our service who could go out into the field to look at those sites that have been proposed as examples of Best Practices. Before we can pass on these exemplars for use by the Lead Communities, we must be able to stand by what we call "best."

6. Write up the reasons

Here this project begins to overlap with "Research." The evaluation that has begun in the step above now must move on to another stage. Let's say we have received these lists of Best Practice sites, programs, etc. But I think we would have to go beyond mere lists to figure out what it is that defines the "goodness" of the good. (E.g. Reimer's Commission paper). Of course this is no small job. We could probably get some of this from the location finders. They could tell us their reasons for their choices. We might be able to hire some of the location finders to write up the reasons in brief or in detail. Perhaps we would not need this for every example in every category but it does seem to me that we're going to need this if we want to get to #7:

7. Translate to Action for the particular Lead Communities

What in each Best Practice case can be translated to the Lead Community and what cannot? This is a complicated question and requires the job described in #6 above, at least for those cases in which the Lead Community is planning to implement action.

It then requires a careful monitoring of what is going on when the attempt to translate particular Best Practices actually is launched. This monitoring is the intersection of the Best Practices project with Adam Gamoran's research project. How the two matters are

divided-- Best Practices Research and Lead Communities Assessment-- is a matter that needs further clarification as the work proceeds. It should, therefore, go onto the agenda as #8 below.

But another issue that forms the background to all of this work is an important additional research project that probably should be undertaken by the Best Practices project (in consultation with the researchers working on the Lead Communities). That is an investigation of the current knowledge and state of the art opinion from general education on the question of implementing change and innovation into settings. (e.g. looking the original Rand "change agent" study and current thinking about it.) A second and related issue is the question of research on implementing change into sites which are larger than school settings since this seems to be applicable to the ambitious goals of the Lead Communities project. (E.g. Larry Cuban's work on school districts.)

8. Research Dimensions

Here we can mean many things: action research in looking at the implementation of Best Practice from one place to another; evaluation research to see what is "best" about best and how things translate from one setting to another; comparative research as Best Practice from "Boston" is tried out both in Toledo and Los Angeles. And more too, I imagine, but I will leave this to Isa or Adam's project.

IV. Timetable

What of the eight steps above can and should be done when? In the Israel meetings we decided to attack this problem through successive "iterations." In other words, the important point was to get the Best Practices project up and running by making a first cut at getting our inventory through reliable informants. On successive investigations of the problems we can refine the information, gather new examples of practice and send out researchers to evaluate the correctness of the choices. We give up something in reliable and guaranteed accurate information; but we gain in being able to offer advice and guidance to the Lead Communities in a shorter amount of time.

V. Lead Communities: Beyond Best Practices

In the view of A Time to Act the "Lead Communities would be encouraged to select elements from the inventory" (p. 69) of Best Practices as they developed their educational plan. Our recent discussions in Jerusalem confirmed this view of the Best Practices Project, but added an important caveat well: Innovation in Jewish education cannot be limited only to implementing those programs that work into a new setting called the Lead Community.

If Jewish education is to grow it must also be free to imagine new possibilities, to reconceptualize as well as to replicate. One practical approach to this matter would be an investigation of innovative ideas that have been written about, but have never been tried out in Jewish education. A search of literature for such ideas should also be undertaken either under the rubric of the Best Practices Project or through the Research Project.

"Best Practices" should be only one dimension of Lead Communities. The crisis in Jewish education calls for new thinking: Bold, creative even daring "new practices" must also play a role in our thinking as the Lead Communities search for ways to affect Jewish continuity through Jewish education. Under the banner of the Best Practices Project we should create the Department of Dreams of Jewish education. This would be the arena in which new ideas or adaptations of ideas from other contexts could be formulated and eventually funded for Jewish education. This could be done through conferences, commissioned "fantasy papers" or through the investigation mentioned above of ideas that have written about, but never tried out.



The Best Practices Project
Barry W. Holtz

I. Introduction

In describing its "blueprint for the future," A Time to Act, the report of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, called for the creation of "an inventory of best educational practices in North America" (p. 69). The primary purpose of this inventory would be to aid the future work of the Council, particularly as it helps to develop a group of model Lead Communities, "local laboratories for Jewish education." As the Lead Communities begin to devise their plans of action, the Best Practices inventory would offer a guide to successful programs/sites/curricula which could be adopted for use in particular Communities. The Best Practices inventory would become a data base of Jewish educational excellence to which the Council staff could refer as it worked with the various Lead Communities.

Thus the planners from a Lead Community could ask the Council "where in North America is the in-service education of teachers done well?" and the Council staff would be able to find such a program or school or site some place in the country through consulting the Best Practice inventory. It is likely that the inventory would not be a published document but a resource that the Council would keep or make available to particular interested parties.

What do we mean by "best practice"? The contemporary literature in general education points out that seeking perfection when we examine educational endeavors will offer us little assistance as we try to improve educational practice. In an enterprise as complex and multifaceted as education, these writers argue, we should be looking to discover "good" not ideal practice. As Joseph Reimer describes this in his paper for Commission, these are educational projects which have weaknesses and do not succeed in all their goals, but which have the strength to recognize the weaknesses and the will to keep working at getting better. "Good" educational practice, then, is what we seek to identify for Jewish education.

A project to create such an inventory begins with the assumption that we know how to locate such Best Practice. The "we" here is the network of people we know, trust or know about in the field of Jewish education around the country. I assume that we could generate a list of such people with not too much difficulty. Through using that network, as described below, we can begin to create the Best Practice inventory.

Theoretically, in having such an index the Council would be able to offer both encouragement and programmatic assistance to the particular Lead Community asking for

advice. The encouragement would come through the knowledge that good practice does exist out in the field in many aspects of Jewish education. By viewing the Best Practice of "X" in one location, the Lead Community could receive actual programmatic assistance by seeing a living example of the way that "X" might be implemented in its local setting.

I say "theoretically" in the paragraph above because we will have to carefully examine the way that the inventory of good educational practice can best be used in living educational situations. Certainly significant stumbling blocks will have to be overcome. In what way, for example, will viewing the Best Practice of "X" in Boston, Atlanta or Montreal offer confidence building and programmatic assistance to the person sitting in the Lead Community? Perhaps he or she will say: "That may be fine for Boston or Atlanta or Montreal, but in our community we don't have 'A' and therefore can't do 'B'."

Knowing that a best practice exists in one place and even seeing that program in action does not guarantee that the Lead Communities will be able to succeed in implementing it in their localities, no matter how good their intentions. The issue of translation from the Best Practice site to the Lead Community site is one which will require considerable thought as this project develops. What makes one curriculum work in Denver or Cleveland is connected to a whole collection of factors that may not be in place when we try to introduce that curriculum in Atlanta or Minneapolis. Part of this project will involve figuring out the many different components of any successful practice.

As we seek to translate and implement the best practice into the Lead Communities, it will be important also to choose those practitioners who are able to communicate a deeper understanding of their own work and can assist the Lead Communities in adapting the Best Practices ideas into new settings.

The Best Practices initiative for Jewish education is a project with at least three interrelated dimensions. First, we will need to create a list of experts in various aspects of Jewish educational practice to whom the CIJE could turn as it worked with Lead Communities. These are the consultants that could be brought into a Lead Community to offer guidance about specific new ideas and programs. For shorthand purposes we can call this "the Rolodex." The Rolodex also includes experts in general and Jewish education who could address questions of a broader or more theoretical sort for the benefit of the CIJE staff and fellows-- people who would not necessarily be brought into the Lead Community itself, but would help the CIJE think about the work that it is doing in the communities.

The first phase of the Best Practices project-- stocking the Rolodex-- has already begun as the CIJE staff has begun working. It will continue throughout the project as new people become known during the process.

Second, the project will have as its primary mission the use of Best Practices for assisting the Lead Communities. For shorthand purposes we can call this "the data base." This will be described in detail in the next section of this memo below. Third, the project has implications for a much larger ongoing research project. For shorthand purposes we can call this "the long-range plan." The long-range plan is a major study of Best Practices in Jewish education-- locating, studying and documenting in detail the best work, the "success stories," of contemporary Jewish education. (I say "contemporary" here, but a research project of this sort might well include a historical dimension too. What can we learn about the almost legendary supplementary school run by Shrage Arian in Albany in the 1960s should have important implications for educational practice today.) Such a project should probably be located in an academic setting outside the CIJE. We could imagine a Center for the Study of Excellence in Jewish Education established at a institution of higher learning with a strong interest in Jewish education, in a School of Education at a university or created as a "free-standing" research center. Obviously, this project intersects with the research plan that the CIJE is also developing.

"Best Practices for assisting the Lead Communities" and "the long-range plan" are not mutually exclusive. The latter flows from the former. As we begin to develop a data base for the Lead Communities, we will also begin to study Best Practices in detail. The difference between the two projects is that the Lead Communities will need immediate assistance. They cannot wait for before acting. But what we learn from the actual experience of the Lead Communities (such as through the assessment project which will be implemented for the Lead Communities) will then become part of the rich documentation central to the long-range plan.

II. Best Practice and the Lead Communities

Of course there is no such thing as "Best Practice" in the abstract, there is only Best Practice of "X" particularity: the (good enough) Hebrew School, JCC, curriculum for teaching Israel, etc. The first problem we have to face is defining the areas which the inventory would want to have as its particular categories. Thus we could cut into the problem in a number of different ways. We could, for example, look at some of the "sites" in which Jewish education takes place such as:

- Hebrew schools
- Day Schools
- Trips to Israel
- Early childhood programs
- JCCs
- Adult Education programs

Or we could look at some of the subject areas which are taught in such sights:

- Bible
- Hebrew
- Israel

Other modes are also possible. Hence the following question needs to be decided: What are the appropriate categories for the inventory?

We propose to choose the categories based on a combination of the following criteria:

a) what we predict the Lead Communities will want and need, based on a survey of knowledgeable people (see step 1 below) and b) what we can get up and running quickly because we know the people and perhaps even some actual sites or programs already, or can get that information quickly.

III. Suggestions for a process

What has to be done to launch and implement the Best Practice project for Lead Communities? I would suggest the following steps:

1. Define the categories

To do this we should quickly poll a select number of advisers who have been involved in thinking about the work of the CIJE or the Commission to see what categories we can agree would be most useful for the Lead Communities.

Our main focus should be the Commission's "enabling option" of developing personnel for Jewish education ("building the profession"). (A second enabling option-- mobilizing community support for Jewish education-- will be dealt with as the Lead Communities are selected and as they develop. Although in principle the "Best Practices" approach might also apply in this area--e.g. we could try to indicate those places around the country in which community support has been successfully mobilized for Jewish education-- the Best Practices project will be limited to the enabling option of "building the profession." A different subgroup can be organized to investigate the Best Practices for community support option. The option of the Israel Experience, viewed as an enabling option, could also be studied by a different subgroup.)

The enabling option of "building the profession" comes to life only when we see it in relationship to the ongoing work of Jewish education in all its many aspects. A number of these dimensions of Jewish education were discussed during the meetings of the Commission and twenty-three such arenas for action were identified. These were called the "programmatic options" and the list included items such as early childhood education, the day school, family education, etc. Although the Commission decided to focus its work

on the enabling options (rather than any specific programmatic options) because of their broad applicability to all areas of Jewish education, it is appropriate for the Best Practices project to turn now to explore the specific programmatic options which can be of most benefit to the Lead Communities. Indeed, it is this list, coupled with the enabling option of building the profession, that can help us begin the process of deciding what specific areas of best practice we ought to analyze.

The method of work will be to use the enabling option of "building the profession" as a lens through each of the chosen programmatic options (from the original list of twenty-three) are viewed. Each chosen programmatic option would be viewed specifically in the light of best practice in building the profession within its domain. For example, what is the best practice of building the profession within the domain of the programmatic option called "adult education" or "early childhood education."

2. Commission a document (a "definitional guide") for each option.

The definitional guide is a document which is prepared for each category. Its purpose is to offer guidance as we seek to determine best (i.e. "good enough") practice within the category.

One advantage of focusing on the enabling option of personnel is that in the Commission report we already have a headstart in defining the how we should go about studying the programs we will examine. A Time To Act (pp. 55-63) analyzes "building the profession" in the light of six subcategories: 1) recruitment, 2) developing new sources of personnel, 3) training, 4) salaries and benefits, 5) career track development, 6) empowerment of educators.

These six subcategories can be the filter we use in looking at the programmatic options under consideration. Thus, if one chosen programmatic option is supplementary school education we could ask: where are the good programs for recruiting personnel to the supplementary school? who does a good job of developing new sources of personnel for the supplementary school? where is the training of personnel for the supplementary school done well? who has done an interesting job in improving salaries and benefits? Has any place implemented outstanding programs of career track development? Are there examples that can be found of the empowerment of educators? The same six points of building the profession can be applied to any of programmatic options.

The definitional guide will take these six subcategories and flesh them out and refine them as an aid which can be used by the "location finders" (see below) who will help us locate specific examples of current best practice in the field. The guide should also include a suggested list of "location finders" for each area. The CIJE staff would react to these papers but we anticipate that this should be a fairly fast process.

3. Identify the location finders

Once we define a list of categories and definitional guides for each, we would then want to find a group of "location finders" who would recognize or know about "Best Practice." It may also require a meeting of people to brainstorm places, sites, people as well. There probably also should be a group of well-traveled Jewish educators who could suggest the "location finders" to the CIJE.

4. Get the lists

Once we have the "location finders" for each category and the definitional guides, we can then put together the suggested lists of best practice for each category. This could come via meetings (as mentioned above), through phone calls or simply through getting submissions of lists from the location finders for each category.

Yet another approach that also can be implemented is a "bottom up" attack on this issue. The CIJE can put out a call to the field for suggestions of best practice to be included in the inventory. One model we ought to investigate is the National Diffusion Network, an organization in general education which seeks to disseminate examples of best practice around the country through this bottom up approach. We would need to explore how the Network deals with questions of quality control to see if it is applicable to our needs.

5. Evaluate the choices

Once we receive the proposed lists in each category, we are going to need to implement some independent evaluation of the candidates for inclusion. As stated above quality control is an important element of the Best Practices project. It will be important, therefore, to have outside experts at our service who could go out into the field to look at those sites that have been proposed as examples of Best Practices. Before we can pass on these exemplars for use by the Lead Communities, we must be able to stand by what we call "best."

6. Write up the reasons

Here this project begins to overlap with other research concerns mentioned in the report of the Commission. The evaluation that has begun in the step above now must move on to another stage. We have to go beyond mere lists for the inventory so that we can try to determine what it is that defines the "goodness" of the good that has been identified. Otherwise the general applicability of the inventory will never be realized. We will certainly get some of this from the location finders. They will need to tell us the reasons for their choices. The outside evaluators will also need to write up the projects that they visit. In this way we can begin to develop a rich source of information about the success stories of Jewish education and how they might (or might not) be translated into other situations.

7. Translate to Action for the particular Lead Communities

What in each Best Practice case can be translated to the Lead Community and what cannot? This is a complicated question and requires the job described in #6 above, at least for those cases in which the Lead Community is planning to implement action.

It then requires a careful monitoring of what is going on when the attempt to translate particular Best Practices actually is launched. This monitoring is the intersection of the Best Practices project with the research and assessment that will be conducted in each Lead Community. How the two matters are divided-- Best Practices Research and Lead Communities Assessment-- is a matter that needs further clarification as the work proceeds.

But another issue that forms the background to all of this work is an important additional research project that probably should be undertaken by the Best Practices project (in consultation with the researchers working on the Lead Communities). That is an investigation of the current knowledge and state of the art opinion from general education on the question of implementing change and innovation into settings. A second and related issue is the question of research on implementing change into sites which are larger than school settings since this seems to be applicable to the ambitious goals of the Lead Communities project.

IV. Timetable

What of these seven steps can and should be done when? Probably the best way to attack this problem is through successive "iterations," beginning with a first cut at finding examples of best practice through using the network of Jewish educators whom we know, then putting out a call for submissions to the inventory, and getting preliminary reports from the "location finders." A second stage would evaluate these first choices and begin the writing up of reasons that can lead to action in the Lead Communities. During the process we would, no doubt, receive other suggestions for inclusion on the list and the final inventory of Best Practices would get more and more refined as the exploration continued. On successive investigations we can refine the information, gather new examples of practice and send out researchers to evaluate the correctness of the choices. The important point is that the Best Practices project can be launched without waiting for closure on all the issues. Thus we will be able to offer advice and guidance to the Lead Communities in a shorter amount of time.

V. Lead Communities: Beyond Best Practices

In the view of A Time to Act the "Lead Communities would be encouraged to select elements from the inventory" (p. 69) of Best Practices as they developed their educational plan. It is with this goal in mind, that we wish to initiate the Best Practices project. But it is important to add a caveat as well: Innovation in Jewish education cannot be limited only to implementing those programs that currently work into a new setting called the Lead Community. If Jewish education is to grow it must also be free to imagine new possibilities, to reconceptualize as well as to replicate. One practical approach to this matter would be an investigation of innovative ideas that have been written about, but have never been tried out in Jewish education. A search of literature for such ideas should also be undertaken either under the rubric of the Best Practices Project or through any research project put into operation by the CIJE.

"Best Practices" should be only one dimension of Lead Communities. The crisis in Jewish education calls for new thinking: Bold, creative, even daring "new practices" must also play a role in our thinking as the Lead Communities search for ways to affect Jewish continuity through Jewish education. Under the banner of the Best Practices Project we should create the Department of Innovative Thinking for Jewish education. This would be the arena in which new ideas or adaptations of ideas from other contexts could be formulated and eventually funded for Jewish education. This could be done through conferences, commissioned think pieces or through the investigation mentioned above of ideas that have written about, but never tried out. The Best Practices project gives us a chance, in other words, to dream about possibilities as yet untried and to test out these dreams in the living laboratories established by the Lead Communities.

**MELTON
RESEARCH
CENTER**
for Jewish Education

Adam &
For your info
and response
July 31, 1991

To: Shulamith Elster, Steve Hoffman,
Seymour Fox, Annette Hochstein
From: Barry Holtz

Friends,

Here is the new version of the Best Practices Project paper, revised for use with the Senior Policy Advisers and the Board. Please let me know if you want other changes.

After speaking with Shulamith and Seymour, I have answered my question from the previous version: Best Practices will focus on the enabling option of personnel, not on particular programmatic options per se. Programmatic options will have a role here, but personnel ("building the profession") will be the microscope under which certain programmatic options will be viewed.

BUT: after thinking about this, something here makes me nervous and I would very much like to hear your collective response: I began to think about how going this route is bound to run into heavier political troubles than what we'd get doing a straight collection or analysis of various examples of best practice among the programmatic options. Why? Because doing some of the programmatic options would tend to be a much more local thing, while the personnel issue is going to put us in the situation of evaluating national institutions. That is, if I am looking at examples of best practice within JCCs or looking for good supplementary schools or places where Hebrew is taught well (i.e. the programmatic options approach), I am going to find one in Denver, another in San Diego, another two in Boston, etc. But if I am looking at who does training of personnel for supplementary schools (i.e. going the enabling option route of personnel)-- aren't I stuck having to deal with a small number of national institutions (JTS, HUC, Brandeis) and in the politically touchy waters of evaluating them?

I think this could present major problems for the project and I'd like some response from you four in this matter. Is there any way to avoid this? Am I missing something here?

While I have your attention, let me now raise a second problem (which was in the other draft of the paper as well). I just got off the phone with Isa and she asks the following: by not doing the programmatic options are we going to shortchange the

Lead Communities who are looking for some very practical short-range advice about issues such as teaching Hebrew in the day school, running good (best practice) trips to Israel, hearing about curricula for early childhood education? Isn't the personnel issue too broad and too "non-programmatic" for good, quick help to the Lead Communities? Any responses?

News flash: I finished this letter and then got a call from Adam who had a very similar reaction to Isa's. He thinks that an "inventory" makes sense when it is a collection of programs, but the personnel issue doesn't seem to have that "practice" dimension which will be of immediate use to the Lead Communities. So what do you all think?

Best,

Billy



JESNA

JEWISH EDUCATION
SERVICE OF
NORTH AMERICA, INC.

התורה לענין חינוך חינוכי
במסגרת אורח

TO: Steve Hoffman

cc.: Shulamith Elster

FROM: Jonathan Woocher

DATE: February 7, 1992

SUBJECT: Possible proposal to Leighton Rosenthal

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Welcome back! Following our conversation, I gave some additional thought as to what we might bring to Leighton Rosenthal as a proposal. Since the issue he expressed interest in is "what works," I decided to try something in the area of evaluation. The enclosed draft letter represents my first go at this.

Since, as we have discussed at various CIJE planning meetings, one of the challenges for the "best practices" project will be determining how to evaluate programs for their actual effectiveness in a reasonably efficient way, I thought that a JESNA-coordinated pilot project in this area might be maximally productive both for us directly in our community consultation role (and certainly for the Covenant Foundation) and for CIJE.

If you think we would have a better chance of getting funding from the Rosenthal Foundation if the proposal came from CIJE and JESNA, I would, of course, be quite happy to go this route. I don't know the nature of the relationships that exist between Leighton and Mort, but I'm satisfied to pursue this in whatever framework you think best.

I would also welcome, of course, your and Shulamith's substantive reactions. I'm working on the assumption that this would in a sense be a pilot project for later phases of the "best practices" work and could also feed into evaluation of specific programs in the lead communities. I think it carves out a discrete area of work that complements what Barry and Adam will be working on.

Let me know what you think.

Thanks.

memo 7671	# of pages 3
From	Jon Woocher
Co.	JESNA
Phone	(212) 529-2000
	(212) 529-2009

D R A F T #1 - February 6, 1992

Dear Leighton,

I'm writing to follow up on my previous letter to you and to ask whether the Rosenthal Foundation might be interested in providing financial support for a project dealing with some of the issues you raised when Bennett Yanowitz and I met with you in November.

Since that meeting, we have been giving considerable thought to the challenge you posed: How do we know that the investments we are being asked to make in Jewish education are really worthwhile? Although a full answer to this question would require a massive research project, I believe that JESNA is in a position to provide a partial answer that can impact on initiatives in some of the key areas of Jewish education that are most important today.

As we discussed when we met, the major problem we face in demonstrating the impact of new program initiatives is that evaluation is costly and time-consuming (especially if done correctly). As a result, most institutions undertaking new projects at the grass-roots level (where much innovation occurs) are unable to properly evaluate what they have done. When we think programs have been successful, and want to replicate and disseminate them, we don't have the hard evidence to convince potential funders that this is worthwhile.

We at JESNA would like to undertake a three-year project to identify and evaluate properly fifteen promising programs in five key educational areas: early childhood education, family education, school improvement, programs for teenagers, and adult Jewish learning. The project would have two goals: First, to determine which of these programs in fact represent significant educational achievements worthy of replication. And second, to develop evaluation models and procedures that can be employed more widely and (hopefully) more efficiently, thereby encouraging more evaluative work in Jewish education. Ultimately, if successful, the project might lay the groundwork for the establishment of a Center for Jewish Educational Evaluation, something which could make a major lasting contribution to the field.

Through our own work over the years and that of the Covenant Foundation, a special program that JESNA operates in partnership with the Crown family of Chicago, we are in an excellent position to identify the programs that might be studied. In addition, our staff expertise in evaluation and close contacts with other experts in this area give us confidence that we would produce the quality of work that would represent a genuine contribution to the field. Finally, this is a project that would ideally complement the multi-year initiative being undertaken by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (with whom we work

2

closely) to identify "best practices" in Jewish education, by helping to develop and test out cost-effective evaluation approaches.

We estimate that this project would cost approximately \$75,000 a year for the three year period, for staff, expert consultants, travel, and other expenses. The products of the project would include not only the individual program evaluations, but a handbook on program evaluation that would be widely disseminated throughout the Jewish educational world.

If this proposal is of interest to you and the Foundation, we would be pleased to prepare a more formal request with a full budget and timetable.

In all events, I thank you for stimulating us to think further about this issue, and look forward to hearing from you.

With my best wishes.

Cordially,

Jonathan S. Woocher

A Guide for Looking at Best Practice in the Supplementary School

A "best practice" supplementary school should be a place....:

I. Systemic Issues

- a. --with well articulated educational and "Jewish" goals
[What are those goals and by what means are they articulated? Meetings? Publications? Sermons?]
- b. --where stakeholders (such as parents, teachers, laypeople) are involved in the articulation or at least the validation, of these goals in an ongoing way
[What is the process by which this articulation and involvement happens?]
- c. --with shared communication and an ongoing vision
[How do we see this in the day to day life of the school?]
- d. --where one feels good to be there and students enjoy learning
[In what way do you see this? What is the atmosphere in classes? The nature of student behavior and "discipline"?]
- e. --where students continue their Jewish education after Bar/Bat Mitzvah
[Does the school have actual data about this?]

II. Curriculum and Instruction Issues

- a. --which takes curriculum seriously and has a serious, well-defined curriculum
[Is it a written curriculum? Do they use materials published by the denominational movements? By commercial publishers?]
- b. --and in which, therefore, students are learning real "content"
[Do you have a sense of what the students learn? About Jewish religious life and practice? Moral principles? History? Hebrew language? Israel, etc. In what way, if any, does the school monitor student progress?]
- c. --in which one sees interesting and "strong" teaching
[Is there a particular style of teaching that you see in the school? (Discussions? Lectures? Group work? etc.) Who are the teachers? What is their Jewish educational background and preparation? What is their relationship to the students?]

What is the stability of the staff over time? What does the school do to help new teachers enter the school?

d. --in which one sees attention given to "affective" experiences for children

[Is there occasion for "practice" in Jewish living or values? For example, is there a tzedakah project, an Israel project, a mitzvah project in the school? Is there a Junior congregation or other opportunity for experiencing prayer? Are there programs in the arts--music, dance, etc? Is there a retreat or shabbaton program for children?

d. --with family or parent education programs

[What does the school do in this area? Do they use any specific materials or programs? (which ones?) How often does this happen? Is there a retreat or shabbaton program for families? Are parents required to engage in some kind of adult learning? In what way?]

III. Supervision Issues

a. --which engages in regular serious inservice education and/or supervision of teachers

[Who does the supervision? What is it like? How regular is it? Does the school use outside consultants for inservice? Are teachers sent to inservice sessions? Where and in what way does this take place? Is there a retreat or shabbaton program for teachers?]

b. --with an effective principal who serves as a true educational leader

[In what way does the principal demonstrate this leadership? How do the teachers...the parents....the rabbi perceive him/her?

Obviously, The group recognized that not every one of these items would be in place in every school. (In that case we would have an "ideal" school and that, of course, is not our agenda here.) But some significant constellation of the above should be in place for a school to make it on to the inventory.

Finally, it was our sense that we do not need to find hundreds of examples of good supplementary schools. Even a dozen would help advance the cause of the Lead Community Project immensely. Aside from looking at good schools our group defined certain specific program areas that are worthy of particular attention. We would like you to identify examples of these as well (as described on the next page):