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Series D: Adam Gamoran Papers. 1991–2008.

Subseries 5: General CIJE Files, 1991–2008.

Box
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Machon L'Morim evaluation. "Evaluation Plan." Correspondence and background material. Newsletters, 1993-1997.

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

Talking Page: Evaluating Machon L'Morim

The person with understanding does not know and judge as one who stands apart unaffected, but as one united by the specific bond with the other; [he or she] thinks with the other and undergoes the situation with him [or her].

Gadamer

Assumptions:

- Behavior and understanding are intimately linked; thoughtful action emanates from careful and ongoing efforts to understand the situation and the other.
- Evaluation should be multi-faceted and responsive to all relevant audiences.
- Program evaluation can serve two purposes: to strengthen practice and to tell the story of an endeavor. Both are appropriate for *Machon L'Morim*.

Audiences and What They Want to Know: some suggestions

Learners

How am I doing and what tells me so?

How can I become and help other educators become "evaluation-minded" [mentoring]?

Where did I come from and where am I going? [What historical and conceptual assumptions have guided/will guide how I teach?]

What is my contribution to my community and my profession?

In what ways have I taken responsibility for my own learning?

Instructor/Facilitator

How have learners grown and developed with respect to knowledge [content]?

How will what participants have learned be incorporated into classrooms and schools [skills]?

What kinds of learning took place and what kinds of things contributed to the learning?

What unanticipated events have affected the program as it progresses?

How is momentum sustained?

What are special advantages and challenges of an innovative format?

How is community being nurtured?

What things should be done differently next time?

North American Jewish Community

What does this program uniquely offer the North American Jewish community?

What are some of the changes or transformations we can expect?

How can this program be expanded in this community and adapted to others?

Funder(s)

Has this project been a good investment?

What happened during the program, including both successes and challenges?

If successful, how can this program be implemented elsewhere?

*explain does
- where does
- evaluation fit in
- re: practice?*

Steps necessary to enable the development of an evaluation plan

Before an effective program evaluation plan can be developed, it is necessary to articulate goals. During the first year, I see five areas of particular relevance.

The learners. How do the conceptualizers and implementers envision a professional Jewish educator? There are many aspects one could focus on; I would suggest there are two major categories. One consists of ascribed or achieved characteristics such as whether or not the educator is Jewish, level of Hebrew fluency, knowledge of Judaics, gender, age, classroom teaching training and experience, synagogue involvement, etc. The other consists of social interactive and meaning-making features of the educator both individually and in the educational context. Interactive aspects of a teacher's professional life includes but is not limited to how he or she conceptualizes the teaching endeavor and finds ways to control and express creativity in a particular context, who constitutes a teacher's professional community and what is the nature of the conversations with that community, where, from whom, and how is new knowledge incorporated into what happens in the classroom; how do teachers respond to the uncertainties of the classroom; to what extent and how do teachers make connections between the individual lives of students and the ideas upon which they are focusing, and what are their underlying assumptions about their students and how have they been transformed through participation. The former set of characteristics are most easily amenable to paper and pencil self reports (although such methods have their limitations), while the second set are accessible through in-depth conversations and observations. In both cases, it is incumbent upon the evaluation definers to identify what it is they would like to see happen as a result of participation in *Machon L'Morim*.

CONFIDENTIAL

Evaluation Plan for Machon L'Morim: 1993 -1994

Julie Tammivaara, Shulamith Elster, Leora Isaacs
March 1994

The proposed evaluation plan for the first year of the first cohort of the Machon L'Morim program is detailed here. Included are the plan's purpose, the assumptions underlying the plan, the program goals, data collection strategies and sources, and a timeline keyed to data collection strategies and sources. The aims and design of the plan are based on the goals of Machon L'Morim.

Purpose

The purpose this evaluation plan addresses is four-fold:

1. To document the program's effectiveness in transforming the professional lives of teachers and thereby the contexts of education in which they work;
2. To assess the Judaic knowledge and leadership skills of teachers and the attitudes of their students and the students' parents;
3. To render an account of the program that will be useful for other communities interested in implementing it; and,
4. To monitor the development of the program to improve it for subsequent teacher cohorts.

Since this plan addresses only the first year of the proposed three-year program, these goals will not be fully realized in the first year-end report.

Assumptions

Five assumptions underpin the thinking and form of this evaluation plan:

1. The program has many phases and multiple goals; participant growth will evolve over time and certain changes will be gradual. Some aspects of this growth will be evident relatively early, while others will not be manifested until much later.
2. Because the program addresses multiple aims and involves a variety of people, multiple data collection strategies focusing on different data sources employed and collected over different points in the program will be necessary to adequately capture it.

3. Transformation of educational settings is most likely to occur when a critical mass of a school's teaching staff is committed to change and they are supported by key administrators.
4. For rich, complex programs such as Machon L'Morim, there will be unanticipated consequences; therefore, an appropriate evaluation plan will be sufficiently flexible such that these may be identified and examined after the program commences.
5. Program participants are adult learners and thus significantly responsible for their own learning.

Program Goals

The programmatic goals of Machon L'Morim consist of four major goals each with several parts.

A. To provide an intellectually and spiritually stimulating experience in study and opportunities for reflection on personal and professional practice.

1. To have the opportunity to study with leading thinkers and educators whose work has been in the areas of spirituality, prayer, and pedagogy,
2. To build a sense of collegiality among colleagues in a given school and across schools within the community,
3. To nurture a spirit of interdenominational cooperation and genuine appreciation of others while engaged in serious work together, and
4. To better understand and appreciate denominational perspectives on prayer and religious observance.

B. To develop a personal theology that finds its expression in tefillah

1. To develop a personal theology that finds its expression in tefillah, and
2. To gain new knowledge of the role of prayer in Jewish tradition.

C. To gain pedagogical skills in the teaching of tefillah and the conducting of tefillah experiences for children

1. To become familiar with the educational literature on the spiritual development of children and on the teaching of tefillah in the Jewish school, and

2. To benefit from demonstrations of effective practice by experienced teachers of tefillah and of middle-school pupils.

D. To develop educational programs in the teaching of tefillah for the school designed specifically to meet the developmental and spiritual needs of the middle-school pupil

1. To consider how children and their families can find new meaning for their lives through prayer experiences,
2. To learn how schools, both congregational and day, have attempted to meet the challenge of meaningful tefillot for their students,
3. To work with colleagues in the development of an educational plan for the school in which one teaches, and
4. To develop a professional development plan with the principal or headmaster for the integration of the Machon L'Morim experience in the school.

Data Collection Strategies and Data Sources for Machon L'Morim: Year One

Five data collection strategies are proposed. They include: interviews, observations, portfolios of student work [peer consultations, journals, reflective essays, curriculum projects, and papers], inventories of knowledge, attitudes, and involvement in Jewish life, and school profiles. Definitions of each follow:

Interviews: An interview is a face-to-face [or voice-to-voice] encounter wherein one or more parties serve to guide a conversation about a particular topic or set of topics and one or more parties serve to inform the conversational guides on a topic or topics.

Observations: Observations entail the participation of one or more persons engaged in focused attention upon and documentation of one or more others who are engaged in educationally-related activities.

Portfolios: Portfolios consist of examples of participants' work gathered over the course of a period of time. Examples of products to be included in a participant's portfolio include:

Peer Consultations: Peer observations and consultations consist of the pairing of two teacher-participants one of whom is engaged in teaching, the other in observing and documenting what is happening. The observation phase is followed by a consultation wherein the two parties discuss what

was done and seen. The consultations are audiotaped and the transcripts of the tapes are used as data for the evaluation effort.

Dialogue Journals and Reflective Essays: Dialogue journals are individual written records of participants' thoughts, reactions, ponderings, etc. focused upon and inscribed during the course of the program. Ideally, they incorporate questions that occur outside class sessions, extensions of ideas stimulated by reading, lectures, and class discussions, and connections drawn by participants between the formal content of the program and their own professional and personal lives. The journals are submitted to the course facilitator who writes her thoughts on the issues addressed by the journal keeper. Reflective essays are more structured and formal versions of journals. Typically, they consist of participant responses to specific issues relevant to the program in which they are participating.

Curriculum Projects

Papers

Inventories of knowledge, attitudes, and involvement in Jewish life: Inventories consist of items developed around specific topics. Inventories are typically highly structured and require relatively little time to administer. Items are structured in a manner that appropriate options can be checked or short answers given. While they may be administered efficiently, good inventories require considerable time to develop.

School Profiles: School profiles will be prepared noting each participating institution's demographics, policies, tefillah practices, curricula, perceived place in the community, etc.

Data sources are those people, settings and things from which information is collected. Data sources in this proposal include: participants, faculty, the facilitator, the Professional Advisory Committee, pupils of participants, pupils' parents, class sessions for the course, participants' classroom sessions, prayer settings, participants' words both written and oral, and products of course project requirements.

The following list connects data collection strategies with data sources and the evaluation team member[s] who will be responsible for the data collection.

A. Interviews

1. Participants [Julie Tammivaara]
2. Faculty [Julie Tammivaara]
3. Professional Advisory Committee [Leora Isaacs]

4. Program staff including Chaim Botwinick, Lee Hendler, Shulamith Elster, Darrell Friedman, and Nancy Kutler [Leora Isaacs]
 5. Funders [Leora Isaacs]
- B. Observations [Leora Isaacs, Shulamith Elster, Julie Tammivaara]
1. Ongoing MLM sessions
 2. Participants' classrooms
 3. Tefillah settings
 4. The institutions within which the participants work
- C. Peer observations and consultations [Shulamith Elster and Julie Tammivaara]
- D. Journals and Reflective Essays [Shulamith Elster and Julie Tammivaara]
- E. Portfolios [Shulamith Elster]
- F. Inventories of knowledge, attitudes and involvement in Jewish life [Leora Isaacs]
1. Participants
 2. Pupils
 3. Parents

Timeline for Data Collection

Time Method	Fall Sept.-December	Winter January-March	Spring March-May
Observation			
Class Meetings	_____	_____	_____
Classrooms		_____	
Faculty Meetings		_____	
Prayer settings		_____	
Interviews			
Participants	_____		_____
Faculty		_____	
PAC		_____	
Portfolios			
Journals	_____	_____	_____
Reflective Essays	_____	_____	_____
Peer Consultations			
Curr. Projects			_____
Papers			
Inventories*			
Participants			_____
Pupils			_____
Parents			_____
School Profiles			_____

* Since inventories appropriate for Machon L'Morim do not currently exist, they will need to be developed. Inventories for the participants will be developed and administered to participants first followed by those for pupils and pupils' parents.

GOALS	PRIMARY DATA SOURCES				
	Interviews	Observations	Portfolios	Inventories	School Profiles
To provide intellectually and spiritually stimulating experiences in study and opportunities for reflection on personal and professional practice	Participants Instructors Facilitator		Journals Reflective Essays Peer Consultations		
To develop a personal theology that finds expression in tefillah	Participants		Journals Reflective Essays		
To gain pedagogical skills in the teaching of tefillah and the conducting of tefillah experiences for pupils		Schools	Journals Reflective Essays Curriculum Projects Peer Consultations	Participants	
To develop educational programs in the teaching of tefillah for the school designed specifically to meet the developmental and spiritual needs of the middle-school pupil	Principals		Journals Reflective Essays Curriculum Projects Peer Consultations	Participants Pupils Parents	Rabbis and Principals

GOAL A: To provide intellectually and spiritually stimulating experiences in study and opportunities for reflection on personal and professional practice

Components	Interviews	Observations	Portfolios	Inventories	School Profiles
1 To have the opportunity to study with leading thinkers and educators whose work has been in the area of spirituality, prayer, and pedagogy	Participants Instructors Facilitator		Journals Reflective essays Peer consultations		
2 To build a sense of collegiality among colleagues in a given school and across schools within the community	Participants Facilitator		Journals Reflective essays Peer consultations		
3 To nurture a spirit of interdenominational cooperation and genuine appreciation of others while engaged in serious work together	Participants Facilitator		Journals Reflective essays Peer consultations		
4 To better understand and appreciate denominational perspectives on prayer and religious observance	Participants		Journals Reflective essays Peer consultations		

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GOAL B: To develop a personal theology that finds expression in tefillah

Components	Interviews	Observations	Portfolios	Inventories	School Profiles
1 To become familiar with the siddur, the machzor, and the liturgy of tefillah	Participants		Journals Reflective essays		
2 To gain new knowledge of the role of prayer in Jewish tradition	Participants		Journals Reflective essays		

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GOALS C: To gain pedagogical skills in the teaching of tefillah and the conducting of tefillah experiences for pupils

Components	Interviews	Observations	Portfolios	Inventories	School Profiles
1 To become familiar with the educational literature on the spiritual development of children and the teaching of tefillah in the Jewish school			Journals Reflective essays Curriculum projects		
2 To benefit from demonstrations of effective practice by experienced teachers of tefillah and of middle school pupils		Participants' Classrooms	Journals Reflective essays Curriculum projects Peer consultations	Participants	

GOAL D: To develop educational programs in the teaching of tefillah for the school designed specifically to meet the developmental and spiritual needs of the middle school pupil

Components	Interviews	Observations	Portfolios	Inventories	School Profiles
1 To consider how children and their families can find new meaning for their lives through prayer experiences	Principals		Reflective essays Papers [?] Peer consultations	Parents Pupils	Rabbis Principals
2 To learn how schools, both congregational and day, have attempted to meet the challenge of meaningful tefillot for their students	Principals		Reflective essays Peer consultations	Participants Parents Pupils	Rabbis Principals
3 To work with colleagues in the development of an educational plan for the school in which one works	Participants		Projects	Participants	Principals
4 To develop a professional development plan with the principal or headmaster for the integration of Machon L'Morim experience in the school	Principals		Projects	Participants	Principals

4 March 1994

From: EUNICE:"73443.3152@compuserve.com" 30-AUG-1994 18:48:19.47
To: "INTERNET:gamoran@ssc.wisc.edu" <gamoran>
CC:
Subj: RE: PL Report

Dear Adam,

I assume you are referring to the MLM evaluation. I will send you a copy if you promise on your children's heads to not tell anyone [yet anyway]. I imagine I can get permission as this was, at least briefly, a CIJE project.
Julie



B'reshit: In the Beginning
MACHON L'MORIM FOR JEWISH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

A Project of the Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff
Philanthropic Fund

"The greatest obstacle we have...is our current inability to attract and retain a cadre of professional educators who share a knowledge and commitment to Judaism, its values and traditions. This calls for a training model which takes the teacher's own spiritual development as one of the goals of the teacher training program. A training model must include understanding of child development and age-appropriate curriculum, and must also build on a teacher's commitment and openness to exploring an understanding of Judaism as an adult."

Dr. Ruth Pinkenson Feldman in
"What We Know About Jewish
Early Childhood Education"

"We must see Jewish early childhood education...as the start of life-long learning which is, in fact, the grounding premise of Jewish citizenship. It is a stunning place to start creating Jewish citizens because Early Childhood education offers us a unique possibility: the chance to take advantage of two windows of opportunity - one opens into the spirit and the mind of the child, the other into the heart and the mind of the parent."

Lee M. Hendler
from Remarks to Early Childhood Directors
January 25, 1995

I. Overview and Goals

Four Baltimore area early childhood programs will be selected to participate in a multi-year professional development and school enhancement project.

The project will have as its mission the enhancement of the Baltimore Jewish community's early childhood programs. It is anticipated that the project will serve as a model for other communities to the extent that the model can be replicated. Each participating program will be required to involve the entire school community (director, teachers, assistants/aides, lay leadership, rabbis, senior educators and parents) in learning experience and in planning for change.

The project's primary goal is to develop personnel and environments that model integrated early childhood Jewish education. It is anticipated that the project will have an impact on children, their parents and families; the school community - teachers, directors, leadership and sponsors; the Baltimore education community.

It is anticipated that this will be achieved by:

- teachers' and directors' participation in formal and informal study sessions with a faculty of local and national educators to expand content knowledge of Judaica and Hebrew language.
- training in pedagogic skills.
- presentations and activities to further understanding of early child development (emphasis on ethical, moral and spiritual development).
- presentations and discussions of successful programs studies through the Best Practices in Jewish Early Childhood Education Project (CIJE).
- planning for parent and family participation educational initiatives and activities within the life of the school community
- activities to create "model" school communities

GRID

Types of goals

Teachers

Directors

School

LEARNING*

REACTIONS*

TEACHER*
CHANGE

EVIDENCE*
IN CHILDREN

OTHER

*At what point(s) will this be taught or learned or accomplished during the program?

II. Participants and Selection of Schools

A. Proposals

All eighteen congregational, community-sponsored and independent programs affiliated with the Council for Jewish Education Services (CJES) will be invited to submit proposals in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Request for Proposals will set out the specific requirements for participation. Participation will require each program to closely examine its mission and develop a plan for implementation of future goals. The project will require the involvement of key stakeholders (lay leadership, institutional sponsors [i.e., congregational leadership/rabbis/other senior educators], parents, faculty and the director over a two year period.

Directors of all CJES affiliated early pre-schools were invited to an informational meeting on January 25, 1995. The project was introduced and a discussion held. There was great interest on the part of the directors who expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to improve the Jewish component of their programs.

Copies of the Request for Proposals (RFP) will be distributed in late March 1995. A briefing for directors will provide guidance in the development of responses on behalf of the programs.

As proposals are received, the cover sheet with identifying data including current financial statements will be removed, each response coded and prepared for blind review by a Selection Committee.

Schools will be selected SOLELY on their ability to provide evidence of: commitment to a Jewish early childhood program, commitment to developmentally appropriate practice, openness to change, involving parents and families, and staff and professional development. Schools selected for participation may include programs affiliated with congregations, community-sponsored and independent schools. The program sees itself as being inclusive and it is the hope that they will reflect the diversity of the Baltimore Jewish community.

B. Participants

Within the application, each school will be asked to submit the resumes of teachers (of children from ages 2 through 4) who would be invited to represent the school. The final selection of participants will be made by directors in consultation with members of the Selection Committee. Each teacher participant will be required to have the endorsement of the school director. No teacher may be accepted for the program independent of the school's participation as a total educational institution.

C. Stipends

Each individual teacher participant will receive a stipend of \$1500 for participation in the seminars, curriculum development for classroom and school, the school enhancement component, research and evaluation and the dissemination efforts.

Each school director will receive a stipend of \$2000 in recognition of the time/effort involved in all aspects of the project and leadership of the school-enhancement component.

Each participating program will be required to return an Institutional Agreement with the signatures of the rabbi/executive director, school committee chair, president of parent organization and director. Individual teachers and directors will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

III. Parent and Family Programs

The efforts to provide a total Jewish environment for the young child must be complemented by those of the parents and family whose influence on the spiritual, moral and ethical development of the child is acknowledged in Jewish sources and contemporary studies in child development.

Each school will be expected to develop specific plans to educate parents and to provide experiential activities for families.

These may include, for example: workshops and celebrations on holiday themes, formal classes for parents that parallel the school curriculum, parenting classes reflecting Jewish values, Hebrew language activities, and cultural arts special events (music, movement, drama). Family education has been shown to positively impact all family members, including siblings and grandparents. These family programs have been included as an integral part of Jewish early childhood education because through these multi-generational programs all participants can become more knowledgeable and feel a stronger sense of belonging to both the school and Jewish communities.

The Home Start Program developed by Rena Rotenberg for the Baltimore community can serve as one of a number of models for planning. (Assistance may be provided by the Pearlstone Coalition on Jewish Family Education.)

IV. The Request for Proposals (RFP)

In developing the response to the RFP, each school will be required to elaborate on the following aspects of school life:

- o Goals
- o Accreditation and Evaluation
- o Admission Procedures
- o Curricular Goals
- o Role of Parents: expectations and involvement
- o Site and Facilities
- o Staff
- o Governance decision-making structure
- o Strategic Planning

A financial statement will be a required element of the covering materials.

V. Program of Study

"We have to make a distinction between two kinds of professional development: informative and transformative. Informative training transmits information. It increases the teacher's content knowledge, understanding and skills. ... professional development that is transformative enables people to develop more complex capacities of mind... we think that the most powerful changes in professionals' practice come about because professionals change their minds." Professor Robert Kegan (Harvard Education Letter: January-February 1995)

A. Themes and Programs

The proposed program of study will attempt to both transmit information and change practice. It will be designed to encompass the major aspects of an "ideal" integrated Jewish early childhood program by its focus on these themes:

Celebration: Shabbat and Holidays

Holiness: God and Prayer

Community: Mitzvot - The Jewish Way of Relating to Others/Life Cycle

Efforts will be made to build a strong professional community through formal study and informal learning including: an orientation program, time within the seminar schedule for reflection and group conversations, inter-class and inter-school visitation, a retreat and/or field experiences. Community will "provide a context for sustained learning." Research suggests that effective teachers are those who are a part of a professional network.

The first year program will be planned for three trimesters - Fall (1995), Winter (1995) and Spring (1996). Each will be of approximately eight weeks duration. Each will focus on a specific theme and incorporate: content knowledge, child development, teaching techniques, curriculum materials, experiential learning and group discussion of the issues and challenge involved in translating new knowledge to classrooms and the schools.

Weekly study sessions will take place in the early evening (7-9 p.m.) at a central location. The site will change each trimester. School directors will participate in all sessions. Assistants and teacher aides will be invited to selected sessions.

The second year program - yet fully to be developed - will continue to involve teachers and directors primarily and is expected to require a similar investment of staff time and resources.

Each teacher and director will be given a personal/professional library. Each school will receive a duplicate set for the school's professional library.

Each school will be given a discretionary fund of \$1,000 to purchase classroom materials and other resources. Purchase decisions are to be made jointly by the director and the participating teachers.

A curriculum overview will be developed by the staff and reviewed by a select group of members of the Curriculum Group (Spring 1995) who will make recommendations, approve specific plans and recommend faculty. It is anticipated that a substantial portion of the group's work can be conducted via tele-conference. (Fall & Winter 1996 [consultation by tele-conference], Spring 1996 [two days]) (See chart on p. 10)

Directors and teachers will be included in the review of the program of study. The evaluation of the previous Machon L'Morim Program and recent research suggests this role.

"Research has consistently shown that teachers learn new methods best not from lectures by experts but by seeing those methods used in actual classrooms, by designing their own learning experiences, by trying out new techniques and getting feedback on their efforts, and by observing and talking with fellow teachers."

B. Field Experiences

Appropriate field experiences will be an important component of the course of study. A participating program may design a field experience to meet specific program requirements.

Among the options under consideration are:

AN ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

Participation in the 1995 Annual Winter Israel Seminar of the Early Childhood Section of the World Zionist Organization. Cost is @ \$1700 per participant. The Seminar is held each year during winter break when participants visit with colleagues from all over the country, observe educational programs and attend seminars on Jewish early childhood education. Rena Rotenberg to serve as coordinator.

1995 CAJE CONFERENCE (Amherst)

CAJE as a "kick-off" activity offering teachers and directors the opportunity to meet and study with 2,000 Jewish educators from all over the world and from the various fields of Jewish education. Approximate cost: \$800 per participant.

WHIZIN INSTITUTE

The Whizin Family Education Summer Institute at University of Judaism in Los Angeles trains teachers and educators to work with families. All the participating teachers and the director of a school with specific interest in family programs would attend.

FIELD EXPERIENCES IN SELECTED COMMUNITIES

New York: Jewish Museum and selected schools
Chicago: Exemplary Lab School Programs of BJE
Other cities: Philadelphia and Washington

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

The National Association for Young Children. Washington (November 1995). and
The Jewish Early Childhood Network. Washington (also November 1995)

VI. School Enhancement

School enhancement activities foster improvement in a school's program through development or close examination of the mission statement, systematic collection of information about the school and planning for a desired change. The process includes lay and professional leadership (of synagogue/or sponsoring institution) faculty, parents, representatives of the school's governing body.

The school director will assume responsibility for this activity as success depends on her leadership skills. She is in the best position to see the inter-relationship of all aspects of the school and to plan for change. The project will be responsible for the preparation of directors for this assignment.

VII. Governance and Administration

A. Staff

Dr. Chaim Botwinick, Chair of Professional Advisory Group and Steering Committee
Dr. Shulamith Elster, Director
Marci Dickman, CJES Advisor
Rena Rotenberg, CJES Consultant
Dr. Gail Dorph, CIJE Consultant

B. Steering Committee

Dr. Chaim Botwinick, Chairman
Lee M. Hendler and Jennifer Meyerhoff, Funders
Dr. Gail Dorph, Consultant
Marci Dickman and Rena Rotenberg, Advisors
Dr. Shulamith Elster, Staff
(To Be Determined), Liaison to the Professional Advisory Group

C. A Professional Advisory Group (PAG) will be recruited from among local and national individuals with experience and expertise. The PAG will review goals periodically and monitor the project. It will be expected to meet three to four times a year - at the end of each trimester (August, December, March, June).

Organizational Chart: Machon L'Morim

Funders (F) Children of Harvey & Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund	Dr. Shulamith R. Elster, Director Staff and Advisors (S)	Steering Committee (SC) Dr. Chaim Botwinick, Chair	CIJE Consultants (CIJE) Dr. Gail Dorph, Liaison	Professional Advisory Group (PAG)* Dr. Chaim Botwinick, Chair	Curriculum Group (CG) Dr. Shulamith Elster, Staff
Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocation • accountability • reset of budget National focus through CIJE Receive regular reports from Staff and PAG Public relations/special events	Present proposals to funders Develop materials for presentation to curriculum group On-going communication with project participants, groups, committees, funders Financial management and reporting Staff for Curriculum Group Staff for PAG Responsible for guidebook, materials, RFP Responsible for processes: planning, selection, dissemination, evaluation	Liaison to funders - Lee M. Hendler, Jennifer Meyerhoff Liaison to PAG-TBD	National focus Issues of replication {Best Practice implementation} Lead Communities Ongoing consultation to PAG and CG	Participate in periodic review of the status of the program Suggest "corrections" when appropriate Approve evaluation plan Receive evaluation report and propose recommendation to funders Appropriate involvement in Selection Committee, CG and with Staff and consultants Public relations and communication *to meet 4 times per year	Review staff proposals and material Make recommendations regarding program Suggest faculty and resources

VIII. Educational Materials

It is anticipated that the project will develop materials for dissemination. These may include:

1. An integrated early childhood curriculum
2. A model for the professional development of early childhood Jewish educators.
3. A model for a school enhancement change/process
4. Handbook for the replication of the project with print materials from seminars and the October 1996 conference.
5. Professional videotapes of selected sessions
6. Professional videotapes of classroom segments: Models of Teaching Young Jewish Children (A grant may be solicited through a local or national foundation to support this activity).

IX. Communications

- A. A quarterly newsletter will keep the school communities, the PAG and interested others informed about the project.
- B. The following activities will be considered:
 1. Annual Early Childhood Conference/CJES in October 1996 Presentation by participants of demonstration lessons and materials based on new knowledge and pedagogic approaches.
 2. Attendance and presentations to the annual conferences:
 - a. CAJE: Coalition for the Advancement for Jewish Education
 - b. Network for Research in Jewish Education
 - c. National Association of Jewish Early Childhood Specialists
 - d. National Jewish Early Childhood Network
 - e. National Association for the Education of Young Children
 - f. Jewish Community Center Association Biennial Conference
- C. The Professional Advisory Group may wish to develop a proposal for an invitational conference to take place in Baltimore during the Spring of the final project year. Invitees may include local and national Jewish educators.

X. Evaluation

An evaluation plan will be developed utilizing the experience of the 1994 Machon L'Morim Evaluation. The plan will be approved in advance of the opening activities. (Fall 1995)

An inventory of Jewish knowledge, attitudes and behaviors will be developed and administered to directors, teachers and parents at the start of the program. This will provide baseline data for research.

Site visits to participating schools (3/4 times per year) and community conversations within participating schools will be elements of the evaluation.

XI. Research

Several research topics were included in the 1994 CJES proposal for the development of an Early Childhood Lab School. These may be appropriate for this project and include opportunities to examine:

- growth in Judaic/Hebraic content knowledge of teachers/directors
- impact of the experience on the classroom and the school
- impact on the experiences of children as they mature from 2 to 4
- impact of the participation of an entire school community in a demonstration project
- impact of the project on parent education and family participation
- impact of parent and family involvement on observance and ritual practice (home) and participation (synagogue and community)

INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

Dear _____:
(Director)

The Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund is pleased to sponsor the Machon L'Morim program as a means of expressing its commitment to the enhancement of Jewish education through the professional development of early childhood educators in the pre-school programs of the Baltimore Jewish community.

In the 1995-96 academic year Machon L'Morim will provide educational seminars and in-school consultations for the schools selected to participate.

Machon L'Morim will provide seminars in Judaica, child development and pedagogy for teachers and directors of students from ages 2-4 in the participating schools. In consideration of the commitment of the educators they will receive a stipend.

The schools are expected to support Machon L'Morim in the following manner:

- to recruit and nominate appropriate educators for participation in the project.
- to provide facilities, without charge, for meetings, seminars and co-curricular activities
- to support the efforts of teachers and the director to incorporate new ideas and new approaches into their classrooms and into the school program
- to participate in project educational seminars on issues in Jewish early childhood education
- to provide appropriate release time for educators to work with colleagues and mentors
- to participate actively in all aspects of project evaluation and related research activities
- to cooperate in the development of curriculum materials for use in similar types of schools

In recognition of these mutual expectations, and in anticipation of a creative partnership between the program and the Philanthropic Fund, please sign the enclosed copy of this letter and return it to me.

Sincerely yours,

Lee M. Hendler
Children of Harvey and
Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund

Rabbi/Executive Director

Date: _____

Educational Director

Date: _____

Pre-school Director

Date: _____

Chair, School Committee

Date: _____

Chair, Parent Organization

Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (Teachers)

Machon L'Morim is a training institute designed to provide personal and professional growth opportunities for a select group of teachers-educators. In selecting educators of promise and talent for this innovative in-service program, Machon L'Morim will provide a wide variety of focused learning opportunities in the following areas: Jewish knowledge, pedagogy and child development.

Machon L'Morim will provide faculty and staff for all program components from among local and nationally-recognized early childhood educators, Jewish educators, scholars and practitioners. All texts and materials will be provided as permanent additions to the educator's own personal/professional library.

Machon L'Morim will provide a \$1,500 fellowship for each teacher.

As a participant in this project, I understand that I have made the following commitments:

1. to participate in all formal study sessions during the three trimesters of the 1995-96 academic year.
2. to complete required readings and assignments.
3. to participate in documentation, evaluation and implementation activities.
4. to participate in the planned field experiences.
5. to develop and oversee the specific educational programs to be implemented in my school.
6. to serve as a mentor to colleagues.

Signature

Date

**LIST OF POTENTIAL PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:
MACHON L'MORIM 1995**

SCHOOL PROJECT	ENROLLMENT
Alef Bet Child Development Center, Inc.	47
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Pre-School	190
Bet Yeladim, Inc.	220
Beth El-Pauline Mash School for Early Childhood Education	250
Beth Israel Pre-School	55
Beth Sholom Nursery School, Frederick, MD	21
Beth Tfiloh Community Pre-School	180
Chizuk Amuno-Goldsmith Early Childhood Education Center	275
Gan Israel Pre-School	20
Gan Yeladim (now affiliated with the JCC program)	62
Har Sinai Nursery & Learning Center	16
JCC Nursery, Owings Mills	288
JCC Nursery, Park Heights	123
Knesseth Israel, Annapolis	35
Liberty Jewish Center-Early Childhood Learning Center	23
Ner Tamid Montessori Pre-School	30
Temple Beth Shalom Nursery School-Arnold, MD	39
Winands Road Synagogue Pre-School	55
TOTAL	1962

(18)

Request for Proposals

B'reshit: Machon L'Morim for Jewish Early Childhood Programs

Machon L'Morim: The Meyerhoff Fellows Program
A Project of the Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund

contact:

Dr. Shulamith R. Elster
Director, Machon L'Morim
c/o Baltimore Hebrew University
5800 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 578-6968
Fax: (410) 578-6940

March 21, 1995

Dear Colleague:

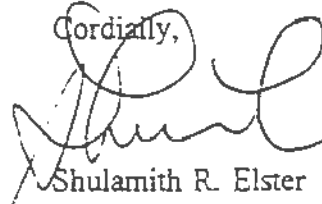
This packet contains information to assist you in the preparation of your school's application for B'reshit: Machon L'Morim for Jewish Early Childhood Education.

All early childhood programs affiliated with the Council On Jewish Education Services are encouraged to consider applying to participate in this project which will develop and implement a new model for the enhancement of the Jewish component of pre-school education.

This packet contains instructions and the forms necessary to apply. All applications must be received by May 1, 1995.

For additional information or assistance, please contact me at (410) 578-6968.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shulamith', written over the word 'Cordially,'.

Shulamith R. Elster
Director
Machon L'Morim

SRE:ek

Enclosures: B'reshit: In the Beginning
Request for Proposals

Program Overview

Four Baltimore area early childhood programs will be selected to participate in a multi-year *professional development* and *school enhancement* project.

The project has as its mission the enhancement of the Baltimore Jewish Community's early childhood programs. The project will serve as a model for other communities to the extent that a model can be replicated. Each participating program will be required to involve the entire school community (director, teachers, assistant/aides, lay leadership, rabbis, senior educators and parents) in learning experiences and in planning for change.

The project's primary goal is to develop personnel and environments that model *integrated* early childhood Jewish education. It is anticipated that the project will have an impact on children, their parents and families; the school community - teachers, directors, leadership and sponsors, and the Baltimore education community.

It is expected that this will be achieved by:

- teachers' and directors' participation in formal and informal study sessions with a faculty of local and national educators to expand knowledge of Judaica and Hebrew language.
- training in pedagogic skills.
- presentations and activities to further understanding of early child development (with emphasis on ethical, moral and spiritual development).
- presentations and discussions of successful programs through study of the Best Practices in Jewish Early Childhood Education Project of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education.
- planning for parent and family participation in educational initiatives and activities within the school community.
- activities to create "model" school communities.

Eligible Applicants: All Jewish early childhood programs affiliated with the Baltimore Council for Jewish Education Services

Deadline for applications: May 1, 1995

Application packets available: March 27, 1995

Estimated number of participating schools: four

Estimated number of participating teachers and directors: 18-20

Project calendar: September 1, 1995 through August 31, 1997 (two years)

Submitting Applications: Please submit original and two copies of the application.

✓ Cover Sheet:

Appendix A: Cover Sheet

✓ Proposal Narrative:

The narrative is the central focus of the proposal. It should contain detailed information on the seven topics outlined in Appendix B covering the following areas: program, calendar and schedule, staff, parents and families, support, governance and future plans.

The narrative should be typed and double spaced.

✓ Attachments to the Proposal:

- Mission Statement
- Staff Resumes
Director and four/five teachers who will be selected to participate in the project
- Financial Statement

Additional attachments may be included: e.g., school materials (brochure, public relations materials), copies of letters of commendation.

Optional: Letters of support for the school's participation in Machon L'Morim from the governing body, sponsoring institution, individuals and groups that have worked with the school and parents.

✓ Selection Criteria:

Schools will be selected SOLELY on their ability to provide evidence of:

- commitment to a Jewish early childhood program.
- commitment to developmentally appropriate practice.
- openness to change.
- involving parents and families.
- staff and professional development.

They will include programs affiliated with congregations, community-sponsored and independent schools. The project sees itself as being inclusive, and it is the hope that they will reflect the diversity of the Baltimore Jewish community.

✓ Selection process:

To assist in creating a "blind" application process applications will be reviewed initially without the covering identifying data. Final selection will be made by a committee of staff and selected members of the Professional Advisory Group of Machon L'Morim. Site visits will be made to semi-finalists as part of the final selection process. It is anticipated that site visits will be made to programs prior to the close of the 1994-5 school year. Announcements regarding final selection will be made by June 30, 1995.

**MACHON L'MORIM FOR
EARLY CHILDHOOD JEWISH EDUCATORS**

Application Number: _____ (to be assigned)

Official name of program: _____

Full mailing address: _____

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

Pre-school Director: _____

Telephone: () _____ () _____
(Home) (Work)

THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND ENDORSED BY:

Chairman of School Committee or Board of Education

(Typed)

(Signature)

If synagogue-affiliated

Educational Director (Typed)

Educational Director (Signature)

Rabbi (Typed)

Rabbi (Signature)

If school has other affiliation

Executive Director (Typed)

Executive Director (Signature)

Number of students enrolled by age

2: _____ 3: _____ 4: _____

Number of full-time teachers: _____

Number of part-time teachers: _____

Number of assistant teachers and/or aides: _____

Please append the packet of informational materials the school routinely sends to prospective parents.

APPENDIX B: NARRATIVE

I. PROGRAM

- A. Provide a brief history of the program
- B. Mission Statement
- C. What evidence is there of developmentally appropriate practice within the program? Please emphasize curricular GOALS particularly those that relate to Jewish knowledge and values.
- D. Please describe the admissions process, including standards for admission and procedures.
- E. Ongoing evaluation and assessment:
Under whose auspices is the school accredited?
How often? Using what criteria?
- F. How is the integrated general and Jewish studies program developed? Who is involved in the decision-making regarding curriculum and program. What use is made of outside consultants? To whom does the program turn for advice and guidance?

II. CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE

- Highlights of yearly calendar
- Daily schedule
- Special activities

III. STAFF (for all teachers, the director and aides)

- What professional qualifications must staff members have?
- What professional/staff development activities are offered to staff?
- How are these funded?

IV. PARENTS AND FAMILIES

- How are parents/families involved in the life of the school? (regular events, special events)
- How does the school communicate with parents? Include specific information regarding communication about Jewish matters - e.g., holidays, observances.

V. SUPPORT

What support does the program receive from the sponsoring institution? from other individuals or groups.

VI. GOVERNANCE

- What boards/committees are involved? How is their work accomplished? What is the composition of these groups - parent, staff and others?
- What role do these groups play in planning for change? for the future of the school?

VII. FUTURE/CHANGE

- What changes would (the director) like to see made in the content of the program?
- What capital and programmatic items are on the school's "wish list"?
- Have any plans been made for the future?
- Where does the school see itself five years from now?
- How does the school anticipate that participation in B'reshit will impact the school?

MACHON L'MORIM

A NEWSLETTER

MACHON L'MORIM:

An Experiment in Education

"Machon L'Morim began as an idea in April '92. Intended to reward and acknowledge teaching excellence, to expose the best teachers to the best thinkers in their field, it would ultimately provide teachers with appropriate tools to take this intensive enrichment experience and use it to transform classroom practice and curriculum. Finally, as an innovative model for Jewish education, it was intended to enable Jewish educators to give the Jewish students in their care compelling and exciting reasons for being Jewish." —Lee M. Hendler

The day and congregational schools of three Baltimore congregations participated in the initial Machon L'Morim project. Twelve teachers and administrators from the six affiliated schools of Baltimore Hebrew, Chizuk Amuno and Beth Tfiloh Congregations were selected as Meyerhoff Fellows by their respective schools.

The Professional Advisory Group under the chairmanship of Lee M. Hendler of the Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund met throughout the

CONTINUED ON PAGE ELEVEN

B'RESHIT: In the Beginning

A Jewish Early Childhood Initiative

In recognition of the critical role of early childhood educators in the development of the Jewish identity of young children and the impact of early Jewish childhood programs on children and their families, a new initiative in the area of Jewish early childhood education is underway.

Four Baltimore area early childhood programs will be selected to participate in a multi-year *professional development* and *school enhancement* project.

The project has as its mission the enhancement of the Baltimore Jewish Community's early childhood programs. The project will serve as a model for other communities to the extent that a model can be replicated. Each participating program will be required to involve the entire school community (director, teachers, assistant/aides, lay leadership, rabbis, senior educators and parents) in learning experiences and in planning for change.

The project's primary goal is to develop personnel and environments that model *integrated* early childhood Jewish education.

CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX

SPRING
1995

A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

By DR. CHAIM BOTWINICK

Machon L'Morim was established on the premise that the teacher is the key to affecting school change and innovation. Machon L'Morim has offered our community an intensive and extensive in-service teacher training program which today serves as a replicable model for Jewish communities throughout North America.

"The program helped (the teachers) to see how powerful they are as role models to pupils and how important it is that they be Judaically committed if they hope to influence their pupils to become committed."

In recognition of the fact that quality is a sine quo non for effective education, Machon L'Morim has responded to this challenge by providing participants an in-service training program rich in scope, quality, and content and with an array of focused and in-depth learning/sharing opportunities complimented by innovative and meaningful experiential programming.

The Baltimore Jewish education community is blessed to be the recipient of a generous grant from the Children of the Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund which underwrites the entire cost of Machon L'Morim. As we complete our second year we owe a debt of gratitude and sincere appreciation to Lee M. Hendler and her siblings who constitute the Children of the Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund. Their vision for Machon L'Morim has indeed become our successful reality!

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP

1993-1995

Ms. Lee M. Hendler, Chair

Dr. Chaim Botwinick, Executive Director
Center for the Advancement
of Jewish Education

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
Rabbi Murray Saltzman

Dr. Suzanne Cotter
Director of Education

Chizuk Amuno Congregation
Rabbi Joel Zaiman

Dr. Paul D. Schneider
Headmaster, Krieger Schechter Day School

Rabbi Stuart Seltzer
Principal

Beth Tfiloh Congregation
Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg

Mrs. Zipora Schorr
Director of Education

"The Jewish individual in the Jewish world-view develops in the context of community and that when we talk about development in this way we mean identity information."

"That is, the real challenge of Jewish continuity is in enabling Jews to develop healthy identities as Jews so that as they grow and develop they will find good reason to actively seek to embody those values and beliefs which Judaism celebrates."

"Through Judaism they will make meaning of themselves and the journey itself will take place within community because that is what Torah requires of us."

-Lee M. Hendler

FACULTY:

Academic Seminar & Israel Study Mission

Rabbi Jack Bieler
Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington

Dr. Steven Brown
Solomon Schechter School of Philadelphia

Nadine Feiler
The Park School

Professor Neil Gillman
Jewish Theological Seminary

Rabbi Jules Harlow
The Rabbinical Assembly

Professor Lawrence Hoffman
Hebrew Union College

Evelyn McClain
The Park School

Michael Posnick
Melton Center
Jewish Theological Seminary

Professor Joseph Reimer
Brandeis University

Deborah Roffman
The Park School

Seymour Rossel
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

Dr. David Silber
Drisha Institute

Professor Saul Wachs
Gratz College

Director
Dr. Shulamith Reich Elster
Baltimore Hebrew University

David Groner
Israel Mission Director
Melton Centre
Ministry of Education

Hebrew University

Dr. Michael Rosenak
Melton Center

Dr. Howard Dietcher
Melton Center

Dr. Yonathan Cohen
Melton Center

Moshe Yitzchahi
Oranim Seminar

Joyce Klein
Melitz

Rabbi Reuven Hammer
Neve Schechter

Rabbi Naama Kelman
Tali Schools

Dr. Aryeh Routenberg

Nancy Benjamin
Neot Kedumim

Barbara Levine
French Hill
Tali School

Dr. Eliyahu Schliefer
Hebrew Union College

Evaluators

Dr. Leora Isaacs

Dr. Julie Tammivaara

CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS: An Interim Report

By DR. STEVEN M. BROWN

My involvement with the Machon L'Morim program so far has been one of wonder, excitement and challenge!

There is probably no program anywhere in the country similar to what is being accomplished here in Baltimore through the magnificent support of the Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund. A group of teachers from the entire spectrum of the Jewish community, from day and afternoon schools, are working together to develop their skills in writing curricula in Jewish prayer and making important contributions to their own schools and eventually to Jewish education as a whole.

I feel very privileged to have been asked to work with this group of dedicated, competent and highly motivated teachers. It is clear that the future of Jewish education is infinitely more secure knowing that there are such wonderfully talented and caring professionals giving of their time and talents to the development of learning materials and educational experiences for our students.

In our monthly seminars we balance learning more about T'fillah, the Siddur, and fundamental concepts underlying Jewish prayer and practical strategies in curriculum development.

The model that has been central to our curriculum development work is one which begins with an authentic look at a traditional text, with the goal of understanding all of the concepts and ideas that underlie that text. Once those concepts have been enunciated and sifted, the curriculum writer-teacher, youth group leader or Shabbat Junior Congregation

organizer selects from the list of concepts those which are most appropriate to the age and developmental level of the learner. Instructional goals and objectives are then constructed, and finally a methodology of exposing students to the particular concept and attaining the desired outcome is developed.

"Having taught Bamidbar this past year and drawing upon dim memories of the desert from my trip over a decade ago, I was reawakened to the desolate beauty of the Judean desert. I now see new possibilities for teaching this section of the Torah, drawing upon the physical surroundings to better understand the hardships, rebellions and struggles of a slave people being forged into a holy nation. I would spend more time looking at the question of why the Torah was given in the desert, how the desert can serve as a place of catharsis and refuge, and explore the idea of the desert (bamidbar) as a place where G-d speaks (midaber) to man."

— Marietta Jaffee

Curriculum writers are encouraged to develop original strategies and materials, or make use of existing resources to avoid re-inventing the wheel.

This curriculum development procedure enables teachers to become independent, creative constructors of curriculum on all levels and in all settings.

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE

CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS: An Interim Report

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

Some of our teachers are working on developing a scope and sequence for the prayer curriculum of a Reform day school. Another is developing teenage mentors to help younger students learn about prayer in an afternoon school setting and further develop their "spirituality". Yet another teacher is using the three letter Hebrew roots of the more important words in the Siddur as a method of teaching Hebrew to seventh graders and to give them the keys to understanding the Siddur.

Each one of these projects (and others described elsewhere in this newsletter) are refined and developed through our team work. One of the most exciting aspects for me as a facilitator of this process is using members of the team to support and

encourage one another. By reviewing work together, we can elicit suggestions and feedback from our peers. Each brings wisdom, personal experience and expertise

"I moved from teaching tefillah in a mechanical, rote fashion to providing pupils with opportunities to find meaning in prayer and to connect prayer to their everyday lives."

that contribute to all. This kind of collaborative, collegial process is what good education and curriculum development should be.

In October, we arranged meetings between the teacher participants, the school principal and myself. Teachers and administrators exchanged views, clarified goals, and came to an agreement on what the teacher's work could contribute to the class or school as a whole. This supportive relationship will insure that the teacher's efforts are valued and help to bring lasting change. To cement this partnership the Meyerhoff Fund has provided funds to purchase materials and resources and to implement the new curricular approaches.

The Jewish community of Baltimore should be proud and grateful that funding has been provided for this unique curriculum development model.

What has been exciting is that different ideologies do not get in the way. People in different movements and on different levels can be enormously supportive and helpful to one another! Each one of these curriculum projects when finished will

"The theme of our Israel Experience was TRADITION AND RENEWAL. As an educator, I can confidently say that the many sessions and trips certainly met this theme successfully. Our eyes were opened to the beautiful TRADITION of our Tanach as it was unfolded by the cadre of erudite professionals. Visiting Israel this summer and having witnessed its vibrancy, progress and growth, I can proudly say that I felt the RENEWAL – the ongoing rejuvenation of our people and the vast rebuilding of our homeland. The challenge is now mine, as a Jewish educator, to inspire our Jewish children with the necessary knowledge and understanding of TRADITION and at the same time bringing relevance to their learning so that they will be imbued with feelings of appreciation, commitment, and pride that will guarantee continued RENEWAL."

– Anita Preis

CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX

CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS:

An Interim Report

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE

leave a legacy for future teachers and administrators. Each project reflects the life of a particular school, its mission and an understanding of what is needed by students and teachers to move forward. This type of locally based curriculum development is powerful in changing school culture and in gaining the support and involvement of colleagues.

There is probably no more powerful way to change the life of a school than enabling a colleague to work at developing a successful idea or program, and to share it with the teacher in the room next door. This is a supportive, non-threatening model of professional growth that empowers those on the "frontlines" to bring substantive and lasting change to their institutions.

"The operant assumption of Machon L'Morim was that education and therefore teachers lay at the center of any definitive response to the continuity questions."

— Lee M. Hendler

B'RESHIT: In the Beginning
A Jewish Early Childhood Initiative

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

It is anticipated that the project will have an impact on children, their parents and families; the school community – teachers, directors, leadership and sponsors, and the Baltimore education community.

"...the greatest strength of Machon L'Morim to date is that it takes Jewish educators seriously and provides teachers with the opportunity to study with great scholars and thinkers."

It is expected that this will be achieved by:

- teachers' and directors' participation in formal and informal study sessions with a faculty of local and national educators to expand knowledge of Judaica and Hebrew language.
- training in pedagogic skills.
- presentations and activities to further the understanding of early child development (with emphasis on ethical, moral and spiritual development).
- presentations and discussions of successful programs through study of the Best Practices in Jewish Early Childhood Education Project of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education.
- planning for parent and family participation in educational initiatives and activities within the school community.
- activities to create "model" school communities.

SCHOOL & CLASSROOM CURRICULUM PROJECTS

Allene Gutin

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation

I am working on a curriculum for 6th graders who no longer attend Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Day School as the school only goes up to the fifth grade. The plan is for a supplemental program meeting one, two or three days a week. This has yet to be determined.

The curriculum will focus on:

Tefillah – a deeper understanding of prayer

Spirituality – how to use prayer to answer important questions that pre-teens are asking

The goal is to blend these two themes to answer questions and guide students to their own answers.

Yoram Unguru

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation

The Roots of Hebrew

The Roots of Hebrew is a project aimed at increasing student awareness of the basic structure of the Hebrew language.

Specifically, the project is directed towards the AMIDAH and its nineteen prayers. An average of three key words are concentrated in each of the prayers; these verbs are based on the CONCEPTS of each prayer. i.e. Kedushan, the roots Kadesh – holy, Cavod – respect, and Hallel – praise. A total of 51 roots will be mastered by students. This, in turn, will enable students to recognize different variations of the root/verb in the context of the prayer. The goal for students is to UNDERSTAND

important concepts of the Amidah rather than memorize specific prayers.

Cynthia Weiner

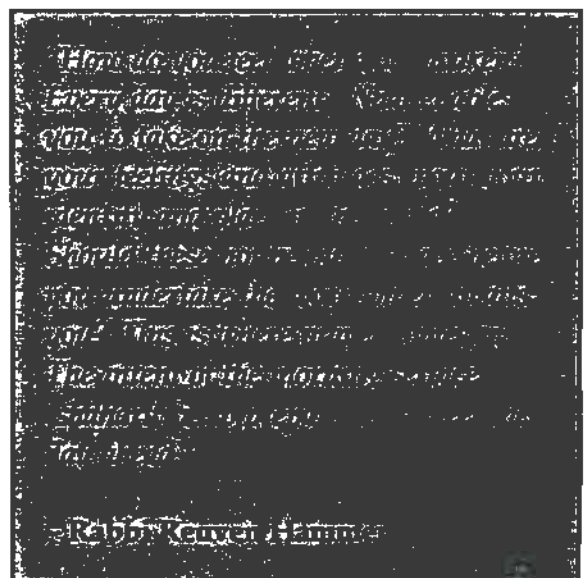
Nancy Epstein

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Day School

We have examined current tefillah practices at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Day School. We will examine tefillah practices at other Reform day schools across the United States and in Israel. These practices will be compared and contrasted with the objective of suggesting and implementing strategies for improvement at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Day School.

Strategies for implementation will be based on the Machon L'Morim experience.

We plan to develop an outline to extend and to spiral tefillah into our upper grades and to write sample teaching units with necessary materials and resources. Strategies for implementation will be developed with teachers in the classroom and clergy, as necessary.



SCHOOL & CLASSROOM CURRICULUM PROJECTS

CONTINUED

Avi Silverman

Beth Tfiloh Community High School

The goal of Prayer Fest '95 is to introduce students at the lower grade levels means to prayer that differ from the traditional forms to which they are accustomed. During the course of four fifteen minute sessions, students can select prayer activities through relay races, writing their own prayer, setting a traditional prayer to popular music, decorating a personal prayer, learning how to sign a traditional prayer, hands on prayer objects and by analyzing and then acting out a particular prayer. Students from the other schools will be invited to jointly study at Beth Tfiloh for this event. In this way the meeting of schools that has taken place in Machon L'Morim will be replicated with our students as well.

Rachel Glazer

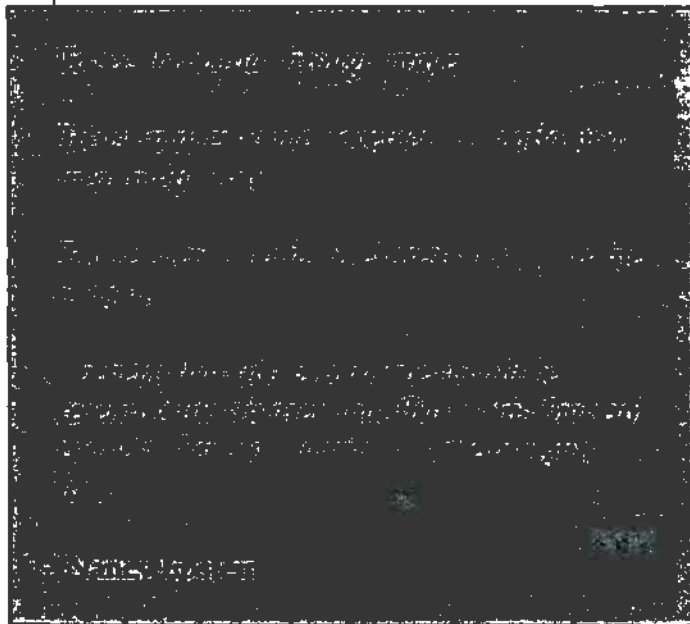
Beth Tfiloh Community High School

Prayer in Secular Poetry

Rabbin Abraham Joshua Heschel said of the "Ba'al Tefillah" "...the person in whom a spiritual equation takes place - the equation of song and soul, or word and mind. The self and prayer are one."

As a part of our Hebrew curriculum we teach our children Hebrew songs written by secular poets, of which some are actually wishes, prayers, requests and expressions of thanks. By kindling awareness and sensitivity to the message of the poem the student will understand that every person is a believer and has unique ways of expressing these beliefs. Since prayer is a natural expression of the feelings, it has given expression to the faith and hopes, sorrows and joys, of the people as a whole. Students will learn to distinguish between different styles of prayers and compare them to the Siddur and the Psalms. Both have been described as the anatomy of all parts of the soul.

All the sorrows, troubles, fears, doubts, hopes, pains, perplexities, stormy outbreaks by which the souls are tossed are depicted in secular poems as well as in the Psalms. In both we find man speaks to G-d, and they both contain the whole music of the heart of men, which is timeless and universal.



SCHOOL & CLASSROOM CURRICULUM PROJECTS

CONTINUED

Harriet Brown

Chizuk Amuno

I am developing a Shabbat morning service for fifth and sixth grade students who attend afternoon religious school or day school. The service will utilize the skills of the children from both settings, recognizing the differences in knowledge and experience, but making each feel important and special. While the service is based on the fixed "matbeyah tefillah," leeway is provided for creativity, experimentation, and freedom of expression. The service includes a Torah service with abridged readings done by the children. Each week's service will include either a seasonal or holiday-related theme or exploration of the Torah portion of the week.

Marietta Jaffee

Chizuk Amuno Religious School

So far this year our Tefillah program for Gimmel students and teenage mentors has been successful in:

- Teaching the mechanics of prayer to fourth graders.
- Generating interest and enthusiasm among the students for becoming prayer leaders.
- Helping students gain the skills and confidence to participate in Junior Congregation Shabbat services and to lead Junior Congregation Shabbat services.
- Providing accessible prayer role models through the presence of teenage mentors.

Through my observation of several mentors during prayer, I became aware of the need to provide mentors with a thorough training program.

My goal is to develop and implement such a program in the following areas.

- Responsibilities of being a Tefillah Mentor – expectations for prompt attendance, regular participation, commitment to attending training throughout the year, stipend.
- The teenage mentor as role model (during prayer and in general).
- Awareness of the developmental stage of nine and ten year olds.
- Creating spaces conducive to prayer.
- Developing discussion leading skills.
- Developing and using a prayer vocabulary.
- Technique for building confidence among students.
- Self and group evaluation.
- Organizing principles in the Siddur.

Before each tefillah session, a teacher or guest speaker will give a brief dvar tefillah to the entire group of students. After watching teachers teaching brief model segments, each teenage mentor will have a chance to teach towards the end of the year.

SCHOOL & CLASSROOM CURRICULUM PROJECTS

CONTINUED

Rita L.K. Plaut

Krieger Schechter Day School

(Chizuk Amuno)

I have decided to focus on one of the three types of prayer *Giving Thanks to God* because I feel that middle school youngsters would benefit and gain a more wholesome perspective of life if they are more aware of the great gifts that have been bestowed upon them. I want to move youngsters to realize what these gifts are as reflected in the tenets of our prayers. I want them to think about what they will do with these gifts; how will they become ethically responsible for what they have.

Beginning with the overall theme of "Thanks" as expressed in the modern prayer of the Amidah, we will focus on the miracles given us daily. This idea of "daily miracles" is one of great significance as we begin to open our eyes in anticipation of the world around us, our bodies and how they allow us to function and the abilities and intellect that enable us to pursue our goals and dreams.

"The Challenge is both personal and pedagogical, and it is clear that the teachers have developed in both areas. There was greater willingness to take risks, to depart (under minimal coercion) from the "prepared" lesson and trust the knowledge of the moment – and the group to provide needed support. Real, practical issues arose related to the teachers' own questions about prayer and their teaching styles. And there was willingness and patience to continue searching even when the answer was not immediately forthcoming – a sure sign of maturation."

– Michael Posnick

MACHON L'MORIM FELLOWS

MACHON L'MORIM

1993-1995

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation

Nancy Epstein

Allene Lee Gutin

Yoram Tal Unguru

Cynthia Jo Weiner

Beth Tfiloh Congregation

Cherie F. Seidman-Brownstein, '93-'94

Rachel E. Glazer

Anita Preis, '93-'94

Rabbi Avi Silverman

Chizuk Amuno Congregation

Harriet S. Brown

Ariella Enden, '93-'94

Marietta Lyons Jaffee

Rita L.K. Plaut

A PRAYER OF RABBI NACHMAN OF BRATSLAV

*"Ruler of the Universe,
grant me the ability to be alone;
may it be my custom to go outdoors each day
among trees and grass, among all
growing things,
and there may I be alone,
and enter into
prayer,
to talk with the One that I belong to.*

*May I express there everything in my heart
and may all the foliage of the field
(all grasses, trees and plants)
may they all awake at my coming
to send out the powers of their life
into the words of my prayer
so that my prayer and speech are made whole
through the life and spirit of all growing things
which are made us one by their
transcendent Source."*

– as taught by Michael Posnick

MACHON L'MORIM: An Experiment in Education

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Philanthropic Fund met throughout the program. This group which included the senior rabbis and educational leaders of the participating institutions and Dr. Chaim Botwinick provided direction and guidance for all aspects of the program through August 1994.

In selecting tefillah as the theme the project was designed to:

- provide intellectually and spiritually stimulating experiences in study and opportunities for reflection on personal and professional practices.
- develop a personal theology that finds expression in tefillah.
- gain pedagogical skills in the teaching of tefillah and the conducting of tefillah experiences for pupils.
- develop educational programs in the teaching of tefillah for the school designed specifically to meet the developmental and spiritual needs of the middle school pupil.

"Machon L'Morim could be a demonstration project modeling pluralism for the Jewish community at large..."

During the 1993/94 academic year, weekly seminars were conducted by a visiting faculty of thirteen scholars and educators. In July, a ten-day Israel Study Mission took place at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

"...when I recite Psalm 29 of Kabbalat Shabbat, which speaks of the 'voice of G-d breaking the cedars,' I remember sitting under a cedar tree at Neot Kedumim discussing this metaphor. Having tasted fresh figs, dates and carob off the trees in the midst of summer when the surrounding terrain is parched I can better appreciate the miraculous truth of the description of Israel as a 'land of milk and honey'."

— Marietta Jaffee

Each teacher received a professional library and duplicate copies of these volumes were given to each of the participating schools.

An evaluation of all aspects of the project was conducted by Dr. Leora Isaacs and Dr. Julie Tammivaara. The recommendations in the evaluation report have been incorporated into planning for the second Machon L'Morim project to begin in September 1995.

"Prayer is the core of every Jewish education. If we fail in teaching the importance of faith and tradition through prayers, we have failed in our mission as Jewish educators."

—Rachel Glazer

MACHON L'MORIM

A NEWSLETTER

IN THE BEGINNING ...

By DR. SHULAMITH REICH ELSTER

B'RESHIT began with an ambitious agenda to dramatically change the nature of Jewish early childhood education in the five participating preschools - Bet Yeladim, Beth El, Beth Israel, Chizuk Amuno and the Jewish Community Center. These schools were selected on the basis of their commitment and that of their sponsoring institutions to Jewish early childhood education. Schools reflect the diversity of the Baltimore Jewish community in that they include congregational schools and those sponsored by the Jewish Community Center and an independent Jewish school.

The Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund sponsors B'RESHIT as a means of expressing its commitment to the enhancement of Jewish education through the professional development of early childhood educators.

It is anticipated that B'RESHIT will serve as a model for other communities to the extent that a model can be replicated.

In order to achieve its goal of developing personnel and environments that model integrated Jewish early childhood education, B'RESHIT has seven distinct yet interrelated program components.

TEACHERS AS LEARNERS: *Adult Jewish Education*

It was anticipated that this process would be a gradual one and that essential to its success were the teachers and directors who each day directly influence the lives of young children and their parents. We assumed a *knowledgeable and committed Jewish teacher* would naturally create learning opportunities and classroom settings that would foster the fullest development of each

youngster and thus with the child's parents build a strong and positive Jewish identity.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: *Directors as Learners*

Four of the directors of Machon L'Morim schools are currently enrolled in the new Educational Leadership Certificate Program at Baltimore Hebrew University. They meet weekly in seminars with other preschool and congregational school educators and a group of senior educators on the staff of the Council on Jewish Education Services. The seminar focuses on the challenges of leadership and the role of the principal/leader in the process of change. Formal graduate training in education provides B'RESHIT directors with new insights and a heightened understanding of their critical roles.

EDUCATORS AS LEARNERS: *Pedagogic Skills*

Pedagogic specialist D'vorah Horn-Greenberg of Bet HaYeled in Philadelphia works directly with each school. The demonstration classrooms in each school will help bring other teachers within the school community into the B'RESHIT program.

MACHON L'MORIM AS LEARNER: *Research and Evaluation*

Our ethnographer/researcher Dr. Julie Tammivaara continues to observe all aspects of B'RESHIT. Observations and insights over the past three years have been invaluable in that they have resulted in many program improvements. Much of the success of B'RESHIT is due to the thorough evaluation of the initial Machon L'Morim work with the three Baltimore synagogues and their

B'RESHIT: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

By DR. CHAIM Y. BOTWINICK

Machon L'Morim: B'RESHIT currently in its second successful year, is designed to enhance and improve Jewish early childhood education personnel and their respective institutions.

The primary goal of the program is to develop environments and educational personnel that model integrated Jewish early childhood education. Participants explore and apply a wide variety of subjects in Judaica and pedagogy with the hope and promise that these experiences not only positively impact upon the skills and development of the participants, but also upon the institutions in which they serve.

Under the sterling and dynamic leadership of Dr. Shulamith Elster as well as a cadre of outstanding early childhood education consultants, mentors and coaches, B'RESHIT continues to have a most profound effect upon the manner in which we conceptualize about child development, professional development/enrichment, educational change, and continual renewal - critical to the pursuit of educational excellence in our community.

Finally, there is no program anywhere in the United States similar to what is being accomplished through this program due to the unswerving vision and philanthropic support of the *Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund*. Their generosity was instrumental in turning this vision into reality - and for this, we will always be most grateful.

ADVISORY GROUP

1995-1997

Dr. Chaim Y. Botwinick, Chair

Mrs. Marci Dickman
Acting Executive Director
Council on Jewish Education Services

Dr. Ruth Pinkenson-Feldman
Jewish Community Center Association

Dr. Miriam P. Feinberg
Board of Jewish Education
of Greater Washington

Mrs. Felice S. Friedman

Mrs. Susan C. Goldstein
Jewish Family Services

Mrs. Lee M. Hendler

Mrs. Jennifer L. Meyerhoff

Mrs. Roberta C. Orman
Oheb Shalom Congregation

Ms. Ina Regosin
Boston Hebrew College

Mrs. Ilene Vogelstein

Dr. Shulamith R. Elster, Staff
Baltimore Hebrew University

"I love my job - not only working with young children but also teaching them in a Jewish setting where I can try to nurture a love of Judaism and an appreciation of our rich heritage. So why for the past twenty plus years did I wince when someone asked me what I do? And why have so many of my colleagues confessed to similar feelings of defensiveness? And more to the point, why am I no longer uncomfortable when someone 'pops the question'?"

Enter Machon L'Morim. Suddenly, it seemed, through the recognition and generosity of the Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund, the community had become aware of the importance of reaching our youngest members, of "turning on" young children to their Jewish connection and thereby beginning a lifelong spiritual identification and connectedness. Rather than dismissing us as glorified babysitters, the Meyerhoff Fund decided to reach out to interested teachers in order to help us become better, more effective transmitters of Jewish values and education. Our sense of self-worth elevated, we thus began a year of growth and introspection, a year in which we were encouraged to challenge old shibboleths, strengthen or in some cases re-define our own sense of Jewishness and always to question."

Judy Mehlman

NO MORE IMPORTANT PLACE TO BE

By RABBI GILA COLMAN RUSKIN



Photo by Jane Hwang, Baltimore Jewish Times

"Rabbi Gila Ruskin stands before a group of preschool teachers on a Thursday night, strumming her guitar as she explains the origins of 'L'chi Lach,' a song about bringing holiness to others. It is the end of a long day, and a long week, for Rabbi Ruskin, but there is no indication of her fatigue.

Rather she appears energized by this evening's discussion of kedusha, or sanctity, and how to help children find the sacred in everyday life.

In one of this evening's many spontaneous exchanges, the rabbi compares the Torah to a wedding gift. It is not a tchotchke, she tells them, a pretty but useless object to keep on a shelf. It is more like a food processor, a durable, versatile instrument the recipients will turn to regularly to enhance their lives.

Outside, it is sleeting and cold, and 9 o'clock has come and gone.

But at this moment, for the 25 women gathered at Pikesville's Beth El Congregation - who, like their teacher, surely hear their families and "to do" lists beckoning - there is no more important place to be."

Christine Stutz, Baltimore Jewish Times

Some of our B'RESHIT participants had been the beloved teachers of my own children in preschool over ten years ago. I was grateful to them for their gentle guidance and warm presence. And now I have the privilege and joy of helping to open up to them the wisdom of the texts of our heritage. Their lives have been enhanced and enriched by our study of *kedusha*, holiness, *simcha*, celebration, and *kehila*, community.

On Thursday evening we gather to learn together from the liturgy, the bible, and historical documents. A bracha for a rainbow, a song for healing of body and spirit, an insight into the Jewish approach to death and mourning, an original interpretation of an ancient Biblical

EXTRAORDINARY IN ITS POWER TO TRANSFORM

By DR. JULIE TAMMIVAARA

Typical of educators in many formal Jewish educational settings, many of the women who gathered on Thursday nights in Baltimore felt ambiguous about their own Jewish identities. On the one hand, they were committed to a lifelong involvement in early childhood education in a Jewish setting, on the other hand, many did not observe the most basic Jewish ritual practices and were reluctant teachers of "Jewish units" in their classrooms. Part of this reluctance can be attributed to a lack of cognitive knowledge about Judaism.

As women, many did not have the opportunity to study Judaism as young girls; others had the opportunity but were not encouraged to engage in study or continue it past the age of bat mitzvah. Most gained their Jewish knowledge in their family of origin through participation in celebrating major holidays and maybe observing Shabbat. Upon entering the program, few acknowledged an intellectual grasp of Judaism either generally or in their own lives.

At the same time these women exhibited another characteristic common to early childhood educators: a deep commitment to their chosen field of work despite little professional recognition or monetary reward. Perhaps among all Jewish educators, preschool educators are the most purely committed as they reap the fewest extrinsic rewards for the work they do.

By the end of the year, virtually all of these women — directors and teacher alike — had partaken of an experience that was extraordinary in its power to transform their personal and professional lives.

I will attempt to trace what I think are the significant steps that led to the program succeeding in making a profound difference in the lives of 26 educators in six Jewish preschools in the greater Baltimore area. The three key areas are organizational, pedagogical, and communicative.

B'RESHIT was designed as a multi-year program of professional development for several cadres of early childhood teachers and their directors and as a program that would enhance schools. It was hoped that the program would develop the professional skills of personnel and create appropriate environments for integrated education such that a model for other communities would result.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Academic

Rabbi Gila Ruskin
Dr. Shulamith Elster
D'vorah Horn Greenberg

Consultants

Dr. Chaim Botwinick
Center for the Advancement of
Jewish Education

Marci Dickman
Council on Jewish
Education Services

Dr. Gail Dorph
Council for Initiatives in
Jewish Education

Bev Engel
Education & Organization
Development Consultant

Dr. Julie Tammivaara
Ethnographer

Yoetzot

Rena Rotenberg
Jewish Community Center
Beth Israel

Sharyn Stein
Beth El

Paula Williams
Bet Yeladim
Chizuk Amuno

"We must see Jewish early childhood education ... as the start of life-long learning, which is, in fact, the grounding premise of Jewish citizenship. It is a stunning place to start creating Jewish citizens, because early childhood education offers us a unique possibility: the chance to take advantage of two windows of opportunity. One opens into the spirit and the mind of the child, the other into the heart and mind of the parent."

Lee M. Hendler
Remarks to Early Childhood Directors
January 25, 1995

THIS YEAR IN JERUSALEM

In August, 1996, we were privileged to attend ICAJE 21 in Jerusalem, through the generosity of the Children of Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Fund. Each of us had been inspired by B'RESHIT: Machon L'Morim to seek a deeply meaningful Jewish experience, but the Jerusalem experience that awaited us was beyond any of our expectations.

"Our study sessions made me aware of my place in the Jewish global order. By my actions, I could sanctify an event or a place. I could affirm the wonderment of an experience by connecting with God through prayer. There is a balance in the natural order, and I as a person can have a powerful role in its appreciation and helping others to keep in touch."

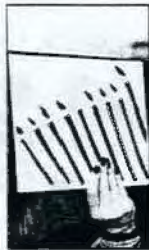
Paula Williams

The setting for Jewish learning was the Mt. Scopus Campus of Hebrew University, providing a vantage point for a breathtakingly beautiful panorama of the City of Jerusalem. This view inspired us as we attended sessions by day and as we were entertained with Israeli singing and dancing each evening in the Amphitheater. In this place were gathered nearly two thousand people from all over the world, and each of us had come for the same purpose — for the sake of the children we teach.

Through our classes and the two *havayah* days when we selected our own experiences in Jerusalem via half day and full day tours, we came to better understand the two Jerusalems: *Yerushalayim shel matah* (Jerusalem of the World) and *Yerushalayim shel ma'alah* (Jerusalem of the Spirit). We returned from the Conference feeling vastly enriched with Jewish knowledge, with a deeper love for Judaism and Israel, and an eagerness to impart our new knowledge and attitudes through out reaching of Jewish pre-school children.

Gayle Glick, Beth El
Sandee Lever, Chizuk Amuno
Gail Potashnick, Beth Israel
Lois Wolf, Beth Israel

SIYUM: A CELEBRATION OF LEARNING



"I think the sessions taught me how to connect with my Jewish past and future. There is a part of me that feels the power of the journey through Sinai, the revelations of the commandments and the Torah."

Paula Williams

EXTRAORDINARY IN ITS POWER TO TRANSFORM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

The eighteen preschools affiliated with the Council for Jewish Education Services were invited to submit proposals, with the understanding that four would be accepted into the B'RESHIT program. The proposal process was carefully detailed, requiring the applicants to provide evidence of:

- Commitment to a Jewish early childhood program,
- Commitment to developmentally appropriate practice,
- Openness to change,
- Willingness to involve parents, families, and staff, and
- Willingness to engage in professional development.

"We grew in knowledge and spirit. Just as a tree grows to maturity I too began a growing process. As the year progressed, I changed as naturally as the seasons change the color of trees. As the year continued, I grew spiritually just as the tree gets taller. As the texture of the bark changes, I changed, my ethical and moral development became more focused. And, just as the size and number of leaves change on the tree, my knowledge of Judaism expanded."

Jean Grinspoon

In addition, school representatives were required to articulate school and curriculum goals, admission, accreditation, and evaluation procedures, parental role in school program, site description and facilities, staff, governance structure, and planning. A financial statement was required.

By implementing this rigorous process, the program ensured that only the most seriously interested schools would apply. It also ensured that only schools positioned to engage in staff professional development and school enhancement would be included.

It is ironic and surprising, but one of the most frequent barriers to effective education is the failure of educational structures to accommodate participants' needs to communicate with one another.

B'RESHIT attempted to break this pattern by building in a role for three people specifically designed to promote inter-and intra-group interaction. These are the yoetzot, the counselors, the guides.

IN THE BEGINNING

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congregational and day schools.

PARENTS AND FAMILIES AS LEARNERS: *Parent and Family Education*

Very high on the agenda of B'RESHIT is the program's implementation of exciting family education in each of the schools. Some work was begun last year with school teams in an inventory of current programs with a view to assessing the Jewish, the family and the educational component of each. Each of the schools has come to realize that their present programs—while successful on a variety of measures—did not meet their own new standards for meaningful Jewish family education.

JEWISH EDUCATION COMMUNITY AS LEARNERS: *Dissemination*

We have expertise and experience. It is important that we find ways to share it with others. There are many possibilities: curriculum materials from our seminars, video tapes of the first year seminars and formal evaluation reports.

We are planning a formal written presentation at the June conference of the Network for Research in Jewish Education and also a publication that presents B'RESHIT from several viewpoints - teacher, director, yoetzot, researcher, project director and Advisory Committee Chair. Also under consideration is a conference in Baltimore on Change in Jewish Early Childhood Education.

SCHOOL AS LEARNER: *School Change*

School change has been a major theme. It is also being addressed in the training that Bev Engel provides for the yoetzot, in formal academic seminars with the directors and with our consultants. The schools have each—with the help of the yoetzot—begun a process of self-assessment and close examination of mission and goals: this the essential first step of a process that requires many resources - time, talent and above all a commitment to change. Work has to be undertaken at this point with the rabbis/executive director in the case of the JCC, lay leadership and school governing bodies. Receptivity to change and to new ways of thinking is a prerequisite on the part of the sponsoring institutions.

MEYERHOFF FELLOWS

1995-1997

BETH EL

Pauline Mash School for Early Childhood Education

Ellen Marks, *Director*
Ellen Asher
Gayle Glick
Patti Robinson
Debby Weinberg

BETH ISRAEL

Beth Israel Preschool

Gail Potashnick, *Director*
Cynthia Bralove
Caron Glassman
Lois Wolf

BET YELADIM

Bet Yeladim, Inc.

Jean Grinspoon, *Director*
Nancy Barad
Shelley Jacobson
Hattie Katkow
Lara Silverstein

CHIZUK AMUNO

Goldsmith Early Childhood Education Center

Sandee Lever, *Director*
Paula Berger
Rochelle Golomb
Judy Mehlman
Marilyn Melnick
Ellyn Soypher

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Owings Mills & Park Heights

Vivian Chait, *Director*
Talía Aaron
Judith Gillis
Jodie Silver
Sybil White
Cece Witow

"I look at the books I am reading now, and wonder if they would have been part of my personal library a year ago... I have never felt as in tune with my Judaism as now."

Gail Potashnick

NO MORE IMPORTANT PLACE TO BE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

story have energized and empowered these teachers to be confident and well-grounded role models for their students, the youngest of our Jewish learners.

"For the first time in many years, I was learning on an adult level that did not involve testing or term papers. I was learning for learning's sake...and for my sake."

"What became increasingly clear to me was that these learning sessions were creating a different way of thinking for me; approaching concepts, units, and materials Jewishly, not merely secularly. It was at this juncture that I realized what B'RESHIT was all about for me. I was being taken back to my beginning in order to teach as a Jewish educator."

Ellen Marks

This fall as we focused on the meaning of our life cycle ceremonies as Jewish rites of passage based on religious and psychological principles, we learned from a mohel about *brit milah*, a Jewish Lamaze instructor about Jewish views of childbirth, a new bride about the values of Jewish marriage, a member of a *chevra kadisha* about the purification of the dead. In the winter, we are embarking on a six-week minimester of intensive courses on the subjects of "Hebrew for Beginners and Those Who Want to Begin Again," "Women in the Bible and Midrash," and "Religion in American Society." In the spring, we plan to visit the sites of Jewish Baltimore, as we explore in depth the services and functions of our *kehila: community*.

I am proud to be the rabbi/teacher of B'RESHIT, adult learners in Machon L'Morim.

"Who ever knew there could be a blessing to recite over a beautiful sunset? Or a sandy beach? I never would have thought of making a snowy day a holy day! How amazing! I did not realize how much Kedusha is a part of our lives."

Patricia Robinson