MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.
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Goals Project. Guides, 1995-1998.

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MEMO TO: CIJE Staff
FROM: Dan Pekarsky
RE: "Goals Coaches" for existing CIJE projects
DATE: April 15, 1998

INTRODUCTION

At our recent retreat at the Chauncey Retreat Center, I articulated what I had mistakenly assumed to be an uncontroversial suggestion that there be assigned to each of the teams responsible for a major CIJE Project an individual whose designated responsibility it would be to make sure that questions and ideas concerning goals and Jewish content ongoingly infuse the work at hand. This idea turned out to be more problematic for some of the participants than I had anticipated: questions were raised (or else lurked in the background) concerning the need for individuals to play this role, as wellas concerning whether introducing such individuals to existing project-teams would overly-complicate the work of these teams. More fundamentally, questions were raised about what the role of such a person would be! In this brief paper, I attempt to lay out a conception of the "goals-coach's" role, as well to offer the rationale for including such an individual on each team.

[1998]

THE PLACE OF VISION IN JEWISH EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Daniel Pekarsky

WORKING DRAFT
NOT FOR CIRCULATION

INTRODUCTION

Educators and supporters of education are often impatient with larger philosophical questions. Preoccupied with pressing problems that already require more than the limited time and energy they have available, it may well feel to them like a distraction to give thought to basic questions concerning the larger purposes that the educational process is meant to serve. This view, however, is mistaken. Attention to such questions is not a frill but an urgent imperative. There is little of more practical value than the possession of an inspiring vision that can inform the educational process. This is the basic thesis that will be developed in this paper.[1]

In their influential book THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL, Arthur Powell et. al. develop a devastating critique of the American high school. At the heart of this critique is the suggestion that, as an institution, the high school has been suffering from what might be called "a failure of nerve". It has been singularly unable or unwilling to declare for any particular conception of what the process of education should be fundamentally about, with the result that what happens is not shaped by any coherent set of organizing principles which will give the enterprise a sense of direction. In their own words:

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[1]This paper has been influenced by ideas articulated over the last decade by Seymour Fox. Some were presented in his course on Jewish Education at the Jerusalem Fellows' Program, as well as in various talks and papers within the framework of the Mandel Institute's "Educated Jew" project. Others emerged in my deliberations with him and his associate, Daniel Marom. See, for example, Seymour Fox: "The Educated Jew: A Guiding Principle for Jewish Education," (1991); Seymour Fox and Israel Scheffler: "Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity: Prospects and Limitations" (in press); and Daniel Marom: "Developing Visions for Education: Rationale, Content and Comments on Methodology" (1994). These ideas will also appear in a forthcoming Mandel Institute book on alternative conceptions of Jewish education: "Visions of Learning: Variant Conceptions of an Ideal Jewish Education" (forthcoming).

> There is one last, unhappy reason that educators have not pointed to certain misdirections in the current crop of reforms: one cannot point to an incorrect direction without some sense of the correct one. But American school people have been singularly unable to think of an educational purpose they should not embrace...Secondary educators have tried to solve the problem of competing purposes by accepting all of them, and by building an institution that would accommodate the result.

> Unfortunately, the flip side of the belief that all directions are correct is the belief that no direction is incorrect -- which is a sort of intellectual bankruptcy. Those who work in secondary education have little sense of an agenda for studies. There is only a long list of subjects to be studied...But there is no answer to the query, Why these and not others? Approaching things this way has made it easy to avoid arguments and decisions about purpose, both of which can be troublesome -- especially in our divided and contentious society.

Powell et. al. conclude:

> High schools are unlikely to make marked improvement...until there is a much clearer sense of what is most important to teach and learn, and why, and how it can best be done.[2]

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[2]Powell, A.G., Farrar, E., and Cohen D. K., THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985, pp. 305-306.

The analysis of the high school found in THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL applies very aptly to large numbers of Jewish educating institutions. Like the high schools described by Powell et. al., these institutions drift along, unguided by any compelling sense of purpose.[3] To the extent that there are guiding ideals, they tend to be so vague as to give very little direction and to call forth little enthusiasm. What these slogan-like ideals do succeed in doing - and this is no mean achievement - is to give a multiplicity of individuals, representing very different beliefs, the illusion that "We are one!", that they can all participate in the same social and educational community. But the price paid for the failure to affirm a larger purpose that goes beyond vague rhetoric is that the enterprise of educating is rendered significantly less effective than it might be if educational institutions were animated by powerful visions of the kinds human beings and/or community that need to be cultivated.

As just suggested, by "vision" I am referring to an image or conception of the kind of human being and/or community that the educational process is to bring into being. "Visions" in this sense represent what might be called "existential visions" in that they identify what Jewish existence at its best in its social and/or individual dimensions looks like. Existential visions are to be found not only implicit in the social life of Jewish communities throughout the ages but also in writings of such diverse thinkers as Ahad Ha-Am, Martin Buber, Maimonides, Joseph B. Soloveitchik, and so on. Notice that an existential vision can be more or less filled-in: it might consist of a thick, ordered constellation of attitudes, skills, understandings, and dispositions; or it

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[3]For a lucid discussion of this point, see Seymour Fox, "Towards a General Theory of Jewish Education," in David Sidorsky (Ed.), THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1973, pp. 260-271.

might be limited to a particular attitude or way of approaching the world (and the skills and understandings that make this possible). There is no need to assume, then, that a vision is coextensive with a way of life.

"Existential vision" in the sense just articulated is to be distinguished from an "institutional vision" -- an image or conception of what an educational institution at its best should look like. When we speak of an educating institution as "a caring community" or as "a community organized around serious study of basic texts", we are identifying an "institutional vision" that identifies the fundamental organizing principles of institutional life. Though having an institutional vision is no doubt important, the worthwhileness of any institutional vision ultimately depends on its being anchored in an adequate existential vision. The reason for this is as simple as the old adage that "form follows function:" educational arrangements must be judged by their capacity to lead students towards those individual and social states of being - those constellations of attitude, knowledge, skill, and disposition - that are the raison d'etre of the enterprise. An adequate institutional vision is one that shows promise of optimizing progress towards the existential vision that undergirds the entire enterprise.[4]

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[4]Noteworthy in this connection is Fred Newmann's "Linking Restructuring to Authentic Student Achievement," PHI DELTA KAPPAN, February 1991, Volume 72, Number 6, pp. 458-463. Here Newmann argues that attempts to restructure educational institutions without careful attention to the purposes that these institutions are intended to serve are seriously ill-conceived; for it is precisely these purposes that need to guide the direction of restructuring efforts. See especially p. 459.

Jewish education can be enriched by guiding existential visions (which I shall henceforth simply refer to as "visions") in at least three ways. The first pertains to the special predicament of American Jews at the end of the 20th century. The other two reflect general educational considerations that have a more universal application and do not assume this problematic predicament.

There is a need to introduce contemporary Jews to powerful visions of Jewish existence. During many historical periods, day-to-day experience in the family and the community sufficed to acquaint children with and to initiate them into meaningful forms of Jewish existence that enabled them to navigate their way through the world as Jews. During such periods, formal educating institutions could content themselves with supplementing this powerful informal education by passing on to the young particular skills and bodies of knowledge; it was not necessary for these institutions to take on the responsibility of presenting and initiating the young into richly meaningful forms of Jewish existence.

But our own age is very different. It is an era in which the young are no longer reared in environments saturated with Jewish rhythms, beliefs, and customs; and one can no longer count on informal socialization to assure the young's emergence as adults with a strong understanding of themselves as Jews. Indeed, many of them grow up with scant understanding of things Jewish, and certainly with little sense of the ways in which a life organized around Jewishly grounded understandings, activities, and values can answer some of their most fundamental needs as human beings. For human beings raised under such circumstances, human beings who are surrounded with a variety of images of the good life emanating from a multitude of quarters,

remaining Jewish is no longer a destiny but a choice. And it is a choice the young are unlikely to make unless they meet up with spiritually, morally, and existentially compelling images of Jewish existence.[5] It is a major job of educating institutions to put before the Jews of our generation these kinds of images. Not to do so, to continue instead with an ill-thought-out and superficial diet of "this and that", is to reinforce the message that flows from other quarters -- namely, that there is little or no reason to look to the Jewish universe in our search for existential and spiritual meaning.

To summarize: it is important for contemporary Jews to encounter powerful visions of a meaningful Jewish existence -- visions that in different ways address our basic needs for meaning, for a sense of place and time. Educational institutions have the potential to respond to this pressing social need by organizing themselves around such visions and offering their clients an in-depth opportunity to encounter and appreciate them. This said, it needs to be added that organizing our educational efforts around compelling visions of the kinds of human beings we hope to cultivate also makes good educational sense on more general grounds. Two of these grounds are discussed below.

To have a vision of the kind of person and/or community that is to be nurtured through the educational process is to have a powerful tool for making basic educational decisions. In Jewish as in general education, educational goals often have a kind of arbitrary character. In general education, we may laud "creativity"; in Jewish education, we may speak of the importance of "Love of Israel" or "Identification with the Jewish People;" but if one asks why

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[5]The formulation of the Jewish community's predicament that is articulated in this and the preceding paragraph is indebted to A TIME TO ACT, pp. 25-30.

these things are important, or even what they mean, it is apparent that they are often slogans without much intellectual content or justificatory foundation. The moment, however, educational goals are grounded in a conception of the kind of Jewish human being one hopes to cultivate, the situation changes dramatically. When this conception is one that we strongly believe in, educational goals that flow from this ideal acquire a twofold power they rarely have. First, the desirability of achieving these goals is readily understood; second, when they are interpreted by the larger vision, they lose their character as "slogans" and acquire a determinate intellectual content.

An example may help to illustrate these points. "Love of Israel" is on its face very vague as an educational goal: it is unclear what "Israel" refers to (Is it the land? Is it the State?); it is unclear by virtue of what Israel is worthy of our love; and it is unclear how such love is to be expressed. But this situation changes dramatically when "love of Israel" is understood as an element in a particular understanding of Judaism and of a meaningful Jewish existence. "Love of Israel" as interpreted by Martin Buber will no doubt be different from "Love of Israel" as understood by Rosenzweig, Ahad Ha-Am, or Soloveitchik. Viewed through the lens of any of these outlooks, it will be clear why and in what sense Israel is to be loved, how such love is to be expressed, and what understandings, skills, attitudes, and behaviors are requisite for appropriately participating in such love. What a moment ago had been an empty slogan now becomes an educational goal rich with intellectual, moral, and affective content -- the kind of goal that can give genuine direction to one's effort to educate.

A related point is this. When the human characteristics identified by educational goals are all anchored in a vision of the kind of person one hopes to educate, not only their relative

importance but also their relationship to one another becomes readily apparent. Thus, for Professor Moshe Greenberg, love of learning Torah, "love of the fulfillment of the commandments between man and God," "acceptance of the Torah as a guide in the area of interpersonal morality," and "a relationship to the Jewish people in all the lands of their dispersion" are all educational goals. But to have access to the vision that underlies these educational goals is to have the key that interprets each of them and explains how they are inter-related; it is, specifically, to understand that the encounter with the text is the existential source of the desiderata identified by the other goals, the foundation out of which the understanding of and commitment to them emerges.[6]

To have a powerful vision of the kind of person one hopes to nurture is, then, to have a rich source of well-articulated educational goals; and such goals, in turn, become a basis for educational decisions across a variety of areas. Consider, for example, the problem of personnel. There is much talk concerning the need for high quality, well-trained educators. But what it means for an educator to be "high quality" and "well-trained" itself depends substantially on one's conception of the desired outcome of the educational process. The kinds of knowledge, commitments, attitudes, and skills the educator needs to have will differ depending on whether one is guided by Heschel's, or Maimonides', or Ahad Ha-Am's vision of an appropriately educated Jewish human being. Thus, to commit oneself to a particular vision is to have a powerful tool in the selection of educational personnel, in the organization of in service education, in the activity of supervision, and so forth.

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[6]Moshe Greenberg, "We Were as Those Who Dream: A Portrait of the Ideal Product of an Ideal Jewish education," unpublished manuscript, soon to be published by The Mandel Institute for the Advanced Study of Jewish Education.

Analogous points can be made concerning curriculum, admissions policies, and the organization of the social environment. In each case, to have a clear sense of what one hopes to achieve through the educational process affords lay and professional educational leaders as well as front-line educators an extraordinarily powerful tool in educational deliberations. It is, incidentally, a corollary of this analysis that a guiding vision is not just a desideratum along with high quality personnel and curriculum; rather, a guiding vision is indispensable in understanding what quality personnel and curricula are.[7]

Having a guiding vision and a set of educational goals anchored in this vision facilitates serious educational evaluation. Evaluation in the most important sense is an attempt to judge whether an institution is succeeding in accomplishing its fundamental purposes; and evaluation in this sense is important because, properly done, it enables policy-makers and practitioners to revisit existing patterns of practice with an eye towards improvement. But if it is to play this role, evaluation requires the identification of clear but meaningful educational goals: clearly defined but low-level goals, such as the ability to sight-read a page of Prayer book Hebrew, may be measurable and important but do not rise to the level of guiding educational purposes; one can be successful in attaining them without being successful in the larger sense that is, without succeeding in cultivating those qualities of mind and heart that are at the center of the enterprise. On the other hand, goals like "Love of Text Study", which seem to point to basic

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[7]The discussion in this section will be misleading if it leaves the impression that educating institutions must choose from among a menu of predesignated visions (each associated with a "great thinker") the one that is appropriate for it. Nothing could be further from the truth. What a menu of competing visions can offer a community, however, is an opportunity to clarify its own guiding vision through a process of struggling with the perspectives and insights at work in a number of very different views.

educational priorities, are often too vague to permit meaningful evaluation of our efforts to achieve them. What is needed are educational goals which are both clear enough to allow for real evaluation but also meaningfully tied to the institution's raison d'etre, so that the answer to the question, "Why is it important for the students to be successful relative to this goal?" could be readily answered to everyone's satisfaction. A guiding vision offers this critical mix of specificity and existential power.

The evidence from general education. Thus far, I have offered three general reasons for thinking that being organized around powerful visions of a meaningful Jewish existence will greatly enhance efforts at Jewish education. As the aforementioned references to the writings of Powell et al. and Newmann suggest, the proposed linkage between a sense of vision and educational effectiveness is not an idiosyncratic hypothesis, but reflects the considered view of some deeply thoughtful members of the educational community at large. There is also a measure of empirical support for this view which is worthy of attention.

Consider, in particular, Smith and O'Day's study of reform efforts in general education. The authors begin by observing the depressing results of most such efforts. Though there have been a flurry of reforms, evaluations of the reforms indicate only minor changes in the typical school, either in the nature of classroom practices or in achievement outcomes. For the most part, the processes and content of instruction in the public school classrooms of today are little different from what they were in 1980 or 1970.[8]

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[8]M.S. Smith and J. O'Day, "Systemic School Reform." In S.H. Fuhrman and B. Malen (Eds.), THE POLITICS OF CURRICULUM AND TESTING, p. 234.

Such findings do not, however, lead Smith and O'Day towards skepticism concerning the potential benefits of educational reform. The problem is not, they suggest, that educational reform is incapable of making a difference in educational outcomes but that most reform efforts have failed to focus on the right kinds of variables. To understand what the right kinds of variables are, they further suggest, we need to look at what characterizes those educational institutions which, according to research, are effective. When Smith and O'Day turn to this research, they identify a number of variables, including "a fairly stable staff, made up of enthusiastic and caring teachers who have a mastery both of the subject matter of the curriculum and a of a variety of pedagogies for teaching it." But among the elements of effective schools that they cite, pride of place goes to what we have been calling vision. They write:

> Beyond - or perhaps underlying - these resources available to the student, the most effective schools maintain a schoolwide vision or mission, and common instructional goals which tie the content, structure, and resources of the school together into an effective and unified whole (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987, Purkey and Smith, 1983). The school mission provides the criteria and rationale for the selection of curriculum materials, the purposes and the nature of school-based professional development, and the interpretation and use of student assessment. The particulars of the vision will differ from school to school, depending on the local context...However, if the school is to be successful in promoting active student involvement in learning, depth of understanding, and complex thinking - major goals of the reform movement - its vision must focus on teaching and learning rather than, for example, on control and discipline as in many

> schools today. In fact, the very need for special attention to control and discipline may be mitigated considerably by the promotion of successful and engaging learning experiences.[9]

In other words, as against those who argue for a focus on "practical matters" like higher salaries, better facilities, more in service education, Smith and O'Day defend the need for educating institutions and those who would reform them to step back and focus their energies on a question which sounds suspiciously philosophical: namely, what is our fundamental mission as an educating institution? What kind of a person possessed of what skills, dispositions, and attitudes should we be trying to nurture? To arrive at answers to such questions which will be compelling to the institution's key stake holders is to take a - perhaps the - decisive step forward on the road to institutional self-renewal.

RESPONDING TO TWO OBJECTIONS

In this section, two major objections to the position staked out above are addressed. One of them pertains to the feasibility of the proposal, and the other to its wisdom.

Is it feasible? Among those who admit that to have a guiding vision can be invaluable for an educating institution, some will nonetheless urge that in our present social circumstances it is unrealistic to expect Jewish educating institutions to arrive at guiding visions that will at once be shared, clear enough to guide practice, and sufficiently compelling to elicit genuine enthusiasm. The problem is that the constituencies served by many congregations and free-

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[9]Smith and O'Day, p. 235.

standing Jewish educating institutions are so diverse that it will be impossible to arrive at a shared vision that will be anything more than "Motherhood" or "Apple Pie." That is, only vague slogans will have the power to unite the various sub-groups that make up typical Jewish educating institutions outside of the ultra-Orthodox community; and the attempt to forge a vision that goes beyond this will inevitably push to the margins some of these sub-groups. For a number of reasons, the leaders of many institutions are unwilling to undertake a course of action that will lead to this kind of marginalization and alienation. For example, loss of membership could have unacceptable economic consequences; and there is sometimes the fear that marginalized families who withdraw may end up providing their children no Jewish education at all.

While it is hard to deny that this concern has some foundation in reality, it would also be a mistake to underestimate the progress that could be made by an institution willing to tackle the problem of vision in a thoughtful way that is sensitive to the views and anxieties of the membership. And while it may be true that any such process will probably be threatening to some groups, there are likely to be significant groups that will be relieved and excited finally to be wrestling in a serious way with questions concerning the nature and significance of Jewish existence -- especially if this effort shows promise of helping to revitalize the institution's educational program. More generally, it may be a mistake to let our fears concerning the consequences of trying to work towards greater clarity of vision prematurely paralyze efforts to do so.

But while such considerations might lead to a somewhat less shrill formulation of the institutional difficulties and risks associated with a decision to tackle the problem of vision, they

do not suffice to dissolve this worrisome set of concerns. While carefully conceived efforts to work with existing institutions featuring diverse sub-groups need to be undertaken, it may in the end turn out that the extent of diversity represented in typical institutions will render it very difficult to arrive at powerful, shared visions that can guide the educational process.

If this is true, and if we also acknowledge the critical need for quality education in our present circumstances, perhaps we need to be thinking about radical structural alternatives to the way we have organized education in the American Jewish community. If it is unrealistic to think that an institution featuring a highly diverse population can go through a process that will lead it to crystallize a single vision that can guide its educational efforts, perhaps we have to begin thinking about creating an organizational universe in the Jewish community that will encourage like-minded individuals to gravitate towards educational institutions that reflect their shared convictions.

We might, for example, look to some of the voucher- or choice-plans that have been bandied about in recent discussions of general education. At present, membership in a congregation affords one the right to send one's children to that congregation's educational program -- a program that tries to be responsive to the diversity of the institution's constituency. Consider, however, a different possibility: suppose that membership in any congregation in a community would afford one the right to educate one's child in any of several educating institutions found in the community, and that an effort was made to ensure that each of these institutions represented a distinctive ideological orientation. The effect of such a policy might well be to draw individuals with similar ideological orientations into the same educational environment, making it possible to organize education around a vision that could elicit the

enthusiastic support of the population it serves. I don't claim that dissolving the currently strong tie between congregation and congregational school is unproblematic or necessarily wise; but I do want to suggest that if we are to create substantially more vision-informed Jewish educating institutions than are now to be found, we may well need to give serious consideration to routes which disrupt existing patterns.

Is it wise? Consider, now, a second set of objections to the proposal that we organize Jewish education around compelling visions of a meaningful Jewish existence. The thrust of these objections is that even if we could do so, it would not necessarily be desirable.

One variant of this objection views the effort to organize educational efforts around visions of the ideal product of a Jewish education as an assault on the autonomy of the student. According to this objection, a vision-guided institution, an institution organized down to its very details along the lines of a particular vision, is a kind of "total institution" which does not offer the child an opportunity to taste and decide among alternative forms of a meaningful Jewish life.

There is more than one way to respond to this objection. One of them takes issue with a tendency within a certain species of liberalism to resist passing on to the young any substantive ideas concerning the good life -- except those values, attitudes, and dispositions that will enable the young to choose their own way of life and to be respectful of the liberty of others. As Richard Hare and others have argued, however, there need be no real contradiction between initiating the young into a particular form of life and meaningfully equipping them with the tools for autonomous choice. Indeed, the former may be a condition of the latter.

This last point may be especially true in our own time. As intimated earlier, a serious autonomous choice between a well-developed form of Jewish existence and various alternatives

implicit in everyday life in modern, or post-modern, Western culture may only be possible if children encounter and have a real opportunity to taste an approach to Jewish existence that is more than a miscellany of customs, vague sentiments, and slogans. But in our own situation it is unlikely that they will encounter such an approach unless educational institutions set themselves up to systematically embody one or another such vision of a meaningful Jewish existence. Given the world in which the students live, the result will not be indoctrination but genuine choice.

This answer may not satisfy some species of liberals. In the name of the individual's autonomy, such individuals will argue that educational institutions must set themselves the challenge of equipping the young to choose from among a variety of competing images of a meaningful Jewish existence, rather than seeking to initiate them into any one of them.

In principle, I believe there is nothing wrong with this ideal as a guide to education. In practice, however, it is a difficult educational ideal to implement meaningfully - especially given the time- and resource-constraints that characterize Jewish education today. To undertake this approach meaningfully it is insufficient for educator and students to stand above a mix of alternatives and to scrutinize them from afar; for under these circumstances each would remain superficially understood and appreciated. A meaningful decision concerning a particular form of Jewish life requires a measure of appreciation "from the inside". Thus, an educational system organized around the principle that the young should make their own choices among different forms of Jewish existence would need to offer serious opportunities for in-depth acquaintance, and even for a significant taste, of more than one of them. Since this is hard enough to accomplish with even a single approach to Jewish existence, the odds are that the approach recommended would turn out to be superficial in its representation of the alternatives, such that

the learners would not come away satisfied with any of them.

Consider, now, a very different reason for thinking it unwise to organize education around specific visions of a meaningful Jewish existence. According to this objection, when educators view their role as preparing the child for some future state of being, they tend not to do justice to the child's immediate needs, concerns, and interests; but it is precisely these needs, concerns, and interests that are the springboard to genuine education. The educational challenge, say these critics, is not to draw the child ever closer to a predesignated form of Jewish existence, but to respond to the child's developmental and other needs in ways that further the child's Jewish growth. To respond to the child's needs and authentic concerns in a meaningful way in a Jewish setting, and to do so in ways that expand the child's Jewish understandings and self-understandings and that communicate to the child that Jewish tradition can address his or her needs in meaningful ways, is quite a sufficient challenge.

I am in many ways very sympathetic to the spirit of this objection, understood as a critique of an approach to education that bypasses the living concerns and questions of children in order to prepare them to become certain kinds of adults. But in no way do I view the positive view that informs this objection as incompatible with the position I have staked out. Among other things, a vision of what Judaism is and a conception of where one hopes the student will be at the end of the educational process need not be used to suppress the child's needs but to interpret them and to suggest ways of responding to them.[10] There is not in the end an irreducible

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10[10]See in this connection Dewey's THE CHILD AND THE CURRICULUM, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956. Here Dewey discusses the ways in which an in-depth understanding of the existing adult civilization ought - and ought not - to inform the process of education. Dewey decidedly rejects the notion that one should think of education as a step by step process of transmitting, piece by piece elements of this adult civilization. Rather, he

incompatibility between having a guiding vision and responding authentically to the learner's living concerns.

CONCLUSION

It is no secret that the widespread interest and financial support that Jewish education has recently enjoyed have their origins in anxiety concerning Jewish continuity. If education is to impact positively on this troubling problem, it will be because it has led its clientele to a vivid appreciation of the ways in which Judaism and Jewish life offer rich opportunities for spiritual, social, and intellectual growth. But if education is to succeed in this effort, it must go beyond a parve offering of skills, information or even "positive experiences". It is imperative that educating institutions courageously move beyond this kind of vague neutrality and declare themselves for particular visions of a meaningful Jewish existence, which they will use as a basis for organizing the educational experience of the young. Only if and when educating institutions offer students, both young and old, entree into forms of Jewish existence that they will recognize to be existentially, intellectually, and spiritually meaningful, will education be responsive to our present predicament. It goes without saying that when educating institutions organize themselves around such visions, they will also become educationally more serious and thoughtful learning environments.

In closing, it must be stressed that a belief in the importance of vision does not entail any particular approach to the development of vision. On this matter there are many different views.

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recommends that educators use their understanding of this civilization as a lens through which to interpret the capacities, skills, and interests of the child, and to suggest ways in which these characteristics can be built upon and directed.

There are some who may believe that such a process begins with, or at some stage requires, an activity called "visioning". There are others who believe that explicit attempts to formulate a guiding vision should not come until after there have been extensive small-scale problem-solving efforts that engage varied stake holders in new ways and effectively transform the institution's culture.[11] Still others might feel that progress towards vision is best assured not by some publicly announced effort in this direction but by approaching in the right spirit the challenges that arise in the institution's day to day life. And, as noted above, there will be others who urge that the amount of diversity found in many typical institutions is so substantial that it will be impossible to arrive at a vision that will simultaneously be shared and inspiring, and that therefore the attempt to nurture the growth of vision-guided institutions must focus on strategies that will encourage new kinds of institutions to come into being. Which, if any, of these views is meritorious, in general or in particular social contexts, is a matter of great educational importance. Attention to this matter must be a principal focus of our energies if we are, in John Dewey's phrase, to find our way out of educational confusion.

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[11]See, in this connection, Michael Fullan, CHANGE FORCES, New York: Falmer Press, 1993, pp. 67-68.

GUIDES SEMINAR
Providence, 7/28/97

BACKGROUND

Part of the rationale for the CIJE/Mandel Institute Goals Seminar, organized in cooperation with CAPE in July of 1996, was the need to develop a cadre of talented individuals with the capacity to forward the educational agenda associated with the Goals Project. With this mind, a sub-group of the larger group that had met in Jerusalem was convened in December of 1996 to examine a case-in-progress presented by Dan Pekarsky. The group was convened a second time in July of 1997 in Providence, Rhode Island: this time, the group's work was defined by a twofold agenda: a) reflection on a project that, as a result of his work in the Goals Seminar, Alvan Kaunfer has taken on in Rhode Island; and b) the need to think through how this group of individuals might most fruitfully operate as a group and contribute to the work of CIJE and the Goals Project.

Attending the meeting were Karen Barth, Amy Gerstein, Alvan Kaunfer, Daniel Pekarsky, Nessa Rapoport, and Linda Thall. Invited but unable to come was David Purpel, who had recently participated in CIJE s Professors Seminar.

CONSIDERING AHAD HA AM'S MOSES

Our work began with a study session organized around Ahad Ha'Am's essay entitled "Moses". In introducing the session, Dan emphasized that our engagement in Jewish study should not be regarded as ritualistic or as incidental to the work that brings us together; for it has the potential to facilitate our creating a kind of learning community amongst us that will contribute to our more task-oriented conversations, as well as to introduce concepts, insights, and questions that will shed light on our discussion of critical educational issues.

Led by Alvan, this discussion focused primarily on Ahad Ha Am s characterization of the Prophet (in the person of Moses) as leader, a characterization that emphasized 1) the Prophet s identity as a person of truth, 2) his extremism on behalf of his vision: his wholehearted and uncompromising dedication to a vision, carried deep within his soul, of what ought to be and must be; and 3) the Prophet s need of a priestly figure -- an Aaron, a person of words -- to mediate between himself as bearer of the vision and the the situation down on the ground . For the very same characteristics that render the Prophet prophetic in the sense specified in 1) and 2) render him less adept at interpreting and adapting to the needs of the moment.

Our discussion of this article brought out on a number of

themes, identified below.

'Truthfulness'. The Prophet is a person of truth in a double-sense. It's not just that he or she sees things as they are, unbiased by subjective feeling, but also that he/she cannot but speak the truth (as he/she sees it) to others (and even to God). It is this inability or unwillingness to tailor his/her presentation of the truth to the audience and the context that necessitates the partnership with the Priest, who is described as "a man of words."

But what does it mean for the Prophet to see things as they are? Two (not necessarily incompatible) views were articulated. On one interpretation to see things as they really are is to be brutally honest with oneself (and others) about what one sees, not letting one's fantasies, fears, hopes, or just lazy thinking contaminate one's assessment of the situation in which we find ourselves. In this context, reference was made to Senge's insistence that efforts to bridge the distance between what is and the vision to which we aspire depend on a willingness to carefully and dispassionately study what he calls 'current reality' [To cite an example from out of our later discussion, in looking at the relationship between the vision a community articulates and existing social and educational arrangements, the Prophet type is the one who does not let us get away with facile efforts to see the vision as already embodied in the present, when in fact it is not; any such claim, this figure insists, needs to be grounded in strong evidence.]

On a second interpretation, "to see things as they are" is not only a matter of being dispassionate but of seeing things as illuminated by the vision, a vision which offers one insight into the present which is otherwise unattainable. Thus, the vision functions as a kind of lens through which the present situation and the challenges of the community are interpreted. This interpretation was accompanied by the suggestion that the first one seems to assume that it is possible to see current reality unencumbered by what the observer brings, and this led to some discussion of the following point: granted that the observer's understandings and commitments inevitably enter into what he/she sees, can't one nonetheless meaningfully distinguish (as interpretation #1 insists) between seeing things in a distorted and in an undistorted way?

Prophet and priest. There was considerable interest in the idea that the challenges of leadership require two different "types", both Prophet and Priest, and there was some discussion of how best to understand their relationship in the process of a community's growth. Does a community need different types at different stages in its development? Do they represent two dimensions of leadership that are constantly in interaction? Should we understand Prophet and Priest as two different roles in

the life of a community -- or, as one member of the group suggested, should we understand Prophet and Priest psychologically, as elements of the Self found within the leader?

In any event, there seemed to be agreement that both leadership elements were important to a community's growth -- that the visionary without the capacity to adapt the vision to the needs of the moment risked being too out of touch with the community to be able to guide its development, and that the Priestly type who is always attentive to the mood and desires of the people being addressed is in danger of losing a meaningful connection to the kind of larger vision that the Prophet represents.

Two kinds of genius? There was in this context a challenge to what some felt to be an explicit or implicit hierarchy in Ahad-Ha'am's outlook: the Prophet is the genius, the Priest is the (mere) implementer. It was suggested that the priest is also a genius -- a genius of implementation. To this it was added that it is inaccurate to describe the work of the priest as a "watering down" of the vision (compromising it) in the face of a recalcitrant reality; rather, implementation can be understood as an imaginative interpretation of vision that takes into account not just the vision but the situation in which it is to be embedded. [It is, of course, possible to acknowledge both possibilities -- that is, that in the process of implementation, visions are sometimes but not always or inevitably interpreted in 'watered down' ways. How to draw this distinction may be worth exploring.]

The problem of 'readiness'. Although time-constraints precluded serious discussion, our conversation pointed to a second dimension of the Ahad Ha-Am essay that is relevant to efforts to encourage transformational change in an institution (or community, or individual) -- namely, the problem of readiness for change. Here we took note of Ahad Ha-Am's discussion of the traditional view that the Israelites that had come out of Egypt were not ready to wholeheartedly commit themselves to and embody the vision that was put before them: neither the experience of great miracles leaving Egypt, nor powerful moments at the foot of Mount Sinai, nor even efforts at "training and education" seemed capable of overcoming in an enduring way the outlook and the values acquired as slaves in Egypt. Hence the need for the forty years in the desert, for a generation that had not known slavery. There is a sense in which "Moses" offers a pessimistic view of the ability of a group of people to transcend the outlook or culture within which they have been raised; hence the need to cultivate a new generation -- or to turn one's back on pathological existing institutions and try to create new ones.

THE PROVIDENCE CASE

Relationship to the "Moses" article. Alvan pointed out some natural bridges between our discussion of the "Moses" essay and some of the central concerns growing out of his work with the Rhode Island Jewish community. Ahad Ha'Am's Moses exemplifies the kind of "vision with punch" described in his written case, a compelling vision that is typically the product of an individual who passionately represents it -- the kind of vision that may be sacrificed in the search for a consensus aimed at allowing everyone to feel included (Alvan's "consensus" issue). And Alvan's worries about connecting the vision as arrived at by his committee and ratified by the Federation with the one-going development of education in the community (his "connector" issue) are illuminated in significant ways by Ahad Ha'Am's discussion of the relationship and role of Prophet and Priest.

Alvan's formulation of some pertinent issues. Having identified the "consensus" and "connector" issues as the larger concerns that he hoped we would jointly illuminate on this occasion, Alvan went on to identify other - what he called sub-issues - that he hoped we would address. For example:

> choice and pluralism: in relation to the "consensus/inclusivity" issue, he called our attention to the committee's struggle with whether and how much to incorporate the language of choice and pluralism in its statement of vision.
>
> the problem of breadth: Is the kind of vision produced by the Providence community too broad to elicit enthusiasm and to meaningfully guide priority-setting and other facets of practice (as compared, say, with the more focused vision emphasizing Study and Social Justice articulated by Barry Schrage in Boston)?

Discussion of Alvan's case. There was high praise for Alvan's work and for his write-up of the work in the form of a case. The writing, the exercises he used with the committees he worked with, his success in drawing attention to significant issues pertaining to change efforts informed by powerful ideas -- all of these and other virtues of his work will render this case a very useful teaching and learning tool as we proceed with our work. Below is a summary of some of the major ideas that surfaced in response to participants' reading of the case and to Alvan's presentation.

1. How far does the vision have to go? A point that is of conceptual and potentially of practical significance is concerned with how we understand the scope of vision. A vision could be understood as referring to 1) the ideal outcomes of a Jewish education -- the kind of person and community we hope to cultivate. It could also be understood to refer to 2) the kinds of institutions necessitated by #1. Finally, it could extend

beyond 1) and 2) to the inclusion of 3) the kind of infrastructure needed to support and maintain the kinds of values and institutions identified in #s 1 and 2. [While #s 1 and 2 are discussed in DP's piece on vision in Jewish education, attention to #3 pushes that discussion to another level.] All three levels in their inter-relationship are important, and it is of interest to consider how attention to them should be woven into the overall process of envisioning and implementation. [Note that while #s 2 and 3 pertain to the implementation of the ideas envisioned in #1, they are not in themselves stages of implementation; they are closer to ideas about implementation (not unrelated to Seymour Fox's Level 3, or "theory of practice).]

2. The difficulty of maintaining a high energy level. Alvan's process was much more time-consuming than his group had realized it would be, and there may have been a problem of flagging energies along the way. It was suggested that perhaps a less linear approach, one that allowed participants to regularly wrestle with questions of practice and implementation long before

their vision had crystallized, might help sustain their energy; well-conceived, it might also help illuminate the developing vision.

3. How might external inputs enrich the process of deliberation, and how can they be incorporated in ways that will have this effect and not seem like a distraction from the work of the group? Raised early in the day, we began - but, alas only began - to explore this question more systematically towards the end of the day when we spent some time considering how Menachem Brinker might have approached the questions addressed by the Providence community, and how an encounter with ideas like his might have enriched the deliberations of the group that Alvan worked with. Some of the pertinent issues in need of further discussion are articulated later in this document.

4. What are the purposes of vision and how might attention to these purposes inform the design of the process of deliberation aimed at articulating a guiding vision? It was suggested that it is problematic to assume that there is only kind of a purpose that a vision can legitimately serve; depending on circumstances, it may meet very different kinds of needs. Among the purposes and needs that a vision might satisfy in the life of an educating community are the following:

a) program/curriculum design and evaluation;

b) resource allocation;

c) strategic planning;

d) creating "a big tent" under which the varied members of a community feel they all have a place;

e) symbolic action: through the vision announcing to ourselves and/or others who we are and what we stand for.

Which of these is judged to be primary in a given situation may carry implications for the design of the process that leads to the vision.

5. How narrow or broad, small or large, should be the group that is involved in working towards the guiding vision? In the context of Alvan's case, a concern was raised about the narrowness of the group involved in crafting the vision that was to guide communal decision-making in education. It was suggested by one participant that the process of working towards the vision is often more important than the final product; and that for this reason it might have proved important to expand the circle of individuals involved in formulating the Rhode Island vision. It was suggested in this connection that it may not be too late to meaningfully engage significant additional constituencies in this process.

6. The tacit dimension: priorities and commitments embedded - and discoverable - in existing forms of practice and organization. It was suggested that as part of a community's efforts to discover or refine its guiding vision it may be of value to surface priorities, commitments, and compromises that are embedded in existing practice. It may, for example, be instructive to identify the value-commitments at work in an educating community's budget allocations or in a school's schedule. In the case of some such inquiries - for example, analysis of a schedule, the activity may be relatively unthreatening inasmuch as schedules tend to reflect long-standing practice rather than the ideology or idiosyncrasies of any particular individual or body. In any event, the tension between the commitments and priorities at work in existing practice, on the one hand, and those that a community affirms as central can catalyze significant progress at the levels of guiding vision and/or practice; it can facilitate testing an avowed vision (or a community's commitment to it) and can lead to thoughtful revision at the level of practice.

7. Avoiding self-deception or smugness: insisting on evidence and on the attitude of a trustworthy physician. It was suggested that in looking at the relationship between the avowed vision and existing practice, there may be a tendency in the direction of self-deception, a tendency "to see" the vision at work in practice even when the relationship between the two is at best tenuous. To counteract this tendency, it was urged that exercises aimed at discovering the commitments and values

embedded in practice include an evidence criterion -- an insistence that claims about what is embedded in practice and about the relationship between vision and practice be accompanied by the evidence for these claims.

It was suggested that an educating community needs the kind of truth-telling that one would hope for in a physician: an honest account of one's true situation, but one framed in a way that will contribute to the client's ability to respond healthily to the information. Once again, this discussion brought us back to the Ahad Ha'Am's discussion of the place of truth in the priest-prophet equation.

8. How much responsibility should the guide take for sustaining the process of deliberation and change? In the context of our discussion of a period in the Providence-process where the participants seemed to be tiring out, it was observed that at various points in a change-process, energies flag and momentum seems to slow and may be altogether lost. What is the guide's role in this situation? More specifically, under what circumstances (if ever), should he/she take on a measure of responsibility for keeping the process going, and under what circumstances and for what reasons is it appropriate for the guide to allow the process to take its own natural course without heroic efforts on his/her part to sustain it?

9. The significance of "choice" and "pluralism" language. Early in our discussion it was suggested that the prominence of "choice" and "pluralism" language in the Providence deliberation process represents a way of purchasing a sense of inclusivity among a very diverse population of Jews. Later in our deliberation, a different hypothesis was proposed: namely, that choice and pluralism represent traditional American values to which American Jews, like many other Americans, are strongly committed. On this view, the prominence of these categories reflects much more than a strategy that allows everyone to feel included; it also testifies to strongly held American values that are affirmed by the deliberators.

10. From vision to practice: the need for intermediate steps. In Providence, the process has not yet gone to the level of seriously wrestling with the practical educational implications of the vision-statement the deliberation-team arrived at. But it was noted by one member of our group that it would be a mistake to think that programmatic implications and community policy could be derived directly from this kind of a vision. There is, it was suggested, a need for developing a comprehensive strategy (a strategy that would itself rely on a host of empirical and other assumptions that go well beyond the content of the vision) that would mediate between the vision and practice. [Though not referred to in this context, this point calls to mind Seymour

Fox's discussion of "the five levels", which highlights the complex and textured character of the relationship between vision and practice.

11. The leader's vision...or discovering the community's vision, OR....

In our initial discussion, there was a tendency to contrast two different approaches to vision: either a charismatic leader (a Moses) brings a vision to the people or a skilled facilitator helps the community to identify its own shared vision. In the course of our conversation, some other ideas surfaced. It was suggested that one of the challenges and tasks of a community's guide is to find a language through which to articulate this community's heretofore inarticulable understandings and values. Since these understandings and values can probably be articulated in more than one way, the guide's responsibility (for choosing a language that will be fruitful) is an awesome one.

Beyond and after playing an active role in helping the community unearth and find a language for its guiding vision, it may be the role of the guide to help this community deepen the vision by challenging it (e.g., by raising questions concerning ambiguous phrases, by offering different interpretations of key phrases, or by introducing difficult counter-examples). See in this connection #12.

12. The role of disequilibrium in the process of deliberation. The role of the guide, or coach, as a gadfly is a subject that was discussed at some length about two years ago in a CIJE/Mandel Institute consultation with Professor Israel Scheffler. This subject entered into our discussions as well. By confronting participants with the gap between what they say they are committed to and the values embedded in practice, by raising irksome but important questions about what they claim to believe, etc., the guide tries to foster among the participants a more thoughtful understanding of what they are committed to and its implications.

THE PLACE OF POWERFUL IDEAS, GROUNDED IN JEWISH SOURCES, IN THE PROCESS OF DELIBERATION AND CHANGE

As suggested above, early on a question was raised concerning how to infuse the community's deliberations concerning a guiding vision with powerful Jewish ideas. While some attention was paid to this issue late in the day, it requires much more sustained discussion. As a way of setting the stage for such a discussion (perhaps at our next meeting), you will find below a formulation of some of the issues in need of attention and a summary of a few points made in our discussion.

The challenges we face are a direct consequence of one of

our most basic convictions. CIJE strongly affirms that the process of educational deliberation needs to include serious struggle with questions of basic purpose and aspiration; and that this struggle will be enriched through the encounter with insights and perspectives found in Jewish thought. One challenge that grows out of this conviction is to identify ideas that will enrich deliberation in this way; a second challenge (perhaps that of the Priest rather than the Prophet) is to formulate and package those ideas in forms that will engage potential audiences; a third challenge is to find ways of meaningfully introducing these intellectual inputs into an individual's or a group's process of deliberation. Serious work needs to be done in all of these areas.

In relation to Alvan's case, the following questions come to mind as guides to continuing discussion:

1) what external intellectual inputs did Alvan try to introduce into the process he led, and for what reasons?

2) how and when did he try to introduce these inputs, and with what effects?

3) might there have been other fruitful ways through which to infuse the process with pertinent external inputs?

While this is not the occasion to address these issues, for future reference and discussion, the following point from our discussion may be worth incorporating.

While there is a tendency to think of the introduction of external intellectual inputs as taking place through an explicit encounter with Jewish texts or a prcis of such texts, this is not the only, or necessarily the best, way to think about how Jewish ideas might be encountered. Consider in this connection the case of psychoanalytic therapy, in which the patient may learn all about projection, the super-ego, sublimation, and the unconscious without ever having read Freud. How does this happen? Through the therapist's questions, interpretations, and, on occasion, elucidation of concepts and insights that are at the heart of psychoanalytic theory. Offered succinctly at the right time and in the right way, such inputs can powerfully influence the patient's thinking and self-understanding.

Analogous considerations apply to guides helping clients (communities or educating institutions) strive for vision-sensitive educational practice. The guide's questions, formulations, metaphors, analogies, and interpretations at critical points in the process can introduce important new ideas and concepts in ways that powerfully affect the deliberation of

participants. If, for example, the client is wrestling with the aims of Jewish education, instead of urging the participants to read certain seminal articles, it might be more fruitful for the guide to offer short but graphic summaries of the ideas found in these essays (with careful attention to the needs of the moment).

If the guide is to play this kind of role, it is essential that he/she be steeped in the appropriate forms of knowledge and that he/she have the ability to access and use this knowledge at the right time and in the right (not heavy-handed) way to enrich the participants' deliberations.

DISCUSSION OF 'GUIDES'

This discussion focused on the possible wisdom of developing a serious and on-going group whose members would 1) serve as guides to communities, agencies, and institutions (and to CIJE itself) in their efforts to develop informing visions through a process that takes ideas (not limited to but especially ideas grounded in Jewish thought) seriously; and/or 2) develop materials of various kinds (e.g. theoretical pieces, portraits of vision-driven institutions, case-studies, cases, etc.) that would support and enrich the work described under #1. The proposal for "GUIDES" (an acronym for "Guiding Ideas Study Group") was handed out to participants at our meeting and served as the springboard to our discussion; this proposal explains why "guiding ideas" replaces the term "goals" in this document and tries to specify how GUIDES will function. No attempt is made to summarize that document, only to identify issues surfaced in the course of our conversation. As a prelude to this, it is important to note that members of the group that met in Providence reacted with enthusiasm to the possibility that we would constitute ourselves as an on-going group.

Purpose and character of the proposed group. In an effort to clarify how this group fits into CIJE and how, if at all, it differs from the Consulting Firm Without Walls, questions were raised concerning the basic purposes and character of GUIDES. The following points were offered in response:

a. GUIDES offers its members support and advice in their efforts to help Jewish educating institutions and the infrastructure that supports them to develop vision-guided practice through a process that takes ideas seriously.

b. The existence of GUIDES offers an opportunity to develop and expand a body of lore concerning how best to think about and to organize, in different settings and contexts, processes of deliberation and change that give a central role to informed and sustained reflection concerning basic purposes and aspirations.

This lore will include a developing body of concepts, insights, powerful examples, cases, case-studies, and theoretical formulations. These materials will provide us with springboards to our own continuing learning; they can also be used as tools in our teaching, in efforts at "seeding the culture", and in work with educating institutions that are struggling with their visional commitments..

c. GUIDES will offer its members an opportunity for growth that is simultaneously professional, personal, and Jewish. Jewish study figures prominently in the life of this group. Its centrality is predicated on the assumption that the insights, ways of thinking, and questions that emerge from the encounter with well-chosen Jewish sources will inform our thinking about the work that brings us together in powerful ways; and also on the assumption that the activity of learning together will contribute to the emergence of a kind of community and culture that will make our work richer and more personally meaningful.

d. While CIJE expects that members in the Consulting Firm Without Walls will be on-board with CIJE's beliefs concerning the centrality of ideas in the process of developing profound forms of Jewish educational practice, what will distinguish GUIDES is that the relationship between ideas and practice is at the heart of its members' professional and learning agenda.

The place of ideas in Jewish educational reform: three dimensions. Ideas being central to the work of CIJE and to GUIDES, it is important to note that our oft-repeated claim that ideas are central to the work of Jewish education is actually a summary of, or a generalization from, a number of distinct beliefs about the importance of ideas, including the following:

a. Judaism is rich with powerful ideas about human existence in its various dimensions, ideas with the capacity to engage mind and heart and to transform the way we understand ourselves and the world. Unfortunately, such ideas rarely enter into Jewish education as we know it. It is essential that Jewish education be transformed in such a way that its clients will regularly encounter powerful Jewish ideas in honest and powerful ways.

b. Too often educating institutions and the infrastructure that supports them operate without clear basic purposes that are capable of eliciting the support and enthusiasm of their constituencies; and even when lip-service (or more) is paid to a particular

vision or guiding idea, it rarely suffuses the life of the educating institution or agency in a more than superficial way. It is essential that Jewish educating institutions come to be informed by guiding ideas, or visions, that identify their central purposes and that suffuse day-to-day practice across contexts.

c. The process of clarifying or discovering an institution's, or our own, guiding vision is enriched through the encounter with powerful Jewish ideas that are pertinent to the questions under consideration. As examples, the attempt to develop a community-vision will be enriched through the encounter with variant Jewish conceptions of what it means to be a community; the attempt to clarify our vision of an educated Jewish human being will benefit from the encounter with philosophically different Jewish views of Jewish existence; and the attempt to develop an Evaluation Institute that will assess the work of Jewish educating institutions will do well to struggle with ethical and other issues pertaining to evaluation, confidentiality, etc. that are discoverable in Jewish sources.

While our work has sometimes suffered from a failure to distinguish between these related but different ways in which ideas figure prominently in our work, the GUIDES proposal, like the Goals Project that has given rise to it, assumes that GUIDES will be concerned with all three of them.

This formulation of the place of ideas in the work of GUIDES and CIJE brought forth a revised formulation. In contrast to the suggestion that Jewish thought has the capacity to elevate the level of discourse that informs deliberation concerning basic purposes, it was urged that we make the stronger statement that attention to Jewish ideas and perspective is indispensable in that it offers unique, otherwise unattainable, questions, insights, understandings, and solutions.

CIJE GOALS PROJECT CONSULTATION, JULY 1995
PROCEEDINGS OF DAY 1

SOME BASIC ISSUES RELATING TO THINKING ABOUT GOALS AND VISION

A number of general concerns were expressed concerning the challenge of meaningfully engaging educators and lay people in thinking about goals and about their relationship to educational practice. For example:

1. **Nurturing the conviction that it is important for educators and lay leaders to wrestle with questions of goals and vision.** There is a tendency to regard such reflection as irrelevant to the demands of practice, as well as a tendency to regard it as "too deep' for ordinary people. Either way, the result is that philosophical issues aren't engaged.

2. **Avoiding being shallow and pedestrian/avoiding being too disconnected.** If the conversation is overly-constrained by the questions, ways of thinking, and present outlook of the participants, there is a danger of shallowness. If, on the other hand, the conversation begins with reflections on "Great Thinkers" like Moshe Greenberg, it may feel too removed from their concerns and realities to seem relevant -- even if it seems interesting. How structure the conversation so that conversation seems tied to these concerns and realities and yet brings them to encounter rich Jewish ideas and conceptions that go their ways of thinking about things?

3. Will reflections on vision and goals infuse practice? Supposing that there is a rich and engaging conversation concerning our vision of a meaningful Jewish existence, it does not follow that the insights acquired and enjoyed in the context of that discussion will find their way into the world of practice. What must the conversation and/or its context be like if such discussions will not be compartmentalized and will in fact influence educational practice? Are there ways - say, via collaborative action-research efforts or through follow-up assignments, etc. - to make it likely that at the end of a seminar or a workshop the insights acquired there will inform what one does?

IF WE OFFER IT, WILL THEY COME?

Is there a demand "out there" for addressing fundamental questions concerning the goals of Jewish education -- so that if we say, "We're here to help you," communities and institutions will gravitate towards us?

Different views were expressed on this matter. Some felt that there is a demand, a demand fueled perhaps by a sense of desperation concerning our present predicament both as a

community and in our institutions.

Others wondered whether the demand would express itself through much more than a willingness to participate in a short-term seminar or retreat. Skepticism was expressed concerning the willingness of many institutions to sign on for a long-term process of study, reflection, and self-examination. Among the reasons offered for thinking that there might not be an eagerness to engage in this kind of process were the following: a) Like us, other educators are already feeling over-worked and feel that they don't have the time and energy to invest in such a process; b) such a process might seem to threaten the leadership's authority or what might feel like a fragile consensus among the membership; c) there might, as noted above, be skepticism concerning the practical "pay-off" in thinking about questions relating to basic educational aims.

To the extent that this skepticism is warranted, it highlights one of the major questions the project has to contend with: namely, how do respond to these obstacles? how do we bring educators, lay leaders, and parents to understand the importance of addressing basic questions concerning the aims of Jewish education in a sustained and serious way? How, as one of us put it, do we overcome the resistance to serious thinking and engender the motivation to engage in it. This question called forth a number of different kinds of responses:

1. A central challenge may be to make vivid the gravity of our situation as a People and the ineffectiveness of existing educational efforts to address this situation. Related to this was the suggestion that we make vivid to those we speak with that education is the arena in which we work out our future as a People.

2. Frame the conversation as an invitation to reappropriate our heritage as a People that has played the significant role it has in history because of its willingness to think about "the Big Questions".

3. Initiate and stimulate the conversation by inviting those we speak with to personalize "the Big Questions" --to ask themselves why they think it's important to raise their children as Jews, and how they will answer their children's questions concerning why it is important or worthwhile to live as a Jew.

It was noted, in this connection, that to engage not just individuals and institutions but the North American Jewish community as a whole in wrestling with this larger question may be the most important goal of the Goals Project. There was, in this connection,some

discussion of whether this larger question is being meaningfully addressed anywhere right now -- and if not, why not.

4. Offer a "For instance!" -- a vivid example of the good things that have happened when the stake holders in an institution have seriously wrestled with questions of vision and goals and their relationship to practice.

5. Attack - by showing the weaknesses of - the "quick-fixes" that are alleged by some to respond meaningfully and adequately to our difficult predicament as a community.

In these varied ways, the challenge would seem to be to nurture a culture or a consciousness that will welcome and even demand the kinds of serious thinking the Goals Project hopes to encourage. But, as noted above, the obstacles ought not to be underestimated.

SUPPOSING THEY DO COME TO US FOR HELP, DO WE HAVE MUCH TO OFFER?

The problem. As long as we confine ourselves to asking ourselves how to motivate people to want to wrestle in a serious way with a goals-agenda, we don't have to face a very tough question: would we know how to help them if they did seek our help? Do we yet know how to help them think about goals and vision in ways that will illuminate practice, and about practice in ways that will lead them to struggle meaningfully about questions of fundamental goals. We speak about the importance of doing these things - but do we know how to do these things - how to raise the level of discourse, or how to help an institution that has begun wrestling with questions of underlying vision to arrive at any shared conclusions that can inform practice.

The solution. We need to find concrete ways of infusing serious philosophical content and deliberation into the work of Jewish educating institutions - and to do so in such a way that the infusion will be neither pedestrian nor perceived as irrelevant. It was in this context that the concepts of maps (topographic and other), tool-kits, libraries of resources, and grids entered our conversations. To be effective in responding to a problem or situation, the coach will need a map of the domain in question that will suggest categories, questions, a range of alternative responses, pertinent materials and ideas of different kinds. The map serves more than one purpose: it helps to interpret the question or situation at hand, but it also suggests a range of possible ways that coach could, depending on his or her assessment of the situation, respond.

The concept of a map is pertinent no matter what the level

at which one starts. If one starts with basic philosophical questions concerning the meaning of Jewish existence, map could point one towards various views on these questions, towards the ways answers to such questions may implicit in existing educational practice, or towards questions concerning how a given answer to such questions - say, Buber's or Rosenzweig's -- might color one's approach to curriculum design or design of the social environment. The map would suggest directions to go and perhaps tools needed to move in such directions. Alternatively, the map could direct one from very practical questions -- Should the children be asked to wear Kippot? or what-not? - to questions at various other levels.

Given an appropriate map and an interest in engaging the participants in reflections on goals and their relationship to practice, any situation that arises in the coach's interaction with the participants can forward the agenda. It was the categories, the questions, the understandings, and the concerns with which DM listened to what the Agnon teachers were saying about Israel that allowed him to size up the situation and to respond to it in ways that led them to think meaningfully about basic questions concerning the meaning of Jewish life and the role of Israel (and Cleveland) in it. And GD's example that built on a video concerning "good Bible Teaching" also highlights the ways in which, informed by appropriate questions, categories, and materials, this situation might lend itself to illuminating basic goals-related questions.

It was noted that developing an adequate map could well be a difficult task requiring significant and varied forms of expertise. The particular example we focused on concerned the teaching of Bible, and we spent some time thinking about the kinds of individuals it would be useful to engage in identifying different conceptions of teaching and learning Bible, how reflection on a particular Bible curriculum could stimulate questions concerning the nature of Torah and its place in Jewish existence, etc.

While the concept of a map suggested various directions one could go and where they might lead, that of a library of resources suggested something that included strategies and resources as well. Using this library, the coach is someone who would size up a situation with an eye towards identifying the level at which the presenting situation should be responded to in order to exploit its potential to stimulate fruitful reflection, as well as to determine the kinds of resources and strategies that have promise of stimulating such reflection at this level.

All of this led us to discussions of grids that focus our attention on the different levels at which the conversation might proceed, on the kinds of resources and questions that might be pertinent -- all in response to a presenting situation that might

range from uncertainties about the Hebrew curriculum, the problem of vandalism, an interest in developing a school-wide mission, etc.

While a grid seems helpful in reminding us about the kinds of things we should be attending to, a caution was expressed about prematurely - or, indeed ever - reifying it and treating it as anything more than a flexible and revisable tool for illuminating the complexity and the choices to be made in a presenting situation.

Treated in this spirit, however, some felt that a grid could be very helpful a) in sizing up a situation; b) in determining a response along a number of dimensions -- level, materials, strategies, aims, etc.; c) in identifying some of the work-- indeed, the learning -- that the Goals Project needs to begin doing if it is to develop a rich map to be used in preparing coaches or in working with institutions.

An important point implicit in our discussion of maps, grids, resource-libraries, and tool-boxes is that noe of them removed the need for good judgment on the part of the coach - the ability to size up what's going on and judging how to respond, drawing on the various concepts, strategies, and materials in his/her possession.

A "PROFOUNDLY SHALLOW" ALTERNATIVE

Although not made explicit, the model implicit in much of our conversation gives the coach a very active guiding role: the coach sizes up the situation and guides the course of the deliberations of teachers and/or the principal and/or the lay leadership towards , or back and forth among, certain levels in order to stimulate a more goals-sensitive community and educational environment.

As an alternative, I.S. proposed a very different model, one which emphasizes self-direction and self-study on the part of the institution's stake holders. On this model, what "we" would provide is a center to which the participants in an institution would come in order to get help in identifying resources that would be useful to them in addressing their real and living concerns and problems. They are the ones who would identify and interpret their pressing problems and the best ways to address them using what resources. The Center would offer them a menu of resources and possible routes to go -- but would leave it in their hands which route to go, which materials to use, or how to use them.

Though generally non-directive, the model allows for the possibility that at the beginnings of the process, the Center or a coach might play a more active role in setting the tone, in

establishing a culture that respects and encourages non-fake, genuine openness. But the aim is to make yourself dispensable--and the best way to do this is to discourage dependence on the coach from the very beginning by putting the responsibility in the hands of the stake holders: it is by being responsible for our own growth that we develop a culture that thrives on being responsible for its own growth, rather than looking to someone else to stimulate it.

The aim, he suggested, is an institution which has internalized an ethos of continuous self-renewal through on-going reflection and self-study concerning what it is trying to do and how it is setting about trying to accomplish it.

The model has any number of appeals: For example: 1) it doesn't infantilize or create dependence on outsiders; 2) efforts always remained tied to the real and living concerns of the participants; 3) it affirms the power of human beings without special expertise and proceeding on their own to come to arrive at powerful insights and adequate solutions to their problems.

At the same time, the model called forth a number of concerns, including the following:

1. Left on their own, will there be a tendency to gravitate the least common-denominator?

2. Will potentially powerful and very pertinent materials not be considered or not be used in the most effective way because the participants didn't bring with them the requisite background of understanding?

3. Will the level of discourse remain superficial, rather than growing in depth?

4. Will critical questions not get asked? When I.S. studied a philosopher with his teachers-to-be, he asked them to think in certain ways about that thinker's bearing on educational practice? Assuming that this is important, can one assume that it will happen without the suggestion or prodding of an outsider?

This is, it was noted, particularly important when we think about figures like Moshe Greenberg: is it enough to encourage a reading of what he has to say, or is the impact richly enhanced if questions focus the attention of the readers on 1) how his conception differs from their own intuitive views, or on 2) what it would mean to organize Bible study or teacher-training or After-School sports on the Greenberg model.

Among the questions that got raised in this connection concerned the desirability of encouraging people to apply what they read or think about to questions of practice (via exercises, questions, etc.). As against the view that this was desirable,

the view was expressed that a rich encounter with a text is likely to have rich echoes in one's approach to one's work even if one hasn't systematically sought the connection, and also that the effort to force a connection might unduly narrow one's appreciation of the text. That there might be ways of encouraging attention to educational implications without unduly narrowing one's reading of the text was also a matter we considered.

5. The role of a thoughtful outsider - a "critical friend" as members of Sizer's coalition say - in identifying blind-spots in an institution's thinking, or points of resistance, or unspoken questions that lie behind what is uttered, was also noted.

6. A concern was expressed that while this kind of an institution might address varied concerns about one or another aspect of their school, it might never spontaneously move on to the "big questions" concerning the raison d'etre of Jewish education and Jewish existence.

At work in many of these questions is a fundamental issue concerning the amount and kind of structure, direction, or guidance on the part of an outsider will be fruitful (and at what price) -- an issue whose resolution would seem, as one person noted, to depend (as does the other approach) on a number of basic assumptions concerning human nature and human learning.

Ball and Cohen/CIJE meeting
1/6/97

Instructional design and specification: Policies and interventions are not free-standing statements of purpose or principle -- they are inevitably associated with efforts to define, explain, interpret, and develop their meaning and entailments for action. This is the domain of specification and development. Some instructional policies and interventions are relatively sparsely specified and developed while others are relatively fully specified and developed. Since policies and associated interventions often are aimed at students but depend on professional educators, what follows applies both to the elements of policy that centers on student learning and to the elements of policy that centers on educators" learning.

Specification refers to the design and definition of educational policies and innovations. The less well specified a policy was, the more of a "black box" it would be. Defining a place for a curriculum for enactors' learning into a policy or intervention would be one example of specification, and defining the content of that curriculum would be another. At the other extreme are policies and interventions that consist chiefly of statements of principle; while such statements suggest a general direction, they often suggest little more than that. How enactors would know if they were making real progress, what steps they should take to make progress, and many related matters would remain undefined. The more undefined (unspecified) a policy or intervention was the more difficult it would be for intervenors to make rational decisions about the direction, pace, and progress of their work, or to communicate effectively about the innovation, to decide how to help users adopt and enact it, to know the difference between weak and strong work, and to design opportunities for potential users to understand what sort of instruction the innovation called for. As a result, the less well specified a policy was the more variety we would expect to see in descriptions of the work within an intervention.[1] The extent to which purpose and methods of operation -- whether evident in practice or on paper -- are specified may help to explain differences in the success of efforts to improve instruction.[2]

Development refers to the action repertoire of a policy or intervention -- including materials, social processes (like teacher education), working models or examples of adoption processes, or video materials that depict teachers' knowledge, norms, and skills in ways that would be educative for other teachers, social processes for involving and educating parents, etc.[3] If the specification of innovations is analagous to instructional design for classrooms, then their development is analagous to creating

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[1] The nature of effective communication and other matters could vary somewhat across innovations, but such differences would not necessarily impede efforts to discern how well specified innovations were.

[2] We do not equate specification with either explicit theory or highly specific procedures: greater specification does not require more detailed doccuments. Specification can be as evident in the operations of an innovation as in sponsors' writing, and we would attend at least as carefully to the theory in action as in written doccuments. Though approaches to change differ considerably, each approach can be more or less well worked out and understood in its own terms.

[3] Development is not the mere enactment of specification. It is not difficult to imagine a direct instruction scheme that is very highly specified but for which the materials and teacher education are detailed, thin, and mechanistic. The results of development may not express the promises of innovative specification, or they may exceed those promises.

materials, occasions for instruction, and processes that would provoke and support change.[4] The better developed interventions are, the more likely they are to effectively manage change and build capacity. Creating curricula for enactors' learning for use in a policy or intervention would be one example of what I mean by development.

Nearly any instructional policy can be well specified and developed -- not just the more didactic ones. The more refined the specification of a policy or intervention is, and the more full its development, the more opportunities enactors will have to learn. The more weakly specified instructional policies are, the more they leave to be invented, improvised, etc., and thus the more complex and difficult enactors' learning will be.

Complete specification and development of instructional interventions and policies is of course impossible, for enactment depends on unpredictable social interactions that cannot be entirely -- or even nearly entirely -- predicted and thus scripted. But specification and development interact with purposes and methods. When the instructional purposes and methods of policies and interventions are quite simple, then more complete specification and development are possible. Specification and development are more complex and difficult when interventions are more intellectually ambitious and child-thinking-centered, and must be less complete because more complex social interactions will ensue. But this greater difficulty and incompleteness of specification and development should not be seen as a tight limit, or evidence that only broad principles can be enunciated. A great deal can be specified and developed for more complex and ambiguous policies and interventions, but there will be more contingency. Weak specification has been more common, both because the work is more difficult and because of the mistaken idea that specification and development inhibit creativity and autonomy.

Enactors' learning, specification, and development: Cognitive psychologists view most instruction as an ill-structured domain: most important terms can be defined in competing ways; causal relationships often are weak and unclear; and ambiguity and uncertainty are endemic. Learning and problem-solving in such domains are more complex and difficult than in well-structured domains. But ithese and other features of ill-structured domains are relative, not absolute, hence the problems of learning in such domains also are relative. The more weakly specified and developed instructional policies and interventions are, the more they leave to be invented, improvised, and figured out. Another way to put the point is to say that the more weakly specified and developed policies and interventions are, the more work they tacitly delegate to enactors. The more policymakers and intervenors leave to enactors to invent, improvise, and figure out, the more uncertain and ambiguous the enactors' work, and potentially the more complex and difficult their learning. Because human rationality is limited, and because we typically seek to reduce uncertainty, such weak specification and development and tacit delegation result in weak and variable enactment, and shorten the half-life of instructional policies and interventions.

Internal coherence: Instructional policies and interventions typically represent efforts to guide teaching and learning. if policy is a sort of instruction, then consistency

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[4] Wedo not assume that design and development exist in linear form; often design is refined as a consequence of work on development.

in the representation of what is being taught, among the various agents that commonly are used to guide instruction, would count, just as it seems to count in classrooms. These agents of instructional guidance include: frameworks and/or content and performance standards; curriculum for students, professional education, assessment for students, professional supervision and support, and incentives for students and professionals. An example of a coherent policy to improve mathematics teaching would be one that sought to guide instruction through all of these agents, and that offered guidance that was consistent in form and content across guidance agents. Many policies and interventions focus on one or two of these agents, thus losing the leverage that others could contribute. Many other policies and interventions focus on many of these agents, but relate them weakly or incoherently. As a result they send different, divergent, or diffuse messages. Less coherent policies will make enactors' learning and enactment much more difficult.

Richness of representation: Another important feature of specification and development is the richness of representation in the "content" that is conveyed by various agents that commonly are used to guide instruction. The more rich the representation the more opportunities learners have to criss-cross the domain in question, and thus to make sense of things. For instance, guidance for teachers who were learning about multiplication of fractions in a new math curriculum would be more rich if it offered several different representations of the operations involved, rather than only one representation. Guidance that included examples of students' work with multiplication of fractions along with representations of the operations would be more rich still.

A Set of Key Problems of Innovation
for Discussion
January 6, 1997

1. Scale.

Everyone worries about the spread of innovations and numbers; big numbers are thought to be better. But complex educational innovations need to scale "in" as well as "up" -- i.e., to build infrastructure within innovative situations as well as to build numbers. Scaling in requires careful design and attention to design and strategic details of the innovation itself. It also requires careful specification and development of an innovation, which seems to many to be at odds with local initiative (see #5 below). Scaling up requires development of means to spread innovation beyond the careful design environments and contexts, with reasonable fidelity of purposes, means, and outcomes, and with concern for resources.

2. The problem also is the solution.

In most cases, the source of the problem also is the agent for solving the problem. For example, teachers and parents are the key source of academic weakness in US elementary schools, but they also are the agents upon whom reformers must depend to repair that weakness. This creates all sorts of problems of incentives, learning, and comprehension of change.

One issue concerns the agents' behavior -- there are reasons why they act as they currently act; understanding why is important. Another concerns incentives: Why should or must they make the changes envisioned? It pays to consider the disincentives to change or innovate in particular ways in specific cases?

Still another issue concerns the agents' role in change: In conceiving and making the innovation happen, how are roles divided or shared? Who develops and agrees on goals? Who designs the change program? Who develops and carries it out? How much are the people to make the change considered, consulted, assisted, enforced, given incentives? How much intersection is there among these roles and responsibilities?

3. Design and initiative.

In order for a complex educational innovation to have a chance of making a difference, it should be a strong, identifiable program, movement, commitment, set of rules or norms, content, or ways of working. Yet in order to be taken up by and used in any serious way, the ideas must be embraced and re-invented by local actors (as in learning, most things that are already known by others), and adapted to fit the local context -- history, resources, players, leadership, community members. Can the requirement for careful design and specification of innovations fit with the requirement for local invention, re-invention, and adaptation?

4. Environments and agents.

Most innovations are designed as though the context of enactment was a matter of indifference -- as though the innovation was an independent agent operating in a generic environment -- but those contexts often are critical. The curriculum reforms of the late 1950s and early 1960s in the US and Europe are a case in point; innovators designed reforms on the asumption that better materials could be a powerful agent for change, but it turned out that failing to make provision for educating users and constituents (teachers, administrators, parents, local officials), damaged or destroyed the materials' effectiveness. Typically, the context is part of the problem that innovators wish to solve -- it is an agent of sorts, or a melange of agents -- but few innovators make provision for its effects on innovations.

5. Why innovations fail.

There are many explanations, but one that is little considered is that most innovations are weakly specified and developed; there is little design, strategy, curriculum for innovators, or concern for the pedagogy of the innovation itself. On this view, most innovations do not have what it would take to even hope to succeed. The 50s curriculum reforms again are a case in point: the materials were well designed, but both design and specification for use (learningt from and about them, and how to use them) was weak or non-existent.

Thus in considering either the prospects for a proposed innovation or the reasons for a past innovation's performance, several questions are critical: How tightly specified is or was the innovation? What are its purposes (what are the goals of the change?), its design (how is the change to be accomplished?), its development (how far it has been pre-conceived to consider carefully and spell out the needs of people, technologies, resources, mechanisms required to make the change?)?

6. Strategic and marketing conflicts.

Time: Many worthwhile changes take time to take root, develop, and spread -- a point that enactors are likely to appreciate. But sponsors often are impatient for more rapid change. Sometimes the impatience for change is a good motivator. But sometimes it leads to a watering down of the aims and nature of the work in order to be able to produce results more quickly. It can also make an intervention look like a failure if big results are expected too soon. Time is both a commodity to be marketed and an implicit expectation of immediate results. These conflicts about time typically affect both practice and policy because the conflicts ramify to the need to communicate the change, and opportunities to mobilize provide the core technology needed for the change, get it in use.

Commitment and skepticism: Most complex change is built around complex bargains; change needs to be "sold" to multiple constituencies. Interveners must persuade funders, leaders, and those who will have to make the actual changes that something important will happen. They often have to promote the change wholeheartedly and convincingly. Doing this can lead to promising more than is

reasonably possible. It can also make it difficult to retain a healthy skepticism about the effort in ways that can help to improve it by learning in and from the experience of change. Ideology and partisanship also are common on the part of interveners and those making change, perhaps linked to the need for conviction to take on many kinds of change. Still, skepticism is a potent resource for improvment, through looking critically at unexpected and unintended costs and outcomes.

Evaluation: Depending on the tangibility and simplicity of the aims of change, the results are more or less simple to determine. In educational change of the kinds we've been studying, there is considerable ambiguity as to what to look at and what standards to hold in order to assess the effects of the change effort. Again, as before the outside influences of context can press the measures of change toward simpler indicants, so as to be able to demonstrate success. Without such clarity of outcome measures, change agents are vulnerable to attack by opponents or resisters, that their efforts are fruitless.

MEMO

To: David Cohen
Deborah Ball

From: Karen A. Barth

Subject: Our meeting on January 6, 1997

Date: December 30, 1996

We are looking forward to meeting with you on January 6th. We are engaged in a strategic process that involves 4 parts:

1) Developing a vision of what success would look like for the North American Jewish Community;

2) Articulating a change philosophy;

3) Defining CIJE's role in making this happen;

4) Outlining specific strategies.

We are currently in phase 2 of this process and have developed a rough draft of our change philosophy which is enclosed. This is a very early draft and needs a lot of work but we thought it would make a useful focal point for our discussion.

We would like to focus our discussion on the following issues:

- How do you think about change?
- Do you have a theory about what works on a large scale? On a small scale?
- What have you learned from your work that might be relevant to the issues we are discussing?
- What models have you seen that could be relevant?
- What cautions and pitfalls should we be aware of ?

I have also enclosed a paper that Amy Gerstein wrote for us. I thought it might be additional "food for thought."

See you on the 6th.

cc: GZD, ADH, BWH, DNP

C:\CIJE\KAREN\MEMO\JAN6MTG.WPD

DRAFT #1

CHANGE PHILOSOPHY AND EMERGING IDEAS ON STRATEGY

JANUARY 1997

[DECEMBER 30, 1996]

WHERE CHANGE NEEDS TO HAPPEN

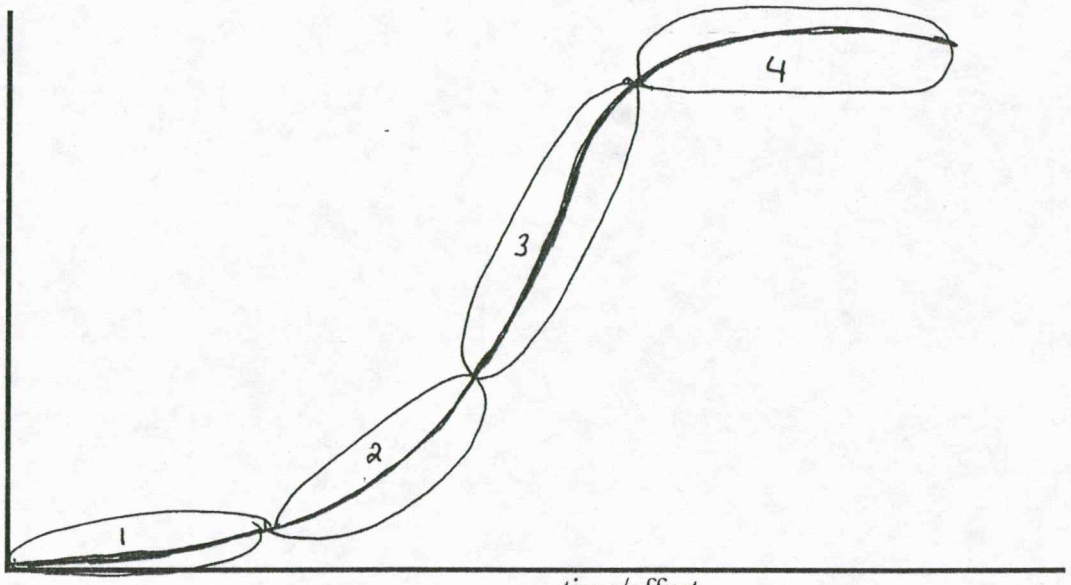
Fundamental Belief	Explanation/Implications
The "Direct Service" institution is the key place where change needs to happen.	Change needs to take place in institutions where Jews interface with Jewish learning and living (e.g. synagogues, schools, camps, JCCs). Any change program that does not ultimately transform these institutions is not worth investing in.
Change needs to happen in the infrastructure that supports these "direct service" institutions (i.e. training institutions, Federations, Central Agencies, Movements, family foundations).	The infrastructure needs to changeto support change in the direct service institutions with the appropriate human and financial resources.
Multiple access points are needed to reach different types of Jews.	Change needs to happen across a broad range of "Direct Service" institutions to offer diverse population Jews the opportunity to connect with the tradition. Therefore focusing on one type of institution (e.g. day schools) is not the total answer.
A critical mass of resources needs to be concentrated on one group of people in order to reach the "tipping point."	There are synergistic effects of multiple positive exposures to Jewish living and learning. Therefore, it is better to concentrate resources on one cohort, one group of families, or one geographical area than to spread small amounts around to barely touch the lives of many people.

Fundamental Belief	Explanation/Implications
Change needs to happen in the way that institutions fit together as a system.	The roles of different institutions and the boundaries between them need to be reengineered to improve the functioning of the system.
Learning, prayer and social action, the fundamental pillars of Jewish tradition, need to be the key foci of revitalization efforts.	

HOW INSTITUTIONS CHANGE

Fundamental Belief	Explanation/Implications
The process of change has 4 stages (see Exhibit 1) 1. Invention - the development of new models and ideas. 2. Early Adoption - the integration of those new models and ideas into leading edge institutions. 3. Dispersion - The acceptance of the new ideas by the majority of institutions. 4. The institutionalization of the new ideas and the slowdown in the rate of change. Jewish educational change is at stages 1 and 2.	The focus of change efforts has to be on the development of models and ideas for change and on the integration of these models into leading edge institutions.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE
Exhibit 1



1- Invention
2 - Early Adoption
3 - Dispersion
4 - Institutionalization

HOW INSTITUTIONS CHANGE

Fundamental Belief	**Explanation/Implications**
Piecemeal changes in institutions do not work. The whole institution must change from the inside out.	Programs are "Band-Aids" and will not result in long-term, meaningful change. Instead we need to help institutions transform themselves and/or to create new institutions.
Comprehensive institutional transformation requires 6 things: -Leadership -Cultural Change -Vision -Process -New Skills -Funding	Six factors work together to produce change. Unless all six are present in the same institution, transformation efforts will stumble and resources will be wasted.

CIJE GOALS PROJECT CONSULTATION, JULY 1995
PROCEEDINGS OF DAY 1

INTRODUCTION

After a summary of a number of developments over the last few months, some of the concerns that gave rise to the consultation were articulated. To cite two examples:

1) CIJE has been invited to participate in a number of programs around a goals-agenda for some significant groups (e.g. Wexner, JCCs, Baltimore's central agency). Our recent experience in Atlanta is both encouraging but gives us pause as we approach these upcoming events. In an important sense, Atlanta was very successful -- there was great enthusiasm for what was accomplished, the engagement in the session was real, etc. On the other hand, we did not come away convinced that the struggle with content-issues was as rich or serious as we might have hoped and wondered whether for the participants this was more of a one-shot episode rather than an event that set the tone and the questions for further deliberations. This raises the question: what would be the most fruitful ways to approach these upcoming events so as to ensure an experience that is immediately rich but also has a fruitful after-life?

2) There have been serious questions concerning our readiness at this point in time to train and engage coaches to work with institutions. The questions pertain not just to the kinds of people who would make good coaches or to the nature of training, but more fundamentally to the nature of working with institutions and what one needs in the way of a knowledge-base and skills in order to do so effectively.

3) There have been some uncertainties concerning the appropriate working-relationship and division of labor in this enterprise between CIJE and the Mandel Institute.

Such concerns are among those the consultation needs to address. Most fundamentally, we want to get clearer concerning the following kinds of questions:

1. What is the fundamental mission of the Goals Project, and what goals flow from that mission?

2. What will it take to ready us to fulfill that mission, and how do we best proceed to arrive at this state of readiness?

3. What set of activities need to be at the heart of our work in light of our answers to #s 1 and 2?

4. What working-relationship between CIJE and the Mandel Institute will prove most fruitful in determining and carrying out the project's agenda?

It was suggested that the following criteria need to be satisfied in answering these questions: a) Genuine agreement on the part of all of us; b) decisions are consistent with commitments we've made; c) decisions will forward the CIJE agenda; and d) do-ability given the time and energy that are available to this project (a matter that we cannot afford to treat cavalierly!).

Following our agenda, our discussion began with the subject of the "Goals of the Goals Project" and built on the documents prepared by Marom and Pekarsky. In what follows, some of the main issues and points are reconstructed -- though not necessarily in the order in which they were expressed. I'm pretty sure I've lost a number of significant insights along the way and have misinterpreted other points; but I am hopeful that these will emerge in reactions to the summary.

SOME BASIC ISSUES RELATING TO THINKING ABOUT GOALS AND VISION

A number of general concerns were expressed concerning the challenge of meaningfully engaging educators and lay people in thinking about goals and about their relationship to educational practice. For example:

1. **Nurturing the conviction that it is important for educators and lay leaders to wrestle with questions of goals and vision.** There is a tendency to regard such reflection as irrelevant to the demands of practice, as well as a tendency to regard it as "too deep' for ordinary people. Either way, the result is that philosophical issues aren't engaged.

2. **Avoiding being shallow and pedestrian/avoiding being too disconnected.** If the conversation is overly-constrained by the questions, ways of thinking, and present outlook of the participants, there is a danger of shallowness. If, on the other hand, the conversation begins with reflections on "Great Thinkers" like Moshe Greenberg, it may feel too removed from their concerns and realities to seem relevant -- even if it seems interesting. How structure the conversation so that conversation seems tied to these concerns and realities and yet brings them to encounter rich Jewish ideas and conceptions that go their ways of thinking about things?

3. **Will reflections on vision and goals infuse practice?** Supposing that there is a rich and engaging conversation

concerning our vision of a meaningful Jewish existence, it does not follow that the insights acquired and enjoyed in the context of that discussion will find their way into the world of practice. What must the conversation and/or its context be like if such discussions will not be compartmentalized and will in fact influence educational practice? Are there ways - say, via collaborative action-research efforts or through follow-up assignments, etc. - to make it likely that at the end of a seminar or a workshop the insights acquired there will inform what one does?

IF WE OFFER IT, WILL THEY COME?

Is there a demand "out there" for addressing fundamental questions concerning the goals of Jewish education -- so that if we say, "We're here to help you," communities and institutions will gravitate towards us?

Different views were expressed on this matter. Some felt that there is a demand, a demand fueled perhaps by a sense of desperation concerning our present predicament both as a community and in our institutions.

Others wondered whether the demand would express itself through much more than a willingness to participate in a short-term seminar or retreat. Skepticism was expressed concerning the willingness of many institutions to sign on for a long-term process of study, reflection, and self-examination. Among the reasons offered for thinking that there might not be an eagerness to engage in this kind of process were the following: a) Like us, other educators are already feeling over-worked and feel that they don't have the time and energy to invest in such a process; b) such a process might seem to threaten the leadership's authority or what might feel like a fragile consensus among the membership; c) there might, as noted above, be skepticism concerning the practical "pay-off" in thinking about questions relating to basic educational aims.

To the extent that this skepticism is warranted, it highlights one of the major questions the project has to contend with: namely, how do respond to these obstacles? how do we bring educators, lay leaders, and parents to understand the importance of addressing basic questions concerning the aims of Jewish education in a sustained and serious way? How, as one of us put it, do we overcome the resistance to serious thinking and engender the motivation to engage in it. This question called forth a number of different kinds of responses:

1. A central challenge may be to make vivid the gravity of our situation as a People and the ineffectiveness of existing educational efforts to address this situation. Related to this was the suggestion that we make vivid to those we speak with that education is the arena in which we work out our

future as a People.

2. Frame the conversation as an invitation to reappropriate our heritage as a People that has played the significant role it has in history because of its willingness to think about "the Big Questions".

3. Initiate and stimulate the conversation by inviting those we speak with to personalize "the Big Questions" --to ask themselves why they think it's important to raise their children as Jews, and how they will answer their children's questions concerning why it is important or worthwhile to live as a Jew.

It was noted, in this connection, that to engage not just individuals and institutions but the North American Jewish community as a whole in wrestling with this larger question may be the most important goal of the Goals Project. There was, in this connection, some discussion of whether this larger question is being meaningfully addressed anywhere right now -- and if not, why not.

4. Offer a "For instance!" -- a vivid example of the good things that have happened when the stake holders in an institution have seriously wrestled with questions of vision and goals and their relationship to practice.

5. Attack - by showing the weaknesses of - the "quick-fixes" that are alleged by some to respond meaningfully and adequately to our difficult predicament as a community.

In these varied ways, the challenge would seem to be to nurture a culture or a consciousness that will welcome and even demand the kinds of serious thinking the Goals Project hopes to encourage. But, as noted above, the obstacles ought not to be underestimated.

SUPPOSING THEY DO COME TO US FOR HELP, DO WE HAVE MUCH TO OFFER?

<u>The problem.</u> As long as we confine ourselves to asking ourselves how to motivate people to want to wrestle in a serious way with a goals-agenda, we don't have to face a very tough question: would we know how to help them if they did seek our help? Do we yet know how to help them think about goals and vision in ways that will illuminate practice, and about practice in ways that will lead them to struggle meaningfully about questions of fundamental goals. We speak about the importance of doing these things - but do we know how to do these things - how to raise the level of discourse, or how to help an institution that has begun wrestling with questions of underlying vision to arrive at any shared conclusions that can inform practice.

The solution. We need to find concrete ways of infusing serious philosophical content and deliberation into the work of Jewish educating institutions - and to do so in such a way that the infusion will be neither pedestrian nor perceived as irrelevant. It was in this context that the concepts of maps (topographic and other), tool-kits, libraries of resources, and grids entered our conversations. To be effective in responding to a problem or situation, the coach will need a map of the domain in question that will suggest categories, questions, a range of alternative responses, pertinent materials and ideas of different kinds. The map serves more than one purpose: it helps to interpret the question or situation at hand, but it also suggests a range of possible ways that coach could, depending on his or her assessment of the situation, respond.

The concept of a map is pertinent no matter what the level at which one starts. If one starts with basic philosophical questions concerning the meaning of Jewish existence, map could point one towards various views on these questions, towards the ways answers to such questions may implicit in existing educational practice, or towards questions concerning how a given answer to such questions - say, Buber's or Rosenzweig's -- might color one's approach to curriculum design or design of the social environment. The map would suggest directions to go and perhaps tools needed to move in such directions. Alternatively, the map could direct one from very practical questions -- Should the children be asked to wear Kippot? or what-not? - to questions at various other levels.

Given an appropriate map and an interest in engaging the participants in reflections on goals and their relationship to practice, any situation that arises in the coach's interaction with the participants can forward the agenda. It was the categories, the questions, the understandings, and the concerns with which DM listened to what the Agnon teachers were saying about Israel that allowed him to size up the situation and to respond to it in ways that led them to think meaningfully about basic questions concerning the meaning of Jewish life and the role of Israel (and Cleveland) in it. And GD's example that built on a video concerning "good Bible Teaching" also highlights the ways in which, informed by appropriate questions, categories, and materials, this situation might lend itself to illuminating basic goals-related questions.

It was noted that developing an adequate map could well be a difficult task requiring significant and varied forms of expertise. The particular example we focused on concerned the teaching of Bible, and we spent some time thinking about the kinds of individuals it would be useful to engage in identifying different conceptions of teaching and learning Bible, how reflection on a particular Bible curriculum could stimulate questions concerning the nature of Torah and its place in Jewish existence, etc.

While the concept of a map suggested various directions one could go and where they might lead, that of a library of resources suggested something that included strategies and resources as well. Using this library, the coach is someone who would size up a situation with an eye towards identifying the level at which the presenting situation should be responded to in order to exploit its potential to stimulate fruitful reflection, as well as to determine the kinds of resources and strategies that have promise of stimulating such reflection at this level.

All of this led us to discussions of grids that focus our attention on the different levels at which the conversation might proceed, on the kinds of resources and questions that might be pertinent -- all in response to a presenting situation that might range from uncertainties about the Hebrew curriculum, the problem of vandalism, an interest in developing a school-wide mission, etc.

While a grid seems helpful in reminding us about the kinds of things we should be attending to, a caution was expressed about prematurely - or, indeed ever - reifying it and treating it as anything more than a flexible and revisable tool for illuminating the complexity and the choices to be made in a presenting situation.

Treated in this spirit, however, some felt that a grid could be very helpful a) in sizing up a situation; b) in determining a response along a number of dimensions -- level, materials, strategies, aims, etc.; c) in identifying some of the work-- indeed, the learning -- that the Goals Project needs to begin doing if it is to develop a rich map to be used in preparing coaches or in working with institutions.

An important point implicit in our discussion of maps, grids, resource-libraries, and tool-boxes is that noe of them removed the need for good judgment on the part of the coach - the ability to size up what's going on and judging how to respond, drawing on the various concepts, strategies, and materials in his/her possession.

A "PROFOUNDLY SHALLOW" ALTERNATIVE

Although not made explicit, the model implicit in much of our conversation gives the coach a very active guiding role: the coach sizes up the situation and guides the course of the deliberations of teachers and/or the principal and/or the lay leadership towards , or back and forth among, certain levels in order to stimulate a more goals-sensitive community and educational environment.

As an alternative, I.S. proposed a very different model, one which emphasizes self-direction and self-study on the part of the institution's stake holders. On this model, what "we" would provide is a center to which the participants in an institution

would come in order to get help in identifying resources that would be useful to them in addressing their real and living concerns and problems. They are the ones who would identify and interpret their pressing problems and the best ways to address them using what resources. The Center would offer them a menu of resources and possible routes to go -- but would leave it in their hands which route to go, which materials to use, or how to use them.

Though generally non-directive, the model allows for the possibility that at the beginnings of the process, the Center or a coach might play a more active role in setting the tone, in establishing a culture that respects and encourages non-fake, genuine openness. But the aim is to make yourself dispensable--and the best way to do this is to discourage dependence on the coach from the very beginning by putting the responsibility in the hands of the stake holders: it is by being responsible for our own growth that we develop a culture that thrives on being responsible for its own growth, rather than looking to someone else to stimulate it.

The aim, he suggested, is an institution which has internalized an ethos of continuous self-renewal through on-going reflection and self-study concerning what it is trying to do and how it is setting about trying to accomplish it.

The model has any number of appeals: For example: 1) it doesn't infantilize or create dependence on outsiders; 2) efforts always remained tied to the real and living concerns of the participants; 3) it affirms the power of human beings without special expertise and proceeding on their own to come to arrive at powerful insights and adequate solutions to their problems.

At the same time, the model called forth a number of concerns, including the following:

1. Left on their own, will there be a tendency to gravitate the least common-denominator?

2. Will potentially powerful and very pertinent materials not be considered or not be used in the most effective way because the participants didn't bring with them the requisite background of understanding?

3. Will the level of discourse remain superficial, rather than growing in depth?

4. Will critical questions not get asked? When I.S. studied a philosopher with his teachers-to-be, he asked them to think in certain ways about that thinker's bearing on educational practice? Assuming that this is important, can one assume that it will happen without the suggestion or prodding of an outsider?

This is, it was noted, particularly important when we think about figures like Moshe Greenberg: is it enough to encourage a

reading of what he has to say, or is the impact richly enhanced if questions focus the attention of the readers on 1) how his conception differs from their own intuitive views, or on 2) what it would mean to organize Bible study or teacher-training or After-School sports on the Greenberg model.

Among the questions that got raised in this connection concerned the desirability of encouraging people to apply what they read or think about to questions of practice (via exercises, questions, etc.). As against the view that this was desirable, the view was expressed that a rich encounter with a text is likely to have rich echoes in one's approach to one's work even if one hasn't systematically sought the connection, and also that the effort to force a connection might unduly narrow one's appreciation of the text. That there might be ways of encouraging attention to educational implications without unduly narrowing one's reading of the text was also a matter we considered.

5. The role of a thoughtful outsider - a "critical friend" as members of Sizer's coalition say - in identifying blind-spots in an institution's thinking, or points of resistance, or unspoken questions that lie behind what is uttered, was also noted.

6. A concern was expressed that while this kind of an institution might address varied concerns about one or another aspect of their school, it might never spontaneously move on to the "big questions" concerning the raison d'etre of Jewish education and Jewish existence.

At work in many of these questions is a fundamental issue concerning the amount and kind of structure, direction, or guidance on the part of an outsider will be fruitful (and at what price) -- an issue whose resolution would seem, as one person noted, to depend (as does the other approach) on a number of basic assumptions concerning human nature and human learning.

THE NEED FOR THE MAPS, RESOURCE-LIBRARIES REITERATED

However we analyze our predicament, and whichever model we adopt, developing a map and a resource library needs to be on our agenda:

1. Even if it is true that there is not a widespread recognition at this point of the need to struggle with issues of basic goals, our ability to respond effectively when this need is expressed will depend on developing the appropriate map and resources;

2. Even if one accepts the I.S. model, one needs to have the map and the resources available in order to

suggest to the institutions that come for advice what routes and what resources they may want to consider as they ponder their situation.

TOWARDS THE END OF THE DAY

A few end-of-day points in no particular order:

1. At the heart of the Goals process and everything else CIJE does, it was suggested, is an effort to help those involved with Jewish education "learn how to think seriously" about what they're doing? [If it's true that they don't in this arena, is it also true that they don't in others e.g. in their businesses, or in their family life?]

This forumulation suggested that CIJE's challenge -- in the Goals Project and other domains - is that of creating a culture of inquiry in Jewish education agencies and institutions -- one that emphasizes serious thinking and the avoidance of quick fixes.

2. Is "coaching" really the most helpful way to think about how to facilitate institutional growth around questions concerning vision/goals alone and in relation to educational practice?

3. It was suggested that we should not forget "the personal dimension" of what we're doing. It's not just that we need to encourage those we deal with to address the big questions in personal terms; we need to remember that those questions are also our own -- and attention to our own struggles with them may add insight to our efforts to work with others around them.

4. We shuttled between a number of metaphors and analogies today-- jump-starting a process; the therapist; the coach; computer-metaphors that eluded me; maps of different kinds, and others.

FRIDAY'S AGENDA

1. Corrections, additions, etc.

2. Based on where we went yesterday, re-approach the "Goals of the Goals Project" question.

3. What activities flow from this larger conception of our project?

SOME OF THE LARGER THEMES AND QUESTIONS IMPLICIT IN THIS SUMMARY--IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

1. How much guidance, structure does a motivated institution need in its efforts to undertake and meaningfully carry through a goals-process of substance? How avoid a culture of dependence?

2. What - if anything at all -- is necessary or helpful in ensuring that reflection on Jewish ideas or ideas about Judaism will have a significant echo in their efforts to organize educational practice and to educate?

3. What's the extant level of motivation, commitment, interest among existing institutions and other constituencies in undertaking on a serious process of becoming more goals-and-vision sensitive? To the extent that the interest is not there, what are the reasons for this?

4. To the extent that the requisite level of interest and commitment is not there, what obstacles need to be overcome, and how can the requisite level of enthusiastic commitment be nurtured? What is the curriculum and the strategies for establishing this level of interest and support for serious reflection?

5. What kinds of topographical maps, materials, grids, tool-kits would a coach need in order to effectively understand and respond to the predicaments and problems of an institution (with an eye towards helping the institution become more goals-and-vision-guided? What is the contribution of these maps and grids to diagnosis and response to a presenting situation? How do these maps, grids, materials, etc. get developed -- and how can we avoid their becoming intellectual crutches?

6. The importance of creating a self-sustaining culture of inquiry in educating institutions that avoids quick-fix thinking. How do so?

7. The importance of people becoming engaged in the Great Conversation concerning the nature of Jewish existence and raison d'etre of Jewish continuity and education. Is this conversation taking place? Why does it get avoided? How stimulate it through our own work?

8. In our own relationship to the major questions that define our work and in our efforts to engage others, we should not bypass the personal dimension?