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**MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980-2011.**

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Subseries 2: Dan Pekarsky, 1981-2011, undated.

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Goals Project. Phoenix High School project, 1997 January – April.

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**From:** Dan pekarsky  
**To:** Alan  
**Date:** 4/18/97 5:11pm  
**Subject:** Phoenix

Here's my reconstruction of and perspective on the Phoenix experience.

Following your contact with Fred Zeidman, I spoke a number of times with him and with the two lay chairs of the planning committee that is interested in the new school. In the context of these discussions, we agreed that I would come in for a Sunday, and that I would lead 3 different sessions: one with the Planning Committee; one with rabbinic and educational leadership in the community; and the third with families that might be interested in the school. Their articulated hopes included the following: creating a sense of excitement, identifying and beginning to look at some critical issues; and determining next steps. Below are some of my impressions. I encouraged Zeidman to write up a careful summary of all three sessions, a summary that could be used as a basis for subsequent conversations and as evidence to relevant constituencies that they are being taken seriously into account. If his summary arrives, I will pass it along. Anyway, here are my impressions:

1. Compared with Cleveland and Atlanta, attendance was disappointing at all three sessions. Whether this had to do with their failure to publicize these sessions adequately (which may well be the case) and/or with a weak base of interest in the project, or with some other variable, I'm not sure. As best I can tell, close to half the planning committee (about 7 or 8 people) attended the session intended for them. Of the community's rabbinic/educational leadership, only 4 to 5 people came. And about 20 to 25 parents showed up for the last session (as compared with over 100 in Cleveland and some 60 or 70 in Atlanta), I think the planners of the day were disappointed - and even angered by - the low turn-out.

2. In session 1, I began with some general comments about the power of vision as a planning tool, and I think this was very effective. Through exercises I brought with me, they were able to focus on - and to recognize the importance of serious thinking concerning a) what it means to describe an institution as pluralistic, and b) the attributes of the Jewish human beings they would hope to cultivate. Their discussions of these ideas -- particularly the discussion of pluralism -- were very rich and animated, and more than one of them commented that this was the first time they had bitten into important content issues in a serious way. I was very pleased about this.

At the same time, I think some might have felt a little daunted by the perceived difficulty of achieving significant or

sufficient agreement concerning these matters -- especially since their hope is to create a school that attracts a broad spectrum of families, including Orthodox and Reform.

In addition, some may have hoped that in addition to articulating the need to address basic questions and to having a chance to begin doing so, I would offer them more guidance concerning next steps they need to take to arrive at a meaningful agreement concerning elements of their vision. A couple of times, for example, I was asked how Atlanta and Boston moved to closure in their determination of a vision. As I mentioned in New York, my sense is that while they've come to feel the need for some kind of vision, they're looking for a quick fix ("We'll lock people up in a room and won't let them out til they've got the vision.")

This said, I want to add that the actual process of moving an institution-in-the-making towards a preliminary guiding vision is something about which I have a measure of uncertainty: how can we marry serious thinking about content with the need to maintain a high level of interest and to achieve a meaningful agreement? I think we - certainly I - would profit from some serious inhouse discussion about this, so that I feel I can be more helpful when brought in for these kinds of consultations. I hope we'll put this on our agenda.

I did, by the way, mention to them at the end of the day that CIJE was considering an intensive set of meetings in December around the problem of vision in community day high schools. There seemed to be some interest on the part of Zeidman, but he commented that having it in Israel might make participation difficult.

3. The session with the rabbis/educators was the least satisfying. I wasn't sure that their presence there was more than perfunctory; it wasn't clear that they were the critical professionals in town; and I wasn't sure how to read them. What I did sense is that there may be some tension between the group planning this school and some folks at the local Bureau of Jewish Education. In particular, there seems to be some bad feeling between the director of the Bureau and one of the co-leaders of the planning group; on the other hand, the other leader of the planning group is President of the Bureau.

4. The meeting with the parents brought out a group of parents who, for very different reasons, seemed genuinely eager to have a day high school; they seemed to feel that the urgency of having such a school would enable them to override denominational differences which otherwise might seem insurmountable. Whether this is true is far

from clear to me at this moment. Some came because of a genuine desire for advanced Jewish education; some because of their dissatisfaction with the learning and the social environment in local public schools.

I began this last session by giving all of them a chance to articulate the concerns and hopes that brought them into the meeting, and then I moved into a talk concerning the exciting movement now being born and concerning the important questions that need to be addressed. To me folks seemed engaged and interested, and they applauded enthusiastically when I finished. Nonetheless, one of the co-leaders of the Planning Group, Debbie, said that she felt that my comments were "over their heads" and seemed concerned that this last session was unsuccessful; she left this meeting looking disappointed. I'm told by Zeidman that her spirits picked up over the next two days when she received enthusiastic calls about the session with the parents.

In any case, I continue to feel that the parents were very engaged and that the talk was appropriate for them. This talk was a close cousin of talks I had given in Atlanta and Cleveland, and I felt that in saying it was over their heads she may have been a bit patronizing. At the same time, in retrospect, I think it might have been valuable for me to spend less time articulating challenges on the horizon, and more time "inspiring them" and eliciting their issues.

5. Overall, though attendance was low on this day, I felt that engagement was high. I do, though have questions concerning how deep the support for this project runs, as well as concerning the quality of the professional and lay leadership that is spear-heading it. More on this orally.

I hope this is helpful as background for our conversation.

PS As I have mentioned on other occasions, in the aftermath of that Sunday, Zeidman has asked me for the Ramah piece, which we've sent him; and he also asked that I draft something for them talking about what "next steps" might be. In fact, I have written up something but I'm reluctant to send it until my CIJE colleagues give me some feedback on it.

CC: Barth, Pekarsky

SOME QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION  
Phoenix, March 1997

1. What would you want your school's expectations and policies to be in the areas of Kashrut and Prayer, and how would your response to this reflect a) your understanding of what it means to be a pluralistic community, and/or b) your purposes in the area of religious education?

2. It is said of the famous British secondary schools (for example, Eton and Harrow) that there was something so distinctive about their graduates that years later they could readily be identified as having come out of a particular institution.

If the school you're hoping to build is successful, what distinctive traits would mark out your graduates as Jewish human beings?

3. Imagine that you have been given a free hand to organize the life of the school (curriculum, hiring policies, social life, and everything else!) in such a way that the students will emerge with a deep appreciation of Israel's importance to us as Jews. Develop and explain the approach you would take.

## SOME QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Phoenix, March 1997

1. Community schools typically define themselves as pluralistic institutions that welcome and affirm diversity in practice and outlook.

In what sense(s) do you hope your school will be pluralistic and how will this commitment to pluralism be expressed in the life of the school (in curriculum, in admissions and hiring policies, and in other areas)?

2. What should your school's policies and expectations be in the areas of Kashrut and Prayer, and how does your answer to these questions reflect your understanding of what it means to be a Jewish pluralistic community and your purposes in the area of religious education?

3. Schools that have a clear conception of the kind of person they would like to cultivate - a vision of an educated graduate - are in a much better position to make decisions about curricular emphases, about hiring, and about other matters.

What conception of an educated Jewish human being should guide your school? Identify the most important attitudes, practices, values, bodies of knowledge, understandings, and/or skills, that will - if you are successful - characterize graduates of your school as Jews?

4. It is said of the famous British secondary schools (for example, Eton and Harrow) that there was something so distinctive about their graduates that years later they could readily be identified as having come out of a particular institution.

If the school you're hoping to build is successful, what distinctive traits would mark out your graduates as Jewish human beings?

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## MILWAUKEE GOALS SEMINAR

Some quotations from Menachem Brinker's "What an 'Educated Jew' Needs to Know"

"...an educated Jew must know everything any educated person anywhere in the world must know, plus many subjects related to his own people, its history and its culture...."

"The grand issue of Jewish and particularly Hebrew culture of the last two hundred years...has been the way in which the Jewish people has been integrated into the family of nations and Jewish culture into western civilization. This has entailed a close examination in our literature of the unique nature of the people of Israel, the future of this uniqueness and its limitations...The last thing which Jewish educators should do is to conceal from their students the extremely problematic nature of this great issue....In my opinion this very subject - the meeting between Jewish culture and western culture, and the entry of the Jew into the modern world, with all its possibilities and dangers - must be reflected [through the educational process]."

"I too believe that the primary goals of the Jewish curriculum must be the creation of a 'good Jew'. But in contrast to my colleagues, I do not envision a single portrait of the 'good Jew'."

"For our purposes, a 'good Jew' is one who is intellectually and emotionally involved in the 'here and now' of the Jewish people, aware of the problems, dangers and opportunities of Jewish life and willing to take an active part in it....The emphasis must be placed precisely upon the tremendous pluralism of Jewish culture and Jewish experience in general."

"The educator must develop within his student an empathy for different, even polaric positions both in ancient Jewish history and within the modern Jewish experience. It is incumbent upon the educator to help his student to identify with the zealots and with Josephus..., with the zionists as well as with the doubters...This ability to [empathize with all positions and groups] is the only explanation I can give for the well-known slogan 'love of Israel'. "I find absolutely nothing wrong in teaching the history, the culture, and the literature of this nation as an uninterrupted series of polemics and conflicts which do not lend themselves to a single harmonious resolution binding upon all Jews. The one and only condition which appears to me to be important is that this education provide the student with the feeling that there is still a future for the Jewish people and for Jewish culture, together with the arguments and differences of opinion in respect to basic issues. The modest task of education must be to prepare the student to take part in these same arguments and disagreements and to take an active part in the life of his people, through a deep sense of belonging as well as a high level of self-awareness.."

## **DEFINING FEATURES OF VISION-DRIVEN INSTITUTIONS**

- 1. There is a clear, shared, and compelling vision of the kind of individual and community toward which one believes one should educate.**
- 2. Anchored in this vision are clear educational goals which guide the enterprise.**
- 3. Curriculum, pedagogy, physical organization, social organization, ethos all in various ways reflect the goals and the vision that the institution is committed to. The vision suffuses the life of the institution.**
- 4. The educators are whole-heartedly identified with the vision and goals the institution represents; they embody it in their own lives and it guides their efforts at education.**
- 5. Because the vision is genuinely compelling to the key stakeholders, because they genuinely care about its actualization, gaps between the vision and the actual outcomes are deeply troubling and serious efforts are made to close these gaps.**

## WHAT'S "THE COMMUNITY" IN A JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

Community day schools often define themselves as pluralistic institutions that welcome diversity.

1. In what sense(s) is your school pluralistic, and in what concrete ways is this commitment to pluralism expressed in the life of the school (e.g., in curriculum, in admissions, in hiring policies, etc.)?

2. Typically, even very pluralistic communities insist that their members develop certain common traits (i.e., those that mark them as members of this community)? What common traits, if any, do you hope will characterize graduates of your school, and what are the ways in which these traits are cultivated?

3. Why is pluralism important? In what beliefs, Jewish and/or other, is your commitment to pluralism (as expressed in 1. and 2.) rooted?

4. As a community open to diverse individuals, how does your school understand its job in the area of religious education, and how is this reflected in the way your school is organized? For example, how do your school's practices regarding Kashrut, Tfillah, and/or Kippot reflect a) your understanding of what it means to be a pluralistic community, and b) your mission in the area of religious education? (Use back of page to respond.)

SOME QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION  
Phoenix, March 1997

1. Schools that are guided by a clear conception of the kind of person they hope to cultivate are in a strong position to decide such matters as curriculum priorities and content, personnel, social norms, daily routines, admissions/hiring policies, etc.

What conception of an educated Jewish human being would you hope the projected school would be guided by as it makes such decisions? What would be the hallmark characteristics of the successful graduate?

2. Whether potential constituencies are attracted or turned off by a school depends on varied matters, including the school's character and its public self-definition. What do you think would attract - and what do you think might scare away - potential constituencies from the population that you work with?

3. What other concerns, suggestions, etc. do you think it important to keep in mind in trying to develop the new high school?

SOME QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION  
Phoenix, March 1997

1. What motivates your own interest in the new high school?

2. It is said of the most famous British secondary schools (for example, Eton and Harrow) that there was something so distinctive about each of them that their graduates could readily be identified as having come out of a particular institution.

If the high school Phoenix is hoping to launch is built and is as successful as you would hope, what would be the hallmark characteristics of its graduates as Jewish human beings? How would one recognize them?

3. What do you think would excite -- and what do you think would "turn off" - the potential core-constituencies for a new community high school?

Sheila  
Schwartz

Rabbi Bismar -  
Wark  
Rabbi, Has  
± 400 Families  
Conserv.

Debby  
Haras

Steve  
Kanner

Glenn  
Hirsch -  
Resource  
Coord.

Bureau of  
Jewish Educ.

Gary Epstein -  
Relig School Dir.  
Beth El - - 900+ families  
Conservative

Stephanie Cohen  
Dir, JCC preschool - -  
~~shares~~ located  
on grounds of 1100±  
family Reform Congreg.

Dan  
P.

Fred

Elective/Modules

\_\_\_\_\_ <sup>تر</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ = ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

Arizona - - not

↳ Afraid of public school

Not ↑ Jewish Id.

Rabbi M: there is a Jewish component!

① Compelling Common Ground

Who are they?

①

---

Shared Values

→ Compassionate

---

A hunger ?? in the students!!

What does it mean to be  
"Pluralistic"?

1) generic Judaism ~~man~~

2)

30 min. until  
parents arrive

Parents will be  
with. until

---

Fear — violence  
Change!

Jewish Ed — Articulate  
Values

W. J. } Warmth  
Community  
Non-  
minority

Bad Gen Education

Our Attraction of Phoenix for next  
generations

Our children

Hertzeliyah Day School

Not being a minority  
Is there a clientele?

Aaron Scholom  
Bureau of Jewish Education  
sitting at back behind  
Debby's husband

Mort

Elena

Sandi

Sheila

Irwin

Sheldon

Debbie

Steve

Session #1

Thanks + Introductions

Role: Qs -- Steps -- Elicit/Listen -- Comment

Twofold Excitement

Significance of new M: Negative: ↓ PS + Anxiety

Positive: Modernity -- Educ → Amt/~~Quality~~/Timing

↳ Particularism/Americanism: then/nou

Amt./Timing -- and Quality -- often Bad

Sources of "Badness" -- ~~Personnel~~ ... And

Deep Reason: Lack of Clarity Re: Purpose/Vision

Case-in-point: Amer. H.S. = Shopping Mall

Cohen's Prescription + Evidence: Smith/Lightfoot

⇒ Aspire to a VDI = Person-Goals-Practices

E.g. Dewey -- Life-long learning = Experimenting

→ Kitchen -- Science - History - Curriculum, etc "Shop"

or: "Empathy"

⇒ Vision As Non-Arbitrary Basis.

↳ Powerful Planning Tool - PR Tool.

Q isn't whether - But what kind?

Vision-debates in gen. ed: Harvard/Charach/Mind

For Jewish School - More Complicated

Can't do everything: Feasible/Desirable

⇒ What Vision of a Jewish Human Being...??

One thing is clear -- Pluralism! But

~~It~~ Inclusivity's Limits - Relig/Wealth/Ability

Pluralism - Curric -- Tilla - Kashrut

↳ Multi- vs Non-denom

What will grads have in common?

→ Harrow only way Think/Halt  
study

Exercise:

Possibility of a diversity-  
friendly Jewish core or  
Orientation:  $\longrightarrow$

זרע של שיושק בקריים ענין  
בשילוב. על תורה, עקרונות  
זרע של שילוב חסדים

## The Case for Torah

Torah: Our tradition of learning

Rich texts, continuing dialogue, Valued activity  
Soul of Jewish life

Our Age: Ignorance, skill, love — Adult Surprise

A school could proudly declare itself  
"a community of learning";

Consistent w/ diversity

What texts/what kind of learning

N Insights, Renewal

Powerful implications!! Guidance

A strong case for אורח חיים as organizing Jewish core:

Avodah: Not Worship or Practice, But "Spiritual Work"

- = ① Effort to understand our place in the cosmos, to discern the meaning of our existence
- ② Efforts to encounter a transcendent reality -- Higher, deeper reality
- ③ Modernity -- many successes -- Not in this arena
- ④ Deep craving for spirituality
- ⑤ Failure of organized Religion

Art Green: "Spiritual - not religious"  
Roger Kamanez, JUBUS

⇒ Much to be said for a school that puts spiritual longings at center

→ Curric., אורח חיים, Hiring etc

But Gmilit Hasadim is also a strong candidate for the school's Jewish center of gravity:

Gmilit Hasadim = Broad Interp

- ① Moral Crisis - World's Problems - "US" <sup>Relativ</sup> self
- ② Our Contributions - - - Our histor. Exp.   
 Our texts Suffering

Ahad Ha-Am - A talent for morality

③ A h.s. that took the challenges of 1933, of Gmilit Hasadim, seriously:

- a) Compelling marriage of Contemp. need and Jewish tradition
- b) Real guidance: Curriculum   
 Teachers   
 Social org.

My suggestion, (T., A, G.H.)

- 1) An orientation consistent w/ diversity
- 2) Powerful guide to decision-making

Response: Why choose?

Answer: (1) Not either-or.

(2) yes - emphasis -- Foreground/background  
Can't do everything!!  $\Rightarrow$  Decide priorities

Final Issue: Thus far, no attention to America

In past: Public School / Pride, loyalty, Engagement

Today: Move to private, Jewish School

Schlessinger: (1) Disengagement (2) Disunity

This, I suspect, not true!! But what is?

⇒ School's Vision/practice must speak to N.U.S.

(1) Relationship between 2 IDs.

(2) Interest in other groups

(3) Interest in Larger Community's Problems

- Poverty, Exploitation, Ecology, Discrimination

Conclude - Another Perspective:

Dewey - school = Microcosm ← Real → Ideal

His challenge: Ideal Jewish Comm: values, activities, Relationships

Let this be your guide

Binds us together as a family.

## AND ALL THE PEOPLE SAW THE VOICES

Shmot 20:16

"His mouth is most sweet" (Song 5:16). It is said in the name of R. Yohanan: The moment Israel at Sinai heard

the word "I," their souls left them, as is written, "My soul left me when He spoke" (Song 5:6). At once, the Word returned to the Holy One and said: Master of the universe, You are ever alive and enduring, the Torah is ever alive and enduring, yet You are sending me to the dead?—they are all dead! So, for Israel's sake, the Holy One went back and sweetened [made soft] the Word, as is said, "The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is stately" (Ps. 29:4), which, as R. Hama bar Hanina explained, means that the voice of the Lord was powerful for young men and had measured stateliness for the aged. [In agreement with R. Hama bar Hanina], R. Levi said: Had it been written, "The voice of the Lord is in His strength," the world could not have stood it. Hence Scripture says, "The voice of the Lord is fitted to the strength" (Ps. 29:4),<sup>1</sup> that is to say, to the strength of each and every person—the young, according to their strength; the aged, according to their strength; the little ones, according to their strength; the sucklings, according to their strength; the women, according to their strength.

Song of Songs Rabba 6

R. Abba stated in the name of Samuel: For three years there was a dispute between Beth Shammai and Beth Hillel, the former asserting, "The *halachah* is in agreement with our views" and the latter contending, "The *halachah* is in agreement with our views". Then a *bath kol*<sup>10</sup> issued announcing, "[The utterances of] both"<sup>11</sup>

are the words of the living God, but the *halachah* is in agreement with the rulings of Beth Hillel. Since, however, 'both are the words of the living God' what was it that entitled Beth Hillel to have the *halachah* fixed in agreement with their rulings?—Because they were kindly and modest, they studied their own rulings and those of Beth Shammai,<sup>1</sup> and were even so<sup>2</sup> [humble] as to mention the actions<sup>3</sup> of Beth Shammai before theirs,

"For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?" (Deut. 5:23). Come and see how the voice went forth to all of Israel, to each and every one in keeping with his particular capacity—to the elderly in keeping with their capacity, to young men in keeping with their capacity, to the little ones in keeping with their capacity, and to the women in keeping with their capacity. R. Yose bar Hanina said: If you are astounded at such an assertion, then draw the relevant inference from the manna, which came down for Israel varying in taste, in keeping with each Israelite's particular need—to young men it tasted like bread, to the elderly it tasted like wafers made with honey, to sucklings it tasted like milk from their mother's breast, to the sick it tasted like fine flour mingled with honey, while for the heathen it tasted as bitter as linseed. Now, if the manna, which was all of the same kind, changed into so many kinds to provide for the particular need of each individual, was it not possible for the voice, in which there is such divine strength, to vary according to the capacity of each individual, so that no harm should befall him? Hence Job said, "God thundereth marvelously with His voice" (Job 37:5).<sup>8</sup>

Shmot Rabba 6

Bab. Eruvin 13 b

# וְכַל-הָעַם רֹאִים אֶת-הַקּוֹלֹת

אמר ו' ס' כ'

לו חפזו ממחקים" - אָמְרוּ בְּשֵׁם ר' יוֹחָנָן: בְּשַׁעַה שֶׁשָּׁמְעוּ  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּסִינַי אֲזַכֵּיר פְּרָחָה וְשָׁמְתָם, זֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּפְּשֵׁי  
 יִצְחָק בְּבִרְוֹי<sup>י</sup>. חֹר הַדְּבָר לִפְנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא וְאָמַר:  
 רְבוּנוֹ-שֶׁל-עוֹלָם. אֵתָה חַי וְנֶקְיָם וְחוֹרְתָךְ חַיָּה וְקַיִמָת. וְשִׁלַּחְתָּנִי  
 אֶצֶל מַתִּים ז' - כָּלֵם מַתִּים וּ בְּאוֹתָהּ שַׁעַה חֹר הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-  
 הוּא וְהִמְתִּיק לָהֶם אֶת-הַדְּבָר. זֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: קוֹל-יְיָ בַּחַת.  
 קוֹל יְיָ בְּהַדְרָה<sup>8</sup>. אָמַר ר' חֲמַא בַר חֲנִינָא: קוֹל-יְיָ בַּחַת  
 לְבַחּוּרִים, קוֹל יְיָ בְּהַדְרָה לְחַשְׁשִׁין. ר' לֹוֹי אָמַר: אֵלוֹ הָיָה  
 כְּתוּב: קוֹל יְיָ בְּכַחוֹ - לֹא הָיָה הַעוֹלָם יָכוֹל לְעֲמוֹד. אֵלָּא  
 "קוֹל יְיָ בַּחַת" - בַּחַת שֶׁל כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד: הַבַּחּוּרִים לִפְנֵי כַּחַס.  
 הַנְּקָנִים לִפְנֵי כַּחַס, הַקְּטָנִים לִפְנֵי כַּחַס, הַיּוֹנְקִים לִפְנֵי כַּחַס,  
 וְהַנְּשִׂים לִפְנֵי כַּחַן.

אמר ו' ס' כ'

מ "מי כל-בשר אשר שמע קול אלהים חיים מדבר  
 מתוך-האש" וגו'<sup>2</sup> - בָּא וּרְאָה הַיָּאָךְ הַקּוֹל יוֹצֵא אֶצֶל כָּל-  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, כָּל-אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לִפְנֵי כַחוֹ: הַנְּקָנִים לִפְנֵי כַחַס, הַבַּחּוּרִים  
 לִפְנֵי כַחַס, הַקְּטָנִים לִפְנֵי כַחַס וְהַנְּשִׂים לִפְנֵי כַחַן. אָמַר ר' יוֹסֵי  
 כַר חֲנִינָא: אִם תִּמְנָה אֵתָה עַל הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה - לְמַד מִן הַקּוֹן.  
 שֶׁלֹא הָיָה יוֹרֵד לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֵלָּא לִפְנֵי כַחַ שֶׁל כָּל-אֶחָד וְאֶחָד  
 מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל. הַבַּחּוּרִים הָיוּ אוֹכְלִים אוֹתוֹ כְּלַחַס, וְהַנְּקָנִים -  
 כְּצַפִּיחִית בְּדָבֶשׁ, וְיוֹנְקִים - כְּחֶלֶב מִשְׁדֵּי אָמָם, וְהַחוֹלִים -  
 כְּסֹלֶת מֵעֶרְכַת בְּדָבֶשׁ, וְהַגּוֹיִם טוֹעֲמִים אוֹתוֹ מֵר כְּגַדִּין. - וּמָה  
 הַקּוֹן שֶׁהָיָה מִיֵּן אֶחָד, וְהַפֶּךְ לְכַמָּה מִיֵּינִן בְּשִׁבִיל צְרִיךְ כָּל-  
 אֶחָד וְאֶחָד, הַקּוֹל שֶׁהָיָה כַחַ בּוֹ - עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה שֶׁהָיָה  
 מִשְׁתַּנָּה לְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד, שֶׁלֹא יִזְקוּ, הָיוּ - בְּרַעַם אֵל בְּקוֹלוֹ  
 נִפְלְאוֹת<sup>3</sup> (שְׁמַר ה).

ב אמר רבי אבא אמר שמואל: שלש שנים נחלקו  
 בית שמאי ובית הלל. הללו אומרים הלכה כמותנו  
 והללו אומרים הלכה כמותנו. יצאה בת קול ואמרה:  
 יאלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים הן. והלכה כבית הלל. וכי מאחר שאלו ואלו דברי  
 אלהים חיים מפני מה זכו בית הלל לקבוע הלכה כמותן - מפני שזוהר ועלובין  
 היו, ושנין דברייהו ודברי בית שמאי.  
 ולא עוד אלא שמקדימין דברי בית שמאי לדברייהו.

בבב, עילין י"ג-כ

"I too believe that the primary goals of the Jewish curriculum must be the creation of a 'good Jew'. But in contrast to my colleagues, I do not envision a single portrait of the 'good Jew'."

"For our purposes, a 'good Jew' is one who is intellectually and emotionally involved in the 'here and now' of the Jewish people, aware of the problems, dangers and opportunities of Jewish life and willing to take an active part in it....The emphasis must be placed precisely upon the tremendous pluralism of Jewish culture and Jewish experience in general."

"The educator must develop within his student an empathy for different, even polaric positions both in ancient Jewish history and within the modern Jewish experience. It is incumbent upon the educator to help his student to identify with the zealots and with Josephus..., with the zionists as well as with the doubters...This ability to [empathize with all positions and groups] is the only explanation I can give for the well-known slogan 'love of Israel'. "I find absolutely nothing wrong in teaching the history, the culture, and the literature of this nation as an uninterrupted series of polemics and conflicts which do not lend themselves to a single harmonious resolution binding upon all Jews. The one and only condition which appears to me to be important is that this education provide the student with the feeling that there is still a future for the Jewish people and for Jewish culture, together with the arguments and differences of opinion in respect to basic issues. The modest task of education must be to prepare the student to take part in these same arguments and disagreements and to take an active part in the life of his people, through a deep sense of belonging as well as a high level of self-awareness.."

-- Professor Menachem Brinker

Qs/Issues/

Post-Exercise /

- A) Major Challenges - List
- B) Develop Guiding Vision

# Planning Grp. Session

Thanks + Intros (+ your interest in Project)

Role: 1) Qs 2) Steps 3) Elicit/Listen 4) Commend

Twofold Excitement: Two births

Sign.f. of Movement → Negative: Pub School + Anxiety

→ Positive ① ↓ Modernity + ↑ Judaism (meaning, values, roots, W)

② Education-key: Amt./Quality/Timing → Adolescence

Adolescence: Mature reflection/study + Id vs →

③ Particularism/Americanism vs Past (PS=Loyal

→ Compatible/Contribute

Creating School-Not Enough: Must be good!

Attributions of "Badness": \$/Personnel/Equip

Deep Reason: Lack of Clarity Re: Basic Purpose

E.g., Amer.H.S. = Shopping Mall

Critics' Prescription - Evidence: Smith/Lightfoot

→ VDI = Kind of Person - Goals - Practices - Teachers

E.g. Dewey - Living = Learning = Experimenting

→ Kitchen -- History -- Math - Science

The Q: Not whether V, but What Kind!

Harvard -- Character - Use Mind Well

For Jewish School: Even more Complicated

Can't do everything -- Wouldn't want to

→ what V. of Jewish human being should inform...

One thing clear: Pluralistic: But -- ??

Inclusive: Relig/wealth/Disability - Limits/Why?

Commitment to Pluralism ~ Curric/Practices ??

Multi-Denom/trans-denom.??

What will grads have in common? → Harrow Q.

Now: Exercise

# Planning Group Session

Thanks — (Interest + Interest in Project)

Role: 1) Qs 2) Steps 3) Elicit/listen 4) Comment

Twofold Excitement: Two births: school/Movement

## Significance of Movement

Negative: ↓ Public Schools -- Anxiety re: trends

Positive:

① Insufficiency of modernity + ↑ J: Meaning/Values/Roots/Wisdom

② Education is key: Amount — Quality — Timing

Traditionally: Up to adolescence → serious limitations!

Adolescence: ↑ ID formation — Mature reflection/study  
e.g. Meaning of Myths/God

③ Particularism is compatible w/ Americanism:

In the past: Public school = Symbol of Loyalty

Now: a) Compatible

b) Contribute to "Good American"

Creating Schools -- not enough -- Must be good!  
Too often, Schools are bad - Attribution: \$/Personnel/Equip.

But all-too-often: a deeper reason  
= Lack of Clarity re: Basic Purposes/Vision  
Slogans -- "Good citizen - R/P - mask Uncertainty  
v Amer. H.S. As Shopping Mall - No rhyme/reason

Say Critics: No improvement until . . . .

Evidence Smith-O'Day

⇒ Strive for a VDI

= Kind of Grad -- Goals -- Practices -- Teachers

E.g. Learning is experimenting → Kitchen/ . . . .

⇒ The Q: not whether V, but what kind?

⇒ Hard Q's: Harvard/Charade/Think well  
USE MINDS

More complicated: Jewish → Can't do everything }  
→ Some - undesirable }

What can/should you do?

One thing clear: "Pluralistic, but → ????"

A) Inclusive - Religious/Disability/Wealth - Limits

B) How will this commitment  $\wedge$  CURRIC

C) Multi-denom -- Trans-denom.

D) What will graduates have in common?

The Harrow Question — <sup>Soul of</sup> School

⇒ A chance to think/talk about these things

## Exercise

[Pluralism] -- [Graduate]

① Individually

② Small groups of 3 or 4

③ Findings

# Post-Exercise - Next Steps

## Major Challenges

- ① Develop guiding vision
  - ②
  - ③
  - ④
  - ⑤
-

# Develop Guiding Vision [w/when/where/who]

- A) Core-group
- B) First Iteration

Respond to "2 takes"

## C) Subsequent theme-informed sessions

### 1) Features

- a) A focus    b) Subst. Inputs
- c) Refine the Vision

### 2) Themes

- a) Pluralism/"Non-denominational"
- b) "Educated Jew"
- c) An American Jew
- d) An educated American

## D) Test on diff. Constituencies

# Concluding Session #1

A) Rest of day

① Rabbis/Educators

Aim: ↑Support ↑Info. ↑Ideas

Suggestions??

② Parents -- Frontal Presentation

Plus

a) Ideas re: an organizing focus

b) Elicit their hopes/concerns

Suggestions?

# Phoenix - Session #2: Rabbis/Educators

My Role: ↑ Q - Elicit Concerns/hopes/Suggestions

Critical Role of this group: Insight/Suggestions/Support

## Excitement/Anxiety

↳ Excitement: and <sup>anx</sup>-Non-Ortho - Adolescence Opp.

↳ Experiment in Pluralism.

Anxiety: ~~Genuine Common Ground~~

↳ Clientele -- Staff -- Principal

↳ Genuine Common Ground

Vision that is stated and Compelling.

## Questions

- ① Your hopes/concerns
- ② Attract/turn off your constituency
- ③ Harrow - Q -- Distinctive focus, compatible w/ Diversity.
- ④ Suggestions

## Parent Group Qs

- ① Motivation
- ② How would your child be different as a result of attending this school?
- ③ What would turn you off?

**JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER PHOENIX**  
**32 West Coolidge, Suite 200**  
**Phoenix, Arizona 85013**  
**(602) 274-1800**  
**FAX (602) 266-7875**

**FED FAX TRANSMISSION**

TO: DANIEL PEKARSKY

FROM: FRED ZEDMAN

DATE: 3/5/97

FAX NUMBER: 1-608-262-9074

NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: 2

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\*Honorary Member

March 5, 1997

Mr. Daniel Pekarsky  
4006 Mandan Crescent  
Madison, WI 53711

Dear Daniel,

It was a pleasure speaking with you the other day, we are all looking forward to visiting with you in Phoenix on Sunday, March 30, 1997 to meet with our High School Committee and others.

While we finalize the structure of the day and meeting times when we speak again, I wanted to outline the concept that we discussed for the day, as follows:

- \* Meeting with the High School Committee--2 1/2 hours
  - generate excitement among all committee members for the concept of a Jewish high school day school
  - develop a process to clarify a vision for the high school
  - develop a timeline of next steps
  - this meeting will be a combination of lecture, exercises, and discussion
- \* Day school executives and board members--1 1/2 hours
  - establish these constituents as stakeholders
  - engage in a discussion of their vision
  - this component will consist of information sharing and discussion

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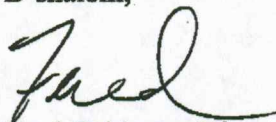
\* Parents--1 1/2 hours

- this component would be an open meeting that would be advertised through the Jewish News and the various religious schools and day schools
- the meeting will consist of presentation and small group discussion with a reconvening to bring all ideas together from the meeting

We also discussed involving Federation leadership and board members and concluded that the best way to enlist this involvement would be through invitations to our Board and Executive Committee to participate in any one of these meetings to be held on the 30th.

We look forward to talking to you and finalizing details for the day. We are excited about your coming to Phoenix and working with us, and we look forward to meeting you in person.

B'shalom,



Fred Zeidman, Director  
Planning and Allocations



THE JEWISH FEDERATION  
OF GREATER PHOENIX

March 10, 1997

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Jeffrey Goulder  
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Michael Greenbaum  
Jerry Gross  
Harold Grossman\*  
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Nancy Hollenberg  
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Jay Zweig

\*Honorary Member

Mr. Daniel Pekarsky  
4006 Mandan Crescent  
Madison, Wisconsin 53711

Dear Daniel,

We look forward to working with you at the end of the month. As we discussed the other day I will meet you at the airport on Saturday evening, March 29. We will have you stay at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Tempe and I'll also get you back to the airport at the end of the day on Sunday. When we speak again on the 25th I'll be able to give you an address and phone number for the hotel that you can leave with your wife (we'll take care of arrangements for the room), and I can get your flight schedule at that time. Please send us a bill for the tickets so that we can reimburse you, along with any related expenses.

As we discussed, the day will look as follows:

Meeting with the High School Committee (9:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M.)

Meeting with Day School Executive Directors and Presidents, Rabbis, and Religious School Directors (11:30 A.M.-1:00 P.M., with lunch included)

Focus Group with Parents (1:30 P.M.-3:00 P.M.)

Debriefing with High School Committee (3:15 P.M.-4:00 P.M., very informal)

I'm enclosing with this letter copies of the memos inviting the various constituencies to the workshops. Debby Harris will be contacting you later to arrange for an interview with the Jewish newspaper here. We'll arrange to have newsprint pads, easels, pens, nametags, etc. for the day. When next we talk please let us know if there are any other details that we need to arrange for the day. Also, please feel free to mail any materials you would like us to have copied here to hand out at any of the workshops.

We look forward to speaking with you again on the 25th.

B'shalom,

Fred Zeidman

cc: Debby Harris  
Steve Kanner

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November 27, 1996

Dr. Alan Hoffman  
Council for Initiatives In Jewish Education  
15 East 26th Street  
New York, NY 10010

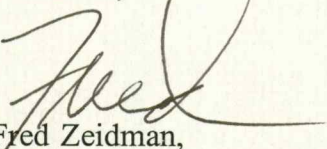
Dear Alan,

It was a pleasure meeting with you, Gail, Karen, and Nessa the other week at the GA. Your willingness to take the time to learn about our community's efforts to develop a Jewish community high school means a great deal to us.

I tried to put on paper our committee's vision for the high school. The result is the enclosed op-ed piece that I submitted to our local Jewish newspaper.

We hope that you or other representatives of CIJE will be able to visit Phoenix and help us to bring greater attention and focus to our process.

B'shalom,

  
Fred Zeidman,  
Director of Planning and Allocations

cc: Steve Kanner  
Debbie Harris

Call Fred Zeidman  
After 4 today  
After 10 a.m. Friday

Wed  
3 pm  
1-602-274-1800

For my telephone  
U. F. Zeidman  
Don  
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Please  
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LOCAL AGENCIES: Jewish Community Relations Council • Phoenix Hebrew Academy • Hillel at ASU • Valley of the Sun JCC • Tri-City JCC • Bureau of Jewish Education  
Va'ad Hakashruth • Jewish Family & Children's Service • Kivell Campus of Care • Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Phoenix • Jewish Community Foundation  
Council for Jews with Special Needs • Phoenix Jewish Free Loan Association

## A VISION FOR THE GREATER PHOENIX JEWISH COMMUNITY

Three days, three thousand Jews, and thirty hours immersed in discussion about the state of North American Jewry and its future--such was this year's annual General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations. The General Assembly (GA) is an annual opportunity for Jewish leaders and professionals from across the United States, Canada, Israel, and elsewhere in the world to learn together, to discuss contemporary issues that effect the Jewish community and to develop strategies to guide the growth and development of Jewish communities and Judaism for the future.

Attending such a convergence of "Yiddishkeit" it is impossible not to dream--to visualize what can be. Permit me to share highlights of my GA-induced vision for the Greater Phoenix Jewish Community:

A Jewish community where parents and children learn and observe their Judaism together in households where Judaism is a continuing life force and not relegated to occasional ritual that's taken off the shelf for special occasions.

A Jewish community that is built on a passion for participating together, for learning and sharing the best that our faith can offer us.

A communal table around which sit the best and the brightest in our community. Where decision making is an inclusive process which knows no turf. Where our agencies, organizations, congregations, and Federation are the keepers of a covenant of mutual trust and support within and on behalf of our Jewish community.

A network of care and cooperation in a Jewish context for all within our community who are in need.

A community with such strong ties with the state of Israel that El Al has regularly scheduled flights from Phoenix!

I've saved the vision that excites me the most for last. There is developing throughout the North American Jewish Community a growing recognition that Jewish day schools represent a significant opportunity to address problems of intermarriage and of assimilation. Many Jewish communities are engaged, at various levels, in developing local Jewish high school day schools; the Greater Phoenix Jewish Community is one such community. I see beyond a high school, however. I see an opportunity for us to develop so much more, to develop a Jewish Community House of Learning.

[NOVEMBER 27, 1996]

Why a "house"? So that we have a place to come together and feel like family as we study together in an inviting, comfortable, and familiar setting. My vision includes a curriculum of both Jewish and secular studies for both high school students and the community at-large and a curriculum so compelling and so excellent that our greatest worry is how quickly can the school be expanded to meet the demand for enrollment and with the incredible outpouring of financial support to make it happen. Our House of Learning should be a center for continuing formal and informal education that attracts Rabbis and educators from our own community as well as throughout world Jewry who want to come to participate in symposia, colloquia, and family retreats. A center of educational excitement that is an extension of our synagogues, temples, Jewish community centers, and all who want to lend their support and be part of this core of our Jewish community. I see an institution that is so innovative and has so much to offer that it becomes a laboratory for both educational programming and Jewish studies, with ties to an expanded and renowned Jewish studies program at Arizona State University.

More than just a day time institution, I envision a learning center that operates 24 hours a day with diverse programs and opportunity for study for parents, for children, or parents and children and, for grandparents to study with their grandchildren. Our Jewish Community House of Learning should become a "port of entry" for enhancing our ties with the State of Israel; where our children study in Israel as part of their high school experience and where Israeli teens come here and spend time with our children in our Jewish Community House of Learning. Not separate from the greater community from which we live but rather an institution that engages our children in mitzvah projects throughout the Jewish community and secular community as part of their course of study--to reinforce our faith's teachings concerning performing mitzvot, assuming responsibility, giving tzedakah, and lifelong learning.

Finally, I see a Jewish Community House of Learning that offers opportunities for our leadership and our future leadership (our children) to learn from experts, world Jewish figures, and noted scholars--to become excited by those who are at the very cutting edge of Jewish thought and practice.

Heady stuff! How does one conclude a vision? The answer for me is simple, you don't. If you believe that a vision is possible than the next question has to be what can I do in my life, day to day to reach that vision. The words of Hillel ring true: "If not now when?"

FED FAX TRANSMISSION

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1-212-532-2360  
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TO: Ms. Megan Hill @ CISE

FROM: Fred ZEIDMAN

DATE: 1/2/97

FAX NUMBER: 1-212-532-2646

NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: \_\_\_\_\_

- Your action required
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- Draft reply for me
- For your comments
- Your signature requested
- Call to discuss
- Other

Per my call to you this am., below are dates/times best for me for a phone conference with Allen Hoffman (times are Phoenix time)

Mon 1/6 10 am, 1 pm, or 2 pm

Tues 1/7 Anytime 8am-10 am, or 2 or 3 pm

Wed 1/8 8 or 9 am

Thur 1/9 10 or 11 am, or anytime 2-4 pm

I'll be out Friday 1/3 but you can leave a message on my voice mail 1-602-274-1800.

I'd like to follow up with Allen from our discussion at the GA. Since that time we've conducted video tele-conference with Bonnie Hoosman and Rabbi Dan Lehman.

Bishaban,  
