



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

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

Series F: CIJE Accrual, 1981-2011, undated.
Subseries 2: Dan Pekarsky, 1981-2011, undated.

Box
80

Folder
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Strategic Plan. Emerald City. Strategic planning, 1996-2011.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
[American Jewish Archives](http://AmericanJewishArchives.org) website.

FROM FED EX 2015

CITIZEN - STRATEGIC
PLAN - EMERALD
CITY

Subject: RE: Additional questions
From: Barry Holtz <baholtz@jtsa.edu>
Date: Thu, 18 Aug 2011 10:59:08 -0400
To: 'dan pekarsky' <pekarsky@education.wisc.edu>

Quick response:

1. "the Consulting Firm Without Walls" was Karen's idea, based on her years with McKinsey.
2. JEWEL was Alan's vision. It's really what Karen thought she was being hired to implement. Alan still has the chart that we created!
3. Emerald city--this was Mort. He also called this "Total Vision" (believe it or not) and I was assigned to write the first draft: what will CIJE have accomplished 10 years from now? Something like that was the question I was supposed to address. I THINK I still have it somewhere and can try to find it. Though it may be in a computer program long dead.
4. There were a number of ideas beyond LC: professors group; visions project; MTEI; building a research capacity; developing a program for working with Lay leaders. These are the ones that leap to mind.

It would be really interesting, if he would buy it, to have Jehuda assemble a group of us with you: Gail, Adam, Ellen, me, Alan Hoffmann: for a 1.5 day conversation looking back at all this. He could learn a lot from that, I think.

Sorry to be so telegraphic, but I'm crazy busy today.

Barry

-----Original Message-----

From: dan pekarsky [<mailto:pekarsky@education.wisc.edu>]
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2011 8:53 AM
To: Barry Holtz
Subject: Additional questions

Hi, Barry - and many thanks for the wealth of information you gave me yesterday - it's very helpful. I had a couple of other additional questions (these relating to an effort I am making to give Jehuda a better sense of what happened under CIJE's auspices years ago. Can you briefly tell me what we had in mind when we spoke about "the Consulting Firm Without Walls"? And with whom was this associated - Karen Barth? In a similar vein, was "JEWEL" a Karen Barth-project - or something that began with Alan? And with whom was the effort to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that began with trying to identify "Emerald City" - the future we aspired to - associated?

More generally, as you can see, I'm struggling to get a sense of what major thrusts/initiatives emerged in that period (over and above the Lead Communities Project) and who was principally involved with them. Any help you can give in clarifying this would be very helpful. Many thanks in advance. And if you would prefer to do this by phone, that would be fine, too.

Best to all.

Danny

Subject: RE: Additional questions
From: Barry Holtz <baholtz@jtsa.edu>
Date: Thu, 18 Aug 2011 14:39:36 -0400
To: 'dan pekarsky' <pekarsky@education.wisc.edu>

I don't remember the consulting firm concept so clearly, but I think the main focus was that CIJE would have a team of experts in various areas "on call"--some in the office, some outside. We would be available to various Jewish institutions that fit the larger mission of CIJE--"building the profession" "building lay support"-- and work with them. Usually the idea was working with a specific federation or large national organization (United Synagogue or JCCA). Wasn't clear whether we'd work with an individual small institution (local synagogue or Jewish camp). Probably not, knowing Mort. The whole thing WAS connected to the way that Mort and Seymour thought--VERY old school "top down" concept of how the Jewish community worked. The famous pyramid! Nowadays people think very differently about these matters. Many of the national organizations have no influence or reach and are sometimes quite moribund in terms of new ideas (that's not true of all, but if you think about current Jewish life the energy is way more local, bottom up driven.)

-----Original Message-----

From: dan pekarsky [mailto:pekarsky@education.wisc.edu]
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2011 12:55 PM
To: Barry Holtz
Subject: Re: Additional questions

Thanks, Barry. This is, again, very helpful. When you have a chance, I would be interested in better understanding the concept of "a consulting firm without walls" - how would it work? would we basically work with their agenda and/or use it as a vehicle of advancing what we view as critical - or what? If, by the way, you have the document you referred to and it's not hard to find, that would be great. Your idea is very interesting about a meeting - I'll check into this. Thanks again.
Shabbat Shalom.

D.

On 8/18/2011 9:59 AM, Barry Holtz wrote:

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Barry

FAX TRANSMISSION
COUNCIL FOR INITIATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

15 EAST 26TH STREET, 10TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10010-1579
(212) 532-2360
FAX: (212) 532-2646

To: Dan Pekarsky

Date: September 30, 1996

Fax #: 608-262-9074

Pages: 5, including this cover sheet

From: Karen Barth

Subject: CC:

COMMENTS:

Copy of Vision for the North American Jewish Community

VISION FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN
JEWISH COMMUNITY

תלמוד תורה בן כלל

ושלם יומיו

אל תפוש מן הצדקה

תפילותיו בלילה כולן יהיו כאלו
הוא נשמה
אלו שאלו בלילה כאלו חיים
שנים לתורה

בבית הקברות לתקן עולם...

Jewish learning is central to the life of most North American Jews.

There is a recognized minimum level of knowledge and skills that most Jews achieve and a substantial size group that achieves much higher levels.

Most Jews belong to one or more communities that engage in prayer, learning, social action and/or other activities and that are central to their identities. These communities serve almost as extended families.

There is a sense of vibrancy in these communities.

Many different ways exist of being and living as a committed Jew but there is a recognized core common "language" and an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.

There is a strong commitment of time and money to the Jewish Community by Jews of all ages.

Being Jewish is at the heart of the self-image of most Jews.

Moral passion and a commitment to repairing the world is recognized as being at the heart of what it means to be Jewish.

Jews and the Jewish Community are actively involved in bringing Jewish values to bear on the problems of the wider society.

There is an active, mutual relationship with Israel.....

There is a large talented group of lay and professional leaders..

LEFT OFF LIST

- ◆ **Egalitarianism**
- ◆ **Imaginative / Daring**
- ◆ **Visual Sophistication**

**LIST OF IDEAS / FROM INTERVIEWS TO-DATE FOR
VISION OF AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

1. **High-quality Schools for children of all ages**
 - More content-rich curriculum
 - Relevance to children's concerns
 - More parental involvement/support
 - Continuous Innovation

2. **Increase importance of experiential and informal learning to support schools**
 - Camps
 - Retreats

3. **Better qualified teachers**
 - Recruiting
 - Pre-service
 - In-service
 - Mentoring/clinical model
 - Networking
 - Standards
 - Evaluation
 - Salaries and benefits
 - Creative sources
(retirees, parents)

4. **Family learning**

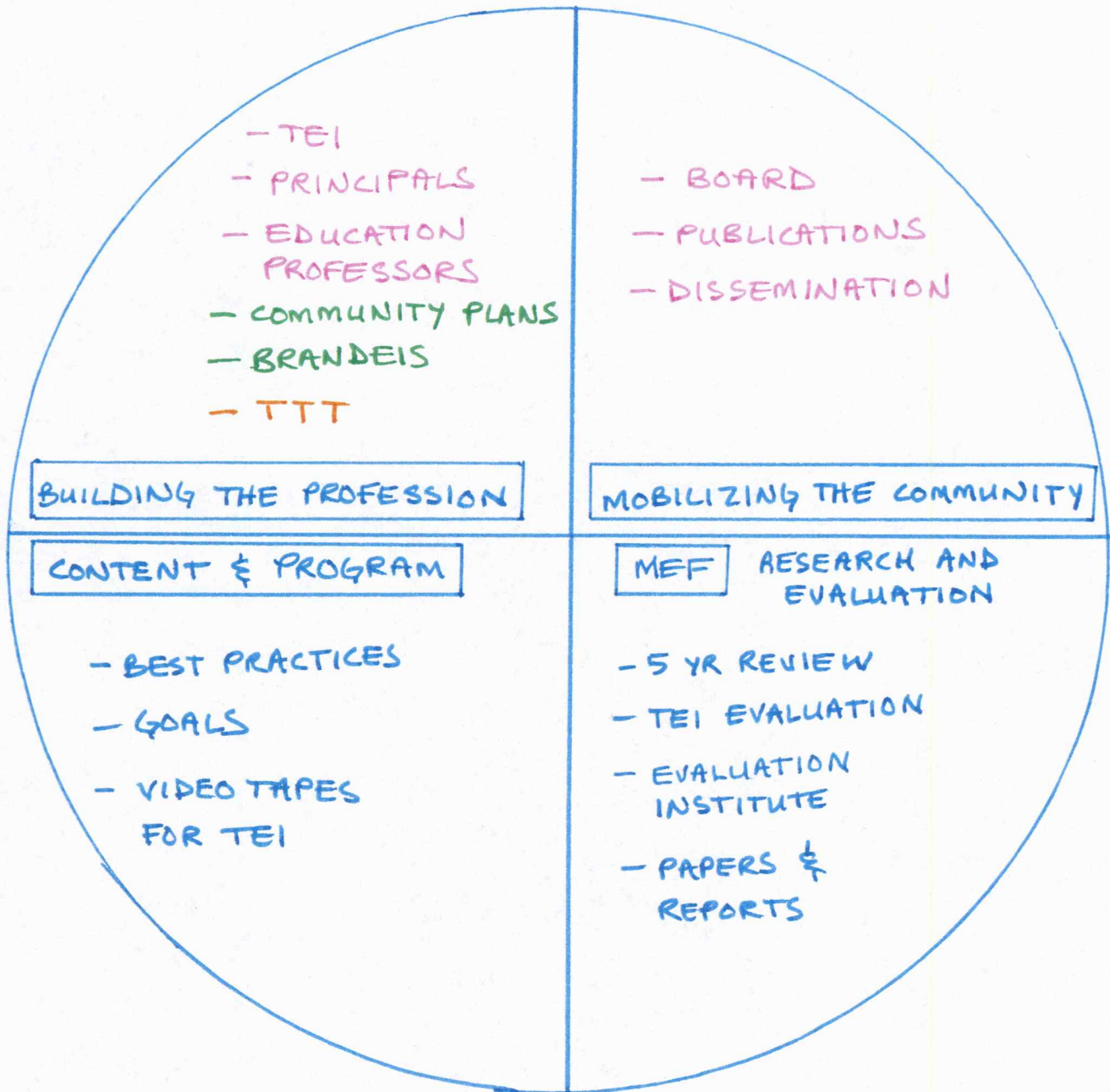
5. **Early childhood**

6. Leadership
7. Funding for everyone who wants to go to day schools
8. Goals
9. Culture and capability for evaluation
10. On going research and innovation
11. Rabbinic Training
12. Adult Learning

BUILDING THE PROFESSION : 1996

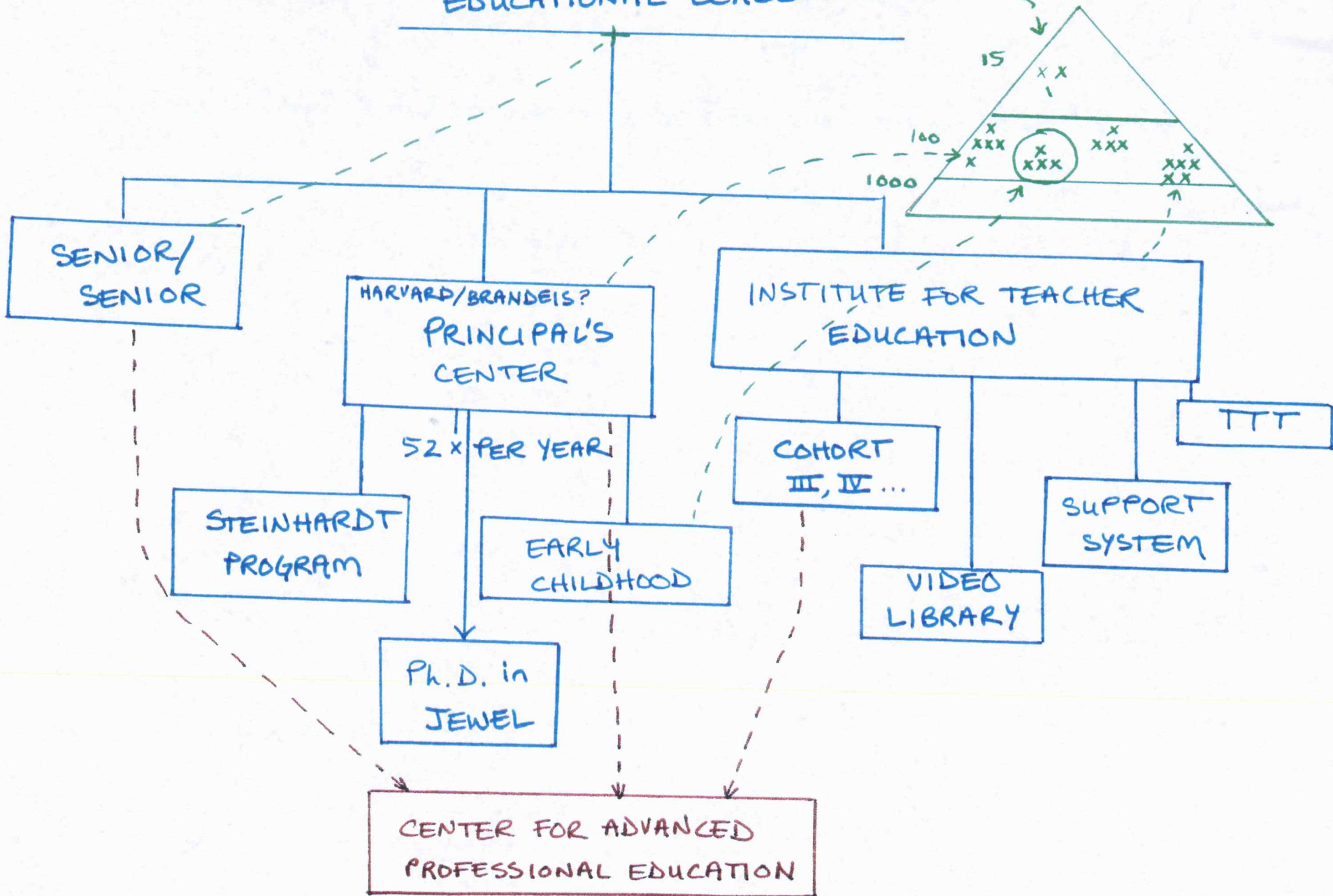
CAPACITY BUILDING	PLANNING AND CONSULTATION	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TEI 2. PRINCIPALS CENTER 3. EDUCATION PROFESSORS - DAY SCHOOLS (TTT) - TORAH U' MESORAH AND TEI - PRINCIPALS FOR COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOLS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LEAD COMMUNITY PERSONNEL ACTION PLANS <li style="text-align: center;">↓ - NEW COMMUNITIES PERSONNEL ACTION PLANS - BRANDEIS - "RABBIS AS EDUCATORS" - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR BUILDING THE PROFESSION <li style="text-align: center;">↓ - PLAN NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (JEWEL) <li style="text-align: center;">PLAN - PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF KEY POSITIONS 	<p>EARLY CHILDHOOD</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TEI - type x 40 2. DEVELOP (3-4 ppl.) CJJE / JCL / NATIONAL 3. RESEARCH 4. MACHON L'MORIM (LABORATORY) </div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>POLICY BRIEF NOV. '96 / '97?</p>

CISE: 1996



CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

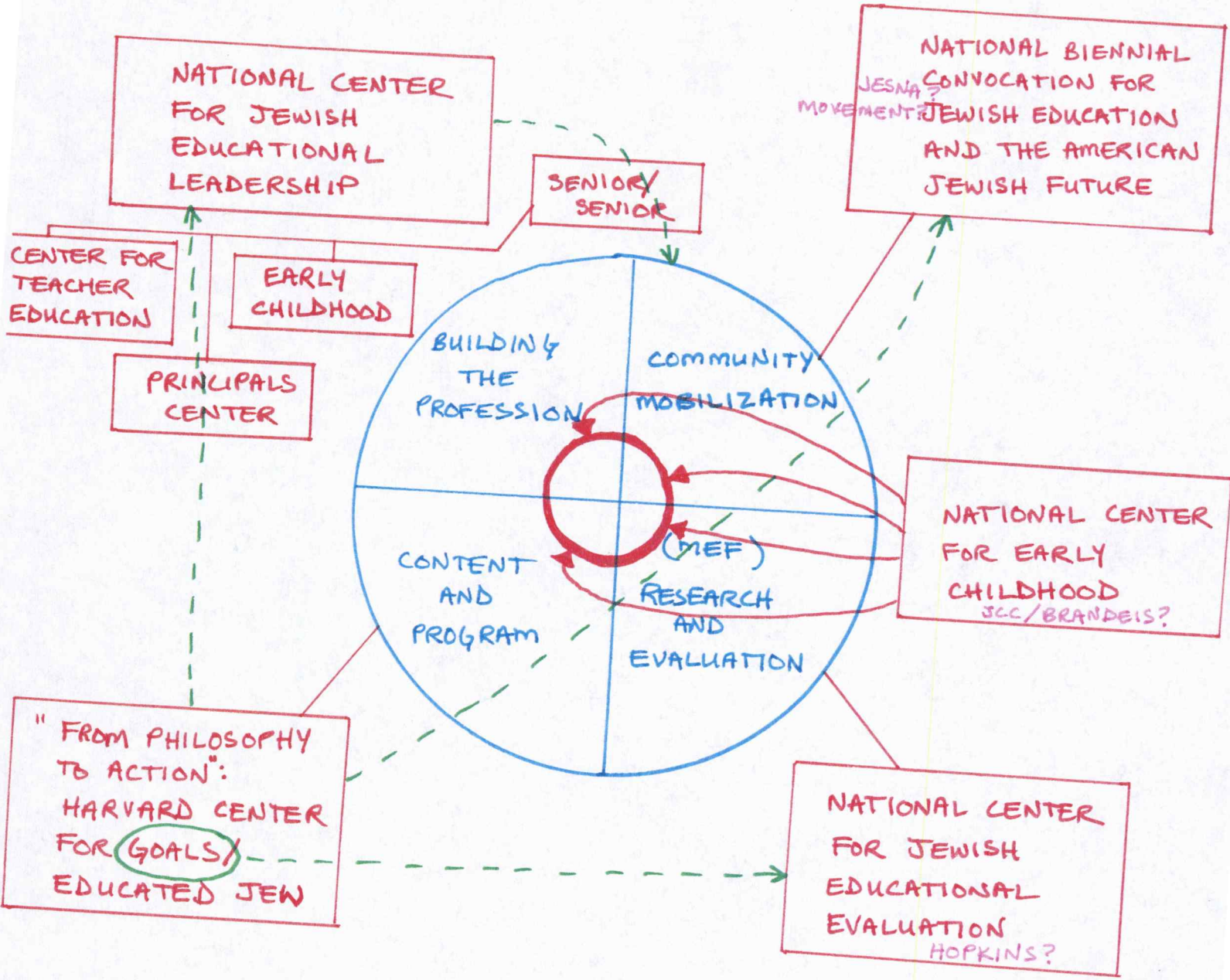
8/98



BUILDING THE PROFESSION : 1999

CAPACITY BUILDING	PLANNING AND CONSULTATION	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EDUCATION PROFESSORS - NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (JEWEL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR BUILDING THE PROFESSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NORMS AND STANDARDS - TEACHER RECRUITMENT - COALITION OF ESSENTIAL COMMUNITIES - "RABBIS AS EDUCATORS" PROJECT - EARLY CHILDHOOD LABORATORIES - CONSULTATION TO NATIONAL "JEWEL" 	<p style="text-align: center;">JEWISH CAMPING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEI - NATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - RESEARCH MEF - LABORATORY </div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY BRIEF 2000</p>

CIFE : 1999



ISSUES FOR STRATEGIC VISION :

- ① WHAT ABOUT LEVEL OF THE COMMUNITY ?
1996 - 1999 AND BEYOND ?
- ② PERSONNEL ACTION PLANS ?
- ③ HOW DOES THIS INTEGRATE
LAY / PROFESSIONAL ?
ACTION / VISION ?

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Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education

To: The CIJE Steering Committee
From: Barry Holtz
April 11, 1994

*me, imagining what
CIJE world
look like after
10 years.*

Total Vision

Draft Two

In the last meeting of the Steering Committee, we discussed the first draft of a long-range plan for the work of CIJE, using the phrase "Total Vision" to describe that plan.

The current draft takes the suggestions offered by the Steering Committee, still using the rhetorical device suggested by Mort that one could think of total vision as the 10 year report of CIJE outlining what it had accomplished, written today instead of in the year 2004.

The CIJE 2004: A 10-Year Report

The CIJE was created by the Commission on Jewish Education in North America in order to implement "on both the local and continental levels" the plan of the Commission "to revitalize Jewish education so that it is capable of performing a pivotal role in the meaningful continuity of the Jewish people." CIJE was given the mandate to "develop comprehensive planning programs and experimental initiatives for the two building blocks . . . to achieve breakthroughs in Jewish education." (A Time to Act)

In the past ten years CIJE has tried to realize its mission through work in a number of different areas described below.

I. CIJE and Local Communities: "From 3 to 23"

When CIJE began, one of its primary innovations was the creation of the concept called "Lead Communities," local laboratories in which to discover the educational practices and

policies that work best." The first years of CIJE's life were very much dominated by spreading the word about Lead Communities, creating criteria for choosing the communities, implementing the selection process and beginning the delicate work of this new experiment with the original three sites, Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee.

Lead Communities were only the beginning of CIJE'S work in local interventions. Over the past decade CIJE has evolved an approach that draws on experiments in general education, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools and the Accelerated Schools Program, while evolving its own unique approach to this area. During this time CIJE has had to balance the challenge of serving as Jewish educational "consultants" to communities, while staying sufficiently distant from the communities so as not to be drawn into the managerial tasks of running a change process. At times this has been difficult, but as time has passed the particular contributions that CIJE can make to a local community as well as the limitations on its involvement have been communicated and negotiated.

One can attribute CIJE's success in this operation to a number of factors: a) Its articulation of those areas in which it does and does not work. In particular CIJE has kept its focus on the two "building blocks" of the original Commission report (building the profession and community mobilization) and it has not involved itself in other areas that communities may need help with. By doing so CIJE has succeeded in keeping the communities focused on the two building blocks; b) By choosing communities which exemplify the three crucial elements of committed Federation director, local lay champions with influence and means, a local professional of high quality in charge of Jewish education, CIJE was able to eliminate certain problematic communities from consideration; c) CIJE's having a first-class staff. d) Effective use of adjunct staff and consultants; e) Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and feedback of its work.

CIJE began with the three original Lead Communities and then moved toward creating an "outer" circle of like-minded communities interested both in hearing about the work of CIJE and using meetings with CIJE as a way of talking about mutual concerns across communities. These meetings included discussion of the issues of research and evaluation, fund-raising and community leadership mobilization as well as analysis of specific educational initiatives in the areas of building the profession.

Various other communities joined as partners in this work. Communities that decided that they wanted to share in the CIJE agenda and receive the CIJE expertise in a more intensive fashion -- as long as they met the CIJE criteria -- could apply to become "affiliated communities" themselves. To be chosen the community had to exhibit the three

factors mentioned above as well as evidence indicating that the communities have already committed themselves to working on the "building block" agenda. CIJE developed a set of certifying standards to determine if applicant communities were so engaged.

Communities paid a fee to CIJE to be members of the outer circle and a consulting fee to CIJE to be affiliated communities.

II. Building the Profession

One of the two key building blocks of the Commission report was "building the profession," improving the quality and quantity of Jewish educators in both the formal and informal domains. CIJE launched two main thrusts in this effort-- local efforts at building the profession through its work in particular communities (as mentioned above) and a continental effort that tried to attack the problem in a more global fashion.

A. Local Efforts

CIJE began its work in each community with the quantitative and qualitative research work of the Educators Survey. This report which began by looking only at the educators in formal settings was expanded in 1995-96 to include informal educational settings as well because the formal domain only encompasses part of the scope of communal Jewish education.

The reports discovered, among other findings, that most Jewish communities needed a significant upgrade in the skills and knowledge of their educators. Educators had in many cases insufficient Judaic background and pedagogic preparation. In some areas-- such as early childhood education-- the problem centered more on Jewish knowledge. Teachers in this field tended to have good credentials and skills in general education, but they lacked the Jewish knowledge to be able to develop interesting pedagogic activities that would enhance the Jewish dimensions of the educational program. In some areas (such as day schools teachers) the study discovered that teachers lacked pedagogic skills though in many cases they did have sufficient Jewish knowledge.

The study found that in all areas of Jewish education, formal and informal, with the possible exception of early childhood programs, teachers received insufficient opportunities for professional growth through inservice programs.

In addition the surveys discovered that salary and benefits were a major concern for educators and improvement of salary and benefits would help attract more educators to full time work in Jewish education.

These and other findings led to the creation of a Personnel Action Plan for each affiliated community. CIJE helped each community develop its own particular action plan by working with local educators and Federation lay leaders and professionals. The plan was comprehensive and wide-ranging, and communities with CIJE advice and counsel phased in segments of the plan in an orderly fashion. The Personnel Action Plans were organized around four key areas: inservice education, recruitment, career ladder, and salary and benefits.

Inservice Education

One of the key areas for upgrading personnel throughout the affiliated communities, and in any community interested in improving its Jewish education, has been in the area of inservice education. CIJE began with a set of Leadership Institutes which were open to all affiliated communities since it was clear that improving the quality of educational leadership would underpin all efforts to improve Jewish education throughout the system. The Leadership Institutes took place twice a year and have been done in coordination with major educational institutions. Some have taken place at Vanderbilt University, some at Columbia University Teachers College, etc.

The program was designed for principals of Day Schools and Supplementary Schools and it focused on issues of leadership such as supervision, board relations, goal setting and a variety of other topics to help improve the quality of leadership in these educational institutions. Day School Principals and Supplementary School Principals met together for some sessions and in other sessions they worked on cases which were individualized for their own particular settings. A second Leadership Institute was designed for Early Childhood Directors from Day Schools, Synagogues and Jewish Community Centers. Similar issues were raised and experts in the field of Early Childhood Education, as well as Jewish Education, worked with these Directors to help improve the quality of their educational institutions.

At the same time, a set of leadership seminars took place within communities. These seminars used the results of the Best Practices Project of CIJE and other resources including outside expertise and consultants from the denominations. These leadership seminars were designed for a more intensive and ongoing approach to issues of leadership and there were separate seminars organized for principals of Early Childhood units, of Supplementary Schools and of Day Schools.

In addition, inservice education took place at not only the level of leadership, but also in an intensive fashion for teachers. A set of differentiated and systematic inservice programs have been designed for Early Childhood teachers, Day School teachers, and Supplementary School teachers. These inservice programs were conducted by a combination of CIJE staff, personnel from the local BJE or the local Jewish College of Jewish Studies as well as national personnel from the training institutions and denominations. Some of the programs focused on pedagogic skills, some focused on subject matter knowledge. There was in addition, a Retreat Program which focused particularly on the experiential dimension of Jewish knowledge and Jewish teaching.

A series of seminars and retreats for the personnel of informal Jewish education have been launched in all of the communities as well. These included seminars and retreats for Youth Group Leaders, Camp personnel and Center workers. In addition, there was a Seminar across all communities for leaders of Israel experience trips.

Another dimension of the inservice program that CIJE has helped design for its communities was a series of mentoring programs for novice teachers. These programs began with the preparation of mentors who could help initiate novices into teaching. Following upon that, the mentoring programs themselves have been launched, both for novice principals and for novice teachers. In addition, CIJE has worked with the local communities to develop peer and expert coaching programs for experienced personnel. This included the preparation of peer coaches, followed by using coaching programs to help improve those principals and teachers who have even a considerable amount of experience.

Finally, CIJE succeeded in placing a number of educators from the Lead Communities in continuing education programs outside of their local cities. Educators attended year-long programs in Israel (which were partially subsidized by the local community), summer study programs in Israel and at universities and seminaries in North America, and degree programs at North American academic institutions.

Recruitment

Aside from inservice education, a second dimension of the Building The Profession improvement in each of the communities centered on recruitment of new personnel into the field. Some of those programs have consisted of leadership programs for teenagers that involved them as counselors, youth group advisers and teaching assistants. Other programs recruited and prepared volunteer teachers for supplementary schools. In these programs

new populations, such as parents, retirees, public school or private school teachers, were brought into the teaching force and were prepared for work as Jewish educators. A third approach consisted of retooling public or private school teachers for careers in Jewish education particularly in supplementary schools.

The results of CIJE efforts in inservice education and recruitment have been: a) improvement in the quality of teaching and leadership in both formal and informal education in local affiliated communities ; b) greater staff stability and retention of educators in the field. c) greater job satisfaction among educators; d) greater parental satisfaction with their children's experiences in schools and informal programs. These results were determined and measured by the CIJE monitoring, evaluation and feedback teams in consultation with CIJE expert advisers.

Career Ladder

The third area of building the profession that CIJE has been working on has been to develop career ladders for educators. This involved the creation of full-time positions that include teaching, as well as mentoring new teachers and peer coaching. CIJE has helped launch projects to create community teachers-- teachers who teach in more than one institution and therefore can have full-time teaching jobs. Finally the career ladder included creating positions in day schools and in some cases in supplementary schools for curriculum supervisors, master teachers, Judaic studies coordinators and resource room teachers.

Salaries and Benefits

Finally, CIJE has been working with the communities in the area of improving salaries and benefits. Here CIJE has been helping local communities think through creating benefits packages for full-time teachers, develop proportional benefits packages for part-time teachers, work on reduced Day School and camp tuition for teachers in the community, along with other ideas to improve the packages offered to educators. CIJE has helped provide contacts with experts in these areas and has organized work with foundations to think about planning improvements.

The results of these initiatives has been increased job satisfaction, retention of educators in the field and recruitment of new individuals to the field.

B. Continental Initiatives

At the continental level CIJE has launched a number of initiatives to improve the quality and numbers of Jewish educators. Working with the denominations and the national training institutions, CIJE has advocated for new programs to retool avocational teachers for full-time work, to help prepare doctoral students in Judaic studies for careers in Jewish education and to create "fast track" programs (such as a National Jewish Teachers Project) to deal with the shortage of teachers in the field.

One area that CIJE has focused on has been revitalizing the National Board of License as a means to improve the quality of personnel in Jewish education. Working with the existing organization, CIJE brought in expert consultants from recent national projects in the field of general education to help rethink and reconceptualize the Board of License as a cutting edge initiative in the area of accreditation of educators. Local central agencies in CIJE affiliated communities helped experiment with the new standards and procedures and the results have been an improvement in both the numbers of accredited teachers and the quality of education throughout North America.

CIJE efforts in the Leadership institutes of the affiliated communities led to the creation of the National Center for Jewish Educational Leadership. This Center located at ???? is an institution that works on research in the area of leadership development as well as creating in-the-field programs to enhance Jewish educational leadership in a variety of settings. Through the Center we now have an increased knowledge base about leadership in the different domains of Jewish education-- for informal educators in Centers, for camp directors, for rabbis, for day school principals, for supplementary school principals-- and an ongoing inservice menu of opportunities for leaders to grow in their fields. Programs of the Center have been coordinated with the national denominations and training institutions, as well as taking advantage of expertise in the field of general education where relevant to the Jewish venues.

Another example of a project that CIJE has helped design and find the funding for is a major effort to recruit young people into the field of Jewish education-- involved the following elements: Working first with the Reform movement and then with the other denominations, CIJE developed a program through which Jewish teenagers are recruited by their synagogues, camps and youth programs to become Madrichim -- teachers, youth leaders or camp counselors in training. Through a specially designed program, these Madrichim receive training and initiation into the field of Jewish education. They work in their local institutions and are supervised by the Madrichim Training Institute, as well as by local supervisors in their home institution.

The names of the Madrichim are placed in a national data bank. When these teenagers graduate from high school and go on to college, Jewish educational institutions near their college are informed that one of the Madrichim will be attending a university nearby. The local rabbi or Center director can make contact with the college student and try to find educational employment for the student during his or her college years. Meanwhile the students attend an ongoing training program including courses, supervision and study visits to Israel.

The "Careers in Jewish Education" performs the dual purpose of providing prepared avocational teachers for local Jewish institutions during the students' college years and inspiring some of the students to enter the field of Jewish education as a lifelong career. In addition the program helps increase the Jewish commitments and involvement of the students during their college years-- and afterwards as well. This program has been launched in coordination with the national denominations, the JCCA and the International Hillel Foundation. The project has been funded by a variety of foundations.

III. Community Mobilization

One of the fundamental building blocks of CIJE as expressed in "A Time to Act" has been mobilizing community support for Jewish education, at both the local and national level. At the local level, CIJE has been involved in helping local leaders and professionals recruit new leadership for Jewish education. This new leadership has been recruited in coordination with the local federation professionals and with intensive work by the CIJE's own Board. Specific programs have been designed to raise the consciousness of local lay leadership about the importance of Jewish education.

One project, for example, has been "adopting" local educational institutions by young leadership in local federations. In this program a local institution such as a communal supplementary high school has served as a setting for local young leadership to discuss the fundamental issues of Jewish education while at the same time, increasing their involvement in the institution. This has given CIJE the opportunity to increase the knowledge and sophistication of local lay leaders about Jewish education.

In addition, CIJE staff and others have been running Best Practices Seminars for local lay leadership which apprises this leadership of the latest work going on in Jewish education and gives these leaders a sense of significant developments in contemporary Jewish education, so that they can make more informed decisions. Moreover, the Goals Project as des-

cribed below in this report, has been involved in the process of community mobilization. The Goals Project engages lay leadership in discussions about the purposes of Jewish education and indeed the purpose and goals of Jewish life in North America.

At the continental level, CIJE has been involved in mobilizing community support for Jewish education in a number of ways. One significant approach has been through its reports to the field, some of which are discussed in the section of this report on dissemination below. For example, CIJE has issued various "Policy papers" on specific issues within the field of Jewish education. The first was a report on the personnel crisis in Jewish education which was based on the research conducted by CIJE in the three Lead Communities and shaped to create a national policy and agenda in the area of building the profession. This report helped dramatize the current weak situation of the Jewish educational profession by pointing out the problems in areas such as Jewish knowledge and financial remuneration in Jewish education, as we have discovered them in our laboratory settings. Through this report CIJE was able to mobilize community support for a significant upgrading of the Jewish education profession.

A second paper of a similar sort was a commissioned report on the economics of contemporary Jewish education which looked at the amount of money currently spent throughout the continent and the way that that money is being utilized. This report made significant recommendations for rethinking the economics of Jewish education and has been a significant topic of discussion amongst the lay leadership of the North American Jewish community. Other reports have also looked at a variety of areas of interest to CIJE including the Israel experience, the goals of Jewish education and developing a research capacity for the field of Jewish education.

IV. Content

A. Best Practices Project

The primary purpose of the Best Practices Project is to document models of excellence in Jewish education-- the "success stories" of the field-- and to use what is learned from documentation to launch educational projects adapted from these models. The project involves two phases of work. First, is the documentation stage. Here examples of best practice are located and reports are written. The second phase consists of "work in the field," the attempt to use these examples of best practice as models of change in the local communities.

During the past ten years the Best Practices Project has evolved and led to the creation of the Center for the Study of Jewish Education. The Center is located at X university ????. **This Center's work has two emphases, documentation and implementation:**

Documentation

This component has been the main business of the Center. It includes:

a) **Current Best Practices:** The documentation, study and analysis of current best practices in Jewish education. Essentially, this has moved forward with the work of the Best Practices Project as it was launched in the early years of CIJE. The Best Practices Project identified nine different areas, the venues in which Jewish education took place: supplementary schools, day schools, early childhood programs, camps and youth groups, college campus, Israel experience, Jewish Community Centers, adult education, community wide programs for improving personnel. Volumes of best practice were put together for each of these areas over the course of the first five years of the project.

However, that work has been expanded as well by seeing the project as an ongoing research project in which the success stories of Jewish education are studied in depth and successive "iterations" of research are performed on each setting.

It also has meant convening conferences and consultations with those doing this research to try to discern patterns and implications of the analysis.

b) **Best Practitioners:** This project has sought to study the people who make best practices possible. The Center has developed a series of "educational biographies and autobiographies," video tapes of practice, studies of the process by which these practitioners have been able to succeed, trying to isolate the factors which led to success.

c) **Best Practices of the past:** Looking at those success stories of the past to see if we can reconstruct what was done and why it succeeded.

d) **The Department of Dreams:** This is the area that includes developing all the ideas in Jewish education that people have written about and never had the means to try. In addition this "department" has commissioned "dreams"-- encouraged people to invent solutions to problems and imagine new directions for Jewish education.

Practical Implications

The second thrust of the Best Practices Project has been to test out the practical implications of its work. In particular this has meant working closely with the affiliated communities as they try out the ideas discovered by the analysis of best practices, past and present and of dreams for the future. In addition, as described earlier, the Best Practices Project provides material for ongoing study and discussion with lay leadership.

B) The Goals Project

One of the major initiatives launched by CIJE during this period has been the Goals Project. The purpose of the Goals Project was to work with institutions and communities to help develop a sense of direction and purpose for the educational enterprises of the institution or the community. Much of Jewish education has been characterized by a lack of sense of direction and the Goals project has sought to address this difficulty. The Goals Project began with a seminar in Israel for communal leaders and professionals in the summer of 1994. At that session the basic concept of the project and its approach were explored.

Following upon the summer seminar CIJE offered each of the Lead Communities a series of four goals sessions during the course of the next year. At these sessions the concept of goals was discussed and in each session an important future piece of writing related to the issue of goals or a lecture by a speaker was presented to the participants. These sessions were offered to all the institutions in the community. Based on the experience of the goals sessions during that year, a number of institutions in each community chose to be part of a more intensive goals project that was launched over the course of the next five years.

One of the important tasks that CIJE undertook was developing a training program for people who would become the "goals experts" within affiliated communities. CIJE, in conjunction with the Mandel Institute, worked closely with the denominational training institutes in developing a training program for such individuals.

This Coalition of Goals-Oriented Institutions engaged in serious discussions around the issue of goals trying to determine and think about the underlying purpose of their educational institution. The educational institutions were assisted by CIJE-trained staff members and CIJE consultants. These discussions revolved around papers written by the Educated Jew Project of the Mandel Institute in Israel and other relevant papers and presentations.

The leadership of each institution was engaged in these discussions, and following upon this work, the other educators in the institution were involved in deliberations about what would it mean to translate these underlying goals into actual educational practices. To help illustrate this idea the goals project studied various educational institutions (both of the present and the past) looking at those institutions' statements of goals and trying to see the way that those goals were implemented in the life of the educational program through visits or presentations.

At the same time the Goals Project engaged the leadership of the major Jewish denominations and training institutions in an effort to think about goals from the denominational point of view. The denominations and training institutions were challenged to engage with the local institutions involved in the CIJE Goals Project to see if those national institutions could help the local institutions work on the issue of goals. Although the Goals Project began with the three Lead Communities specifically, leaders from other interested communities were also invited to attend and the Goals Project was one of those CIJE initiatives that was offered to the outer circle of CIJE communities and other communities involved in the continental CIJE enterprise.

IV. Research

A) Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback

One of CIJE's important contributions to the world of Jewish education was the Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback Project (MEF). During its first years the MEF Project examined the issues of community mobilization in the three Lead Communities, interviewed local educators for reports on the professional lives of educators and conducted the Educators Survey. The MEF Project gave feedback both to the three lead communities and to the CIJE staff about the launch of the lead communities initiative.

During the next years the MEF Project began to explore specific educational institutions within the community evaluating new programs from the point of view of goals and outcomes. In addition, the MEF project surveyed a number of educators and communal leaders as it tried to create a portrait of educational institutional usage within the three Lead Communities. The MEF Project was of considerable interest to the outer ring of CIJE communities and to Jewish education in North America in general. The MEF Project represented a model that CIJE helped launch in a number of different communities throughout the continent. Not only the educators survey and the professional lives of educators but the general approach to evaluation and feedback became a significant example as communities tried to improve Jewish education throughout the continent.

B) Other Research

CIJE has helped design a large scale strategic plan for research in North American Jewish education through consultations from both Jewish and general education and careful explorations with existing institutions. There are currently a number of ongoing research projects that emerged out of the CIJE efforts and include the founding of four centers devoted to Jewish educational research, one being the Center for the Study of Jewish Education mentioned above in the section on the Best Practices Project. Three other research centers for Jewish education have been established at universities or seminaries-- each taking a different focus.

CIJE has helped foster an appreciation of the importance of research and helped to broker foundations, Jewish education researchers (both in North America and in Israel) and researchers from general education in joint collaborations. These have included projects on teacher knowledge and teacher education, studies of the economics of Jewish education, qualitative studies of Jewish educational work, historical studies of Jewish educational projects, quantitative studies of student achievement and knowledge, and policy studies related to the issues involved in community mobilization.

CIJE was responsible for initiating a long term study of the impact of the changes that it has helped to foster through CIJE local initiatives. That project began with a major research effort aimed at establishing base lines of current Jewish identification and Jewish learning which would allow the results of interventions to be evaluated.

V. Conferences

CIJE has been the catalyst for a series of conferences on important issues related to the field of Jewish education, flowing out of defined needs. These conferences have emerged out of the CIJE's work in the field as well as through the intellectual work of the CIJE staff. These began in 1994 with the conference on "New Work in Supplementary School Education" which brought together people working in this area from a variety of institutions.

This was followed by the conference on "Evaluation and Assessment in the field of Jewish Education" which brought together academic researchers from both Jewish and general education as well as Federation leadership concerned with this problem. "The Religious

Personality and the Challenge of Education" was a conference co-sponsored by the Lilly Endowment and brought together both Christian and Jewish perspectives and action projects in this area. Following upon this was the conference on "The Economics of Jewish Education" which involved Federations, major foundations and lay leadership. As various topics emerged in the CIJE work, conferences were held both to bring the best wisdom to bear on particular issues and to monitor progress in specific areas. Many of these conferences were co-sponsored with other institutions and organizations.

VI. Publications and Dissemination of Materials

CIJE has fostered the publication of significant materials in Jewish education. These include the reports of the Best Practices Project, the research papers that emerged out of the MEF project, the literature on goals that went hand in hand with the Goals Project, along with the papers commissioned for work in the area of goals (some of this in conjunction with the Mandel Institute in Israel.)

In addition CIJE has produced publications unrelated to the ongoing projects. These include a) the CIJE newsletter which informs the field of its ongoing work, b) the publications of the various CIJE conferences mentioned above, c) a series entitled "Current Issues in Jewish Education" which are the public lectures of the CIJE Board meetings in written form and related materials, and d) the various "Policy papers" mentioned earlier in this report.

These materials have been distributed through the CIJE's own publishing program, through commercial and university publishers and through other national Jewish education organizations-- including JESNA, JCCA and CJF. New technologies such as on-line computer access to materials and CD-ROM publications have also been utilized. Finally CIJE has presented its work at a variety of national conferences both for professionals and lay leaders. These have included the CJF General Assembly, the CAJE conferences and other research gatherings.

CRITICAL CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN STRATEGIC PLANNING INTERVIEWS

Interviewees had a wealth of ideas about how to enhance the vitality of American Jewish life and Jewish education. Some of the critical emphases and issues are summarized below.

1. A vision for the future

When asked what a more vital Jewish community of the future would look like, interviewees pointed in varied directions. Some emphasized the centrality of learning to Jewish life across different stages of the life-cycle. Others painted a community which offered substantially richer opportunities than are currently available for seekers in quest of a richer spiritual life that speaks to the need for meaning and transcendence. Others imagined an inclusive community in which various groups now pushed to the margins of Jewish life -- e.g. the gay community, secular Jews -- are embraced and allowed to enrich Jewish cultural life. Another pointed to a world in which compelling but, for many, yet-to-be-devised intellectual frameworks serve to integrate modern sensibilities and beliefs with central Jewish categories, thus ending the split in the contemporary Jewish consciousness. Another identified a future in which, informed by Jewish texts and sensibilities, Jews actively interpreted and addressed the critical moral, ecological and social challenges presented by contemporary life. Finally, while some imagined a Jewish future in which Judaism's distinctive religious insights and practices are at the center of Jewish life, and felt that it was only as such that Judaism would prove strong, others aspired to a Jewish community that featured a variety of diverse streams, both religious and secular.

2. Is there a crisis and, if so, what can we do about it? Where we now are: the optimism/pessimism continuum.

Is there a crisis? While many feel that Jewish cultural life is in a state of disrepair (as witnessed by demographic data), at least one person suggested that there is no "problem" requiring revitalization. The so-called problem is only a problem for traditional "establishment" institutions that are losing their social support; at the same time as this is happening, other forms of Jewish life, e.g. those associated with the Jewish Renewal movement are spontaneously coming into being and engaging the human energies of many.

Can the demographic crisis be meaningfully addressed? One person expressed the view that we are naive to think that the majority of American Jews can be engaged in Jewish life under modern conditions. At the other extreme, another expressed the view that we already possess the knowledge needed to develop educational institutions capable of revitalizing American Jewish life. In between are many who are cautiously optimistic and who urge the need for: new ideas about the nature and significance of Jewish life; new institutional forms (both communal and educational); new target populations; and higher quality leadership and other personnel.

3. Leadership

A number of individuals felt that the key to transformational change is dynamic leadership. Different kinds of leaders emerged as critical for different interviewees.

For some, high-quality, wealthy lay leaders seemed critical. A concern was expressed that there are not many young leaders of this kind on the horizon.

Others emphasized a critical need for "change-experts" -- for change agents and consultants who could help Jewish institutions develop and implement their change-agendas.

Others focused on charismatic congregational rabbis and emphasized the need to reconstruct rabbinic education so that rabbis could more readily meet the most critical challenges before them. Though there was a general sense that the roles of rabbis needed to be reconceptualized, different ideas were expressed about this reconceptualization. Ideas mentioned included: rabbi as teacher (especially of adults); rabbi as spiritual guide; and rabbi as community organizer.

4. Institutions

To repair or not to repair. Some interviewees were confident that, with appropriate inputs, existing institutions (for example, synagogues and schools) could be meaningfully repaired and urged investment in these primary institutions. Synagogues, day schools, and congregational schools were identified as arenas in which meaningful intervention is possible and desirable; what stands in the way is not inability but a failure of communal energy and will. It was suggested that outreach efforts that bring people into these existing institutions are unlikely to bear fruit if the institutions do not have something meaningful to offer those who walk in the door; there needs to be a message and responsiveness to people's needs. At the same time, some interviewees were skeptical that existing institutions could be transformed into adequate institutions for the American Jewish community. For example, the view was expressed that synagogues are so pathological as to be beyond repair, and a concern was expressed that by their very nature they seem always far behind and therefore unresponsive to the needs and concerns of their constituencies.

New institutional forms. Skeptics concerning the prognosis for existing institutional types, as well as some of their supporters, urged the development of new kinds of institutions that might more adequately address contemporary needs. New institutional forms that were proposed included: "virtual" universities, which while encouraging periodic face-to-face interaction, take advantage of interactive technologies like e-mail and video-conferencing; meditation centers; retreat centers; educational institutions organized around lodged in familial-settings; after-school programs, very different from supplemental programs, that meet parents' needs for after-school day care; internally

pluralistic institutions that meaningfully bring together individuals representing very different Jewish outlooks and ways of life; institutions in which the distinctive ways of each group would be honored but in which opportunities for meaningful engagement across group lines would be written into the pattern of organization.

5. Achieving high-quality institutions

Critical ingredients. One set of discussions focuses on the ingredients of such institutions. Different emphases were found in the interviews. Some mentioned the need for strong, charismatic leadership (of the Marshall Meyer variety). Others noted that existing institutions typically have no compelling message that will engage people, and that they are unlikely to be vital unless animated by powerful ideas. Still others noted that we tend to build our institutions without attention to the felt-needs and rhythms of our potential constituencies, expecting them to adapt to us rather than the other way around; attention and responsiveness to the needs of relevant constituencies in designing institutional life is essential.

Design and/or fostering natural growth. Some interviewees felt that we now know - or can come to know - a lot about the character of strong Jewish institutions, and that therefore the job of a responsible Jewish community is to encourage, guide, and support the development of these institutions in a systematic way. Others (often skeptical of our ability to design institutions that are attuned to "the needs of the customer") emphasized the desirability of nurturing a cultural context that encouraged and supported grass-roots efforts of various kinds -- young shoots, some of which might evolve into tomorrow's powerful oaks.

6. Powerful ideas

While some interviewees emphasized the need for new institutional forms and/or new target-populations, others emphasized the spiritual/intellectual poverty of contemporary Jewish life and articulated a need for Jewish ideas that would prove compelling to contemporary American Jews. Jewish institutions -- new or old, explicitly educational or not -- are unlikely to prove engaging unless they are suffused with powerful Jewish ideas, ideas that infuse with rich meaning the acts and activities we associate with Jewish life.

One person ventured the idea that the critical problem we face is that our understandings of such terms as "prayer," "God," and "mitzvah" presuppose a world-view that is no longer credible to many contemporary Jews; therefore the challenge is to develop a new intellectual framework that will give such terms a meaning that can more readily be identified with.

One interviewee suggested that there is a need for a kind of Aspen Institute in American Jewish life -- an institution that encourages our most powerful and creative minds to address our deepest questions and that feeds the American Jewish landscape with a stream of rich ideas that enrich and challenge our understandings of ourselves as Jews.

Other interviewees emphasized the importance of ensuring greater access to powerful Jewish ideas -- for example, through a journal, or by making sure that rabbinical students routinely have opportunities to study under the most profound contemporary thinkers (so that they can be influenced in the ways that another generation of rabbis was influenced by thinkers like Heschel and Soloveitchik).

7. Target-populations

How inclusive should the community be? There are various echoes of the in-reach/out-reach debate in the interview data. Some interviewees expressed the view that the Jewish community needed to be more inclusive than it now is -- finding ways to be more welcoming and engaging to women, to gays and lesbians, to secular Jews, and to others who typically feel marginalized by, and sometimes alienated from, American Jewish life. It was suggested that not only does the Jewish community have the obligation to reach out to such groups on terms that are welcoming and affirming, but that such groups have the potential to make important contributions to the quality of Jewish life. Another group thought to be underserved by the community today was identified as "seekers" -- that is, individuals in quest of religious meaning and transcendent experiences; typically, very little provision is made for them in the organization of Jewish life.

Target-populations for education. While some interviewees explicitly resisted (as "magic bullet" thinking) the notion that Jewish educational interventions should focus on a particular target-population, others suggested that given scarce dollars and human resources, it would be strategically wise to focus on special target-populations. While those who took this position shared the view that we have to stop thinking of Jewish education as something that happens between the ages of 5 and Bar/Bat Mitzvah, there were very different views expressed concerning what special target-populations needed the lion's share of attention:

a. Adult education: Some believed that once adults have become powerfully engaged in Jewish learning, the education of their children follows in due course.

b. Adolescence: The view was expressed that this is the stage in which adult identities get shaped and that therefore Jewish education needs to be at its most serious at this stage of the life-cycle.

c. Early childhood and family education: Not only was early childhood viewed by some as a critical stage in human development; it was also suggested that at this stage it would be possible to draw the whole family into the orbit of education, giving rise to meaningful forms of adult education and family education.

d. The secular community: Some complained about the absence of adequate educational resources being directed at America's secular Jews, even though many

American Jews fall into this category. It was urged that this group not be written off, and that meaningful ways be found to engage them.

8. Improving Jewish education

A variety of ideas were expressed in the interviews concerning the best way to improve the quality of Jewish education. Below are some of the central ideas that were expressed:

Improve the quality of Jewish educators. Consistent with CIJE's emphasis on personnel, many interviewees spoke to the importance of improving the quality of Jewish educators. Some spoke to the desirability of attracting and training new populations of Jews for whom the work of educating would represent a sacred act laden with personal significance; Jews-by-choice, post-career individuals, and Russian immigrants were offered as examples. Others spoke to the need of professionalizing the field of Jewish education via licensing, standards, and strong pre-service and in-service education. Still others spoke to the need to facilitate the personal religious growth of educators working in schools, camps and other settings via retreats and sabbaticals.

Strengthen the content of Jewish education. a) Some urged that progress depends on moving away from an emphasis on what to do and how to do it and towards an emphasis on the "whys" of Jewish life, the powerful ideas or insights that underlie Jewish practices. Put differently, Jewish educating institutions need to be suffused with compelling Jewish ideas. b) Others urged that Jewish educational environments need to be welcoming and responsive to the genuine questions and the honest doubts of learners; otherwise, they will continue to be alienating institutions. c) While several individuals mentioned the need to make "text" central to Jewish education, more than one urged that we adopt a broad understanding of "text," one that includes works of art which gave the power to engage contemporary seekers.

Relationship between experience and education. While implicit in many comments was the suggestion that access, via education, to powerful ideas about Jewish life would transform otherwise empty Jewish practices into meaningful experiences, a very different view was also expressed: it was suggested that the hunger for Jewish education only arises after one has already had powerful Jewish experiences. It is such experiences that catalyze the desire to learn. As an example, it was suggested that, for many individuals, it is only after they have been deeply moved by a religious service (such as those at Bnai Jeshurun in New York) that they develop a desire to engage in systematic study. This suggests that facilitating powerful Jewish experiences should be the starting-point to Jewish education.

Emphasize the non-academic quality of Jewish learning. It was suggested that the Jewish learning we need to foster differs from the academic Jewish learning found in universities; it needs to engage the heart, to speak to the living concerns of the learner.

Improved institutional settings. While some felt that the supplemental school was a

dead-end, at least one interviewee felt that, suitably supported and enriched, it could be a powerful educating institution: not the quantity, but the quality of Jewish education is decisive, it was suggested. The possibility of substantially improving day schools was also mentioned by some. Others emphasized the need for other kinds of educational settings, e.g., those identified as "informal" or familial settings.

Religion and/or peoplehood. While some felt that Jewish religious ideas need to be at the heart of any Jewish renaissance, others felt that peoplehood -- the sense of ourselves as an enduring people with a multiplicity of outlooks, religious and secular -- needs to be at the center of Jewish education.

9. Eradicating financial barriers to quality education

Developing an army of educators that are up to the challenge of Jewish education is a costly endeavor, requiring substantial investments in salaries and both pre-service and in-service education. In addition, the view was expressed that the absence of money should not be an obstacle to a quality Jewish education; the community must ensure that all children have the opportunity for a quality education, regardless of their financial resources.