MS-831: Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation Records, 1980 – 2008.
Series E: Mandel Foundation Israel, 1984 – 1999.

Box	Folder
D-1	1888

CJENA reports, 1989.

3101 Clifton Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220
513.487.3000
AmericanJewishArchives.org

Appendix 2

FEDERATION-LED COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR JEWISH EDUCATION, IDENTITY AND CONTINUITY

by

Joel Fox
Director of Planning & Research
Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland

Prepared for

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

Meeting of June 14, 1989

May 31, 1989

For the last few years, local North American Jewish community planning agendas have been shifting, evolving to a point of much more concentration on issues related to Jewish survival and continuity. While traditional community planning for special subpopulations such as the disabled and aging continues, many communities have rearranged their planning priorities to focus more resources and attention on questions about the nature of our North American Jewish community in the 21st century.

The national planning agenda has provided the impetus for this change, with major national agencies including the JAFI Jewish Education Committee (North America), JESNA, CAJE, JWB and the CJF all raising the visibility of Jewish education and continuity as an issue of primary concern requiring extraordinary community efforts.

A second impetus for change has come from research. Within both academic and communal circles a number of influential studies have recently been published which have given support to concerns about Jewish continuity and pointed towards possible solutions for problems faced in the field. These include the work done by Perry London and his colleagues at Harvard on Jewish identity formation[1], by Alvin Schiff and his colleagues in New York on supplementary schools[2], and by Barry Shrage in Cleveland on experimentation leading to institutional change[3]. These studies, along with many others, suggest the need for changes in our communal funding priorities, in our basic educational approaches and in the breadth of players involved in Jewish education. This article will explore the implications of this knowledge as a guide to federations entering this field.

CHANGING ROLES FOR FEDERATIONS

Jonathan Woocher's concept of the "communalization" of Jewish education sets the stage for a new role for federations to be directly involved in broad-based community planning for Jewish education and continuity. We have learned from the national efforts that community-wide collaborative efforts are necessary for Jewish education planning to be meaningful in the 1990s. It is clear that many institutions have long played and will continue to play essential roles in the delivery of educational services, creation of educational materials, the training and support of educational personnel, and evaluation. What is newly emerging is the realization that federations can serve a key role in the communalization of Jewish education by facilitating and coordinating the community's efforts at improving its educational systems. Federations will not replace the work of BJE's, synagogues or JCC's, but they can add a vital new dimension to the field of Jewish education by addressing changing norms in communal life, involving the highest level of leadership and accessing new levels of funding.

Top community leadership is, of course, federations' most valuable asset. These are the people who are able to focus others on an issue and generate and move funding towards a particular goal. The leadership is also best able to reestablish community norms and address the dissonance between family practices and Jewish customs as learned in school. There are many national leaders from

CJF, JWB, JESNA and elsewhere getting deeply involved in this issue and working with their peers to get them involved.

Access to funding is another major reason to have federations at the center of the new movement towards the primacy of Jewish education and Jewish continuity on the communal agenda. Federations will be called upon to raise more money to address these issues, manage the difficult process of rearranging existing community priorities, and work with people who are capable of establishing special purpose funds to assure this activity in perpetuity. Federations can bring to bear endowment and ongoing operating support to leverage other money for this purpose. The new program concepts are big, expensive and broad-based enough to require the communities' "central address" to be the key player and coordinator and to work alongside other communal and religious organizations to bring about the desired changes.

Partnering with the synagogues is another role for federations. After all, about 80 percent of our young people who get some Jewish education get it in a synagogue school. These key service providers can neither do the whole job alone, nor should they be asked to give up their autonomy. Rather, we have started to see incredible strength in the joint-venture approach--since everyone will win if we are successful.

MODELS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Many federations have already engaged in Federation-led community planning for Jewish identity and continuity. Commissions, committees and task forces are already well advanced in Baltimore, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Pittsburgh, Richmond and Washington. Others are at earlier stages of organization.

"Communalization" of the effort is the key to placing continuity issues high on the community planning agenda. Developing an all encompassing planning process is working. The federations have assumed a leadership role but have been sure to involve all the key players in the community and especially the synagogues.

Professional leadership teams, led by federation planners but including rabbis, school directors, JCC and BJE professionals and academics, are working together to define problems, sort out priorities and develop options to be considered by lay leadership. Most of these 11 communities report that lay involvement on the commission was originally representative of the various institutions. But, once people got involved in consideration of issues that affect everyone, the planning effort gelled into a unified approach. That in itself was of value in ensuring a broad commitment to program recommendations and appropriate use of financial resources to deal with community-wide issues.

Three different community organization approaches have been taken by the communities that are more advanced in the planning process: 1) traditional planning, 2) request for proposals, and 3) seed money. Before detailing the approaches, it is important to note that all three have as a prerequisite active experimentation with individual program ideas prior to the communal approach. Whether it be family education in Detroit, synagogue-based

teacher training in Baltimore or outreach programs in Denver, in all cases program experimentation has set the stage for people's willingness to believe that change in the educational system is possible and can have a positive impact on Jewish continuity.

Briefly, the three community organization models look like this:

Traditional Planning --

Cleveland and Baltimore have convened all the players in the community to go through the exercise of defining problems; sorting out priorities; developing and considering action plans; developing full program, implementation, funding and evaluation plans, and then publishing blueprints for broad-based community action. This process is closely linked to the traditional planning activity in these and many other communities. However, in both cases, the intensity of effort, commitment and excitement was unusually high. The broad-based partnership with the synagogues appears to be one of the most important keys to these successes.

"Request for Proposals" --

Detroit's process was initially similar to the Cleveland and Baltimore experience. However, after establishing priorities, Detroit published an inventory of issues the community wanted addressed through innovative program proposals. This "request for proposals" approach caused agencies, synagogues, and individuals to begin to think and plan together around the newly established community directives. This type of planning process should be possible in any size community and under almost any set of circumstances in the schools and other community institutions. Once a community establishes its goals and priorities, then it can begin determining who should be responsible for any new program initiatives and how they will be funded.

Seed Money Approach --

Columbus put its resources out front as an incentive for cooperative planning and creative thinking in dealing with identified community problems. The Federation's Board of Trustees set aside $250,000 of campaign money and then initiated a federation-led process to decide how best to spend it.

For all the differences between approaches, the planning processes had much in common. They all demonstrated that federation-led efforts can quickly go public with new priorities and be quite flexible in moving ahead with the planning process. They came to similar conclusions in identifying three elements that are basic to improving the effectiveness of the educational system. They are 1) the need to professionalize the personnel in Jewish education, 2) the need for involving parents in the Jewish identity formation of their children, and 3) the need for more and better informal educational experiences for building the Jewish identity of our youth. We will review each of these in greater detail.

PERSONNEL

North American Jewry is suffering from the lack of a profession in Jewish education. We have many people working in the field, but most in part-time, poorly compensated, low status positions. We have yet to create the conditions for working in this field which will attract highly qualified people, adequately compensate and support them, and offer them a challenging ladder of opportunity for a professional career.

Creating a profession of Jewish education is an idea whose time has come. The day school movement has made the most progress in offering full-time work, opportunities to advance oneself up a career ladder and, in some cases, competitive salaries and benefits. In supplementary schools and in many informal educational contexts, the professional opportunities have been far more limited, and we are seeing an increased reliance on avocational personnel. There have been urgent calls to find ways to creatively combine positions and offer educators full-time employment that is challenging, long-term and well compensated.

There are communities which have begun to take up the challenge of improving the quality of personnel in supplementary schools by helping part-time teachers acquire the skills and knowledge needed to be more effective in classrooms. In Baltimore schools have been given incentives to engage a majority of their teachers in skill training. In Cleveland a "personal growth plan" has been developed which provides individualized training programs, recognizing different backgrounds in content knowledge and pedagogic skills. Several communities are providing teachers with the opportunity to study in Israel and many sponsor participation in professional conferences such as those run by CAJE. These and other approaches will need to be developed to build a profession of Jewish educators.

INFORMAL EXPERIENCES

Research in Jewish identity formation and in Jewish professional career choices offers support to a long-held theory that informal educational experiences can play a significant role in influencing one's commitment to Jewish life. For example, Cleveland's demographic study of Jews from 18-29 years old found that many people cite summer camp, a trip to Israel or a youth group experience as most positively enhancing their current Jewish identity.

Even were everyone to agree to grant informal education a key role in Jewish education, from a planning perspective, it could not stand alone. Informal education is inherently connected to the other pieces of the puzzle. We do not have a cohort of professionals who combine strong Jewish knowledge with group work skills, so enhanced training of personnel is an immediate prerequisite. Second, for meaningful Jewish experiences to be properly understood, students need formal education to interpret them. Third, since informal education relies heavily on "artificial environments" such as summer camps and weekend retreats, there need to be bridges built to connect the "high" of these beyond the classroom experiences to the daily life of the community. In all cases, the informal experience needs to be expanded upon to be most truly effective.

For Federation planning, there is a need for a comprehensive approach, integrating BJE, JCC and school personnel. This approach provides an opportunity for people who care about these issues to talk and learn from each other. Program models like Columbus' Discovery Program which integrates preparation for an Israel trip into school curricula and JCC family retreats provide great food for thought in the Federation planning arena.

Suggestions for integrating formal and informal educational experiences can be found in the supplementary school study done by the New York BJE. Although it may seem to the leadership like a radical step, a number of planners and educators are now considering shifting supplementary school hours in some years from the mid-week program to more experiential weekend retreats. That these major shifts can even be contemplated represents a significant belief in the power of providing a Jewish life experience to students whose families may otherwise not provide it and whose formal Jewish education is otherwise not linked to their daily lives.

JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION

It has long been recognized in general education that schools cannot educate children in a vacuum. If issues studied in the classroom, or even experienced in informal settings, are not supported at home, much of the educational advantage is lost. This idea was given empirical support in the work of Harold Himmelfarb[4] and others. In recent years a number of Jewish educators have begun to close the gap between the Jewish classroom and home by more extensively involving the family in classroom activities.

As with informal experiences, family education cannot be seen as an adjunct to the existing program but rather needs to become part of the program itself. We need to think of ourselves as educating families and not just individual students.

An outstanding example of this is to be found in Detroit's Jewish Education for Families ("JEFF"). Schools are invited to participate in informal family educational programs on the condition that they set up an internal committee structure made up of educators and parents who jointly plan the program and ensure its connection to the curriculum of the formal classroom. This "community organization" concept within the school seems to work well for Detroit schools, and in different forms, has been tried in other communities such as Boston and Los Angeles.

Cleveland is considering a model built on the social work case management approach. Around the lifecycle events, families are open to more extensive connections to the community. At these times, families can be approached to build a program involving their own commitment to learning, Israel experiences and various Jewish schooling options. Each school will learn how to sit down with parents and children to discuss this comprehensive Jewish activity. The federations can support the synagogue schools by bringing to bear communal resources to give the schools the ability to carry out these plans in an effective way.

CONCLUSION

Reviewing the work of the federation-led planning for Jewish education ongoing in the 11 cities cited above, we find their most important success has been to raise the ante, to involve the top tier of communal leadership in issues of Jewish education and continuity. From their involvement can follow a rearrangement of financial allocations to more fully address the building of a more effective Jewish educational system that will help each provider of services--synagogues and agencies--to fulfill their educational missions.

Those communities which are furthest in their thinking and planning are now dealing with very complex funding, control and governance issues. They must sort out the extent to which community resources can be expended in schools and settings over which the federations have no financial control. For the most part, the top leadership involved in these efforts have come to see that the federations' and synagogues' futures are so inextricably bound that we have no choice but to share control and influence if all of us are to be successful in ensuring Jewish continuity.

Another broad challenge will be the need for evaluation of programs. Studies will have to be commissioned to determine whether newly funded programs are accomplishing their immediate objectives and whether, in the long term, better education leads to more commitment in the next generation. Through JESNA and academic institutions we will need to build adequate facilities to conduct reliable evaluation studies.

Over time we will have to measure the degree of determination that exists on the local level to reorder funding priorities to allow these changes to happen. Unquestionably, important and difficult discussions over priorities will need to be held. Hopefully national initiatives--from JESNA, JWB, CJF and the denominations--will spur change on the local level. The existence of family foundations interested in funding initiatives and the creation of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America should add significant incentives for communal change.

We are fortunate that a number of positive influences converge at this time which help the federations to proceed. The general American return to traditional values and religious life helps. The fact that we have less worry about our physical and social needs in this generation helps. Our massive national resources both from the campaigns and in the foundations will help. Our emerging national cadre of new Jewish education professionals will help. Our mature community planning approaches and relationships with the synagogues help. And, of course, the extensive research and writing related to "what works" in Jewish education helps tremendously, although much more needs to be done.

As the federation-led comprehensive approaches to Jewish education planning continue, we will all need to continue to learn from each other and share successes. The door is wide open, and with hard work and determination we should be ready to take advantage of the many opportunities.

REFERENCES

1) Perry London and Naava Frank, "Jewish Identity and Jewish Schooling," journal of Jewish Communal Service, Volume 64, No. 1, 1987.

2) Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, Jewish Supplementary Schooling: An Educational System in Need of Change, 1988.

3) Barry Shrage, "From Experimentation to Institutionalized Change: An Action Plan for Jewish Continuity," unpublished manuscript, Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1987.

4) Harold Himmelfarb, "The Non-Linear Impact of Religious Schooling: Comparing Different Types and Amounts of Jewish Education," Sociology of Education, Volume 50, 1977.

Special thanks to Dr. Joseph Reimer, Assistant Professor, Benjamin S. Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service, Brandeis University, and Staff Consultant, North American Commission on Jewish Education, for his assistance with this article.

June 1, 1989

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. At its meeting on December 13, 1988 the Commission decided to focus its work initially on two options.

- To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education; and
- To deal with the community—its structures, leadership and funding as major agents for change.

2. There was consensus that we should deal with personnel and the community. It was recognized that these are enabling options, pre-conditions for effecting all of the programmatic options, and thereby likely to improve Jewish education in all areas. Some commissioners reminded us that agreement has existed for a long time, that these areas are in need of improvement, but expressed concern as to whether any ways can be found to significantly improve them.

3. Since the meeting on December 13th, almost all commissioners have been consulted. Two key questions have emerged:

A. Do we know *what* should be done in the areas of personnel and the community?

Are there any important ideas?

B. Do we know *how* it should be done?

Are there strategies for implementation?

4. Throughout the consultations, ideas were proposed by commissioners and other experts, programs were brought to our attention by practitioners in the field, and we were informed of current trends and developments in the areas of both personnel and community.

5. **The Community:**

We learned that key lay leaders of the community are taking a new interest in Jewish education; that eleven commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity, coordinated by CJF, have been established in communities; that private foundations interested in Jewish education are growing in number and size, and more.

6. **Personnel:**

Our assumption was reinforced that in dealing with personnel the approach would have to be comprehensive, that **recruitment, training, retention and profession-building** would have to be addressed simultaneously. There are many interesting and promising ideas in each of these areas. Some of these ideas have been tried and are considered successful; others have been formulated and seem convincing. However, we were also made aware of the paucity of data and the absence of planned, systematic efforts.

7. We learned that the **personnel and community options are inter-related** and that any strategy must involve them both. If we hope to recruit outstanding people, they will have to believe that the community is embarking on a new era for Jewish education. An infusion of dedicated and qualified personnel into the field will help convince parents that Jewish education can make a difference in the lives of their children and in the life-styles of their families.

8. This task – bringing about change in the areas of personnel and community – is vast and complex and will be difficult to address at once and across-the-board throughout North America. Because much of education takes place on the local level, and because we recognize the importance of the local community playing a major role in initiating ideas and being leading partners in their implementation, **it is suggested that the Commission consider establishing a program to develop community action sites.**

9. A community action site could involve an entire community, a network of institutions or one major institution where ideas and programs that have succeeded, as well as new ideas and experimental programs, would be implemented. If successful, other communities might be inspired to apply the lessons learned in community action sites to their own communities.

10. Working on the local scene will require the involvement and assistance of national institutions and organizations. Local efforts will not reach their full potential without the broad and sustained contribution of experts on the national level. **A community action site requires both local initiative and involvement, and national expertise.**

11. As these multiple and complex issues are being considered, many questions emerge. How does one begin to plan the local initiatives that will eventually lead to wide-spread change? Who will be the broker between the national resources and the institutions and individuals in the communities where projects are undertaken? How can one bring the best practice of Jewish education in the world to bear on specific programs? Who will see to it that successful endeavours are brought to the attention of other communities and that the ideas are appropriately diffused?

These are some of the questions that will be on the agenda of the Commission as it convenes for its third meeting on June 14, 1989.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

June 1, 1989

WORK IN PROGRESS:

FROM THE SECOND TO THE THIRD MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

I. Background

Between August and December 1988, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America engaged in a decision-making process aimed at identifying those areas where intervention could significantly affect the impact of Jewish education/Jewish continuity in North America.

A wide variety of possible options reflecting the commitments, concerns and interests of the commissioners were considered—any one of which could have served as the basis for the Commission's agenda. It was recognized that the options could be usefully divided into two large categories: enabling options and programmatic options. The Commission decided to focus its work *initially* on two of the enabling options:

1. To deal with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education; and

2. To deal with the community—its leadership, structures and funding, as major agents for change.

At the same time, many commissioners urged that work also be undertaken in various programmatic areas (e.g. early childhood, day schools, supplementary schools, informal education, the media, Israel Experience programs, programs for college students).

II. The Challenge: Ideas and Strategies

The consensus among commissioners on the importance of dealing with personnel and the community did not alleviate the concern expressed by some as to whether ways can be found to significantly improve the situation in these two areas. These commissioners reminded us that agreement that these areas are in need of improvement has existed for a long time among educators and community leaders. Articles have been written; conferences have been held; solutions have been suggested; programs have been tried. Yet significant improvement has not occurred. Some claim that we may know what the problems are, but have not devised solutions that would address them, nor workable strategies for implementing them effectively in the field.

The challenge for the Commission at this time is to address these issues and ask the following questions:

1. **What should be done in the areas of personnel and the community?** What are some of the ideas that could help us begin our work, ideas that would address the problems of recruitment, training and retention of personnel as well as of profession-building? What are some of the ideas that would change the way the

community addresses Jewish education—through involving outstanding leadership, generating significant additional funding, building the appropriate structures, and changing the climate?

2. **How should it be done?** How should this commission propose translating ideas into practice, developing them into programs for implementation? How should it go about changing matters in the field? What strategies should guide the implementation of these ideas?

III. What Should Be Done

Many factors contribute to the conviction that at the present time effective action to improve Jewish education can be undertaken with a reasonable chance for success. Ideas that were proposed by commissioners and other experts, programs that were brought to our attention by practitioners in the field and current trends and developments in both the personnel and community areas support this conviction.

A. The Community

1. Recent Developments

As the attached paper "Community Organization for Jewish Education in North America: Leadership, Finance and Structure" by Henry L. Zucker illustrates (see Appendix 1) there are a number of encouraging developments taking place in the way that the North American community relates to Jewish education.

- Key lay leaders of the community are taking a new interest in Jewish education.
- Eleven communities have organized local commissions on Jewish education/Jewish continuity, coordinated by CJF. Other communities are considering establishing such commissions. (See "Federation-Led Community Planning for Jewish Education, Identity and Continuity," by Joel Fox, Appendix 2.)
- The establishment of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America has generated a good deal of interest.
- Federations have begun placing Jewish education higher on the list of their priorities.
- Private foundations interested in Jewish education, are growing in number and size. Several have already funded important programs.
- The institutions of higher Jewish learning are in the process of developing and intensifying their education and training programs.
- JESNA and some bureaus are planning and have undertaken important initiatives in formal and informal Jewish education.
- JWB's report on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of JCCs is being implemented and first results are apparent.
- The denominations, nationally and locally, are developing important new educational materials, methods and technologies for schools, camps, and youth movements.

2. Next Steps

As this Commission begins to respond to the challenges of the community option, it can be encouraged by these and other

activities. The Commission should carefully study and analyze the developing momentum, seek to build on it, and consider what additional steps could help the Jewish community provide the greatest possible support for across-the-board improvement in Jewish education.

B. Personnel

1. A Comprehensive Approach

There are shortages of personnel in all areas and for all age groups. Dealing with the shortage of qualified personnel for Jewish education will require the Commission to consider a series of complex problems and challenges. Little has been done in this area and significant development is needed. Although there have been efforts at improvement, no **systematic, comprehensive, well-funded approach has been undertaken.**

The absence of such a comprehensive approach may even diminish the impact of sound programs. For example, we know that salaries for teachers are low, yet increasing salaries has not always had the expected impact of attracting new and qualified personnel to the field. Evidence from both general and Jewish education points to the fact that salaries alone are not enough to bring about change, rather they have to be combined with other measures such as improving status, empowering educators, intensifying training and developing career opportunities.

To deal effectively with the personnel option requires that **recruitment, training, profession-building and retention** be addressed simultaneously. Since the last meeting of the Commission in December, we have been studying these four topics. We have learned of many interesting and promising ideas, and at the same time, we are aware of a paucity of data and of the absence of planned, systematic efforts.

2. Some Examples

What follows are some examples of the ideas suggested by experts. Some of these experts are scholars, some practitioners, some researchers and theoreticians, some community leaders. Some of these ideas have been tried and are considered successful. Others have been formulated and seem convincing and promising. All require further study and careful consideration.

a. RECRUITMENT OF PERSONNEL

How could we increase the pool of talented people who will join personnel training programs and who can be recruited to work as educators in the field? Commissioners and other experts have pointed to the fact that no comprehensive approach to recruitment has been undertaken. A number of questions arise, including: who to recruit, where to recruit, how to recruit, under what circumstances could recruitment succeed? When do students make their career decisions—in high school? in college? Should we recruit people at various ages? What institutions and programs are likely feeder systems for the profession of Jewish education—camps, youth movements, programs in Israel? What is their potential today? At which special population pools should we target recruitment efforts?

Some Suggestions:

- Recruit educators from general education: There is a pool of young Jewish educators working in general education. Many have excelled in fields such

as early childhood education and adult education and could be recruited and retrained for Jewish education. In order to tap this resource, we would need to find out under what circumstances such people could be attracted and recruited.

- Recruit Judaic studies majors and graduates: A recent study has indicated that there may be a significant number of students majoring in Jewish studies at general universities who could be recruited for the field of Jewish education.
- Recruit people considering a career change: In general education there are encouraging experiments in progress on recruiting people who are considering mid-career changes in their profession.
- Recruit rabbinical school graduates: At present, a significant proportion of rabbinical school students choose to specialize in education. This may be an important pool for candidates for senior positions.
- Recruit graduates of schools and camps: There is reason to believe that there is a significant pool of dedicated and committed graduates of schools and camps who could make an important contribution during their college years to the supplementary school, the JCC and Israel Experience programs. These young people have decided on careers in business, law, medicine and academia, but are willing and interested in making a contribution to Jewish continuity. Under proper circumstances, and with appropriate rewards—both financial and intellectual—they could enhance and complement the work of full-time professionals.

Some of these ideas, such as recruiting Judaic Studies majors have been studied; others, like re-tooling people from general education, are being selectively tried. Some new ideas are untried and need to be studied. They all need to be looked at in a new and fresh way.

b. TRAINING

Any effort to improve personnel will have to involve a significant development of training opportunities. What kind of training should take place for the various populations—on-the-job? pre-service? training for specially recruited populations? Where could it be done? In existing institutions? In Judaic departments of general universities? In Israel? What should be the content of training? What should be the relationship and balance between Jewish studies, pedagogy, administration, etc.? These are only some of the questions that will need to be examined.

Some suggestions:

- Some institutes and summer courses exist. They should be expanded. Large scale institutes and summer courses—similar to those that exist in general education—could be established for the improvement of the teaching of Jewish subjects (e.g. courses for teachers of Bible, Hebrew, Jewish history). Such programs would enhance the work of supplementary school teachers, day school teachers, JCC educators, principals and researchers.
- In-service courses to help educators use special techniques could be introduced. For example, programs could be offered to help teachers become comfortable with, and experience the practical benefits to be derived from, the use of media and technology in their work.

- Judaic Studies departments in general universities could be encouraged to offer in-service training courses throughout the year for Jewish educators, formal and informal.
- The use of Israel's educational resources should be expanded. As one example, currently a group of senior JCC executives is spending three months in Israel studying in a program organized by JWB. Such programs could be expanded and adapted for formal educators.
- The training capacity in North America needs to be strengthened. The faculty of existing training institutions is small and must be expanded. Some suggestions are:

* New positions for professors of Jewish education must be created.

* Judaica professors at general universities could be recruited to bolster the existing training programs by adding the expertise of their specific field of knowledge (e.g. Bible, Talmud, etc.).

* Jewish professors in university departments of education, psychology, philosophy and sociology could be recruited to teach in the education programs at institutions of higher Jewish learning.

* Outstanding practitioners who have succeeded in schools or informal settings should share their wisdom by joining the faculty of training programs.

* Creative combinations of these ideas might rapidly enhance the capability of the training of Jewish educators.

Many more ideas for dealing with the shortages in the area of training have been suggested. Some, involving fellowships and stipends, are already under way. Others involve building the research capability for Jewish education so that programs and ideas can be effectively monitored and evaluated. A blend of some of these ideas and others would yield fruitful results.

c. BUILDING THE PROFESSION

Can Jewish education be developed into a fully recognized profession? Is this a pre-condition for increasing recruitment to the field? How can it be done? How much of it must be done? Some of the elements involved include status (which in turn is related to salaries, benefits, empowerment, etc.), career opportunities, certification, collegial networking, a code of professional ethics and an agreed upon body of knowledge. All of these are part of what makes a profession. As we consulted with commissioners and other experts, the following suggestions were made:

- Salaries and benefits are important and should be improved. However, they alone are not enough to change the status of educators.
- The empowerment of educators – strengthening their role in setting educational policy and content – is the subject of a major debate and of experiments in general education in North America. The role of empowerment for Jewish educators, particularly teachers, must be carefully considered and the insights derived from general education should be evaluated.
- Career opportunities that offer a variety of options for advancement need to be developed. Outstanding teachers should have other options for advancement besides administrative

positions (e.g. assistant principal, principal) for which they may or may not be qualified. Other senior positions, such as specialists in Bible, family education, special education, adult education, and curriculum development, should be created.

- Networks of collegiality exist only in limited form. Journals, conferences and professional communication networks should be enlarged and developed. The rapid and impressive success of CAJE serves as an encouraging example.

We will have to consider to what extent these elements need to be introduced if we hope to recruit and retain talented people for the field.

d. RETENTION

Significant numbers of educators leave the field after a few years. Preliminary studies indicate that issues of status, empowerment, salaries, relationship with lay boards and with superiors, excessive administrative work, etc. contribute to the attrition. We have to learn more about educators, their motivations, their aspirations, to address the issue of retention more effectively.

IV. Interim Summary

As discussion of these four elements shows, and as we were reminded throughout our consultations, it is imperative to approach the problem of personnel by dealing with all four elements simultaneously – recruitment, training, profession-building, retention. It will be very difficult – if not impossible – to recruit if we do not build the profession. It will be very difficult to raise the large sums of money necessary to build the needed training programs unless many more students are attracted to Jewish education. The entire enterprise will suffer if talented educators are discouraged and prematurely leave the field.

The community and personnel options are interrelated and a strategy involving both must be devised. If we hope to recruit outstanding people, they will have to believe that the community is embarking on a new era for Jewish education. They will have to believe that they are entering a field where there will be reasonable salaries, a secure career line, where their ideas will make a difference and where they will be in a position to influence the future. Creating these conditions will require a commitment by the North American Jewish Community at the continental and local levels.

An infusion of dedicated and qualified personnel into the field of Jewish education will help convince parents that Jewish education can make a difference in the lives of their children and in the life-styles of their families. The community, through its leadership, will then be able to more effectively design and take the steps necessary to place Jewish education higher on its list of priorities.

V. Bringing About Change

A. From Ideas to Community Action Sites

Implicit in the notion of change is the assumption that one knows what should be changed and can demonstrate it. However, at this time, some of what should be changed and demonstrated has not yet been developed.

How can we determine which ideas are worth our investment? How comprehensive must our approach be? How can we know what combination of ideas and programs are likely to have the greatest impact? How can we decide where to begin?

These questions and others can only be resolved in real-life situations. The solution to questions, the specifics of educational plans and programs, need to be worked out in the actual situation, tailored to the particular students, educators, environment and content. Plans and programs need to be fine-tuned and adapted as implementation proceeds. How can we structure a way to move from plans to implementation, from theory to practice?

This task—bringing about change in the areas of personnel and the community through implementation—is vast and complex and will be difficult to address at once and across-the-board throughout North America. We believe, however, that it could be feasible to begin such undertakings on the local level, in communities. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Much of education takes place on the local level—in the communities, in schools, synagogues, community centers, camps.

2. Experts have reminded us that there are many advantages to building programs "from the bottom up"—with the local community playing a major role in initiating ideas and being leading partners in their implementation—thereby establishing ownership of the initiative.

3. Significant human resources and energy are required to implement a comprehensive undertaking (one that would involve all or many aspects of personnel—recruitment, training, profession-building, retention—and of community). If such an undertaking is done on a local level—during its experimental stage—its scope will be more manageable. It will be easier to find the people needed to run the project.

4. In addition to the educators currently available, a community could mobilize other outstanding people from among its rabbis, scholars of Judaica, federation executives and Jewish scholars in the humanities and social sciences for the local project.

5. A local project could be managed in a hands-on manner. It could, therefore, be constantly improved and fine-tuned.

6. There are already ideas and programs (best practices) that, if brought together in one site, integrated and implemented in a complementary way, could have a significantly greater impact than they have today when their application is fragmented.

7. In addition to proven ideas, new visions of Jewish education which have not yet been tried could be translated into practice and careful experimentation, in a more manageable way.

8. The results of a local undertaking would be tangible and visible—hopefully within a reasonable amount of time. As such, they could

generate interest and reactions that might lead to a public debate on the important issues of Jewish education.

9. A network could be developed among local sites which could increase the impact of each and, hopefully, generate interest among additional communities to replicate and adapt this approach.

At the same time we recognize the indispensable contribution that must be made through the broad and sustained efforts of experts working "from the top down." Working on the local scene will require the involvement and assistance of the national organizations and training institutions. Local efforts will not reach their full potential unless supported by the expertise of the national institutions and organizations. In turn, for the national institutions, local experiments would be an opportunity to test and develop new concepts in Jewish education.

Our challenge is to work simultaneously on the local and national levels. We need to combine these two approaches rather than treat them separately. For these reasons, **we suggest that the Commission develop a program for communities that wish to become Community Action Sites**, and can deal effectively with both the community and personnel options.

A Community Action Site could involve an entire community, a network of institutions, or one major institution. Here some of the best ideas and programs in Jewish education would be initiated in as comprehensive a form as possible. It would be a site where the ideas and programs that have succeeded, as well as new ideas and experimental programs, would be undertaken. Work at this site will be guided by visions of what Jewish education at its best can be.

An assumption implicit in the suggestion of a Community Action Site is that other communities would be able to see what a successful approach to the community and personnel options could be, and would be inspired to apply the lessons learned to their own communities.

B. From Community Action Sites to Implementation

As these multiple and complex issues are being considered, many questions emerge. How does one begin to plan the local initiatives that will eventually lead to widespread change? Who will be the broker between the national resources and the institutions and individuals in the communities where projects are undertaken? How can one bring the best practice of Jewish education in the world to bear on specific programs? Who will be responsible for the effective implementation of local projects? What can ensure that standards and goals are maintained? Who will see to it that successful endeavours are brought to the attention of other communities and that the ideas are appropriately diffused?

There is a case for initiating change through Community Action Sites. However, as the above issues reveal, it is clear that an answer is needed to the question of "How will this be done?". If demonstration projects will be undertaken in Community Action Sites of one form or another they will have to be researched, planned, funded, implemented. Community Action Sites will need to be carefully chosen. Their professional and lay leadership will need to be engaged to take the project in hand.

For projects to have their full impact, standards will have to be set and maintained. Lessons will have to be learned from the implementation. Information will have to be diffused to additional sites and throughout the community about what works and what can be replicated or adapted. How will this complex enterprise be undertaken?

These are some of the questions that will be on the agenda of the Commission as it convenes for its third meeting on June 14, 1989.

Appendix 1

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR JEWISH EDUCATION:

Leadership, Finance and Structure

by

Henry L. Zucker
Executive Vice President, Emeritus
Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland
and
Consultant, The Mandel Associated Foundations

Prepared for

COMMISSION ON JEWISH EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

Meeting of June 14, 1989

June 1, 1989

The Commission selected from a long list of option papers produced for its December 13th meeting what the Commission believes to be the "enabling options," those which are basic to improvement in the programmatic options. The "enabling options" have to do with personnel and with community and financing. Jewish education progress depends on improvement in teaching and administrative personnel, and on the ability of the Commission to raise the priority and funding levels which the American Jewish community assigns to Jewish continuity and Jewish education. Setting a higher community priority on Jewish education is a pre-condition to developing better quality Jewish education personnel.

On December 13, we listed options under the titles "to deal with the community--its leadership and its structures--as major agents for change in any area," and "to generate significant additional funding for Jewish education."

This paper combines these two options under the new title "Community Organization for Jewish Education--Leadership, Finance, and Structure."

This paper complements the content of the previous option papers with what has been learned from commissioners and staff in meetings and in individual discussions.

COMMUNITY

What is the community we are talking about in connection with formal and informal Jewish education?

By community we mean the organized Jewish community as it relates to the issues of Jewish continuity, commitment and learning, and to communal organizations and personnel engaged in these issues. Our target population includes the lay and professional leaders who create the content and the climate for Jewish formal and informal education, such as teachers, principals, communal workers, scholars, rabbis, heads of institutions of higher learning, denomination and day school leaders, and the leaders of the American Jewish community who are involved in planning for and financing Jewish education. The chief organization targets at the local level are the religious congregations, Jewish Community Centers, schools and agencies under communal sponsorship, Jewish community federations and bureaus of Jewish education (particularly in the large and intermediate cities), and major Jewish-sponsored foundations. On the national level, we have the Council of Jewish Federations, JWB, JESNA, the chief denominational and congregational bodies, training institutions, and associations of educators and communal workers who are engaged in formal and informal Jewish education.

It is expected that the Commission's findings and its proactive stance will be directed primarily to these persons and organizations, and will help them to make major improvements in Jewish education.

LEADERSHIP

Prior to World War II, the leadership of the organized American Jewish community did not consider Jewish education a top priority for communal concern. Indeed, a large proportion of the leadership was indifferent and some even antagonistic to community support for Jewish education. In the early days of federation, emphasis was on the social services and on the Americanization of the new immigrants. During World War II and in the post-War period, the highest priority for community leaders was the lifesaving work of Jewish relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, and then nation-building in Israel. More recently, community leadership has put a higher premium on Jewish education. There is an increasing awareness of the need for total community support of Jewish education. There appears to be a reordering of community priorities in the direction of Jewish education and an awareness that healthy Jewish continuity requires a deeper community commitment to the education of the younger generation.

What is clear now is that to establish a highest communal planning and funding priority for Jewish education requires the involvement of the highest level of community leadership. This leadership is now very much concerned about the healthy continuity of the Jewish people in the North American setting. They are beginning to translate this concern into an understanding that top leadership must be forceful in promoting the Jewish education enterprise.

Not all of the commissioners are convinced that Jewish education is now seen by key lay leadership as a top community priority. However, most believe that there is a decided trend toward involvement of top leadership, and that the battle to create a highest communal priority for Jewish education is well on its way to being won. Certainly there is still a marked difference among local communities in the degree to which they support Jewish education. It is clear that the Commission has a special mission to convince the North American Jewish community leadership that their personal involvement in Jewish education is necessary, if we are to improve Jewish education and stem the tide of Jewish indifference and assimilation.

STRUCTURE

Commission members appear to agree that we have not yet developed community structures that are adequate to effect the necessary improvements in Jewish education. This criticism is directed both at local and national structures. There are recent and current efforts at improvement. Some areas which require continuing examination are:

1. The relationship among federations, bureaus of Jewish education, communal schools and congregations.

2. The place of federations in planning and budgeting for Jewish education and in financing Jewish education, and the relationship of federations to bureaus of Jewish education.

3. The need for forceful national leadership in establishing standards for the field, in promoting, encouraging, and evaluating innovations, and in spreading the application of best practices as they are discovered all over the continent.

Fortunately, JESNA, JWB and CJF are currently engaged in efforts to examine these issues, and at least eleven federations are involved in comprehensive studies of their communities' Jewish education programs. The Commission may wish to develop its own ideas regarding what new or improved structures are needed to speed up improvements in the field.

FINANCE

Congregations, tuition payments by parents, and fund-raising, especially by day schools, have been mainstays of Jewish education financing. These sources of support are crucial and should be encouraged (there is some support for the idea that tuition should be discontinued as a source of support). There is a consensus, nevertheless, that considerably new funding is required from federations as the primary source of organized community funding. It is believed, too, that substantial funding will need to come from private foundations and leading families which have an identified concern for Jewish continuity and Jewish education.

It is believed that communal patterns of funding may need to be altered and that there may need to be changes in organization relationships to accommodate this. Cooperation between the congregations and the federations is essential to developing the funds needed to improve Jewish education.

Some specific suggestions have been made by commissioners for new programs to improve Jewish education which would require new funding. For example, one suggestion is the establishment of a national Jewish education fund to provide matching funds to support program ideas developed at the local level. Another suggestion is the establishment and funding of a national pension fund for the benefit of Jewish education personnel. These or other ideas, if and when recommended, will need to attract new funding sources. One commissioner believes that the Commission would most likely make its greatest contribution to Jewish education by developing new ideas such as these and finding the funding for them.

It is clear that the Commission intends to be proactive in its effort to improve Jewish education. This will very likely include encouraging additional funding from traditional sources and funding from new sources.

There is a feeling of optimism that greater funds can be generated for Jewish education in spite of the current great demand for communal funding for other purposes. There is evidence that a number of communities are already beginning to place a higher funding priority on Jewish education and that a trend has begun to allocate a greater proportion of Jewish communal funds to this field. There is also the fortuitous circumstance that federation endowment funds--a relatively new source of communal funds--are growing at a good pace and these funds can be an important

source of support for Jewish education. Simultaneously, there is a recent and current growth of substantial family foundations--a post-World War II phenomenon which has accelerated in recent years, and promises to be an important new funding resource to meet Jewish communal needs. A number of such foundations have an expressed interest in Jewish education.

In general, therefore, there is reason for optimism that additonal funding will be available for well-considered programs to improve and expand Jewish education.

It needs to be noted that some commissioners have expressed themselves to the effect that "throwing money" at Jewish education will not by itself do the job. They believe that, at the same time, there needs to be a careful review of current programs and administrative structures to see how these can be improved. They believe that we need to encourage monitoring and evaluation of projects aimed at improving Jewish education. Careful attention to the quality of what we are attempting to do and honest and perceptive evaluations are needed, both to get appropriate results for what is being spent and also to encourage funding sources.

In brief, then, it is clear that there is a consensus that improvements in the field of Jewish education will require an infusion of considerably greater funds. It is believed that traditional funding sources need to place a higher priority on funding Jewish education, and allocating a greater proportion of their total budget to Jewish education. There is also a consensus that considerable new funding will need to be generated from private foundations and leading families which are concerned about Jewish continuity and Jewish education, and from federation endowment funds. Cooperation between the congregations and the federations is basic to a sound development of the financial requirements to improve Jewish education, and prior organizational patterns may need to be altered to accomodate funding changes.

Finally, it is worth repeating this word of caution: money alone will not bring about the needed improvements. We will need to ensure the effective administration and utilization of funds. We will need to monitor and evaluate current and new programs to assure that improvements are realized. Only then will funding sources of all kinds be encouraged to continue and increase their support.