

SYNAGOGUE/SCHOOL CHANGE INITIATIVES

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	CAJE FELLOWS
Auspice/Sponsorship	Rose Community Foundation and Colorado Agency for Jewish Education
Contact Information	Maggie Miller - mmiller@caje-co.org (303)321-3191 ext. 17
Year Established	2001
Program Goals	The goal of the CAJE Fellows program is to train and mentor adults who love Judaism and want to teach it to children, but lack the necessary education or confidence to teach Religious School.
Program Description	Designed to address teacher retention and recruitment for our Jewish schools, the CAJE Fellows Program is a community-wide approach to attracting, training and retaining teachers. Based on national best practices, the CAJE Fellows Program addresses concerns raised in the Commission on Jewish School Excellence's Blessing and Challenge report, in particular, the growing need for professional supplemental school teachers. The CAJE Fellows program will change school cultures by training and providing ongoing mentoring for thirty teachers each year to teach in Denver and Boulder's Religious Schools, and by training senior teachers and principals in those schools to coach and mentor these apprentice teachers. Based on best-practices from our local school districts, CAJE Fellows combines coaching and mentoring with systemic change initiatives within the schools. One of its goals is to build true learning communities among each school's faculty. There are three aspects of the CAJE Fellows Program - the CAJE Fellows, Senior Teachers, and Participating Institutions.
	▪ To be a CAJE Fellow, you must like being Jewish, love children, be prepared to learn, and commit to teaching after the program. Over the course of a school year, CAJE Fellows will go through training and mentoring, spend about seven hours each month learning, and between two and five hours each week apprenticing in a Religious School classroom so as to develop the necessary skills and confidence to become a teacher. They will receive a stipend of \$1,000 and the gift of being trained to make a real difference for Jewish children.
	▪ Senior Teachers must have had at least three years of successful teaching experience, be recommended by their principal and colleagues, want to share their skills with others, and be prepared to learn. Over the course of a school year, Senior Teachers will spend about six hours each month participating in training, group study, and mentoring. Each Senior Teacher will then be paired with a CAJE Fellow to help them develop the necessary skills and confidence to become a teacher. They will receive a stipend of \$1,000 while making a significant contribution to the Jewish people.
	▪ Participating Institutions are Religious Schools that need more teachers. These must have the support of the Rabbi, school principal, and the synagogue board, and have on staff at least one person qualified to be a Senior Teacher. You must already use student assessment and teacher evaluation tools, or be prepared to introduce them, and must be willing to pay 1/3 of the stipend of each Senior Teacher and CAJE Fellow in your school.
Process	If you are interested in the CAJE Fellows Program, contact Maggie Miller for more information about applications and deadlines.

Criteria for Participation	Criteria to be a CAJE Fellow, Senior Teacher, and/or Participating Institution are mentioned above.
Participating Congregations	Nine CAJE Fellows, nine senior teachers and six participating Religious Schools in Denver and Boulder.
Evaluation	Ongoing internal evaluation
Outcomes to Date	The CAJE Fellows program is building a qualified teaching base for the community. Teachers are beginning to make connections with each other and are also beginning to realize the importance of curriculum planning for their classrooms. They are more tuned in to the rhythms of student learning, while students are getting the benefit of two teachers in the classroom. CAJE Fellows and Senior Teachers are beginning to feel more confident in educational theory, pedagogy and classroom management. Congregational lay leaders feel they are gaining more qualified, enthusiastic teachers who know “how” to teach. School principals are excited to have a structured way of recognizing their experienced teachers. Senior Teachers are learning how to teach pedagogy model for newer teachers and change school expectations.
Subscription Fee	Schools pay 1/3 of the stipends for the CAJE Fellows and Senior Teachers.
Annual Budget	Approximately \$165,000 per year
	Funding is provided by the Rose Community Foundation
Next steps	Continuing to raise the bar for excellence in our Jewish teaching through induction and mentoring programs.

	CATALYST FOR SCHOOL CHANGE
Auspice/Sponsorship	The Colorado Agency for Jewish Education and the Colorado Jewish Venture Philanthropy Fund
Contact Information	Risa Buckstein - rbuckstein@caje-co.org (303)321-3191 ext. 14
Year Established	2002
Program Goals	The goal of Catalyst is to promote excellence in synagogue schools through systemic change, to help them integrate and align their schools with their institutional goals, and to help schools prepare for grants designed to innovate and promote excellence. A key to success is the active involvement in the change process of students, parents, lay leadership, clergy and educational professionals.
Program Description	Catalyst is a two-year initiative where students, parents, lay leadership, clergy, and other professional staff work together to study their schools in relation to their synagogue communities and ensure their school's success. Since each school's educational needs and goals are unique, the approaches and methodologies Catalyst uses will be customized for each institution. CAJE is funded to work with 3-5 schools during a two-year period. Questions and goals that these schools might explore could focus on families, parental involvement, educational goals, needs assessment, or post Bar/Bat Mitzvah retention. CAJE will provide Catalyst schools:
	▪ A renewable one year mini-grant for their school to use to further their goal of school excellence.
	▪ Trained Professionals to help: - Create and affirm school's educational goals. - Develop a plan for school excellence. - Form a team dedicated to pursuing excellence in their school. - Implement systems for delivering and sustaining school excellence. - Assess programs and establish benchmarks for success. - Collaborate with other Catalyst schools to strengthen each other.
	▪ Strategies and consultation to help Catalyst schools position themselves for future grant funding.
Process	The application to be a Catalyst school is a two-page proposal letter including:
	▪ A statement that you meet Catalyst eligibility criteria, and your professionals and lay leaders are willing to devote time and energy to this project.
	▪ A brief description of how your current school community is organized,

	including parent, lay leader, and professional roles.
	Your reasons for wanting to become a Catalyst school, including your vision for school excellence and examples of your school's successes and challenges.
	An explanation of how you will use the mini-grant to further school excellence.
	After being accepted, schools begin consultations with the Catalyst trained professionals.
Criteria for Participation	Schools who are interested in applying to be a Catalyst school must be committed to promoting sustainable excellence in their school through systemic change, which they see as a collaborative process involving students, parents, lay leadership, clergy, and other professional staff. They must either have, or be committed to developing, a vision and mission with clear measurable goals that CAJE can help them to achieve. Congregants should be willing to participate in workshops designed to broaden knowledge of best practices in schools and promote sharing of ideas among schools. They should hope to inspire adult learning communities and like to gain a deeper appreciation of the integral role of the school in the life of the synagogue. Congregations should also have a designated professional who will work with CAJE to implement the mini-grant, organize meetings, communicate with the greater synagogue community, and guide the planning and implementation of a plan for school excellence.
Participating Congregations	Two Reform, one Conservative, one Reconstructionist, and one Orthodox congregation.
	Four congregations have completed the process.
Evaluation	An internal evaluation will be conducted in the summer of 2004.
Outcomes to Date	Schools have met 3 times and learned with a trained facilitator how to use a logic model and work plan to chart their goals and develop implementation strategies. They have also begun to look at evaluation as a continuous process to systemic change at their institutions.
	Within individual congregations, it has been noted that clergy, educational professionals and lay leaders have begun the process of looking at the relationships between synagogues and schools.
Subscription Fee	There is no fee to the congregations; they receive a two-year grant for \$110,000 and each of the four participating schools also received a mini-grant of \$3,000 to continue development and change.
Annual Budget	\$55,000 a year.
	Funding provided for by the Colorado Jewish Venture Philanthropists
Next steps	Ongoing project development

	CHAI Learning for Jewish Life
Auspice/Sponsorship	UAHC in partnership with Hebrew Union College and the National Association of Temple Educators
Contact Information	Rabbi Jan Katzew - jkatzew@UAHC.org (212)650-4112
Year Established	2001 - schools began to pilot program
Program Goals	The goal of CHAI is to change organizations to provide a flexible, comprehensive strategy for lifelong Jewish learning. By making curricular resources available for congregations, giving them autonomy and flexibility in deciding utilization and implementation levels, CHAI seeks to improve congregations' courses of Jewish education in order to create individuals and communities of Jews with a deeper and fuller commitment to Jewish living.
Program Description	The UAHC CHAI Curriculum is designed to facilitate lifelong Jewish learning; it is intended for Religious School students grades 2-7, Religious School teachers, Education Committees, congregational Boards of Directors, parents of children ages 3-14, and families with children ages 7-14. CHAI responds to the need for a dynamic balance between <i>Torah</i> (Jewish literacy), <i>avodah</i> (competency), and <i>g'milut chasadim</i> (acts of caring and social justice) within congregational schools. Lesson plans and curricular materials and resources must be approved at four different levels: First, writers engaged in the UAHC write each of the curriculum and lesson plans; second, academic advisors of the HUC faculty must approve the material on their Judaic and educational academic integrity; third, the National Association of Temple Educators makes sure that each of the lessons is practical and applicable to congregations and their schools; and fourth, the editorial team at the UAHC department of education review the material before being sent to publication. The UAHC has engaged JESNA to provide a source of independent evaluation of CHAI's effectiveness, and also so that continual responses, changes, and upgrades can be made according to feedback. The following are programs that CHAI implements: ▪ <u>Curriculum Core - Torah, Avodah, G'Milut Chasadim</u>: CHAI lessons utilize an approach that begins with desired outcomes in mind. The lessons aim to nurture "enduring understandings," values that have lifetime meaning for Reform Jews. The curriculum core is designed around the fundamental lessons of <i>Torah</i>, <i>avodah</i>, and <i>g'milut chasadim</i>. Each level of the curriculum core consists of 27 one-hour lessons - 9 lessons for each topic with the conclusion of a related family lesson. The Curriculum Core takes about five years to implement through phasing in one to two levels per year. ▪ <u>Mitkadem - Hebrew Program for Youth</u>: The Mitkadem curriculum is a self-paced individualized beginning with Hebrew letter recognition and decoding skills, and progressing through the study of a series of blessings, prayers and ritual observance. It is a self-paced, individualized, comprehensive program of Hebrew learning for youth that embraces Hebrew as a sacred Jewish language through t'filah (prayer) and Torah. Mitkadem is divided into ramot (levels) based on students' competency level rather than grade level. ▪ <u>Teacher Development</u>: An important distinguishing feature of the CHAI curriculum is the intensive teacher support and training which

	accompanies it. The UAHC is committed to helping congregations implement the program. A full range of professional resources as well as ongoing assistance, is available to support the CHAI educational initiative in every congregation. This program includes workshops by the 14 UAHC regional educators, 3-day faculty retreats, an online course explicitly devoted to teachers using CHAI, and listserves for teachers of each CHAI program.
	▪ <u>Family Education:</u> The CHAI Initiative includes a complete Family Education curriculum with three components: 14 ready-to-teach lesson plans that are designed to be integrated into the curriculum core of each grade level, if the congregation so desires, a comprehensive Jewish Family Education Guide to help congregations deliver effective, meaningful family education programs, and a 2-volume set of congregation-wide programs centered around the topics of Jewish Living and Shabbat and Holidays. Each can be ordered separately.
	▪ <u>Early Childhood Parent Education:</u> The 9 parent education sessions offered in this program are designed to help parents in the early childhood setting create a Jewish home and nurture the Jewish identity of their children. Topics address the real-world challenges of family life, using the wisdom of Jewish tradition, and provide guidance to parents through the Jewish education choices they will make for their children after they leave the early childhood setting.
	▪ <u>Parent Education for School-Age Children:</u> Parent Education sessions provide parents with the tools they need to be Jewish teachers and role models. The series is based on the same components as the Core: <i>Torah, Avodah, and G'milut Chasadim</i>. This material is currently being piloted.
	▪ <u>Temple Boards (The Role of Temple Boards) and Religious School Committees (Rethinking Jewish Education):</u> In order for Jewish Education to succeed, partnerships need to be built between professionals and volunteer leaders. The CHAI Initiative offers two separate and complementary guides to take congregational leaders through a process that helps clarify the integral roles they play in building a community of learning, learned Jews.
Process	Congregations can receive information about CHAI and its resources, including workshops and online courses, from the UAHC department of education. Congregations purchase curriculums, lessons plans, and related material from the UAHC Press. These materials come in a loose-leaf binder so that congregations can utilize them and change them as they see fit.
	Congregations can benefit from professional consultation with one of the regional education directors at any time.
Criteria for Participation	Any congregation can purchase and use CHAI resources.
Participating Congregations	In the first year, approximately 250 congregations used parts of CHAI; the overwhelming majority of congregations were members of the UAHC. This year there could be more than 300 congregations using CHAI.
Evaluation	There are ongoing evaluations by JESNA of the Curriculum Core and Mitkadem resources. Summary reports and evaluations can be found on the CHAI link of the UAHC website. Teacher retreats were evaluated by

	participants and staff in the first year and the program was altered in the second year in response to participant needs. Parent education lessons are currently being piloted and evaluated.
Outcomes to Date	One major unanticipated outcome was the number of schools that have already started using CHAI; this shows the large success of the initiative. Changes and updates to programs and lessons have been made in response to evaluations and feedback.
	Teachers have been preparing, teaching, and assessing classes differently, finding that they have different goals in their classes since using CHAI.
Subscription Fee	Depends on the size of the institution (number of students and teachers) and the number of programs they wish to implement. The fees cover the materials that congregations decide to purchase. There are additional costs for retreats (room and board).
Annual Budget	\$200,000-\$500,000
	Funding is provided by the UAHC, including private funds within the UAHC that support this initiative. The UAHC is also in consultation with other foundations that are interested in funding aspects of CHAI.
Next steps	CHAI will continue what it has already begun with ongoing evaluations and responses to the feedback. In the near future, feedback from students will be collected, so as to gain insight on the direct impact of CHAI, making sure that the goals have been accomplished from the students' perspectives. CHAI is also working to reach out to the smallest, poorest, weakest congregations, ensuring they receive maximum benefits from program implementation.

	DESIGNATED SCHOOL PROJECT
Auspice/Sponsorship	Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education (Philadelphia)
Contact Information	Helene Tigay - htigay@acaje.org (215)635-8940 ext. 1201
Year Established	1993
Program Goals	The goal of the Designated School Project (DSP) is to raise the quality of Jewish education in the school by enhancing the school's infrastructure through a collaborative process with lay and professional leaders, including the creation of a mission statement, goals, and action plan, as well as strategies for shared decision-making, planning, program implementation, and evaluation.
Program Description	The DSP works to create an environment within the congregation which promotes a clear vision and established goals for Jewish learning that are shaped by the entire community. The DSP Steering Committee (DSPSC) - a group comprised of committed professional and lay education leaders representing a cross section of the synagogue's diverse membership - is mandated by the synagogue's Board of Directors to carefully consider all aspects of the religious education program and determine areas in need of change. The DSPSC then proposes educational areas within the infrastructure on which to focus its attention. The congregation's newly created and/or revised shared educational vision and mission statements guide all of the DSPSC's discussions, recommendations, and action planning. It works to restructure the religious school committees by promoting teacher education and leadership and curriculum development, while also developing and expanding family education programs.
	Initially, the DSPSC proposes 3-4 areas which the schools should focus on, depending on the specific needs of each individual school. Then, they will hold monthly meetings to determine what needs to be reconstructed and developed in the schools, and how to implement these changes.
	Between the monthly DSPSC meetings, subcommittee meetings will be held to work on the actual implementation of the schools' goals.
Process	To apply for the program, the Board, Rabbi, Cantor, Education Director, education committee chairperson, faculty representative, and lay leaders of all formal and informal education groups from the synagogue meet with an ACAJE representative about the program. After agreement to pursue involvement in the DSP, these leaders need to draft a "letter of intent" no more than 2 pages long. This letter should be signed by the professional and lay leaders and directed to the attention of the ACAJE consultant for Educational Leadership and Organizational Development. The letter of intent should include:
	Summary of the reasons they wish to participate in the DSP and ways that the DSP can be beneficial to the school, both organizationally and substantively.
	The synagogue leadership's commitment to the DSP process, which would include a minimum of one steering committee meeting per month with follow-up tasks and possible other, smaller group meeting in between.

	After acceptance to the DSP program, there will be an orientation retreat of about 5-6 hours for the DSPSC. The committee will learn about the DSP model, begin team building in preparation for the work ahead, begin reviewing and updating the synagogue's educational vision and mission, train members of the DSPSC to facilitate similar envisioning sessions to update the educational mission with the rest of the congregation, and develop a projected plan for DSP work over the next two years based on the goals articulated in the synagogue's "letter of intent."
	A consultant from the DSP will work with the schools on the implementation of the program.
Criteria for Participation	Any school is eligible to apply as long as they can be fully committed to the process.
Participating Synagogues	Currently 2 Reform schools are participating. Two more will be added in the fall.
	13 schools across denominations have completed the program.
Evaluation	No evaluation has taken place yet. DSP will conduct an outside evaluation in the fall of 2003.
Outcomes to Date	School improvement has become the center of the synagogue's activities and energies. Since implementation of the DSP in schools, an increase has been noted of a real commitment on behalf of the lay people to pursue excellence in supplementary schools.
	Some schools have hired more staff, including full time educators, secretaries, or more teachers in response to the necessary changes needed to reach their goals.
Subscription Fee	\$1000 per year on a sliding scale.
Annual budget	The budget for the Designated School Project covers the expenses of the consultant, who currently works 3 days/week.
Next steps	Much of organizational development work will take place in the six NESS schools; however, there will be 2-3 DSP schools as well.

	EXPERIMENT IN CONGREGATIONAL EDUCATION
Auspice/Sponsorship	Rhea Hirsch School of Education, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles
Contact Information	Rob Weinberg - rweinberg@HUC.edu (847)328-0032
Year Established	1992
Program Goals	The Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE) is a multi-denominational project that seeks to strengthen congregations and communities as critical centers of Jewish life in North America. The mission of the ECE project is to transform congregations from membership service organizations into "communities of meaning," in which members are involved and engaged with Jewish living and learning and with one another.
Program Description	ECE is the nation's first synagogue transformation program; it provides the knowledge, information, processes and tools for learning from other congregations to support each synagogue throughout the entire process. ECE currently works with congregations in community-based groups with support from local community benefactors. ECE works with each individual synagogue within a community group and plans in the future to be able to enroll individual congregations. Check the ECE's website at www.eceonline.org for updates on enrollment options. Congregations benefit from the use of a comprehensive and flexible guidebook with suggested activities, text study materials, and group processes, an internet-based, private ECE Team Workspace to enhance productivity and effectiveness of leadership, interactive online learning resources, and community-based and/or national workshops with other ECE congregations so as to share information and learn from national experts in congregational education and synagogue transformation. Each ECE congregation forms a task force and a leadership team which play the key roles in planning and navigating aspects of the congregation's ECE itinerary. These ECE teams meet frequently over a period of 18 to 30 months, depending on the project scope and focus, to connect with each other, study Jewish texts, and inquire, discuss, and reflect. This program has two major goals - creating Congregations of Learners and Self-Renewing Congregations: ▪ <u>Congregation of Learners</u>: Synagogues will work to create programming for all members of the community to become actively engaged in the process of learning. ▪ <u>Self-Renewing Congregations</u>: Synagogues will practice collaborative leadership among professional staff and volunteers, and incorporate deliberation, reflection, and ongoing experimentation and assessment into all of their activities.
Process	Contact Project Director Rob Weinberg to explore possibilities of creating or joining a cohort of congregations. There are two implementation processes that have been and are currently used in this project of transformation. The "Congregations of Learners" is a five-stage process currently being implemented by the Kansas City cohort. It was also used by the two cohorts who have already completed the project. The "Alternative Models of the Religious School" is a four-stage process currently being Implemented by the cohorts in New York and San Francisco.
	"Congregation of Learners" - A two and one-half year process.

	▪ <u>Preparation and Self-Assessment</u>: A diverse group of members learn about the congregation's history and culture to enable them to make a decision about whether or not to proceed, to set realistic goals, and to provide a foundation for future work.
	▪ <u>Visions</u>: A variety of exercises enabling the task force to articulate its vision of the congregation as a congregation of learners.
	▪ <u>Experimenting with a Number of Short-Term Programmatic Enhancements</u>: The task force creates a number of small, innovative, and easy-to-implement programs for innovative learning and to get feedback on the vision.
	▪ <u>Outreach to the Congregation</u>: The task force hosts small group conversations with representatives of the community to promote the idea of a Congregation of Learners, to brainstorm ideas for innovative learning and to get feedback on the vision.
	▪ <u>Exploration</u>: Based on a few priorities identified in the previous phases, the task force forms working groups around three to five themes. Each working group typically assesses congregational needs, studies the theme through articles and speakers, investigates what others do, experiments, and develops a plan including staffing and funding requirements.
	"Alternative Models of the Religious School" - A one and one-half year process
	▪ <u>Setting the Stage</u>: Preparing for the project by forming teams and conducting activities to assess and enhance the congregation's readiness for the journey.
	▪ <u>Looking Inward</u>: Reviewing the congregation's current situation by identifying lasting congregational values, inquiring into powerful past Jewish learning experiences, examining existing assumptions, taking stock of current educational programs, identifying challenges and opportunities, and engaging the congregation in meaningful conversation through "town hall" meeting of "focus group" discussions as to their vision of advancement.
	▪ <u>Looking Outward</u>: Exploring ideas from other congregations, often using ECE's unique online interactive learning tools to study innovative educational programs wherever they exist, examine their core educational principles, and understand the challenges and opportunities that motivated their innovators.
	▪ <u>Looking Forward</u>: Envisioning an ideal new model, setting goals and scope for change, selecting models to adapt or elements to incorporate into innovative designs, planning implementation, gaining approvals, and implementing, bringing to life the congregation's unique future.
Criteria for Participation	Any community may contact the ECE to inquire about implementing this initiative in their cohort of congregations if they meet the level of readiness. Congregations must have a modicum of stability and an openness to change and innovation, a core of capable and competent workers and leaders who open and willing to engage in this work with the ECE, and the willingness to explore collaborative leadership among professionals and volunteers.

Participating Congregations	There are currently 12 congregations within three different community cohorts who are implementing the ECE Initiative. Five congregations in San Francisco, CA; two congregations in Kansas City, KS; and five congregations in New York, NY.
	14 congregations in two cohorts have completed the process.
Evaluation	ECE is currently in the process of conducting a formal evaluation in the New York cohort using both internal and external professionals.
Outcomes to Date	The ECE is known as one of the most successful synagogue transformation projects. The inspiration for three books, several research reports, and three similar projects at the local and national levels have arisen from this project.
	Congregations typically emerge from their initial direct involvement with ECE ready to embark on new educational initiatives that provide the best Jewish learning experiences that most congregants conclude they could ever recall or imagine. Many of these innovations have gone beyond educational programming and into the realm of worship and community. ECE has opened doors to involvement and leadership within congregations. Often times, congregants who participated in ECE programs and opportunities have been more apt to become more involved in a variety of ways within their synagogues. Due to the development and learning experiences of the ECE, congregations gain the ability to integrate new ways of thinking and doing so as to deepen their sense of community, become more responsive toward challenges and opportunities, and work together towards a shared vision of furthering their advancement.
Subscription Fee	Depending on the scope of the project and the funding from the community, the subscription fee is typically \$5,000-\$10,000 per year
Annual Budget	Approximately \$600,000 per year.
	The ECE is currently funded by The Nathan Cummings Foundation and the Koret Foundation along with specific funders for each area. In Kansas City, the work of the ECE is funded by The Jeannette & Jerome Cohen Philanthropic Fund, Helen & Sam Kaplan Memorial Fund, Lowenstein Family Supporting Foundation, The Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City. In San Francisco, the ECE is funded by The Jewish Community Endowment Fund of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties and The Koret Foundation. In New York, the ECE is funded by UJA-Federation of New York, Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal, Task Force on Congregational and Communal Education, and The Covenant Foundation.
Next Steps	ECE is working toward being able to enroll individual congregations when they are ready to work at their own pace.

	☆EXPLORATIONS...
Contact Information	Sandra Barsky Daniels - sbdsun@aol.com (860)354-3640
	Sue Ringler Pet - suripet@aol.com (860)350-2417
Year Established	1995
Program Goals	☆EXPLORATIONS... is a unique and exciting alternative approach to Jewish education. The program works to achieve an extraordinary learning environment by immersing a community of learners, preschool through adult, in one major aspect of Judaism at a time, offering vibrant, multifaceted learning experiences. ☆EXPLORATIONS... can be incorporated into a traditional religious school or day school and can suit Chavurah groups and camp settings as well. ☆EXPLORATIONS... curriculum can be piloted once a year or can take the place of traditional curriculum all year. It can enhance or begin to transform any program so a community may become a “family of learners” with adults and children alike actively participating in Jewish learning and exploration.
Program Description	☆EXPLORATIONS... participants study an aspect of Judaism for 2-8 weeks, interacting with an original curriculum that integrates a carefully selected collection of resource materials and educational activities. Each ☆EXPLORATION... is comprised of three major educational components: Adult Education, Intergenerational Learning, and a Culminating Activity. ☆EXPLORATIONS... complements and partners well with various Hebrew Programs. The program generally runs on Sunday mornings, while Adult Education can take place on week nights and Culminating Activities can be scheduled in the afternoon or evening. An adult from each family is encouraged to participate in ☆EXPLORATIONS... resulting in an enriched staff and increased family involvement. Community input throughout the year, both formal and informal, helps shape the program, build ownership, and foster a strong feeling of community and Jewish Identity.
	▪ <u>Adult Education:</u> Education Directors introduce the content, goals, and structure of each ☆EXPLORATIONS... topic to a combination of teaching staff, parents, b'nai mitzvah, and other interested adult congregants, some pre-arranged into “Teaching Teams.” Participants first delve into the current topic on an adult level and then learn to implement innovative teaching strategies, workshop-style lessons, and projects for children. Rabbis, other community experts, and invited scholars illuminate intriguing concepts. The program flourishes as an enhanced faculty emerges. Staff and other congregants become aware of the unique strengths they bring to a Teaching Team (e.g. Torah, ritual, music, art, cooking, woodworking). They are confident in their own knowledge and prepared to teach.
	▪ <u>Intergenerational Learning:</u> ☆EXPLORATIONS... sessions are rich in creativity, activity, and excitement. Teaching Teams of adults and teens direct multiage groups of children, all studying the same topic at age-appropriate levels. Groups enjoy family-style learning that meet individuals at their readiness level and creates a “dinner table” type comfort not experienced in most traditional settings. The synagogue “buzzes” with common vocabulary, snippets of sharing and anticipating toward a memorable Culminating Activity.
	• <u>Culminating Activity:</u> ☆EXPLORATIONS... brings closure to each

	topic of study through a Unique Celebration of Jewish Learning – in performance, narrative, exhibition, production, or demonstration. As the community shares learning, new Jewish images are created. Impressions for lasting understandings are formed. Continuity of Jewish practice becomes a realistic goal.
Process	For more information on ☆EXPLORATIONS... Curriculum, Workshops, and Consulting, check out the website at www.explorejewisheducation.com . To order Curriculum, request Workshops, or inquire about Consultation, contact either of the creators, or order right from the web site. The two creators of ☆EXPLORATIONS... offer professional consultation to facilitate the implementation of a pilot program or to make plans for long-term change. Proposals may include site visits, roundtable discussion, long distance conferencing, and individualized projects.
Criteria for Participation	Any school or program across denominations, geographic locations, and size.
Participating Schools	☆EXPLORATIONS... was founded in Temple Sholom in New Milford, CT, which continues to be a thriving Jewish learning community and living laboratory. Pilots are being implemented in Reform and Conservative synagogue supplementary schools, as well as a day school.
Evaluation	For ten years, the Temple Sholom community and Education Committee have been conducting informal evaluations to continually build upon success and further improve the program. An internal formal evaluation will take place this year. There will be ongoing evaluations in the pilot schools.
Outcomes to Date	☆EXPLORATIONS... prides itself in the fact that parental involvement at Temple Sholom has increased to 99%. It is the norm at Temple Sholom that ☆EXPLORATIONS... can, and should, involve an entire learning community. With adults present in the building on a regular basis and groups actively engaged, ☆EXPLORATIONS... experiences virtually no discipline problems. ☆EXPLORATIONS...has generated spin-offs in the form of new committees and new programs for the entire congregation.
Subscription Fee	Costs for ☆EXPLORATIONS... varies, depending on selected Curriculum, Workshops, and Consulting. Curriculum packages range from \$118-\$318 plus the cost of student journals, sets of 10 for \$18. Each workshop, running 2-4 hours, ranges from \$600-\$1000 plus travel and lodging if applicable. Consulting fees are based upon each individual request.
Next steps	Sandra Barsky Daniels and Sue Ringler Pet continue to write new ☆EXPLORATIONS... curriculum for Temple Sholom. They also work to fine tune curriculum that have been piloted in their own community and offer it on the web in order to expand the resources available to other communities.

	A FRAMEWORK FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE SCHOOL
Auspice/Sponsorship	United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Contact Information	Rabbi Robert Abramson - abramson@uscj.org (212)533-7800 ext.2501
Year Established	1999
Program Goals	A Framework for Excellence helps Conservative congregations assure a quality Jewish education for the students of their synagogue schools, generating a major influence in forming what a Jewish person knows (knowledge), knows how to do (skills), and wants to do (attitudes and proclivities). The Framework provides benchmarks to the congregation including family education, active rabbinic and cantorial participation, and ongoing professional development for teachers and principals. It works to integrate elements of informal education and systematically engage in family education. The Framework schools start early, continue through adolescence, and ultimately expand formal education to students through high school. USJC expects Framework schools to have children and teens involved in both formal and informal education as members of Kadimah and USY.
Program Description	The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism adopted new educational standards for congregational schools. The Framework for Excellence has three components: The Statement of Aims of the Conservative Synagogue School, developed by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism Commission on Jewish Education, articulating the aims of Conservative Jewish education for K through high school; benchmarks, which establish an institutional framework for quality Jewish education; and choice of six models, structures all sharing certain common elements within a sufficient amount of time over years to achieve the aims of the Conservative synagogue school. Congregations are expected to heed the benchmarks and to choose one of the models. With the help of a USCJ Framework full-time staff person, congregations should work together with the Department of Education to move forward in establishing a Framework for Excellence. If the Framework for Excellence is to be maximized, there needs to be ongoing orientation of the lay leaders who carry the responsibility for education in the congregation.
	The six models of the Framework for Excellence all include a family education program, requirement of attendance at Shabbat services, with a minimum of at least ten times a year, and the development of an organic relationship between formal and informal education programs. The synagogue works at increasing the participation of post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah students in Jewish study through the 12th grade. It will work to assure that its post- Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are studying for a minimum of 4 hours per week. This might be either in high school programs (synagogue, joint congregational, or community), supervised independent study, or supervised internet study of approved courses.
	I. This model—meeting three times a week for a minimum of five years—has strengths which have made it a standard for many decades. It permits needed time coupled with frequency of meeting. Frequency of contact, when used properly, enhances the mastery of skills and the retention of knowledge. These are both important components of the aims of Conservative Jewish education. These strengths continue to make it a preferred pattern for the elementary

	school years. Even where this preferred pattern for grades 3-7 is in place, education should not await grade 3. It should begin no later than kindergarten. Grades: 3 - 7, 6 hours/3 days per week
	II. This model emphasizes the continuance of formal Jewish education from K through high school. It frontloads the education program with considerable time in K-2. It permits the congregation to choose to reduce class time for 7th graders to 5 hours because they consider them to be on overload. Grades: K - 3 hours per week 1 - 3 hours per week 2 - 5 hours per week 3-6 - 5 ½ hours/3 or 2 days per week 7 - 5 hours/3 or 2 days per week
	III. This model emphasizes the continuance of formal Jewish education from K through high school, offering an intensive high school program of 6 hour a week. Grades: K - 2 hours per week 1 - 2 hours per week 2 - 2 hours per week 3-7 - 5 ½ hours/3 or 2 days per week Post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are involved in Jewish study through the 11th grade for a minimum of 6 hours per week in a high school program.
	IV. This model emphasizes built-in, required, experiential programs and nurturing family/parent Jewish growth. Shabbat morning program: 3 hours/10 times per year for grades 3-6 including services, program, kiddush. Attendance of seventh graders at Shabbat morning services is required. Minimally, seventh graders should attend services at least 10 times during the year. Shabbaton each year for grades 3-7. Education programs for families/parents take place for 3 hours per month in grades 3-5. In grade 6 (pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah) they average 5 hours a month. Some family programs might have separate components for children and parents. Parents might fulfill part of the requirement by participating in adult education programs. This is successful when 80% or more of families participate in family or parent education programs. Grades: K - 2 hours per week 1 - 2 hours per week 2 - 2 hours per week 3-7 - 5 hours /3 or 2 day per week
	V. This model emphasizes a comparatively high level of intensive child or parent commitment expressed in ongoing participation in an aspect of Jewish learning or worship. It also recognizes the pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah years as a window of opportunity and builds into those years appropriate activities. There is intensive parent and student participation in at least one of the following options: <u>Option 1</u> The congregation succeeds in getting 70% of students in grades 3-8 to attend Shabbat services weekly (75% of time) either at junior congregation, main service, or family service, or at a different synagogue <u>Option 2</u>

	The congregation succeeds in getting 70% of parents of children in grades 2-7 to participate at least once a month in family or adult education <u>Option 3</u> The congregation succeeds in getting 70% of parents of children in grades 2-7 to participate at least once a month in Shabbat or daily services. Grades: K - 2 hours per week 1 - 2 hours per week 2 - 2 hours per week 3-5 - 5 ½ hours/3 or 2 day per week 6 - 5 hours/3 or 2 days per week (There is a ½ hour per week Torah Reading Club (and other synagogue skills) which is attended by at least 80% of 6th grade students.) 7 - 5 hours/2 days per week (All 7th grade students engage in a tikun olam project for an additional 2 hours per month.)
	VI. This model emphasizes the Shabbat experience for children along with frontloading hours in K-2. Grades: K - 3 hours per week 1 - 3 hours per week 2 - 3 hours per week 3-7 - 6 hours per week For grades 3-7, there is a 2-3 hour Shabbat program every week with at least 1 hour of Shabbat-appropriate instruction. Regular attendance is required. The synagogue can demonstrate that it achieves the 75% retention level into 8th grade or has a plan for doing so over a reasonable period of time.
Process	The following qualitative standards for synagogue schools are based on the expert knowledge of people in the field and best practice studies. These benchmarks indicate that a congregation has established an institutional framework for quality Jewish education and, in so doing, is fulfilling the standards of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism for synagogue school education. These benchmarks are met when the congregation has shown that:
	It has family education. To maximize effectiveness, synagogue education programs must not be limited to the child. The synagogue needs to engage in an ongoing family education program. It is the synagogue's task through family education to create and nourish Jewish experiences. Family education programs can have the dual benefit of enriching Jewish family life and making parents allies of the synagogue's education program as they act in a family-friendly manner, enriching the quality of members' family life.
	Its education program is made up of a strong cognitive component, elements of skill mastery, and an affective component. Students must consider mitzvot as sacred obligations. There must be an organic relationship between that which is learned and that which is experienced. This kind of relationship will take place inside and outside the class. Coordinated planning and a close relationship between the school, Kadimah, and USY most effectively enrich that relationship. Together, youth activities and the school provide the child and teen with a powerful, positive Jewish peer group experience. All synagogues should encourage students to attend Camp Ramah

	and a Conservative Movement trip to Israel.
	▪ The Rabbi and Hazzan have meaningful relationships with the process of the school.
	▪ The congregation supports the ongoing professional development of educational directors/principals, teachers, and family educators. - Teachers participate in a documented minimum of six hours a year (exclusive of administrative staff meetings) of teacher development consisting of Jewish enrichment and/or pedagogy. - Principals and family educators have a personal, professional development plan which is supported by the congregation, including attendance at the Jewish Educators Assembly Convention.
	▪ The congregation recognizes the importance of licenses and credentials, urging and providing opportunities for teachers to work towards licensing. The school has a licensed educational director/principal or one working towards obtaining a principal's license or the status of Associate Member in the Jewish Educators Assembly.
	▪ The congregation has a written statement of educational philosophy and a written curriculum, which moves in a coherent and definitive way toward achieving the aims stated in the "Statement of Aims for the Conservative Synagogue School."
	▪ The congregation has a program for assessing the Jewish growth and development of students as articulated by the "Statement of Aims." Such assessment has two major dimensions: 1) Assuring that certain basic knowledge and skills have been attained; and 2) Assessing the attainment of ideas, values and attitudes. The Department of Education will assist synagogues in finding the right tools to determine the attainment of basic skills and knowledge and the means to assess the development of ways of knowing, values, attitudes, and growth in observance.
	▪ The congregation establishes a pattern of communication between the nursery school/early childhood program, the elementary (K-8) school program, and the high school program to assure an ongoing and sequenced learning process as the child matures.
	▪ The congregation has an education committee that operates according to an established protocol. The education committee reports periodically to the Board of the synagogue with regard to the policies and direction of the synagogue's educational program
Criteria for Participation	Any congregation, whose school is affiliated with the USCJ, that meets the criteria of the Framework (going through the benchmarks and implementing one of the six models) and, upon submission of documentation and its review, receives national recognition as a Framework for Excellence school.
Participating congregations	USCJ's Framework for Excellence has had contact with 300 schools since 1999.
	As of July, 2003, 43 Framework for Excellence schools have been recognized.

	That number is continually increasing as more schools meet the criteria.
Evaluation	USCJ has not conducted an evaluation of the Framework for Excellence; it is seen as a self-reflective process for the synagogues.
Outcomes to date	Congregations have had the chance to reflect on what they are doing within their schools. They have held themselves up to a set of benchmarks and standards, in terms of what their past and present practices are and what they would like their practices to be, thus determining to implement the Framework for Excellence.
Subscription Fee	Budget implications are driven by what the congregations have to do and the steps they have to take to meet the criteria.
Next steps	USCJ has been running workshops on the Frameworks and meeting with congregations all over North America. They will continue doing this as well as continuing to coach congregations, helping them through the Framework process, as they decide which model to implement.

	KESHER
Contact Information	Linda Echt - keshher@keshherweb.org
Year Established	1992
Program Goals	The main goal of Keshher is to build a sense of Jewish community and belonging among the participants by instilling a sense of pride about being Jewish in the students and providing a positive learning experience resulting in a strong foundation in Judaica, Hebrew, and Jewish ritual. For the parents, there is a goal of extending the Keshher community from just students to include the rest of their families through development of family programming and adult learning opportunities. For tzevet (staff) members, Keshher is a place of serious adult Jewish learning and teacher development. Keshher builds kesharim! (connections)
Program Description	The Keshher curricular model centers on the learner with a flexible approach allowing for a range of learning abilities. Teacher interests and strengths are reflected throughout the curriculum, emphasizing community building through the practice of kavod (respect), in all aspects of students' lives. Keshher meets five times a week, Monday through Thursday, from after school until 6:00 pm, while ending at 5:00 pm on Fridays after the weekly Shabbat program. Attendance requirements vary depending on the grade of the students, ranging from two to five days a week. One of the significant innovations that Keshher offers is that it combines after-school daycare with Hebrew school, meeting the multiple needs of parents and students. The Cambridge Public School System allows kids attending Keshher to use their bus system for transportation to Keshher. The central areas of curriculum are: Hebrew, Judaica and T'fillot. The program currently serves kindergarten through ninth grades.
	▪ Hebrew: Keshher begins Hebrew studies in Kindergarten, emphasizing the ability to function in modern Hebrew (as opposed to liturgical), which should be used regularly in their daily lives. Hebrew is used throughout the Keshher day. Although Keshher is not a language immersion program, it is a program that exposes the community to Hebrew at all times. This means that Hebrew is a part of the entire Keshher day and not just relegated to the structured Hebrew learning time. Students are divided into groups based on proficiency and developmental appropriateness with unit themes such as Keshher surroundings, family and home, holidays, and Israel. The students revisit these themes each year at higher levels of fluency in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar.
	▪ Judaica: The Judaica curriculum has a three-year cycle, with each year setting the course for a different journey, encouraging discovery of new ideas and experiences with an ever-growing depth as students mature developmentally. One year focuses on Jewish values and ethics, one year focuses on Jewish history, and one focuses on the Jewish calendar. With each meeting of a holiday, event in history, or a Jewish value or custom, the kids glean something new and relevant in their lives.
	▪ Bar/Bat-Mitzvah: The Bar/Bat mitzvah curriculum is divided into four parts. These are text study (Torah, Tanach, and Tefillah), afternoon and evening prayers (Mincha/Maariv), Yesod (foundations) which explores contemporary Jewish living, and the Sanhedrin (Great

	Assembly) which meets several times a year to debate, discuss, and learn about the customs of Judaism. The Sanhedrin is chaired by those who have become Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Our 6-9th graders also have the option to apply to be part of our Melamdim program. This program gives our pre-teen and teenagers the opportunity to work with the younger Keshet kids, do administrative work, and altogether work on their hadrachah (leadership) skills. Those that participate in the Melamdim program are paid for their work.
	Keshet also focuses heavily on family education, recognizing that Jewish learning is a life-long process. It plans to assess the evolving Jewish family education needs of the Keshet community, to respond to those assessed needs with goals, and to design and implement programming to achieve those goals, keeping the diverse needs of the community in mind.
Process	N/A
Criteria for Participation	Any child in the area may enroll in Keshet. However, due to limited space, there is a waiting list for program enrollment.
Participating Synagogues	N/A
Evaluation	An evaluation was conducted in May of 2001.
Outcomes to Date	Although Keshet struggles somewhat financially, they have made it a priority to create as many full time positions as possible. It is of great importance for Keshet to professionalize Jewish education and to be known as a program that does so. Some board members are working to try and put together a long-range financial plan to help deal with its financial situation and invest in a permanent building for Keshet. Keshet has not had to advertise for enrollment since its second year. Keshet now has a reputation in the community for excellence in Jewish education. It has a waiting list that is the same in numbers as the number of current enrollees. Re-enrollment from year to year is nearly 100%.
	Keshet is the first of its kind. Beginning in the fall of 2003 a new Keshet will open in Newton MA. This replication is in part made possible through a Covenant Foundation grant for replication. The two Keshets are legally independent from each other, however, a strong collaboration has been formed as Keshet in Cambridge is consulting with them every step of the way.
Subscription Fee	N/A
Annual Budget	\$430,000 - approximately 85% comes from tuition and the rest comes from fundraising. Keshet provides tuition assistance to any family that demonstrates need.
	Keshet has received Covenant Grants. They have also received a couple of other very small foundation grants. Keshet relies heavily on parent paid tuition and annual appeal letter.
Next steps	Keshet is trying to develop a long-range financial plan so that they can then focus on growth and a capital building program. There have been discussions about Keshet becoming the Bar/Bat mitzvah program for a local synagogue that is not having much success retaining Bar/Bat Mitzvah aged students.

	<i>LA'ATID: Synagogues for the Future</i> (Synagogue Initiative Program [SIP] Pilot Program for <i>La'atid</i>)
Auspice/Sponsorship	Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford and its Commission on Jewish Education (CJE)
Contact Information	Education Director of <i>La'atid: Synagogues for the Future</i> - Dr. Sandy Waldman Dashefsky – dashhome@att.net (860)646-1842
Year Established	La'atid: Winter 1999 (SIP piloted in 1996)
Program Goals	There are several goals of <i>La'atid</i> : to nurture and develop a strong sense of Jewish identity, knowledge, and living in synagogue members of all ages; to increase the capabilities of synagogue members and schools, to look at themselves and creatively "re-engineer" their own unique vision, mission, and experimental action plans; to strengthen and expand partnerships among a broad-base of professionals and lay leaders in cooperative planning and decision making; and to develop an organic interconnection of synagogue and school with a strengthened professional and lay leadership.
Program Description	<i>La'atid: Synagogues for the Future</i> began as a three-year program designed to help selected congregations in Greater Hartford nurture a strong sense of Jewish identity, increase Jewish knowledge and enrich Jewish living in constituents of all ages. <i>La'atid</i> initially started out with three congregations, however, after conducting an in-depth, impartial evaluation with JESNA, <i>La'atid</i> expanded. The evaluation provided accountability that assisted the funders and the community in recognizing the success of <i>La'atid</i> and in providing additional funding through the Federation for two new congregations. Moreover, based on the needs of the three original congregations, as shown in the evaluation, a new dimension was added to <i>La'atid</i> to focus specifically on school change and professional development.
	Through <i>La'atid</i> , congregations are engaged in individual organizational change processes which reflect and respond to each congregation's visions, culture, and needs, helping them advance towards their specific goals including integrating Jewish content, learning, and values in congregational life. <i>La'atid</i> works to develop innovative, community building experiences for families with young children as well as for young adults and adults beyond the child-rearing years: <i>La'atid</i> creates meaningful, educational, and spiritual experiences, provides creative opportunities for Tikkun Olam, initiates support groups (e.g., for young adults, intermarried couples, and their parents), and strives to create welcoming communities. <i>La'atid's</i> philosophy is to bring together a broad-base representation of professional and lay leadership within each of the five congregations and have them design and implement visionary experimental action plans by listening to the diverse needs of the community and focusing on Torah study. <i>La'atid</i> provides:
	Formal course work, retreats, intensive ongoing on-site mentoring and consultation, assisting each congregation in successfully planning and implementing their own goals, and building professional and lay leadership.
	On-site facilitators and a <i>La'atid</i> education director provide staff support to manage project planning and implementation, assuring communication and accountability between professional and lay leadership. Each congregation is guided through the change process

	by direct facilitation of meetings as well as assisting the synagogue leadership. The <i>La'atid</i> education director:
	- Convenes retreats, conferences, workshops, and courses to provide professional and lay leadership development in areas of synagogue change, Torah study, and spiritual growth.
	- Determines and oversees an evaluation process, with the <i>La'atid</i> Planning and Oversight Committee guided by JESNA, to assess effectiveness of the initiative.
	- Serves as staff with the CJE Executive Director for the <i>La'atid</i> Planning and Oversight Committee.
	- Guides <i>La'atid</i> consultants and key synagogue professional and lay leaders.
	▪ Challenge Grants provide direct funding to help the congregations implement experimental action plans developed through <i>La'atid</i>.
Process	Congregations must go through an application process through the <i>La'atid</i> Planning and Oversight Committee. The process includes:
	▪ A letter explaining the community's interest and ability to participate in a synagogue change process signed by a broad-base of the congregation leadership.
	▪ Meetings between synagogue key leadership and the <i>La'atid</i> education director and chair of the <i>La'atid</i> Planning and Oversight Committee.
	▪ Completion of a survey of the congregations' structure and needs (<i>La'atid</i> only).
	▪ Evaluation by the committee of the "readiness" of the synagogues interested in participation in the change project.
	Once synagogues have been accepted into the program, the congregations develop a task force with broad-base representation of professional and lay leaders. They also develop an executive team of professional and lay leadership that work with facilitators to guide the process for the <i>La'atid</i> congregation and task force. They then begin monthly or bi-monthly meetings with the professional consultants to develop their visions, priorities, and action plans.
Criteria for Participation	Any congregation, irrespective of denomination, in the Greater Hartford area may apply if it can meet both the time and energy commitments for the process and action plans, as well as demonstrate stability and "readiness" for change. Some examples of "readiness" include: openness/ability in processing conflicts; willingness to participate in classes, conferences, and meetings; willingness to risk and experiment; and stability of professional and lay leadership.
Participating Congregations	<i>La'atid</i> was initially implemented in three congregations, but has expanded to five congregations.
	SIP, the pilot for <i>La'atid</i> , was implemented in two congregations.

Evaluation	The Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford engaged JESNA to help <i>La'atid</i> develop a rigorous feedback process that allowed the community to monitor its progress throughout the change process as well as to serve as objective evaluators who would assess <i>La'atid's</i> achievements from the outside. Dr. Leora Isaacs, JESNA's Vice President for Program and Organizational Learning, worked with Dr. Sandy Waldman Dashefsky, the Education Director of <i>La'atid</i> . JESNA will continue to provide mechanisms for accountability, feedback, and impartial evaluation on all levels.
Outcomes to Date	The guidance and direction provided by the facilitators and Education Director was central to the success of the project. Each congregation learned to meet the distinctive needs and wishes of their congregants - to increase Jewish knowledge and thereby comfort at services – to establish support groups and study and celebratory programs for their congregants and families, as well as for their professional staff. <i>La'atid</i> congregations were able to attract new members and involve previously uninvolved congregants. New programs have attracted large numbers of participants, bringing together families and participants who had not previously been connected to the congregation or community. Congregations have found new ways of collaboration and partnership between professional and lay leaders as well as the development of new professional and lay leadership. Through ongoing evaluation and reflective practice, the congregations developed mechanisms to evaluate programs and elicit participants feedback. In addition, there has been increased community building within and between the <i>La'atid</i> congregations.
Subscription Fee	The five <i>La'atid</i> congregations contribute \$26,000 per year towards the <i>La'atid</i> budget. This includes general fees for participation in <i>La'atid</i> , based on a sliding scale, plus registration fees for required courses and conferences.
Annual Budget	\$130,000 per year plus additional in-kind time by the Commission on Jewish Education of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford professional and support staff.
	Funding has been provided through the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford, the Endowment Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford, Inc, and the Covenant Foundation. (SIP was funded by the Endowment Foundation of Greater Hartford, Inc.)
Next steps	The community is now providing assistance for the present <i>La'atid</i> synagogues with the development of a segment specifically focused on innovative school change through on-site educational consultation. <i>La'atid</i> is in the process of “rippling out” their process to other congregations in the Greater Hartford area, initially through a series of specific conferences on synagogue change and revitalization.

	MASHKON
Auspice/Sponsorship	Board of Jewish Education of Greater Washington, DC
	BJE Washington, Barry Krasner – barry@bjedc.org (310)255-1951
Year Established	1996
Program Goals	The goal of <i>Mashkon</i> is to assist the religious schools in providing their students with a meaningful, relevant and spiritually vibrant Jewish education. This goal is accomplished through a partnership between the funders of the <i>Mashkon</i> Initiative, the BJE, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. The <i>Mashkon</i> Initiative serves as a catalyst for change, renewal, and improvement of the community's congregational and other supplementary religious schools.
Program Description	<i>Mashkon</i> is a cluster of projects designed to improve different aspects of congregational education. Synagogues choose which program they wish to implement in their congregations; each program is designed specifically to the needs of the individual congregations and schools. The programs include:
	▪ <u>Morasha - The Florence Melton Mini-School for Teachers</u>: an intensive two year program that combines the basics of Judaism with the tools needed for classroom implementation
	▪ <u>The Master Teachers Corps</u>: A community wide program to assist principals with the educational supervision of their teachers. Mentors are available twice a month to observe classes and provide constructive feedback; the master teacher, in consultation with the principal, is also available to present two staff development programs per year to the entire faculty.
	▪ <u>Sh'lom Kitah</u>: On-the job teacher training with a special needs mentor to provide the techniques needed to successfully integrate students with learning differences into the regular classroom.
	▪ <u>Jewish Teen Institute</u>: Two teacher training programs, one in the fall and one in the spring, are open to all upper grade teachers, grades 8-12, focusing on how to make a school's existing curriculum more effective. The goals of JTI are improving instruction and enriching the curricular offerings in congregational education programs.
	▪ <u>Merkaz Pedagogi Mekomi - Portable Resource Centers</u>: Provides schools with the most up-to-date information on relevant topics, including lists of websites on holidays, Jewish values, Israel, and Torah, along with materials dealing with educational technology. The educational materials include an array of activities and generic curricular materials for program enrichment in the classroom.
	▪ <u>Bet Midrash and Year-End Retreat for Principals</u>: The program provides expert speakers throughout the year as well as an opportunity for the congregational principles to spend an extended period of time together dealing with issues of change and transformation.
	▪ <u>In-Service Training Corps</u>: The Corps provides a faculty with a

	three-session mini-course either in an area of classroom management or curriculum enhancement, combined with three follow-up visits to focus on how the training is being implemented in the classrooms.
	▪ <u>Gesher L'Keshet - A Spiral Jewish Family Life Education Curriculum for Families with Young Children</u>: A joint nursery school/religious school education program for parents of children in pre-school through second grade, focusing on values and the appropriate parenting tools linked to those values. The curriculum covers <i>Shabbat</i>, <i>Hanukkah</i> and <i>Pesach</i>.
	▪ <u>To Create a Context of Meaning - A Training Module for Principals and Teachers</u>: A training unit that challenges Jewish educators to confront the difficult issues in their own lives concerning faith and meaning, making them better able to transmit religious concepts in a meaningful way and to respond to the "tough questions" raised by students in the classroom.
Process	<i>Mashkon</i> sends out letters and application forms to every synagogue in the Greater Washington area. Some programs can accommodate only a certain number of schools (e.g. Master Teachers Corps can only be implemented in 16 schools, Sh'lom Kitah only 12, etc.) depending on the funding for the year. Some of the programs are open and available to all of the schools (e.g. The Jewish Teen Institute, the Portable Resource Center and Morasha). Staffing and implementation is similar for each program/school.
	After acceptance to a particular <i>Mashkon</i> program, the program coordinator will be in touch with the school director to discuss their visions and goals. Every attempt is made to tailor each program according to the needs of the individual schools.
	Programs run for one year.
Criteria for Participation	All supplementary schools in the Greater Washington Jewish Community are eligible to participate in <i>Mashkon</i> programs.
Participating Congregations	About 40 schools are currently participating in <i>Mashkon</i> , representing all denominations and the entire Greater Washington, DC area.
Evaluation	Leora Isaacs from JESNA conducted an external evaluation in 1999.
	The results were gratifying. The <i>Mashkon</i> initiative has made a number of mid-course corrections so that all the programs can be more responsive to the needs of the educators. Each program is continually undergoing a rigorous process of internal evaluation each year using questionnaires/response forms for staff and program participants, interviews, and focus groups.
	Many participants have characterized their learning as "a transformational experience." Some teachers report that as a result of their participation in <i>Mashkon</i> programs, their students have shown a great deal of growth and change in perspective, as well as a better understanding of the "big picture" of Judaism.
Subscription Fee	Schools up to 200 students - \$100.00 over 200 students - \$200.00
Annual Budget	\$177,815 for 2003/2004

	The [private] funders of the <i>Mashkon</i> Initiative, the BJE, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington provide for the funding of the <i>Mashkon</i> initiative.
Next Steps	The program continues to grow and contribute in all areas of congregational education: professional development, curriculum renewal, teen issues, technological advancement, and family education.

	NURTURING EXCELLENCE IN SYNAGOGUE SCHOOLS The NESS Initiative
Auspice/Sponsorship	Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education (ACAJE) and Foundations, Inc.
Contact Information	Dr Shelley Kapnek Rosenberg – srosenberg@acaje.org (215)635-8940 ext. 1235
Year Established	2002
Program Goals	The goal of NESS is to foster excellence in synagogue schools so as to increase the retention rate of students in synagogue schools and enhance the Jewish identity of students and their families and increase the students' connection to the Jewish community post B'nai Mitzvah.
Program Description	The NESS (Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools) Initiative, a unique collaboration between the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education, FOUNDATIONS, Inc., and the Penn Literacy Network of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, is a cutting-edge program for improving synagogue schools. The program combines assessment of a school's assets and limitations through a newly designed standardized instrument (Jewish School Assessment School Improvement Process), teacher and mentor teacher training through the Penn Literacy Network (PLN), as well as leadership training for school directors. Participants learn innovative teaching strategies and meaningful Jewish content – as well as techniques for integrating them in ways that will capture the interest of today's students. NESS also incorporates opportunities for teachers to practice these newly acquired strategies and skills under the supervision of specially trained mentors. Last, but not least, NESS involves training lay leaders, along with the professionals, so that together they can provide the underpinning support for everything the schools are working to achieve. NESS is a three-year, whole-staff program, conducted on-site, in six diverse pilot schools that were chosen through a rigorous selection process. It is anticipated that NESS will be a model for excellence in synagogue schools in Greater Philadelphia and ultimately throughout the country. The NESS initiative includes: ▪ Ongoing professional training for the entire school staff on-site. ▪ Leadership training for the educational director and mentor teacher. ▪ Guidance to lay and professional members of the synagogue/school community on creating a mission statement and an action plan for school improvement. ▪ Ongoing organizational support to help develop the school as an integral part of the entire synagogue community. ▪ Stipends and/or credits for training of the educational directors, mentor teachers, and teachers. ▪ Yearly meeting with all participating schools for two years following the completion of the program to encourage continued growth and development.
Process	A letter about the NESS project was sent to the lay and professional leadership of the congregations and their schools in the Philadelphia area. NESS hopes that at the end of the three years, additional funding will become

	available so that another six schools can be included in the NESS program.
	Synagogues submitted an application that included staff information, a letter describing the school's current goals, a description of how NESS fits into and forwards those goals, an indication of commitment to participate in all appropriate facets of the program, and resumes of the educational director and mentor teacher.
	Schools, educational directors, rabbis, and lay leaders were interviewed by the NESS director.
Criteria for Participation	All synagogue and Jewish community schools within the Philadelphia five-county area are eligible to participate in the NESS initiative if they can meet the following requirements:
	The school/synagogue must submit a signed commitment from the rabbi, educational director, education committee chairperson, and board president indicating their willingness to participate in the NESS program, including 12 hours of leadership training per year, to which other representatives of the synagogue/school community will be invited.
	The educational director agrees to participate in 1) 16 hours of leadership training seminars for each for three years, 2) 30 hours on-site of full-staff training for two years and additional professional development in the third year, and 3) 12 hours of organizational development training.
	The mentor teacher (recommended by the educational director to coach and observe teachers in their classrooms) agrees to participate in 1) 12 hours of mentor teacher training for each of three years and 2) 30 hours of on-site full-staff training for two years and additional professional development in the third year.
	At least 80% of the teaching staff signs a commitment to participate in intensive training of 30 hours/year for each of two years and 12 hours in the third year.
	Participation in administering the "Jewish School Assessment, School Improvement" (J-SASIP) instrument and developing an action plan for school improvement.
	Participation in NESS program evaluations.
	Continuation of staff and leadership development upon completion of the program.
	Agreement to serve as a model for future NESS participants.
Participating Congregations	Six schools throughout the Philadelphia area, across denominations, geographic locations, and size.
Evaluation	N/A Program begins August, 2003.
Outcomes to Date Subscription Fee	N/A \$1200 per year for each of the three years \$1.5 million

Annual budget	A Million and a half dollar project over the three years. NESS is funded by both private funders as well as the Philadelphia Federation.
Next Steps	An assessment tool will be conducted, a pre-evaluation instrument will be administered, and training will begin in the fall.

	PROJECT CURRICULUM RENEWAL
Auspice/Sponsorship	Jewish Education Center of Cleveland
Contact Information	Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz - nmoskowitz@JECC.org (216)371-0446
Year Established	1986
Program Goals	Project Curriculum Renewal (PCR) was designed to encourage school improvement in supplementary, day, or preschools, by guiding them through the process of curriculum renewal and development. PCR works in the area of professional development to help teachers empower learners by providing curricula, materials, and ideas of how to think differently about learning and teaching.
Program Description	There are three structures to PCR: a 3-year intensive curriculum process in a school, a curriculum practicum, and independent consultations.
	I. <u>The Three Year Program:</u> This is an intensive process of curriculum renewal in which the institutional professional and lay leadership from JECC affiliated schools focus on one aspect of the school from a curricular perspective. Support is continuously provided by the JECC's Curriculum Department, who work with school leadership and staff to develop, implement, and evaluate a new detailed curriculum that often "pushes the envelope" in Jewish education. It is through the curricular process that professional development is also addressed. Curriculum is developed specifically for the site involved in the process, but it is made available to other schools, once it has been tested. The practicum provides a foundation for Jewish educators to understand and address curricular issues in their own school setting.
	II. <u>Curriculum Practicum:</u> The director of PCR teaches an annual semester-long curriculum practicum for local educators; credit is granted by the Siegal College of Judaic Studies. The director, with the assistance of Curriculum Department staff also has offered an intensive four-day summer course on curriculum development, open to national as well as local educators.
	III. <u>Consultations:</u> The department also does short term consultations for local constituents.
Process	If interested in this program, and meet the criteria for participation, contact the PCR for application details. After being accepted to the PCR, the three-year process begins.
	The first year of the three-year process is spent by the PCR staff and a school-based leadership team studying educational philosophy related to the school's areas of interest. A stakeholders group, comprised of lay leaders and professional staff, is established to develop an educational framework upon which the new curriculum will be built. The school's faculty agrees on the curriculum direction and the Curriculum Department writes curriculum guides over the summer so teachers have their material prior to school opening.
	The second year is spent implementing and evaluating the curriculum. The JECC schedules coursework to complement the curriculum

	implementation process, and offers coaching to those who desire a partner in their classroom work. ▪ The curriculum is revised based on second-year evaluations and implemented again, with JECC supports, for a final year.
Criteria for Participation	Any school, across the denominations, that is affiliated with the JECC may apply if they have the following qualities: schools must show readiness (stability of the leadership), and be willing to commit their time to the project. The education director and at least one other site staff member must invest two hours every week of the first year and two hours every other week of the second year.
Participating Congregations	Four Reform congregations, three Conservative, one Orthodox day school, and one preschool. One of the Reform and two of the Conservative congregations repeated the process for the second time, developing a different area of their educational programs.
	Eight schools have completed the process.
Evaluation	There is an ongoing internal evaluation.
Outcomes to Date	PCR allows the JECC Curriculum Department and local educators to explore new educational models. The process and curriculum developed has raised the bar in Cleveland's Jewish schools by providing high quality curricular materials, that are an outcome of the "renewal process." PCR has published curriculum documents that are available to anyone that is interested.
	Directors involved in PCR had had the benefit of working closely with educational colleagues over a three year process. They learn about educational change, and grow their skills in supporting curriculum and teaching in their schools. Most teachers have moved off frontal teaching -- engaging and empowering the learners.
Subscription Fee	No subscription fee.
Annual Budget	\$351,000
	Funding for the PCR is provided by the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland's Fund for the Jewish Future.
Next steps	PCR has just started work in its first day school, and is in its second year with its first early childhood center. It and hopes to continue reaching out to all schools of Jewish education. In relation to the issues of the changing field, where teachers and directors are constantly entering and leaving, PCR will be evaluating the project and process, trying to determine if it's the right, most effective model to be using.

	PROJECT ETGAR
Auspice/Sponsorship	Melton Research Center for Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's Department of Education.
Contact Information	Debbie Kerschner – BDKersch@aol.com (914)241-9254
Year Established	November 2001 - started training January 2002 - schools began teaching.
Program Goals	Project Etgar is a student-centered middle school curriculum designed to create a positive and productive learning experience for early adolescents in Conservative congregational schools. It works to address adolescents' continually developing needs including self-expression, taking control of their lives, focusing on short/long-term goals and tasks, peer acceptance and social interaction, and re-examination and redefinition of their maturing concepts of God, Torah, K'lal Yisrael, and Jewish identity. When completed, the New Middle School Curriculum will be a comprehensive 5 to 6 hour per week program. It will synthesize the needs, talents, abilities and life experiences of 6th, 7th and 8th graders with the core concepts of Judaism derived from the "Statement on the Aims of the Conservative Synagogue School: defined by the USCJ Commission on Jewish Education.
Program Description	<u>Core units</u> were developed using the 4MAT curriculum planning system because it honors learner diversity using the natural learning cycle. Project Etgar lessons and units tap students' prior knowledge and experiences, add "new" Jewish knowledge, promote practice, questioning and scrutiny of these new learnings, and enable students to construct their own Jewish understanding and identity. Each year students study four or five core units made up of ten to fifteen lessons revolving around central ideas that are drawn from traditional Jewish texts and contemporary sources. ▪ <u>Iyun Tefillah</u>: Designed to give students an understanding of prayer. ▪ <u>Hebrew</u>: Students begin to understand the key words of many of the prayers they recite. ▪ <u>Project Box</u>: An enrichment activity that allows students to select individual projects that they find interesting. ▪ <u>Jewish Family Education</u>: Sessions are part of every Etgar unit, bringing middle school students and their parents together for hands-on Jewish experiences. ▪ <u>Keshet</u>: Newsletter that is sent home to parents to keep them informed about the concepts and topics studied in their child's class. ▪ <u>Moach Madness</u>: Daily ten-minute time blocks that are filled with short, discreet, reflecting activities that are designed to benefit the students who arrive to school "on time," during the first ten minutes of class. In many religious schools this time is wasted. Moach Madness ensures that every minute of religious school time is used productively.
Process	Letters are sent out to all USCJ affiliated synagogues in the Fall asking if they are interested in being pilot schools. If interested, they can receive an application either by contacting Debbie or finding the application online. The application will include:
	▪ A short biography of the synagogue, and resumes of the educational directors and teachers who will be involved in the pilot program.

	▪ A short statement from the Rabbi and President of the congregation or Board of Education describing their commitment to the project.
	▪ A 500 word essay to be completed by the Educational Director explaining why your synagogue school would be a good place to test Project Etgar and how both the school and Project Etgar could benefit.
	In 2003 there was one training session for the Education Directors in Boston in February (at the end of JEA). In July there was training for Education Directors (3 days) and teachers (2 days) in New York City. Training was conducted by Cindy Dolgin and Marcey Dolgin, Directors of Curriculum Development and by Serene Victor and Rhonda Cohen, ETEs. Etgar employs Etgar Teacher Educators (ETE) who will work with the teachers and educational directors to implement Project Etgar.
Criteria for Participation	In order to participate, the congregational middle schools must be affiliated with the USCJ, have a stable staff, and be willing to make a significant monetary and time commitment to the program. Schools must meet at least 5 hours total in 2-3 days/week with at least one class of 10 students each in grades 6-8. They must also be willing to host the project representative who will be working with the school's leaders and parent body to develop awareness and create institutional buy-in for this project. Project Etgar will supply all the training and educational materials the school would need to launch the program.
Participating Congregations	Twenty-two Conservative synagogues are currently participating in Project Etgar. As it is a three year task, no schools have yet completed the process.
Evaluation	There has been an ongoing internal evaluation since training began in November, 2001.
Outcomes to date	The final results of the qualitative and quantitative research are not in yet. We started with 10 schools in January 2002 and added 2 schools in September 2002. Of the original 10 pilot schools, 8 remain. In July 2003 we trained 14 new pilot schools. 5 of the original pilot schools sent more teachers to be trained.
	Many schools have increased classroom time to 5 hours/week. The recruitment of teachers is now much stronger for grades 6-7. Students seem to be more engaged in their learning and are bringing home what they study to involve their parents and families in their learning's. Teachers have been enjoying teaching much more as a result of this program.
Subscription Fee	Pilot Schools for 2003/2004 Academic Year -training for Educational Director \$450; Training for Teachers \$300. Training took place at JTS in NYC. Schools were responsible for all travel expenses. \$40 per student charge.
Next steps	Modifications are being made and new curriculum materials are being developed based on feedback from the schools, teachers, and students.

	PROJECT MISHPACHA Educating Jewish Families
Auspice/Sponsorship	Beth El Congregation and the Dr. Beatrice Miller Endowment
Contact Information	Jonathan Willis - Jonathan@Bethelbalto.com (410)484-4543
Year Established	1992
Program Goals	Project Mishpacha is designed to educate entire Jewish families through adult education, family programs, Shabbat services, tikkun olam projects, educator-in-residence weekends, field trips, and retreats for its member families.
Program Description	Project Mishpacha is an innovative program for children and their parents with formal requirements for participation and involvement. By mixing together formal and informal Jewish education, Project Mishpacha achieves its overall goal by creating an environment where families are able to grow together Jewishly, and where school, home, and synagogue are all seen as extensions of each other. The program has required a real commitment by parents to participate in these programs. In exchange, Project Mishpacha children attend religious school two times per week rather than the customary three times within Conservative congregations. The project strives to educate parents and children alike, bringing them closer to Jewish observance, literacy, and spirituality.
	Project Mishpacha uses a spiral curriculum within the schools where students study central issues within Judaism at ever increasing levels of sophistication each year. Project coordinators established a Curriculum Task Force Committee last summer and worked with a group of talented teachers to create units of study that integrate as much as possible with Hebrew, prayer, art, music and literature. Curricula include Tanakh, the Hey family program, which was a culmination of the students' unit on "Foods in the Bible," stressing the values learned in stories such as Abraham and the angels, Eliezer at the well, the manna in the wilderness, and Shabbat.
	The adult education program is designed to coordinate with learning within the school classrooms. What the children are learning, so are the parents. Parents also participate in Jewish Studies classes that are intended to motivate parents to analyze Jewish texts. These text courses include: The Synagogues (Aleph), Shabbat Home Rituals (Bet), Shabbat Synagogue Service (Gimel), The Second Temple (Dalet), Modern Jewish History (Hey) and Jewish Responses to Contemporary Issues (Vav). Parents attending these classes throughout the six years of their child's Hebrew school education are exposed to a basic Jewish studies curriculum. The school includes:
	▪ A two-day-a-week religious school program, grade levels Aleph through Vav.
	▪ Family programs designed both to integrate with the school's level-specific curriculum as well as to reflect Jewish calendar, traditions, and history.
	▪ Shabbat family services providing age appropriate prayer and inviting all members of the family to participate on many levels in Friday night, Saturday morning, and Havdalah services.
	▪ Adult Education Courses that afford the parents the opportunity to

	increase their knowledge of Judaism, enabling them to bring Judaism home to reinforce their children's education.
	▪ Tikkun Olam family projects stressing the importance of doing mitzvot and grounding volunteerism within a Judaic framework.
Process	Initially, there was a long process developing Beth El Congregation's internal lay leadership. A family programmer was hired to consult with the professional and lay leadership about ideas and models of family education. The program was advertised to all the families in the congregation. Those who were interested were interviewed to gauge their interest and commitment to the program. After about two years of planning, the program was implemented in the school; it started with levels Aleph and Bet, and extra grades were added each year.
	Any interested synagogue can gain ideas and learn from Project Mishpacha in Beth El Congregation.
Criteria for Participation	N/A
Participating Congregations	Congregation Beth El
Evaluation	There have been two external evaluations; one took place 3-4 years after program was implemented, and the other by HUC in 2001. Beth El Congregation has been conducting ongoing, internal informal evaluations.
Outcomes to Date	Since implementation of Project Mishpacha, family involvement in the synagogue and Shabbat services attendance have greatly increased. However, because students are only in class two days a week as opposed to three, classes have been a bit behind in educational content; the school had to hold extra tutoring for the vav classes at the synagogue.
Subscription Fee	Membership dues and typical religious school payments
Annual Budget	Annual Budget for the synagogue's religious school
	Funding is provided for by congregational fees, an endowment provided by Dr Beatrice Miller's family, occasional outside grants, and in-house fundraising.
Next steps	Beth El Congregation will continue their constant reevaluation of the program. They are looking into possibly taking the concept down to lower grades as well as expanding options for families through the high school years.

	RENAISSANCE EDUCATOR PROJECT
Auspice/Sponsorship	Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Boston, MA
Contact Information	Dr. Daniel J. Margolis – djm@bje.org (617)965-7350 ext. 222 Penni Moss - pmoss@bje.org ext. 244
Year Established	1998
Program Goals	The Renaissance Educator Project is a professional development program which works to improve the quality of congregational education by establishing full-time educational positions in synagogues where they did not exist before.
Program Description	This project provides 3 years of funding to create new full-time staff positions that expand the capacity of congregations to provide more comprehensive and integrated Jewish education. Renaissance Educators (RE) work with both a professional mentor, who provides an experienced, yet personal perspective of expertise and maturity, and an on-site supervisor. The supervisor, a full-time, stable, synagogue educator or rabbi, oversees the RE's work and provides traditional supervision and evaluation. The BJE also consults regularly with the synagogue on the RE's progress and how the synagogue's program changes as a result of his/her presence. The RE typically carries a full teaching load and also works in various other areas of synagogue education, including: youth work, junior congregation, Bar/Bat mitzvah tutoring, family education, or adult learning. The RE's salary is comprised of budgeted amounts from each of these areas, supplemented by the 3 year grant (in descending amounts) that provides funding for: ▪ A salary supplement to bring the RE's compensation to a reasonable full-time level plus benefits. ▪ A mentor who meets regularly with the renaissance educator. ▪ A professional development advisor to create, together with the Renaissance Educator, an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP) of academic and practical experiences to provide the educator with career guidance. This includes course work focusing on Judaic and education knowledge, administration, and other skills at Brandeis University and Hebrew College. ▪ On-the-job training and network meetings with other REs. ▪ Meetings between the school leaders and educators and the BJE to monitor and evaluate the progress of the RE's IPDP.
Process	Schools are notified twice a year of all the grant opportunities available in the Greater Boston Area, including the Renaissance Educator Project. An interested school contacts the BJE for advice and, if ready, an application form. Before submitting the application, school staff and lay leaders consult with the BJE about their needs, intentions, and why and how they believe the project could work in their synagogues.
	The REs from around the city meet 2-4 times a year in a BJE professional network to share their experiences and study topics related to their unique, multiple roles. They also join one of the other specialized BJE professional networks (e.g., youth, early childhood, special education, etc.). BJE

	consultation also continues with professionals and laypeople to reflect on how the RE is contributing to their overall congregational program.
Criteria for Participation	Any synagogue in the Greater Boston Area may be accepted to this project as long as they demonstrate the need, have the capacity to put together a serious budget, and can assign a full-time stable member of their staff to the role of supervisor of the project. The synagogues must commit to the basic outline of program, including Judaic education studies and meetings. They must also have demonstrated previous experiences in a variety of grant programs sponsored by the Federation.
Participating congregations	This coming year, there will be 5 participating congregations: 1 Reconstructionist, 2 Reform, and 2 Conservative.
Evaluation	An internal evaluation was conducted about a year ago. The report is available for those who wish to view it.
Outcomes to Date	The REs agree that the work they are doing would most likely not have been done without them; congregations acknowledge that it has been both important and helpful to have extra pairs of hands to get work done: school cultures have changed, there is more programmatic integration, students and families feel that they receive more ongoing attention, and education directors are freed to provide more sophisticated leadership. The 4 schools that have completed the project have kept the added staff positions after their grants ended. Further, 4 other schools have created RE positions on their own, without federation funding. These REs are considered “adjuncts” and participate fully in the BJE networks, consultations, and professional development opportunities. To date, there are 13 REs in the community, including “alums,” “adjuncts” and current participants.
Subscription Fee	The grant is for \$20,000 over three years, typically beginning with a \$10,000 grant in year one, declining in successive years to \$6,000 and \$4,000 each year.
Annual budget	About \$80,000-\$85,000 per year which covers grants, staffing, program and administration costs. Funded by the Federation.
Next steps	The goal of the Renaissance Educator Project is to create and sustain 25 RE positions in the community. Several day schools have asked to be considered for the project as well, with the thought that a day school RE would teach and also be available for curriculum development, informal and family education activities, etc. The hope is that the project will also create a normative “entry” route for young educators (or mid-careerists) who want to pursue full-time work in synagogue education. Such educators, in the Boston conception, would have the capacity to do a variety of tasks within schools, including teaching, and would be able to integrate various domains and content areas as well.

	SCHOOL ACCREDITATION PROCESS
Auspice/Sponsorship	Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Los Angeles, CA
Contact Information	Dr. Emil Jacoby – ejacoby@bje.org (617)965-7350 ext. 222
Year Established	1993
Program Goals	The School Accreditation Process was initiated by the Bureau of Jewish Education of Greater Los Angeles to create criteria in individual schools for determining success in enhancing the quality of Jewish education. The process offers guidance to schools toward a clear vision of statement and goals providing the foundation for their work.
Program Description	The accreditation process entails comprehensive self-assessment, on-site visitation, and review by the Commission on School Accreditation. BJE administrative grants assist schools with initial costs; school improvement grants subsidize program enhancement projects, and annual allocation subsidies are available to schools meeting all BJE requirements. The administration of the School Accreditation Process requires the services of a half-time professional and limited time assignments by other consultants. A team of professional educators and lay leaders representing the diverseness of the Los Angeles community developed the process for enhancing the quality of educational programs by means of:
	▪ Assessing educational programs.
	▪ Fostering excellence in school programming.
	▪ Mandating periodic self-assessment and encouraging strategic planning.
	▪ Granting funds for program enhancements.
	▪ Providing public validation of the rationale and high achievements of Jewish schools.
	▪ Accrediting schools for a maximum of six years, when the institution must repeat the process.
	▪ Setting standards and validating qualifications for annual financial subsidy by the BJE/Jewish Federation.
Process	The 1998 Accreditation Manual for Jewish Schools outlines the three phases of this process and has special sections for the five most common Jewish school categories (early childhood centers, day schools, yeshivot, Conservative, and Reform religious schools).
	▪ <u>Self-Study</u>: Individual assessments are made of school accomplishments to see where they are with regard to their stated missions and goals; evaluations of the school programs are conducted by professional staff, lay boards, and parents to determine the progress of the school in meeting objectives; and a self-study report is prepared reflecting the findings in relationship to the

	accreditation standards and norms.
	▪ <u>On-Site Visits</u>: A team of educators observes the classes and meets with lay committees, teachers, parents, and students to determine how the self-study report reflects the school's educational environment.
	▪ <u>Review and Decision by the Accrediting Commission</u>: Members of the visiting team discuss their findings with the school leadership and present a written report to the BJE Accreditation Commission for Schools. The Commission reviews the report and decides on a term of accreditation for each school. After being notified, the school establishes a follow-up committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations.
Criteria for Participation	All affiliated schools meeting basic affiliation requirements are eligible for participation in the accreditation process. The roster includes community and congregational religious schools, elementary and secondary day schools, yeshivot and early childhood centers.
Participating Synagogues	80% of all affiliated religious and day schools have completed the School Accreditation Process
	Out of a total of 78 eligible schools, 65 have been accredited. This includes 14 Yeshivot (Orthodox), 14 day schools (Conservative, Reform, and Community), and 37 religious schools (Conservative and Reform).
Evaluation	The academic and procedural aspects of the process are reviewed annually by the participating educators serving on Visiting Teams and by members of the various Accrediting Commissions. The recommendations are noted in the Commission minutes and incorporated in revised procedures.
	The fiscal aspects of the Process are periodically evaluated by the Accreditation Committee and staff. Criteria for School Improvement Grants and awards policy were revised in 2002.
Outcomes to Date	The impact of school accreditation on Los Angeles Jewish schools has been very favorable. It now offers experience-based networking for both educators and schools. The accreditation initiative has increased the clout of Jewish education in the community-at-large and earned national recognition as an effective model for community-wide programs. Its success has helped to provide additional funds for creative projects. The following indicators describe some of the positive changes that have taken place:
	80% of the supplementary and day schools have been accredited or re-accredited. The program has introduced periodic assessment and evaluation into schools, and has established accountability by professionals. It has also empowered both teachers and parents by including them in the decision making processes
Subscription Fee	All day schools are charged \$1,000; religious schools, \$750; and early childhood centers, \$500. Currently supplementary religious schools and early childhood centers re-accredited for six years are eligible for grants from a minimum of \$3,750 to a maximum of \$7,500. Day schools and yeshivot may qualify for grants ranging from \$7,500 to \$15,000.

Annual Budget	\$99,000 in grants were awarded to the 16 schools accredited or re-accredited in 2002. The total budget for accreditation grants since the inception of the program was approximately \$490,000. These funds have been provided by the Federation and allocated to the schools by the BJE.
Next Step	Maintain the School Accreditation Process and keep it updated.

	SHABBAT CENTERED SYNAGOGUE COMMUNITY
Auspice/Sponsorship	Individual Congregations
Contact Information	Present Interim Educational Director Rabbi Sandi Berliner - ravsandirb@aol.com Present Rabbi Alan LaPayover – alanlp@hslc.org Former Founding Educational Director Cyd Weissman - cweissman@huc.edu Former Rabbi Marc Margolius - Ravmarcm@aol.com
Year Established	1995
Program Goals	The goal of the Shabbat Centered Synagogue Community is to create a community with multiple gateways where congregants of all ages learn, pray, socialize, and take part in social action, building a religious, moral, learning, and socially responsible, engaging community. The hope is to change the role of the "teacher" to "builder of community."
Program Description	The Shabbat Centered Synagogue Community, at congregation Beth Am Israel, works to make Judaism - the traditions, values, and education - an important part of each members' daily lives. The Rabbi, Educational Director, and lay leadership must have a full partnership so that they can work together as a team focused on the same mission. Congregants, with the guidance of their leaders, develop the synagogue's "distinctive Torah," which will be taught consistently throughout the synagogue, fostering a common language for learning and living Jewishly. Teacher development and learning is tied to a common perspective on curriculum with three focuses: learning the content - Judaica; exploring how teachers feel about the content - address the need to enrich teachers' lives and perspectives as well; and pedagogy - finding the best ways to achieve a unique perspective on the curriculum. Through the ideal of the "distinctive Torah" and advancing teacher development, classes were added Shabbat mornings, engaging everyone in the congregation (wishing to be involved) to concentrate on how the Torah, its values, and content, relate to each person. People learn about Abraham and Moses as their ancestry, not just historic people. They learn how to live the Shema and turn to prayer in times of need, practicing Judaism regularly within the community. Children and parents learn the same values, all centered around Shabbat and the Torah. Learning opportunities through this program include: ▪ Adult and inter-generational classes offered each Shabbat morning prior to services. ▪ In-service teacher learning where the teachers participate in a beginning of the year learning Shabbaton and bi-monthly study sessions that run while students are in minyan. ▪ Shabbat morning Beit Midrash program, setting both children's and parents' Jewish education within the communal context of Shabbat, while allowing families the freedom to choose their connection to Shabbat via adult classes, family minyanim, special joint-learning events, and worship.
Process	Beth Am began as a small congregation with a small, traditional religious school. Congregational leaders and members wanted to improve both their synagogue and school. Insights slowly developed, beginning with the realization that their family education program was too sporadic to really develop and change people's lives. The Rabbi valued Shabbat as the rhythm

	of Jewish life. Leaders and congregants alike did some research and reflection and turned towards experimentation. Beth Am piloted a program from which they learned, evaluated, and built upon. Over a number of years, through pilots and a culture of experimentation, the Shabbat Centered Synagogue Community was developed. They received a two year grant from the Federation when the program began. Since then, it has been fully funded by the congregation itself.
	Beth Am has hired new staff as more classes and programs have been created. Most of the adult learning classes are taught by volunteers from the congregation.
Criteria for Participation	N/A It was only developed in Beth Am, however other congregations can learn from Beth Am to create the same sort of program for themselves.
Participating Congregations	One Conservative congregation: Beth Am Israel.
Evaluation	An internal evaluation was completed in 1998.
Outcomes to Date	There was a major increase in both Shabbat attendance and participation and in Torah study. The program made people feel like they belonged to a Jewish community, connected to Jewish life. Congregants began to use what they had been learning about Judaism in their daily lives. The congregation has grown considerably due to word of mouth. People were drawn to a synagogue that is well-known for nurturing community, Jewish living, and family education, causing a major increase in membership.
Subscription Fee	Congregational membership dues.
Annual Budget	Receive a two year \$50,000 "continuity grant" from the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia for its DESIGN (Designing an Educational System for Inter-Generational Neshamot) project.
Next steps	The Shabbat Centered Synagogue Community hopes to do more internal work. The program has affected a majority of the congregants, but not everybody. They hope to develop mentoring programs and spiritual autobiography programs, along with expanding already existing programs and classes so as to benefit each congregational member, each person of the community.

	SYNAGOGUE EDUCATION INCUBATOR An Educational Alliance
Auspice/Sponsorship	Jewish Education Association of MetroWest/JEA and UJC of MetroWest
Contact Information	Dr. Mark Silk – msilk@jeametrowest.org (973)929-2965
Year Established	2001
Program Goals	SEI's vision is to promote the most creative, dynamic, successful and meaningful, synagogue-based education, leading to Jewish growth for every member of each MetroWest synagogue, both as individuals and family members through planning, training, and collaborative decision making.
Program Description	SEI is a comprehensive approach to institutional change that is systematic and specific to each institution, working to integrate the education system into the entire synagogue, while anticipating the types of support necessary to make change long-lasting. The program director, on-site facilitators, and outside speakers/consultants work with the synagogue to develop a vision of excellence, conduct training sessions about the change process and "models of best practice," and develop a tangible implementation plan. SEI training sessions also focus on the actual steps and processes of change within individual synagogues, such as how to integrate changes into the entire system, leadership skills, making change positive for the entire synagogue, and why and how to conduct evaluations. Some of the training sessions include information on how to plan, implement, and market new programs, such as family education and youth leadership training. The SEI project, about 3-5 years long, works to:
	▪ Foster Collaboration on Jewish education between synagogue professionals and volunteers.
	▪ Develop synagogue based educational visions and mission statements.
	▪ Promote innovative educational programming.
	▪ Provide lay and professional leaders with tools necessary to implement educational improvement plans.
	▪ Develop a grass roots community agenda for Jewish education.
Process	To apply for the SEI project, synagogues assemble a preliminary team of professional and volunteer leaders to learn more about SEI. Then the team completes an application form. The form provides the synagogue an opportunity to demonstrate their readiness for change and their willingness to commit to SEI. After being accepted, SEI begins work with the synagogue leaders to develop a vision and a plan to reach their goals. Staffing for the project include an SEI programming director, assistant, on-site facilitator, and outside consultants/speakers, besides synagogue staff.
Criteria for Participation	SEI works with any synagogue in the MetroWest area that has a sense of need to change something in their synagogue, stability of professional staff, and the ability to gather a diverse team of professional and volunteer leaders who will agree to commit to the SEI project.
Participating Synagogues	Two Reform, Three Conservative, and one Reconstructionist.

	No synagogues have completed the project yet.
Evaluation	There is currently an ongoing internal evaluation by the JEA of MetroWest with oversight by the UJC of MetroWest.
Outcomes to Date	SEI has given synagogues the realization that change is possible. they've taught congregations how to organize committees, attract and nurture volunteers, fully integrate education into the synagogues, and assess evaluations. SEI has learned about the importance of the unique cultures of each synagogue and how that affects the priorities and pace of changes. While the change process takes a long time, "low-hanging fruit" provide important reinforcement for moving forward.
	Most SEI synagogues have prioritized their goals and learned how to implement change and growth, using resources and information that some of them did not know how to access or use before SEI. They've learned how to make better decisions, use better practices, and make changes fit into their synagogues. Some synagogues have also implemented new programs like learners' minyan, an interfaith Chavurah, and intergenerational learning opportunities on Shabbat.
Subscription Fee	The fee depends on the synagogues' size and ranges from \$500-\$1000.
Annual Budget	\$100,000 for the first year, \$120,000 for the second year, and third year.
	Funding is provided from a UJC strategic initiative grant, the JEA, and user fees.
Next steps	The SEI is working towards two new services: issue focused planning and skill focused programs. Issue focused services will be centered more specifically on congregations' particular issues rather than working on the entire synagogue system as a whole. The goal of SEI's skills focused programs to provide the prerequisite skills that will enable congregants to implement substantive changes in their congregations.

	SYNAGOGUE LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE
Auspice/Sponsorship	UJA Federation of Bergen County & North Hudson in partnership with the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation
Contact Information	Judy Beck - judyB@ujabergen.org (210)488-6800
Year Established	1997
Program Goals	The Synagogue Leadership Initiative (SLI) was conceived to strengthen and invigorate synagogues within the service area of the UJA Federation of Bergen County and North Hudson. The goals of this project are: to help grow synagogues that are relevant and vibrant and enable them to reach their fullest potential; to develop synagogue leadership that is Jewishly knowledgeable and aware of the best practices of synagogue management; to build community on the intra and inter synagogue level; and to generate a force field of Jewish life in Bergen county that will affect affiliated and unaffiliated Jews alike.
Program Description	SLI assists participating synagogues to develop strong lay leadership, create dynamic educational programs, and spiritually uplifting worship. Through strategic planning SLI enables congregations envision and implement their goals towards growth and development. SLI programming is congregation specific, not one-recipe, one size fits all. It is a labor-intensive program where staff really works with all elements of each congregation to address their specific challenges and needs, and teaches them the skills necessary to develop and deliver specific programs to address these challenges. The goal of programming is to enable congregations to realize their institutional potential. The program design of the SLI works like a timeline with five steps; congregations can choose to be a part of as many or few programs as they wish.
	▪ <u>Newsletter:</u> The Shul Biz newsletter is published four times a year. It promotes new ideas and interesting programs in synagogues from around the country.
	▪ <u>Institutes:</u> These are held two to three times per year. New and interesting innovative ideas within and about synagogues are presented, which the program participants can learn from.
	▪ <u>Capacity Building Workshops:</u> These are held to enhance the necessary skills for the advancement of the congregation and synagogue as a whole. Marketing, fundraising, membership recruitment, and program development skills are strengthened through these workshops.
	▪ <u>Affinity Groups:</u> These are held for the rabbis, cantors, executive directors, presidents, and sisterhood presidents throughout the Bergen County and North Hudson area. - Rabbis: Planning meetings, study groups, support groups, retreats, and pastoral skill building. - Cantors: monthly meetings. - Executive Directors: Monthly meetings, development of skill building and development-type programs for the staff in their

	individual synagogues. - Presidents: Monthly meetings, scale building workshops, capacity building programs, list serve. - Sisterhood Presidents: Three meetings per year.
	▪ Strategic Planning: Staff and congregants meet about once a month for a year to write a strategic plan and then are mentored through the implementation phase for another year.
Process	There is no need to apply for any part of the program other than strategic planning. Congregations simply get in touch with the SLI staff to begin participation in the other four aspects. Any congregation that applies for strategic planning will be accepted, however, at this juncture SLI can only plan with three synagogues at a time.
	Before strategic planning can be developed in synagogues, SLI works with the congregations to prepare them for the process by looking at various issues that they are dealing with and trying to resolve any internal issues that should be settled prior to beginning the planning process. Readiness activities include; doing a congregational needs assessment, participation by the rabbi and congregational President a relationship enhancement program, along with a two to three part workshop with the school board so as to develop a full partnership where the congregational leadership are working together with the same vision for the same goals.
Criteria for Participation	Any synagogue in the service area of the UJA Federation of Bergen County and North Hudson can participate in any of the programs of SLI.
Participating Congregations	42 congregations have participated in one aspect or another of the SLI. 12 Reform, 20 Conservative, 1 Reconstructionist, and 9 Orthodox synagogues.
	Nine congregations have participated in strategic planning - two Orthodox, one Reconstructionist, one Reform, and five Conservative. Six congregations are currently implementing the initiatives of strategic planning. One congregation has received a grant to create new programs as a result of their planning and several more are applying for grants to fund programs to be implemented as a result of the programming.
Evaluation	There have been ongoing program evaluations, however no formal external evaluation has been conducted.
Outcomes to Date	SLI has provided access to resources that small congregations could not have had access to before. Within congregations, it has been noted that staff and lay leadership are more energized due to participation in the SLI. Long-term congregants have become re-involved in synagogue life while newer members are brought into active involvement. Board governance has moved into a more strategic policy-setting direction, rabbis have become more effective leaders, congregations have become more effective fundraisers, and lay leaders have become more effective in terms of visioning and implementing programs. There has also been a noticed increase in worship participation by congregations involved in the SLI.
Subscription Fee	No Fee
Annual Budget	\$400,000 funded by grants from the Continuity Commission of the UJA Federation of Bergen County and North Hudson and the Henry and Marilyn

	Taub Foundation
Next steps	The SLI is working to become more closely tied to the Federation, so that they will become the central address for all synagogue-related issues in the community. The program will depend on (increased) input from a lay and professional committee, which will guide projects in future. The SLI is going through a phase of experimentation so as to determine the best practices to initiate change in synagogues. They are working on the funding for mini-grants and the creation of new programs to provide for further congregational change.