

ENGINEERING ENDURING CHANGE

LEARNING WHAT IT WILL TAKE
TO TRANSFORM
DAY SCHOOL ISRAEL EDUCATION
FROM A STUDY OF BASIS

THE BAY AREA SCHOOLS
ISRAEL SYNERGY INITIATIVE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Launched in September 2008, at the stimulus of the Jim Joseph Foundation, BASIS—the Bay Area Schools Israel Synergy initiative—has been an ambitious initiative to intensify Israel education in eleven Jewish day schools with a combined enrollment of more than 2,000 students.

This report studies the BASIS initiative so as to learn what might lead to enduring change elsewhere in the field of day school Israel education and in any Jewish communal effort to produce systemic and sustained change across multiple educational institutions.

Looking closely at the initiative's main components—those provided by the San Francisco Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE), the initiative's lead agency, and those embedded within participating schools—this report identifies program components that promise enduring cultural and structural change in schools; those that have contributed to positive change; and those whose overall impact has been neutral.

The program components that promise enduring change include: a determined effort to develop a school-level vision for Israel education; the appointment of an Israel education coordinator with power and influence in each school; engagement of general studies faculty in the work of Israel education; developing appropriately designed—curricularized and integrated—student trips to Israel; and enhancing school-based capacity for curriculum design.

The program components that have produced positive impacts but that will probably not endure include: a twinning relationship with Israeli schools; taking school leadership teams to Israel for a community-wide four-day seminar; establishing a monthly Community of Practice meeting of BASIS school coordinators; and focusing on arts and culture as vehicles for Israel education.

Mapping existing programs for teaching about Israel within each school did not consistently nor necessarily result in positive or lasting change.

Drawing on what has been learned from looking closely at BASIS and from what is known from other multi-school change initiatives, the following model is proposed of what it will take to transform Israel education in schools, and of what will impede such transformation even when many positive forces are aligned.

As seen in Figure 1 (see page 2), the suggested model identifies both external drivers and internal levers of change. It also proposes that the readiness of participating schools must be determined before they are recruited to any initiative.

FIGURE 1: A MODEL FOR ENGINEERING ENDURING CHANGE IN ISRAEL EDUCATION

EXTERNAL DRIVERS	READINESS	INTERNAL LEVERS		SCHOOL-LEVEL OUTCOMES
Vision of the Program Horizon and for the Day After		Actionable School-Specific Vision for Israel Education	Coordinator (with influence and power)	Transformed School Structure, Culture and Curriculum
Direction, Supervision and Support from a Central Agency			Participation and Buy-In from General Studies Faculty	
Funding			Student trip to Israel and Engagement with Israeli Peers	
			Enhanced Capacity for Curriculum Design	

The report finishes by identifying a series of **five steps that are critical to the successful implementation of the proposed model.**

- 1** Developing a clear vision of transformed Israel education in North American day schools
- 2** Identifying an administrative platform from which to lead and coordinate an initiative for change
- 3** Designing measures of school readiness and student impact
- 4** Constructing matched cohorts of participating schools
- 5** Preparing personnel to lead and coordinate Israel education in schools

BACKGROUND

OUR REMIT

Launched in September 2008, at the stimulus of the Jim Joseph Foundation, BASIS—the Bay Area Schools Israel Synergy initiative—is a bold attempt to change the culture and content of Jewish schools on a regional scale. Made possible by a major infusion of philanthropic funding, it is an ambitious initiative to intensify Israel education in eleven Jewish day schools, with a combined enrollment of more than 2,000 students, in a region of the country where the local Jewish and civic environment is at best ambivalent and at worst antagonistic to deepening Israel engagement.

This report is not an evaluation of the extent to which the initiative succeeded or failed. It is an attempt to derive lessons from what the project attempted and produced. We approach this task with a view of BASIS as a naturalistic experiment. Study of the experiences and outcomes in different schools makes it possible to tease out implications for what might lead to enduring change elsewhere in the field of Israel education and in any Jewish communal effort to produce systemic and sustained change across multiple educational institutions.

This report is not an assessment of *what* happened but rather an attempt to figure out *why* things happened as they did, and *how* lessons learned from BASIS might be applied to good effect elsewhere. Absent base-line data about the culture of Israel education in the participating schools, let alone about students' knowledge and connection to Israel before the project was launched, our conclusions are necessarily interpretative. Our conclusions depend heavily on the self-report of participants in the initiative, even while extensively triangulated. These self-reports have been intensively processed by a research team deeply familiar with the practice of Israel education in Jewish schools and with past efforts to improve day school Israel education. Our conclusions are interpretative, but they are the carefully considered interpretations of *connoisseurs* in the fields of Israel education and Jewish school leadership.

OUR STARTING POINT

A summative evaluation of BASIS was submitted in April 2011 by SRI International. Its findings and conclusions were derived from survey and qualitative data collected during an 18-month period up to midway through the initiative's third year. Framed by repeated cautions that it was too early in the initiative's life-course to judge its impact and sustainability, the authors of the evaluation found that:

All eleven participating schools are changing how they go about Israel education in the ways outlined in the [initiative's] logic model.

- BASIS provided school staff with professional development on how to design and implement high-quality Israel education through workshops, expert consultation, and a Community of Practice.
- BASIS helped schools update their Israel vision statements and develop goals for the types of student engagement they desire students to have with Israel.
- BASIS guided schools in their development of long-term Israel education plans by helping schools map their existing Israel education activities and lessons, compare their existing program with their new Israel education goals, identify lessons and activities that are appropriate, and identify gaps where additional lessons need to be developed.
- Schools have implemented new and enhanced student-focused Israel education and engagement strategies.
- Schools are using a variety of strategies—twinning and partnerships programs, Israel trips, family education, *shlichut*, arts and culture, and technology—to engage students in Israel education, with the majority of schools using multiple strategies.

Our inquiry, conducted between September 2011 and January 2012, has taken place during the first part of the project's fourth year. What we found is consistent with the findings of the 2011 evaluation, with the additional nuance that, having collected data almost a year later, we have had an opportunity to observe the initiative's further evolution even while some of the initiative's most significant outcomes are still developing. More than three years after the initiative's launch, we have seen how, in some schools, it has become more deeply embedded, how in others, because of positive changes in the environment, it has belatedly taken off, and how in yet others, with the grant's activities beginning to wind down, its long-term impact is already doubtful.

We see our task as to interpret why the initiative's influence played out differently in participating schools. Thereby, we can identify conditions and interventions that might enduringly produce intensified Israel education in other schools and other systems.

OUR APPROACH

So as to gain the fullest possible sense both of the initiative's development and of the quality of Israel education in participating schools, our four-member team has conducted tens of interviews with lay and professional stakeholders within schools and within the agencies and organizations connected to the project. We conducted site visits at a representative sample of the eleven schools where we interviewed a wide variety of informants from across their communities, and where we met with students and observed classroom practices. We analyzed the great body of documentary materials produced by the project. We also interviewed a wide range of lay and professional informants at the BJE and beyond. Throughout this process, in a further layer of verification and triangulation, we cycled back repeatedly to compare our impressions with those of key staff who had led the project. Finally, our team engaged in intensive, independent, internal deliberations so as to distill the most precise possible interpretation of the initiative's outcomes and implications. Further details of this process are provided in the Appendix.

THE PROJECT IN VIEW

THE GOALS OF BASIS

As stated on the website of the San Francisco Bureau of Jewish Education, the body that came to be defined as “the fiscal agent and sole operator of this project,” the goal of BASIS is “to bring Jewish students and their families closer to Israel, and to strengthen the connection of our youth to Israel and the Jewish people by making Israel a core part of every school’s academic program and culture.”

The initiative’s goals acquired greater clarity and specificity as the project evolved. Originally charged with the broad goal of “designing and putting into place a long-term plan to incorporate Israel education into every aspect of the school’s community, impacting students, faculty, administration and families” (letter from acting director to schools, 12/16/08), the project came, at the start of its second year, to focus on a more precisely specified set of outcomes that included, for example, production of an Israel education scope and sequence of student learning outcomes and providing teachers with the necessary training to take part in this process. The clearest articulation of the initiative’s goals is provided by a logic model, composed in October 2009 (see Table 1 on page 8).

THE INITIATIVE’S MAIN COMPONENTS

The BASIS model was made up of supports and interventions located both at the Bureau of Jewish Education and within the schools themselves. Funding was divided, over the project’s four years, on the basis of 61% [\$3,946,348] provided to the schools, with the balance [\$2,464,797] going to the BJE for indirect and direct program support. Funding to schools was allocated according to an annual formula in which each participating school received \$360 per grade 1-12 student in the initiative’s second year, diminishing to \$284 by the initiative’s final year. The BASIS grant was administered first for one year of planning, renewed for two years, and then renewed again for a further year.

At the Central Agency

Personnel

As the body tasked with providing leadership, management and coordination of the project, the San Francisco BJE has employed a project team made up of: a project director; a director of planning and evaluation; four strategy managers in the fields of curriculum development, resource management, arts and culture, and twinning and partnership; as well as additional support staff.

This team, in turn, appointed organizational development experts to work with each school during the initiative’s first year so as to develop a set of 5-year school-level strategic plans for the project. In the initiative’s second and third years, *manchim* (coaches), drawn mainly from Israeli institutions, were matched with each school to provide expert guidance and support in different aspects of Israel education and/or curriculum design.

Programs

Over the initiative’s four years, the BJE BASIS team planned and delivered an extensive series of interventions that have provided professional development, ongoing support, and enrichment for the eleven participating schools. These have included:

- An intense four-day seminar in Israel that brought together a large group that was made up of five participants from each of the eleven schools.
- A series of centralized and school-based workshops for school coordinators, leadership team and/or curriculum team members in relation to key aspects of the BASIS process. These workshops have focused on: curriculum mapping; curriculum development using Understanding by Design; diverse content areas; vision development; and program development.

- Ongoing guidance of schools in relation to: curriculum design; the implementation of student trips to Israel and twinning relationships; and the use of arts and culture as vehicles for Israel education.
- Monthly Community of Practice (CoP) meetings for the eleven school-level BASIS coordinators for sharing, networking, and advanced professional learning.

In the Eleven BASIS Schools

Personnel

At the school level, the initiative was led by the following groups and individuals:

- All participating schools were required to appoint a coordinator to plan, manage and coordinate the project at the school level, and to connect with fellow-coordinators from other schools at monthly CoPs. In the project's first year, the coordinator held a 0.2 appointment; in the following years, a 0.4 appointment.
- Schools were required to convene a leadership team made up of senior administration, the BASIS coordinator, Jewish and general studies faculty and (often) volunteer members of the school community. This team, usually active during the initiative's first couple of years, was tasked with drafting a school-specific vision for Israel education and with overseeing the initiative's direction at the school.
- Each school had to convene a curriculum team to lead and support the mapping of current Israel education activities and the development of a curricular scope and sequence.

Practices

The first full year of the grant was operated in a highly experimental vein. Schools were encouraged to "try out Israel education activities that they believed would advance school change" (letter from acting director, 12/16/08). It was hoped that these activities would serve as a springboard for long-term plans, provided they were in line with the school's Five-Year Israel Education Projection prepared during the initial planning stages of the project.

Once a logic model for the initiative as a whole was developed, school level activities were expected to include a number of common components that would enable schools to articulate their purposes in Israel education, identify how well their programs served those purposes, and plan forward so as to fulfill their purposes with the greatest possible effectiveness.

These components included:

- Crafting an Israel education vision that provided the starting point for an articulation of essential questions and enduring understandings to guide curriculum work.
- Mapping existing Israel education programs and lessons by using ATLAS Curriculum Mapping software, a powerful tool for tracking, comparing and planning.
- Developing a scope and sequence for future curriculum activity that built on the previous steps, paying special attention to the delivery of Israel education across the whole curriculum.
- Implementing new and enhanced Israel education and Israel engagement strategies with students that support the school's scope and sequence, or introducing professional developmental strategies to support and enhanced the school's Israel education capacity. These strategies included: introducing new curriculum content to classrooms; twinning relationships and exchanges with Israeli schools; student and/or faculty programs in Israel; recruiting *shlichim* to schools; and other experiential programs especially in the field of arts and culture.
- Reporting at regular intervals to the BJE and to the Jim Joseph Foundation about the initiative's progress and about future plans in relation to the school's Five-Year Israel Education Projection.

THE INITIATIVE'S CONTEXT

Any attempt to derive policy implications from the conception, implementation and impact of BASIS is complicated by the nested circumstances in which the initiative played out. The broader circumstances in which the grant was conceived and delivered were significantly colored by particular sets of institutional relationships and histories. This was one of the first grants made by a new foundation; in a region where some of its board members are prominently involved; where Jewish day schools do not have a long history of working together; where Jewish day school parents might be less sympathetic than those in other parts of the country to the intensification of Israel education in their children's schools; and where the role of the Bureau of Jewish Education is sometimes contested and sometimes celebrated by different community stakeholders. All of these circumstances have had their own particular impact on the initiative's genesis and development.

These circumstantial facts have meant that in writing this report we have focused our analysis at the school rather than community or funder level. Of course schools also come with their own histories—they are complicated by turnover in leadership, the prejudices and biases of those who govern and lead them, and the vagaries of interpersonal politics. They come with vastly different financial, cultural and human assets. And yet, because this initiative, unusually, included eleven schools who were exposed to the same set of interventions, and had access to same set of resources (if sometimes in different proportions), there is an opportunity to tease out some general principles about what typically had positive impact and what didn't, and about what kinds of circumstances and conditions were helpful or unhelpful to positive school change. The scale of the project at the school level does make it possible to propose some generally relevant conclusions that can have application in other communities no matter how different they are from the Bay Area between September 2008 and January 2012. We work towards those conclusions in the following sections.

TABLE 1: LOGIC MODEL FOR BASIS EVALUATION

Influential Factors	<p>Effectiveness of BJE’s management structure, communication with schools, clarity of expectations, and timeline to help schools reach project goals.</p> <p>Timelines of receiving JJF grant funds.</p> <p>Teacher and community buy-in for project at each of the schools.</p>
Resources	<p>BJE will provide example curricula and models, experts, training, Community of Practice meetings, Israel Forum workshops to support schools’ planning.</p> <p>BJE will link with other Israel education organizations to expand available training and resources to the schools.</p> <p>JJF will provide \$360 per student; a basket of consultants; access to iCenter resources; and timely payment for project management, educators professional development, and BASIS evaluation.</p>
Activities	<p>Schools, in partnership with the BASIS development team, will provide professional development for and coordinate with teachers on how to design and provide high-quality Israel education.</p> <p>Schools will update their visions and mission statements and their logic models as needed to guide their ongoing strategies.</p> <p>Schools will develop knowledge- and skill-based learning objectives for students and will assess progress on those objectives.</p> <p>Schools will develop long-term Israel education plans, based on the identified objectives and goals, that are comprehensive and sequenced by starting with a plan for one or a few grade levels and expanding the plan to include all grade levels by the end of the four years.</p> <p>Schools will implement the new and enhanced student-focused strategies outlined in their plans: curricula, school events, <i>sblichim</i>, family education, twinning and partnerships programs, Israel trips, technology, and arts and culture.</p>
Outputs	<p>Number of teachers trained.</p> <p>Teacher satisfaction with training.</p> <p>Amount of teachers who include Israel education in their instruction.</p> <p>Number of students who participate in various Israel education strategies.</p> <p>Amount of time students spend on Israel education.</p> <p>Student satisfaction with Israel education instruction/activities they receive.</p>
Short-Term Outcomes (within One Year)	<p>Increases in educators’ knowledge about, connection to, and engagement with Israel.</p> <p>Increases in capacity of teachers to design, plan, and teach Israel education.</p> <p>Increases in student learning about Israel (e.g., its geography, its history, its people and their cultures, its geographical issues, its cultural/religious issues).</p> <p>Increases in student connection to and engagement with Israeli people and the role Israel plays in the Jewish community worldwide.</p>
Intermediate-Term Outcomes (within Two to Four Years)	<p>Increases in families’ knowledge about, connection to and engagement with Israel.</p> <p>Increases in the visibility of Israel in school environments, including surroundings (portraiture), programming (adult education), place of Israel in the overall school life beyond celebratory Israel days.</p> <p>Increases in resources relating to Israel, (e.g., purchase of books for libraries, resources for music education, creation of learning centers, and other resources directed to Israel-related topics).</p> <p>Increases in schools’ use of sustainable resources within the community to support and fund Israel education capacity building and programming.</p>
Impact (Sustainable Changes)	<p>School mission statements and planning and professional development structures will incorporate Israel education as an essential piece of Jewish education.</p> <p>Schools will have developed sustainable Israel education plans and strategies by incorporating Israel education into their budgets and ongoing fundraising efforts.</p> <p>Schools will have more available resources and capacity to support ongoing Israel education.</p> <p>Israel education will play a more instrumental role in school life and curriculum.</p>

BJE: The Bureau of Jewish Education

Schools: The eleven Jewish day and high schools participating in BASIS

BASIS IN ACTION—THREE TRAJECTORIES

We propose to convey a sense of the varying impacts of BASIS in different schools, and of what accounts for these variations, by sharing a select number of strongly representative school stories. These examples—one of a school changed in only a very limited fashion; one, a school positively but not yet lastingly changed; and one a school enabled to continue moving towards enduring excellence—provide a vivid demonstration of what played out across the initiative as a whole. These examples introduce a set of broader conclusions, derived from the study of all eleven schools, about which project elements produced limited change, which produced positive but not lasting change, and which produced the promise of enduring change.

While the trajectories in these narratives are highly representative of all eleven schools, the specific circumstances in each narrative are not. These examples do not include a high school, of which there were two in the initiative, each challenged in some fashion by the lack of fit between their organization as high schools and some of the initiative's main foci. These examples are also all taken from community day schools. There were, however, two religiously orthodox schools in the BASIS cohort. In each, the school's orthodox culture strongly colored the project's development, both in terms of the take-up of different program components and overall readiness to embrace Israel as a central feature of school life.

THE SHALOM SCHOOL

Limited “Concrete” Change, and Frustration at the Lack of More

In a region where Jewish day schools are widely dispersed from one another, the Shalom school—located in Sacramento, almost 100 miles from its nearest peer—has long been the most isolated. A K-6 school with just under 200 students, the school plays an important role in the life of its local Jewish community. In turn, volunteer leaders play a more active role in the school than they do in larger communities.

These circumstances partly explain the outsize role of volunteer leaders on the school's BASIS leadership team.

The Sacramento Jewish community has for a long time had a strong, generally apolitical, connection to Israel. This has colored the broad if not especially intense commitment to Israel in the school. Thus, a few years ago, when The AVI CHAI Foundation suggested Israel-centric language for day school mission statements, the Shalom board simply adopted whole the language that the foundation proposed. The board also paid for the Head of School at the time to go to Israel, and inserted a trip in to the contract of the new Head, someone who had never visited Israel herself. Since its opening in 1978, Israel has been a constant of school life, even if located almost exclusively within the confines of the Jewish studies curriculum. With all students graduating at the end of 6th grade, there has never been a school Israel trip that might serve as focal point for Israel programming.

BASIS provided a highly valued opportunity to connect Shalom to other Bay area schools, through the monthly meetings of heads of school, the coordinators' Community of Practice and through various shared programs—especially the seminar in Israel, in the aftermath of which the participating professionals led a three-day Israel 101 seminar for all staff. For the lay-leaders and the general studies teachers the Israel seminar was an especially meaningful experience.

The BASIS coordinator—who left the school after the project's third year—had been assistant to the Head but was not a Jewish educator. She was a controversial personality—someone with power but not influence—who had difficulty working with teacher teams. She was not an effective portal for BASIS inputs to the wider school community. It could be said that most of the focus of BASIS in the school was directed towards limited, concrete outcomes that never extended as far as was hoped by members of the leadership team.

The initiative's lasting organizational impact has been in enabling the creation of meeting-time each week for interdepartmental groups, originally intended to facilitate BASIS curriculum mapping and development processes. This weekly slot has now become a regular part of school life but it is no longer focused on Israel. Likewise, some of the school's BASIS funds were spent on smart boards and laptops so as to facilitate a twinning partnership with an Israeli school. The partnership had looked quite promising because of strong personal relationships with teachers at an Israeli school, but when those teachers moved on, the partnership was still-born. The new technology is now being put to other uses although there is hope that the Jewish studies director (and new BASIS coordinator) will be able to reignite a twinning initiative.

The one enduring BASIS product is a gigantic mosaic mural that is featured at the entrance of the school. It is a complex and impressive piece that integrates Jewish and Israeli history as well as the character traits of each tribe of Israel. According to the Head of School, "everyone worked on the project in the school. It was a great way to engage the whole community in Israel through something everyone could relate to... and now it is a piece of the campus." She is planning now to advance an initiative over 12 years to develop curriculum around the mosaic wall.

The curriculum mapping process with ATLAS was not productive. A curriculum team was never convened. Rather, teachers on the leadership team were sent to the ATLAS training, with uneven results. The school will not be renewing the license, although they do see the need for a more systematic curriculum scope and sequence. This year, the new Head and the new coordinator are hoping to ensure that "binders" are created that collect all Israel related material by topic and grade. Members of the leadership team were also disappointed with the input they received from their *mancheb*. They had hoped that she would help them develop content and not just a strategic vision. They imagine that someone more local could have been of more help in real-time.

It is no wonder that with a new Head of the School and new Israel coordinator now in place at the start of the initiative's final year, the school's leadership team feel that they are in "free-fall" with the onset of what they regard as the sudden end of the project's funding and their lack of readiness for life after BASIS.

BRANDEIS HILLEL DAY SCHOOL (BHDS)

Clearer Purposes, Intensified Practices, but an Uncertain Future

BHDS is a complex institution. The largest school to participate in BASIS, with a combined roll of some 500 students, Brandeis encompasses two campuses, each with observably different school cultures. More than fifty years old, the school is one of the most prominent Jewish institutions in the city; some of its volunteers play leadership roles in local and national Jewish organizations. Many families are drawn to the school—especially its San Francisco campus—by the quality of the general studies curriculum, a product that is energetically protected by some school stakeholders. As one person we interviewed said, "looking at our classrooms, we look like a good multicultural public school."

When asked about the impact of BASIS, stakeholders consistently point to the different way in which people in the school now talk about Israel, no small matter as we were repeatedly told. There have been other important changes too. Before BASIS was launched the school had a low-intensity twinning relationship with Israeli schools; it was one of the first Bay area schools to launch such a relationship. For a couple of years, it had also been running an 8th grade Israel trip that competed with a trip to Washington. Israel was a constant but not consistent presence in the Jewish studies curriculum which together with Hebrew occupied two hours a day. Today, it seems, the Brandeis leadership is much more confident about the prominent place of Israel in the school. There has been palpable improvement in the sophistication of Israel programming. The Israel trip has become the focal point for the middle school program and includes far more curricular elements; the Washington trip has been dropped entirely. The twinning relationship has been broadened to enable many more faculty and students to come from Israel and to build deep relationships between schools. Brandeis now has a complete map of where Israel occurs across all components of the curriculum and not just Jewish studies. While the mapping exercise was experienced as terribly onerous, not least because it was regarded as an unanticipated program requirement, it is seen today to have some value.

The primary drivers of these changes have been, first, a visioning process undertaken initially by a leadership team made up of many of the most influential stakeholders in the school.

This was followed by a process undertaken by the BASIS curriculum team to translate the vision in to a framework of essential questions and enduring understandings that can, and are beginning to, structure the curriculum. It is in relation to this step that the school's leadership most appreciated the contribution of their BASIS *mancheb* and also the BASIS staff. Second, the school has been blessed with an Israel coordinator of great influence—if limited formal power—who has worked intensively to move the project forward. A veteran member of the Jewish studies faculty, a school parent, a self-starter, and an intensively conscientious individual, she is skilled at motivating others without being pushy. She is perceived to understand the reality of the teachers with whom she works. Third, BASIS funding has made it possible to intensify and sophisticate programs that, for the moment, strongly energize children's encounter with Israel.

There is a sense of cultural transformation in the school. BASIS has led to a greater intensification of Israel related activity, a greater clarity of purpose, and greater confidence about Israel's place in school life. And yet it is evident that there is also anxiety and skepticism among many in the school about what will happen when the BASIS money runs out and about whether Israel education has broken out of its confinement to the Judaic parts of the curriculum.

Structural change is hard to identify. At this time, Israel has not systematically entered the classrooms of the general studies faculty other than of those who participated in the BASIS curriculum team. It is unlikely to spread much further without being formally required by the school's leadership. While the twinning program is currently a vital component of school life, there is unlikely to be money to maintain it at a meaningful level of intensity. Currently, the coordinator holds a half-time portion jointly funded from BASIS money and the core school budget. It is not clear that her position will be maintained in future years. In a school of such complexity, without a coordinator who can devote time to holding all of the pieces together and to driving the process forward, it is doubtful how long the program's intensity will be maintained. Without sufficient formal power, the coordinator has not been able to mandate the kind of changes that might be lasting. As one participant in the process put it, "the jury's out with regards to what this might all mean." This is especially the case with both the Head of School and head of Jewish studies leaving at the end of the current academic year.

RONALD C. WORNICK JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Deeper, Wider and Still Testing the Limits

Located on a JCC campus, the Wornick School with a student roll of 220 students, has long been recognized for its deep commitment to Israel education. Despite seeing a succession of three heads in the last five years, the school has maintained a clear and consistent set of purposes with regards to Israel education. Parents report that most families select the school knowing of Israel's central value there. Those who are uncomfortable go elsewhere. In this respect, it seems as if the school already arrived at a strong school-level vision for Israel education even before being required to do so by the BASIS process.

Wornick, like Brandeis, was a Bay area pioneer in developing a twinning relationship with an Israeli school. The relationship began six years ago out of a personal connection between a pair of faculty members and saw a small but steady exchange of faculty as well as meaningful joint curriculum work. With the additional resources provided by BASIS, this relationship has flourished with a sizable number of students coming from Israel on exchange visits to stay in the homes of Wornick families where they have developed relationships with the wider school community. Again, even before the launch of BASIS, the school had engaged the services of a curriculum consultant to suggest creative ways of approaching the study of Israel in the middle school's grades. BASIS has allowed them to expand the ambition of this project and to provide release-time for teachers to become involved in the development of material.

Starting from a relatively advanced starting point, the school's leadership has used the BASIS framework to continue building capacity that enables students to experience Israel education with enduring intensity. Starting with a clear vision has helped. This task has been further facilitated by the appointment of an Israel coordinator whose influence in the school was reinforced by her appointment as head of Jewish studies at the end of the project's third year. The coordinator has been able to make permanent program changes with the full support of the Head of School and the head of general studies. This is the kind of structural adjustment that is missing at Brandeis.

Using the opportunities provided by BASIS, and the support provided by its staff, the twinning relationship has been intensified so as to engage more and more of the general studies faculty; two delegations of teachers went to Israel during the last three years. These visits have become such powerful drivers of curriculum change, especially in connecting Jewish and general studies, that the school's lay and professional leadership intend to secure funds to enable these experiences to continue after the initiative's end. The eighth-grade trip to Israel continues to function as the pinnacle of students' Wornick experience. Its impact has been extended by partnering students who will go on the trip with students from younger grades. This small addition enables the trip's contribution to the whole of the school to be experienced more widely. Finally, and more closely connected to the core components of the BASIS program, the curriculum mapping process—with important support provided by BASIS consultants—has been so meaningful that it has been extended to other areas of the curriculum such as social science and history. The school has now bought its own ATLAS license.

A significant indicator of the maturation of Israel education at Wornick is a continued questioning about what have been the outcomes of its change efforts. The Head of School comments: “Everyone will agree that it’s wonderful that sixth-grade students can compare desalination processes in California and Israel. At the same time, when these kids stroll around the streets of Jerusalem, will they recognize Ahad Haam’s name? Will they know when Lord Balfour lived?” In related fashion, she and her Israel education coordinator are disappointed that their progress in developing a sixth to seventh-grade curriculum has been so slow. They wonder if they will now have the resources to do this work themselves even while they reach out to curriculum consultants beyond BASIS to help with this work. They had hoped that their *mancheb* would help them make more progress. They’re disappointed also that Hebrew language instruction was never on the table as a core development element within the BASIS program vision, and that Hebrew has only been touched in a limited way by the changes stimulated by BASIS. These concerns reflect a holistic view of how Israel will be encountered across the whole curriculum long after the project’s end. That, we suspect, is the kind of all-encompassing view that the Jim Joseph Foundation had originally desired.

INGREDIENTS OF TRANSFORMATION

These three narratives highlight a set of patterns that have been evident across all eleven schools. The existence of such patterns enables us to point to program elements that: (i) contribute to the promise of enduring change in schools; (ii) promote positive but not necessarily lasting change; and (iii) in and of themselves, have neutral impact on schools, especially in the absence of other catalytic factors.

INGREDIENTS THAT PROMISE ENDURING CHANGE

A School-Level Vision

The schools that responded most conscientiously to the requirement that they develop a school-level vision for Israel education found their efforts well rewarded. Resisting the rush to produce products and launch programs, their actions provide a neat demonstration of Kurt Lewin’s aphorism that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. It wasn’t just that these schools identified goals that could then orient or guide activities, they enabled their stakeholders to develop a shared language that allowed them to talk about Israel with confidence and clarity. This had far-reaching ramifications, especially when the process brought together members of the community (lay leaders; general studies faculty; parents) who might not ordinarily have had an interest in or the responsibility to think about the place of Israel in their school.

When schools tried to bypass this step, for example by delegating a couple of faculty members to write up a vision, they short-changed themselves. The process of developing a vision was as important as the product it produced. The one exception to this rule was at Wornick, where, as seen above, the school started the BASIS process with an already well-articulated vision that was widely appreciated by the school community.

A Coordinator with Both Power and Influence

The BASIS model required that all schools appoint a coordinator, initially for the equivalent of one day a week, and then for at least two days a week. This person was the critical point of connection to the wider project through the BJE-hosted Community of Practice and through contact with BJE BASIS staff. As we puzzled over why some coordinators had great positive impact on schools and others did not, we found that the most impactful individuals were not necessarily those who were most expert in Israel studies; such people might be important resources but not change agents. In one school, where a savvy Head recognized that the coordinator was not an effective change agent, he mobilized a member of the senior administration to “work with” the coordinator at getting things done. At the same time, it was clear from other schools that a weak coordinator (someone not respected by the broader faculty) could not be carried by even the most dynamic Head. Finally, a coordinator with power—say, a senior administrator—who was an outsider to the field of Israel education did not tend to be an effective change-agent either. Despite their power, these people didn’t seize educational opportunities, make curricular connections, or talk in compelling ways to support cultural change.

The coordinator had potential to play a pivotal role in making possible enduring transformation, but it was only a coordinator with both power and influence who could actually do so. The most impactful coordinators were those who had authority to modify structures and shift individuals out of their regular practices, and were at the same time capable of influencing and inspiring others through their own passion and knowledge.

Engaged General Studies Faculty

Historically, day school Israel education has been confined to Hebrew or Judaic studies classrooms and to special events that have an explicit Israeli or Jewish point of reference.

This was certainly the case in most of the BASIS schools before the initiative's launch. The participating schools that moved towards an enduringly intense approach to Israel education were those that mobilized their general studies faculty both to connect their students with Israel and to instruct them about it.

The engagement of general studies faculty is a powerful lever for changing school culture. Most powerfully, this lever can be activated by a successful twinning relationship that involves joint student projects, for example, in the sciences and social studies, and that enables general studies faculty through visits to Israel to learn about and become connected to the country themselves. At first we thought that the twinning relationship was itself the lever for change, but then we saw that general studies engagement can be produced by running focused trips to Israel independent of a twinning relationship, or by accessing skilled professional development provided locally or at the school itself. We have seen also how this lever can either be paralyzed when school leadership is not trusted/followed by the general studies staff or immobilized when general studies faculty are excluded from the process for envisioning Israel's place in the school.

A Student Trip to Israel as A Curricularized and Integrated Experience

While twinning relationships can enable intensely positive experiences for teachers and for other members of the wider school community, their costs are hard to sustain if they involve bringing Israeli students to America or if they require running programs in Israel for more than one or two faculty members at a time. They are powerful but terribly fragile tools. By contrast, trips to Israel for students whether or not they are part of a twinning relationship are powerful engines for enduring Israel education, if they are well curricularized, strongly integrated in to the rest of the school program, strategically scheduled, and provide meaningful opportunities for interaction with Israeli peers.

BASIS made it possible for schools that previously did not run such student trips to make them a normative part of school life. It enabled those schools that already ran trips to increase their educational sophistication and extend their impact in the lead up to the trip and after. In this way, the trip has been not just another vehicle for Israel education (as we had previously thought), it has been a lever that changes how other vehicles are deployed.

It is noticeable that once schools see how powerful such experiences can be for their students and how central they are to the design of curriculum, they are ready to embrace the funding challenge involved in sustaining such programs from their own resources.

Enhancing School-Based Capacity for Curriculum Design

At the heart of BASIS was an expectation of change in the scope and sequence of teaching and learning about Israel. This expectation was centered on introducing schools to the principles of Understanding by Design (UBD), a powerful system for the design of teaching and learning.

It is easy to overlook how profound a change this involved. Few schools previously possessed a coherent or systematic approach to teaching about Israel, and few of the faculty responsible for teaching about Israel had previously received advanced training in curriculum design. As BASIS took shape, a great deal of effort was therefore focused on skill building, through workshops for coordinators and faculty, and through school-based coaching by the BJE's BASIS curriculum specialist.

The fruits of these efforts have begun to ripen in important ways, albeit slowly. In part this slowness is because teachers often resist change in classroom practice—the heart of what they know and do—especially when the pressure for change comes from external forces. BASIS also had to overcome an expectation that curriculum renewal would come through schools gaining access to new and improved resources (an expectation that may, in part, explain disappointment in schools with the contribution to the process of *manchim* who, it was presumed, would bring those resources with them). Mastering a process that involved learning how to design resources themselves was not readily embraced. Finally, while UBD is a powerful design system, it is almost impossible to adopt piecemeal, without reorienting a whole school's approach to curriculum development, especially when applied to Israel education, a cross disciplinary and departmental endeavor. As one Head of School expressed it, “what if we don't want to be a UBD school?”

In the final year of the initiative, there is beginning to be evidence of changed educational practices that promise to endure after the project's end. It is no coincidence that when the professionals in schools were asked to identify which element of the BASIS process they most valued,

many highlighted the support they received from the BJE's lead curriculum consultant. Her willingness to meet practitioners "where they were" and then work closely with them, over time, in learning and applying the principles of UBD was especially appreciated in relation to a task that had called many to step outside their professional comfort zone so as to develop new skills of potentially far-reaching significance.

INGREDIENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE CHANGE

The BASIS funding and framework made it possible to create a number of experiences that had undoubted positive impact. However, many of these experiences were only ever intended to be one-off; they are unlikely to be financially sustainable, or they will require ongoing commitments from agencies outside the schools if they are to be sustained. These experiences have made a useful and often powerful contribution to the program but their impact is unlikely to endure.

A Twinning Relationship with Israeli Schools

Even before the launch of BASIS, the San Francisco BJE had become a field-leader in trying to move schools towards building on-going relationships between their students and teachers and those in Israel. The benefits of those relationships for all concerned have been described above. The BASIS initiative provided an opportunity to extend these relationships in ways that are not dependent on travel between the two countries. For many schools, however, twinning is still concerned, above all, with bringing groups of students from Israel to America, if only because of the extraordinary results produced by such experiences.

Repeatedly, we were told that bringing groups of students from Israel to BASIS schools had an electrifying impact on students, teachers and families. The relationships nurtured in this way were powerfully experienced by those most closely touched by them. Although the terms of the BASIS grant did not allow schools to fund the travel of Israelis to America, BASIS funds were used to heavily subsidize the land costs of such programs, especially when they included the participation of BASIS students. Given the logistical challenges in running and sustaining such programs, the expertise of BJE BASIS staff was absolutely integral to the successful implementation of these visits.

But bringing students and teachers from Israel cannot by itself lastingly transform what happens in American schools. The impact of these visits lasts as long as those involved are present in the school; thus, the BJE's efforts in moving schools towards other more sustainable forms of twinning relationships. In the long-term, perhaps the greatest impact of such experiences is in triggering or motivating a readiness to embrace other enduring changes. Making longer-lasting change depends on the factors enumerated above.

Taking Leadership to Israel

Another experience which had major impact on many (although not all) schools was the four-day seminar—the summer forum—run in Israel for the entire community of BASIS schools in July 2009. This event communicated a powerful message that the BASIS initiative was prepared to do things differently and was deeply committed to involving all Bay area day schools. For schools that previously lacked conviction about Israel's place in their institution, this experience was galvanizing, if indeed they brought key stakeholders to Israel. For others, the experience, although regarded as frustratingly short, was an opportunity to kick-start challenging conversations within their school communities. For all involved, the seminar had a positive impact especially through providing a sense of being part of a communal delegation joined by its shared interest in transforming Israel education. But like most brief, one-shot experiences its impacts were short-lived unless there were levers in place to multiply their effect.

Building Communities of Practice

If the school-level Israel coordinator was a key contributor to the possibility of enduring change in schools, then the Community of Practice that brought coordinators together at the BJE once a month helped many coordinators perform their responsibilities with greater effectiveness; but, again, much depended on the qualities and circumstances of the coordinator. For coordinators from the more isolated and less institutionally robust schools, these meetings were especially valued: the coordinators learned important skills, gained a professional network, and felt more closely connected to the goals of the initiative. For those with relatively extensive networks of their own, these meetings were less valuable. Indeed, it was at the CoP or as a consequence of participation in it that frustrations connected to the inclusion in the initiative of all Bay area day schools, regardless of readiness or grade level, were most likely to surface.

Thus, the CoP was an important and valuable part of the process but its impact was heavily contingent on a wide variety of variables. We wonder whether it will continue when there is neither a contractual obligation to do so nor a financial incentive.

Encountering Israel Through Arts and Culture

A signature element in the BASIS approach came from the insight that learning about Israel and connection to it can be especially meaningful when experienced through the medium of arts and culture. Thanks to the efforts of BJE staffer, Vavi Toran, the San Francisco BJE has a long and impressive record of innovation and achievement in this field. In fact, this long record of achievement may explain why those we interviewed in the schools did not highlight this orientation as something that was introduced or changed by BASIS. It is possible that many simply took it for granted that Israel can be meaningfully encountered through arts and culture.

That said, the resources and experiences that the BASIS team brought to the schools vitiated the initiative as a whole, and provided a series of palpable and contemporary experiences of Israel. These resources and experiences provided precisely the kinds of content for which many in the schools were looking. But in programmatic terms the short-term strength of this approach is also a long-term weakness. Special programs brought to schools from outside exacerbate their dependence on outside resources that few in the schools have the capacity to develop themselves. The powerful outcomes produced at such moments seem so special because of their rarity or temporariness. It is difficult to see how ultimately these outcomes can survive beyond the life-span of the program without continuous external stimuli.

INGREDIENTS THAT HAVE NEUTRAL IMPACT

There have been some elements of the BASIS model that have made great demands on key personnel in the schools but that have not necessarily resulted in positive school change. At best, the impact of these activities has been neutral. These tasks have been completed as a requirement of the project but often with limited positive impact.

Mapping the Curriculum

It made good theoretical sense to require schools to map their curriculum so as to determine where, when and how they teach students about Israel. A curriculum map can be a useful starting point for further innovation and development. In reality, because many in the schools perceived the curriculum mapping task to have been an unanticipated obligation, and because in many cases this was a task taken on by the coordinators and/or a small number of other personnel simply so as to fulfill their obligations, this task does not seem to have been a lever for change as hoped, a disappointing outcome given how much effort was invested in it.

In the best instances, the mapping exercise did indeed serve as a model for other curriculum areas. It even led some schools to purchase their own mapping license. But, interestingly, even in one school which was already using the ATLAS mapping software in other parts of the curriculum, the Israel education map was not perceived as a living document but rather a one-time exercise demanded by outside agencies. In respect to this aspect of the initiative, it is as if BASIS teams in schools were engaging in a form of resistance to change imposed from without, and were therefore slow to appreciate an intervention that should have been of benefit to all involved. In contrast to the efforts involved in committing to an ambitious curriculum design process, also driven from outside the schools, their hard work on curriculum mapping seems to have had few long-lasting benefits.

The Head of School's Contribution

In our earlier studies of Israel education in day schools we found that Heads of School had played an influential role in shaping the intensity of Israel education, especially when it came to taking their schools in directions which went against prevailing norms. This may indeed be so, but when it came to changing how schools went about Israel education as part of this particular initiative we were surprised to find that while Heads created favorable or unfavorable environments for change, they were neither the primary agents of change nor obstacles to the initiative's success. To put it succinctly, Heads of School enable change to happen; they don't make it happen. This, we believe, is an important finding, and it underlines again the initiative's dependence on well-chosen coordinators at the school level—something that had potential, we believe, to make achieving enduring change more accessible.

INDICATORS OF TRANSFORMATION

Each of the eleven BASIS schools will reach a different end point by the end of the initiative. Where they get to will be in part an outcome of the initiative's programmatic components, as described above. It will also be a consequence of where each school started and how the mix of interventions has played out in each context. While it is premature to talk of particular schools having reached a point of enduring transformation, it is possible to draw evidence from most of the participating BASIS schools that can help paint a picture of what transformative change might look like both in the Bay area and beyond.

In many ways, if this granular picture of transformation had been available at the project's start, it might have helped schools focus more clearly on the outcomes they most desired. This picture would have provided a compass-setting, project-level vision that would have helped the initiative's leaders navigate and communicate their purposes both to school leaders and to the initiative's funders. But then, perhaps inevitably, this is a picture that has only come in to view after having conducted such a bold experiment.

CULTURAL AND CURRICULUM CHANGE

The BASIS initiative has been more than just an attempt to change how one subject is taught. It has been concerned with engineering a change in the culture of Bay area Jewish day schools. There are indications from a number of the schools of what such an outcome might look like. Indeed these indications are precisely the kinds of changes identified in the SRI evaluation report submitted in April 2011.

Indicators of cultural change include:

- Displaying greater comfort and clarity in talking about Israel and about the goals of Israel education
- A wider range of faculty and other school stakeholders talking about Israel and Israel education
- Collaboration and cooperation across subject areas, and across the formal and informal curriculum, for the delivery of Israel education

- Greater coherence and consistency across grades in the design of teaching and learning about Israel
- Adoption and adaptation of the organizational instruments and planning practices of Israel education as models for other subject areas and disciplines
- Informal events that mark significant Israeli moments providing a template and example for special events in the civic American calendar
- Reorienting the focus of existing programs (such as service learning) so as to provide them with an Israel focus

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Our study makes apparent that for enduring change to occur in how schools conduct Israel education, change must be structural and not only cultural. Structural change means that schools are organized differently, and their priorities adjusted, so that Israel education occupies a different place in the institution. Structural change is what undergirds enduring cultural change. Indicators of structural change include:

- Creation of a permanent Israel coordinator position that drives forward and connects changes to teaching and learning about Israel
- Reallocating budget so as to sustain student trips to Israel and/or twinning activities
- Changed curriculum requirements that cement learning about Israel both towards clearly stated goals and across subject areas
- Redistributing teaching and/or planning time so as elevate a focus on Israel
- Redefined criteria for new faculty appointments that reflect the school's vision for Israel education

A MODEL FOR ENGINEERING ENDURING CHANGE

We now move from analyzing what has happened over the four years of the BASIS initiative to proposing how enduring change might be engineered in Jewish day schools and perhaps other institutions. This proposal draws on what we have learned from looking closely at BASIS and from what we know from other multi-school change initiatives in Jewish and non-Jewish schools. We propose (see Figure 2 on page 19) a model that indicates what it will take to transform Israel education in schools, and what we think impedes such transformation, even when many positive forces are aligned.

EXTERNAL DRIVERS

Our analysis of BASIS has largely focused on the processes and interventions inside schools. It is evident that to engineer enduring change across a system, three powerful elements are necessary, some of which, in the case of BASIS, were not fully present because of the initiative's emergent and experimental nature.

1 A Vision of the Program and of the Day After

For multiple schools to commit to a change initiative, they have to be engaged by a clear and compelling vision of systemic change within which they can locate themselves. In the case of BASIS, this vision took time to emerge. In complex school change programs (such as Head Start or Harvard's Public Education Leadership Project) or in more narrowly focused Jewish community initiatives such as the Tanakh Standards and Benchmarks initiative, it is this vision—ideally spelled out at a granular curriculum level—that draws participants in and enables them to see where they are expected to be at particular identified milestones. No less important, even before they join an initiative, schools need help with picturing and planning for the day after the initiative. In the case of BASIS, this last component was slow to emerge because of the initiative's pioneering quality. The absence of such a plan endangers the long-term sustainability of the changes that the initiative wrought.

2 Direction, Supervision and Support from an External Agency

The broader political and organizational circumstances of the BASIS initiative created opportunities for and obstacles to the provision of strong external direction, supervision and support by the BJE. Ideally, all three of these elements must be part of an enduring change process. Direction gives form to a compelling vision; supervision ensures that participants are meeting defined goals and expectations; and support helps participating institutions to advance when they drop behind or are ready to move forward. Balancing all of these roles is perhaps the most challenging and labor-intensive dimension of a change initiative for the lead agency. It will be a critical element in engineering enduring change in other communities and contexts. If an agency is to play these roles well, it must have high levels of trust from program participants and the ability to deploy funding so as to incentivize change at degrees beyond which participants may not originally have conceived or desired.

3 Funding

It goes without saying that sufficient funds have to be brought to a project to enable the realization of a vision for change. The performance of certain BASIS schools demonstrates that such funds need not be indefinitely available for new norms of practice and principle to be established. Strategic funding can create a fertile environment for structural and cultural change, and can be deployed to incentivize change that might otherwise be resisted.

READINESS

One of the most controversial aspects of the BASIS approach was that, in its first phase, it required that all Bay area schools be included in the initiative regardless of their readiness. This requirement was a superordinate value for the funding foundation which was locally based and at an early stage in its life course. The initiative certainly helped

make possible something that had previously been challenging for local day schools: that they work together and collaborate in systemic change.

However, the progress made with respect to these local goals was also an obstacle to more immediate and lasting school transformation in the field of Israel education. For a change project to have greatest impact, participating institutions need to demonstrate in the first place that they have an appropriate and sufficient mix of human, organizational and cultural capital to engage with and sustain their participation in a challenging if vitalizing process. A more coherently constituted cohort can become its own best resource within the change process. In the case of BASIS this was an asset that was available in only limited fashion because of other legitimate commitments that the foundation chose to privilege.

INTERNAL LEVERS

In the “Ingredients that Promise Enduring Change” section of this report (see page 13) we described in detail the internal levers that made the greatest contribution to the possibility of enduring change.

We suspect that three of these levers—an actionable school-specific vision, a coordinator with power and influence, and enhanced capacity for curriculum design—are necessary but not individually sufficient levers for change. Two levers—engaged general studies faculty and a school trip—seem valuable but not necessary elements. (This conclusion represents an important refinement of the constructs of intensifiers and vehicles of Israel education that we proposed in previous research of ours. The BASIS study reveals that a school trip serves more as an intensifier than a vehicle; we call it here a lever. In turn a Head of School is not an intensifier as we had previously thought.)

SCHOOL-LEVEL OUTCOMES

In the “Cultural and Curriculum Change” and “Structural Change” sections of this report (see page 17), we outlined what the cultural and structural features of an enduringly transformed approach to Israel education might look like. Our sense is that many school change projects focus on cultural change, but to be truly enduring they must also bring about structural change. Structural change undergirds lasting cultural change.

FIGURE 2: A MODEL FOR ENGINEERING ENDURING CHANGE IN ISRAEL EDUCATION

EXTERNAL DRIVERS	READINESS	Actionable School-Specific Vision for Israel Education	INTERNAL LEVERS	SCHOOL-LEVEL OUTCOMES
Vision of the Program Horizon and for the Day After			Coordinator (with influence and power)	Transformed School Structure, Culture and Curriculum
Direction, Supervision and Support from a Central Agency			Participation and Buy-In from General Studies Faculty	
Funding			Student trip to Israel and Engagement with Israeli Peers	
	Enhanced Capacity for Curriculum Design			

WHAT WILL IT TAKE—FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The BASIS initiative serves as an ambitious prototype—an unprecedented test case—that helps make clear what it will take to engineer enduring change in Israel education within Jewish day schools. If the model we derived from our study is to be enacted with success, then some further steps are needed to enable similar such initiatives to engineer more consistent and enduring outcomes.

1 Developing A Clear Vision

This description of what BASIS achieved (along with other products produced by the initiative) provides a strong starting point for articulating in granular detail what transformed day school Israel education can look like. The initiative has generated useful tools that will help schools develop their own institution-specific vision. But a focused effort—conducted at the broadest possible level—is still needed to draw out from these resources what a programmatic end-point should look like for all schools and what are the milestones on the way to reaching that point.

2 Identifying A Platform for Leadership and Coordination

The San Francisco BJE was the most appropriate agency to provide leadership, supervision and support for a Bay area initiative. The BJE has developed intellectual capital that can be of great value to other communities and groups. At the same time, it is likely that change within and/or across other communities will need to be led by agencies with greater national reach albeit with access to the accumulated wisdom in San Francisco. These agencies need to be identified in relation to the rigorous expectations outlined in the “External Drivers” section of this report (see page 18) paramount among which is their capacity to articulate in granular detail a vision for transformed Israel education and their being trusted by those they lead.

3 Designing Measures of Readiness and Impact

Before another initiative is launched, descriptors and measures must be in place that (i) can help determine which institutions are ready to participate in a demanding change process, and (ii) can identify the outcomes that institutions are currently producing. The latter will provide baseline data that enable the reliable measurement of what is altered for children and for other members of school communities.

4 Building Matched Cohorts of Participating Institutions

We are convinced that cohorts of schools that participate in a joint change process such as this need not be locally constituted. Schools that display readiness can be drawn from across regions and denominations. The BASIS experience demonstrates that, in local settings, stronger schools can raise weaker schools, but can also be held back by them. We suggest that cohorts will be most coherent if grouped by the age group with which they engage.

5 Preparing Personnel to Lead and Coordinate Change in Schools

Because Israel education is a multidisciplinary and multicontextual activity it requires ongoing institution level coordination. Coordinators of day school Israel education need to possess multiple skills and a wide array of expertise. Across the day school system, there are people with the potential to play such roles. With appropriate and contextually focused preparation these people can make a pivotal contribution to the transformation of Israel education. Investment in their preparation will be all the more impactful if it is linked to systemic change processes such as that of BASIS.

ENDNOTE

It is hard to imagine that change in day school Israel education would be possible without an experiment such as BASIS. This bold initiative has provided resources and examples that enable others to move forward in ways that were not previously possible. Indeed we believe that the lessons from BASIS can be applied to other day school transformation processes and to efforts to transform Israel education in other educational settings.

If BASIS has been an attempt to land a man on the moon, its pioneering efforts make it possible to imagine now how we might get to Mars. The initiative provides moving demonstration of the words of Rabbi Elazar in Pirkei Avot, “it is not for you to complete the task, but neither are you free to stand aside from it.”

APPENDIX: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This report is not an evaluation of the extent to which the BASIS initiative succeeded or failed. It is an attempt to figure out why things happened as they did, and how lessons learned from BASIS might be applied to good effect elsewhere. For this reason the data collection methodology did not involve deployment of outcomes measures but rather discerning inquiry in how things have come to be the way they are.

Our research mandate called for: (i) extensive interviews with participants, stakeholders and local informants so as to build a well-informed sense of what occurred through comparing and contrasting multiple perspectives; (ii) a concentrated effort to see for ourselves how things look, through site visits and the careful analysis of documents produced during the course of the initiative; and (iii) an iterative process of weighing, modifying and integrating conclusions reached by the members of the research team.

The research budget allowed for preliminary, half day—orientation—visits to three schools, and then full-scale one- to two-day visits to nine of the eleven schools. The full-scale visits included interviews with the Head of School, the BASIS coordinator, members of the leadership and curriculum teams, samples of teachers and students, and volunteers. These visits also included the observation of classes and of other relevant school events. Preparation for the visits included the careful review of reports submitted by the schools as part of the initiative and additional communication with them by the BJE.

Further interviews were conducted with members of the BASIS team at the BJE, members of the BASIS advisory board, a sample of *manchim*, professionals from the Jim Joseph Foundation, and additional informants within the Bay area Jewish educational community. In total, close to 100 interviews were conducted as part of our work.

A great volume of documentary data was reviewed, whether produced by the BJE or by the schools. These documents came from all four years of the initiative, and served as more than just a supplement to the interviews. Analysis of these documents revealed the evolving foci of the initiative and their implementation by schools.

A final stage in the production of this report—and in particular its proposal of a model for application to other communities—involved an iterative process of intense, independent, internal deliberation among the research team throughout the five months of our work. Through this last part of the process we have been able to distill the most precise possible interpretation of the initiative's outcomes and implications.

Declaration: The lead author of this report also served as a *mancheb* (a coach) to one of the BASIS schools. His close familiarity with the program proved an asset during the course of conducting this work, and did not result in any conflict of interest.

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