



THE ELECTRONIC EDUCATOR-
A weekly update of information for you and your school!
A service of the NJ Region USCJ Dept. of Education
Michelle Rich, Director of Education and Youth Activities
Nita Polay Levin, Field Worker
Lisa Harris Glass, Executive Director

In this Week's Issue:

- One day conference
- Mini-Courses
- Understanding by Design Seminar
- Purim ideas from Sue Wyner
- Preschool Corner
- BabagaNewz
- Compact
- Combing Through My Files

CALLING ALL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS!

First-time-ever, One day conference coming to
 NJ Region USCJ!

SAVE THE DATE: Wednesday, June 10, 2009

LOCATION: Cong. Neve Shalom, Metuchen (2 turns off the GSP)

TIME: 9:30 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Something Different! New Presentations!

- * *Presentation, consultation and display by BEHRMAN HOUSE PUBLISHERS*
- * *DR. SHOSHANA SILBERMAN, presenting techniques from her new book, Active Teaching Activities*
- * *THE QUALITY HEBREW HIGH with RABBI RON ISAACS, creator and director of one of the best in the region*
- * *Vibrant Shabbat Morning Services for Young Children*
- * *Teaching Children with Special Needs*
- * **YES! EVEN A SMALL SCHOOL CAN HAVE A QUALITY PROGRAM!**
- * **WORKSHOPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS**

MORE TO COME! WE ARE ON A ROLL!!

TEACHER TRAINING

MINI-COURSES

Winter/Spring Semester

COURSE # 5: TEACHING THE PARSHA THE ACTIVE WAY IN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
INSTRUCTOR: DR. SHOSHANA SILBERMAN, CONSULTANT, AUTHOR & LECTURER

Author of the up-coming book on Active Learning Techniques as applied to the religious school classroom, Dr. Silberman will share Active Learning techniques that you can apply to any parsha in 5 - 15 minutes.

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 7 - 8:30 PM LOCATION: Morristown Jewish Center

**COURSE # 6: FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ONLY
ASSESSING AND EVALUATING STUDENT LEARNING IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
INSTRUCTOR: SUSAN WYNER, No. American Consultant for Synagogue
EDUCATION, USCJ**

This workshop will broaden your thinking about student assessment and how it can be used to promote maximum learning in the classroom. We will examine ways to communicate teacher observations both to the students and to the parents, so that progress is reported and challenges are addressed. Traditional Jewish texts, the latest research, video observation and your own skills and ideas will be critical tools in our study.

**DATE: Tuesday, March 17, 10 am - 12 N
LOCATION: NJ Region USCJ office, Raritan Center, Edison**

If you are interested in attending any of these courses, contact Michelle Rich at Rich@USCJ.org. As a benefit of your synagogue's membership in United Synagogue, all courses are free for teachers affiliated with a USCJ school or anyone who is a member of a USCJ congregation.

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN SEMINAR

It's official!! The JECC will be offering its summer Understanding by Design seminar from Sunday, June 28th – Wednesday, July 1st, 2009.

Some of the initial inquiries this year have come from those who are looking to spend their professional development money that had been reserved for CAJE ... and some directors have asked about bringing teachers. We LOVE teams – they allow a school or community to choose its focus and work on it throughout the time here. However, my caveat to you is that we work as a cohort over four days pretty intensely. Those who enjoy the seminar have a formal educational background, have had experience in the field for a number of years, and enjoy thinking about and working with curriculum. If you have teachers you might have taken to CAJE with you, this might not be the right professional development experience for them. Or it might very well be!

Please be in touch if you have any questions! This seminar does have a tendency to fill because our space at the JECC is limited. Register early!

The JECC staff and I are looking forward to another wonderful week with our colleagues from across the country! Perhaps you'll be one of them!

Feel free to share this email with anyone else you think might be interested.

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CHAG PURIM

Purim is About the Joy of Survival
MiShenichnas Adar Marbim BeSimcha!!
(Also attached in better format as a .pdf and .doc)
When Adar Comes, Joy Is Increased!!

Want to try something interesting? Google "Be Happy Its Adar" and watch all of the hits you get!
I got 39,200 hits! Who knew?

So let's first talk about the happiness—the costumes, the hamantashen, the Mishloach Manot, the wild abandon at the reading of the Megilla (this is for educators of children, so we won't go into the increase in alcoholic consumption.)

If you are looking for some web sites that can add to the fun for your students, even while they study about the holiday, here are a few that won't fail to entertain:

www.torahtots.com/holidays/purim/purim.htm For games, activities, songs. Good for young children through elementary.

www.care2.com/gates/holidays/purim/purim/html For the Purim story and activities. Good for a variety of ages.

www.jafi.org.il/education/festivals/PURIM/pureng7.html This site is created under the auspices of the Jewish Agency. Good for a variety of ages.

www.amit.org.il/learning/english/purim/ Lots of interactive computer activities and creative ideas. Good for elementary to middle school. It's a site that will make them think.

www.usy.org/kadima/Purim_Programs.doc. By Kadima Coordinator Amy Greenfield, a variety of Purim games and activities. Good for elementary-teens.

A Purimspiel Alternative: For me a Purimspiel has to be exceptionally funny to work. An alternative is for the professional staff to select a costume theme and write a few song parodies that the congregation can sing along. Attached you will find a few parodies for the theme of "Beauty and the Beast" (I had the privilege of playing "Mrs. Potts"—and I searched for "Chip" all night!) Perhaps this will get your creative juices going. It's fun to get a group of people together around a bowl of M n' M's—amazing how creative and humorous the parodies will get!

Our colleague Daniel Victor, Rabbi in Residence at East Midwood Hebrew Day School kindly forwarded an idea that his Mom, Serene Victor, my predecessor, sent him. "Hamansticks", a take-off of "Thundersticks", can be used as a school fundraiser. See the attached flyer for details. Daniel was also generous in providing his e-mail address in case you have questions about how the fundraiser works! Thanks, Daniel and Serene!

Through all the fun of Purim, it's important to remind our students that the joy has its genesis from a story of survival. And although God's name is not found in the story, it certainly is found in the white spaces between the letters, as well as in the brachot before and after reading Megilla. So as you plan for the joy, we know that you won't forget to plan for the four mitzvot:

1. The reading of the Megilla (Mikrah Megilla)
2. The meal (Seudah Purim)
3. The giving of gifts (Mishloach Manot)
4. Gifts to the poor (Matanot l'evyonim)

In this way your school Purim celebration can be as fulfilling and educational as it is fun.

Be Happy—1 Adar is on February 25!

We read the Purim Megilla
on the evening of March 9 and
on March 10 (14 Adar).

Susan E. Wyner
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

North American Consultant for Synagogue Education

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PRESCHOOL CORNER

Hi All,

Sorry it took so long to get the notes out - had to run to catch the flight to LA right after the call. Here you go - lots of exciting stuff happening! Talk to you next month - March 18, 1:15 EST time.

Max

EC Director's Chat – Feb. 11, 2009

Topics: report on the JEA conference, talk about the Guidelines for Conservative Early Childhood Programs (copyright and pilot) and mitzvah projects.

On the call

Idie Benjamin – Temple Israel Center, White Plains, NY

Judy Jacks Berman – Beth Shalom, Overland Park, KS

Esther Cohen – Beth Torah, Richardson, TX

Debbie Kinman-Ford – Cong. B'nai Israel, Gainesville, FL

Gail Schmitt – Adat Shalom, Cheswick PA

Sheri Brown – Cong. Shaare Shalom, Leesburg, VA

Phyllis Denenberg – B'nai Tikvah, North Brunswick, NJ

Ellen Walters, Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Ed, Philadelphia, PA

Barbara Davis – Temple Beth Shalom, Framingham, MA

Next call – Wed March 18 1:15 EST Topic - Summer camp (themes, organization, how bring Jewish into the summer)

Suggestion for future topics: behavior management techniques, also safety practices such as how schools deal with an intruder in the building “lock down” etc. summer camp (themes, organization, how bring Jewish into the summer)

JEA summary:

Early Childhood Directors at the JEA 2009

Close to twenty Early Childhood Directors from around the country joined together for the USCJ Early Childhood Director's conference at the JEA in Scottsdale, AZ. EC Directors had the advantage of hearing spectacular scholars such as Rabbi Brad Artson, Dr. Barry Holtz, Rabbi Elliot Dorff and Rabbi Ed Feinstein. We gathered for focused, intimate learning on relevant issues in early childhood in the Conservative movement, including the Guidelines for Conservative Early Childhood Programs. A pilot program for the Guidelines emerged as a result of the conference, and will lead to a training manual by Summer 09. Maxine Handelman, Rabbi Mitch Malkus and Mary Lou Allen took us in-depth into the challenges of a successful early childhood – synagogue relationship. Many other conference attendees joined the early childhood directors to learn and grow together. Teams of EC and ED directors who attended the conference benefited the most, learning (and dancing!) together at the conference, and taking all the learning home together. Early Childhood directors have many conferences to choose from, but those who chose the EC Director's Conference at the JEA were able to network closely with colleagues and experience focused learning. Next year's JEA is in Israel, so stay tuned to see what's planned for early childhood directors!

Guidelines for Conservative Early Childhood Programs:

The Guidelines are about as done as they are going to be – edited by several, they even have a copyright! From a suggestion at the JEA, the Guidelines are now being piloted. 12 schools are implementing the different sections of the Guidelines, and a training manual will be developed from the experiences of the pilot schools. A hard copy of the Guidelines, along with the training manual, will be distributed to every USCJ and Schechter EC director by the end of July. The Guidelines will be on the USCJ website soon, and will be broadly publicized when the training manual is available this summer.

CAJE and conferences:

This month on the call we had a really great discussion about what Jewish early childhood conference options now remain now that CAJE z'v is now closing. The idea of a regional, low key, no frills conference that would afford us lots of time to network, brainstorm and learn together, for a low cost, generated a lot of excitement. As many of you have seen on the listserv, Debbie Kinman-Ford has spearheaded the effort to assess interest in such a retreat. In the coming weeks, Max, Debbie, and others (including, possibly, reps from the reform movement) will continue investigations into the possibility of making this retreat a reality. Please let me know if you'd like to help.

Mitzvah projects:

Ideas for mitzvah projects can often be found in Jewish magazines, such as collecting pajamas for a domestic abuse shelter, or having "Blue Box Bob" from the JNF come to visit.

I think the most exciting idea (for me) to come out of the discussion was the idea of the EC kids creating shalach manot baskets for all the families in the congregation who DO NOT have a child in the EC. Something simple, perhaps with a picture or card made by the EC kids, this creates an incredible connection between the EC program and the congregation at large, which is something we should always be striving to do.

Hag Purim Sameach!!

Max

Maxine Handelman
Consultant for Early Childhood Education

BabagaNewz

February 18, 2009 / 24 Shevat 5769

Dear NITA POLAY,

The holiday of Purim begins Monday night, March 9, 2009 (14 Adar 5769). On **Purim**, we are meant to be full of joy, as we celebrate the saving of the Jews in Persia.

Visit the [Holiday Resources](#) section of the BabagaNewz teachers' site to find everything you need to **teach Purim**. Start with [mini-lessons](#) to introduce the holiday. These include activities such as designing game cards and writing original poetry. Share [Purim Central](#) with your students. Here, they will find recipes, games, and more, all related to this Adar holiday.

Keep reading for many activities and lesson plans, which I hope you will find useful and meaningful.

B'Shalom,
Sara Marx
Web Editor

Call-In Hour with BabagaNewz.com Educator

BabagaNewz.com offers a **call-in hour** with Director of Education, Lisa Micley, on Wednesday, March 4, 2009. Join the conversation to **ask questions, share concerns, and get ideas for your classroom.**

Chapters of the

Choose one of the following times on March 4, 2009:
1 p.m.
4 p.m.

Contact us [by email](#) to register, or just dial 1-888-247-2572 and enter 9607# when prompted.

Quick Links

[BabagaNewz.com](#)

[Check out games](#)
[Send an e-card](#)

Happiness Movie

This movie full of happy people and set to the music of Shir Lismoach (Malki's Song) will put everyone in a joyous mood for Purim. Show it in class or have students watch at home beforehand. Click [here](#) to watch!

Purim Resources

Click [here](#) for the complete set of teachers' resources for Purim.

Click [here](#) for Purim Central for kids.

[The Secret of Giving](#)

Teach this special lesson in which students explore the relationship between *matanot la'evyonim* (gifts for the poor) and Purim, discover connections between tzedakah and other Jewish holidays and life-cycle events, and design tribute cards to raise tzedakah funds.

[Hebrew Match Game: Purim Edition](#)

Learn the vocabulary for Purim and then play the game. This is a great activity to do with classes the week before Purim.

[High School Megillah](#)

Your students will *love* this sing along take-off of "We're All in This Together" from High School Musical!

[Slideshow](#)

This slideshow depicts the celebration of Purim in Israel. This movie and slideshow can be used in the classroom, at school assemblies, for family programs, in homes, etc.

[V'nahafokh Hu Day!](#)

V'nahafokh hu (and it was turned around) is sometimes seen as the catchphrase of Purim. Click [here](#) to find out how to organize a "V'nahafokh Hu Day" to get your students in the Purim spirit.

[Purim e-card](#)

[Purim Mask Craft](#)

[Hamantaschen recipe](#)

[JEWPARDY! Holiday Edition](#)



BabagaNewz.com is an educational web site that helps students see the world from a Jewish values perspective. BabagaNewz.com is a project of JFL Media in partnership with The AVI CHAI Foundation.

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A Compact of Commitment To Conservative Judaism

Enriching the Lives of Conservative Jews

Jews enlightening Jews.

Jews mentoring other Jews.

Jews spiritually enhancing their own lives.

COMPACT's mission is to aid in Jewish self-growth, which affirms the brit mitzvah - covenant -- of the Torah's commandments within each Jew.

For seven years (and several Adar IIs) - that's 87 months in a row, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism has produced a monthly educational packet called COMPACT.

The **Compact Of Commitment To Conservative Judaism** began as a presentation by Rabbi Jerome M. Epstein at the Five Pillars Convention in February 2002 in Washington D.C; where the USCJ, the Rabbinical Assembly, the Cantor's Assembly, the Jewish Educators Assembly and the North American Association of Synagogue Executives gathered for a combined convention.

From Rabbi Epstein's presentation grew this opportunity for people ... all people ... professional and clergy, members and leaders, young and old to receive interesting material to read and grow as Jews. Resources from the corners of Conservative Judaism to the extended ideas of Jews from other affiliations are edited into the monthly COMPACT.

!

COMPACT is and will be on the USCJ website for anyone to see and read.

Please share this information with your members, your colleagues, and your constituency.

Shalom,

Rabbi Moshe Edelman, Director
Department of Leadership Development and Congregational Planning
& Committee on Congregational Standards

http://uscj.org/compact/compact_feb_2009.pdf

the look for **COMPACT 87 ADAR5769.pdf**
The COMPACT is available in both **word** and **PDF**

Rabbi Moshe Edelman

COMBING THROUGH MY FILES:

Be Happy: It's Adar !

It's not too early to start thinking about **Purim** !!

From Babaganewz : .com *Top 10 Ways the Purim Story Would Go Down in Modern Times; Shushan Classifieds (which Purim personality posted these ads??); High School Megillah (The shpiel)*

Crafts **stories** **shpiels**
Recipes **puzzles** **board games**
Carnivals **Early Childhood activities**
Workshops **Shlach manot baskets**
Whole school activities **family programs**

Also available from our files:

Kashrut Pursuit: the Board Game
(an excellent game for teaching and reviewing about
Kashrut)

Feeling creative but need help designing an idea? Call us!
For these, and other ideas, contact Nita at Levin@USCJ.org