



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:

- Conference on Synagogue Education
- MANAJE Conference
- Contract information
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- Preschool corner
- Combing through my files

(IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOUR BROCHURE AND REGISTRATION FORM, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE RIGHT AWAY!)

CONFERENCE ON SYNAGOGUE EDUCATION

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Cong. Neve Shalom, Metuchen, 9:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

New Presentations! High Quality Education!

For religious school teachers & principals, preschool teachers & directors, cantors, rabbis, school boards, and synagogue lay people who have an interest in bettering Jewish education in their synagogue

- * DR. SHOSHANA SILBERMAN, presenting techniques from her new book, ACTIVE JEWISH LEARNING**
- * SETTING UP A QUALITY HEBREW HIGH with RABBI RON ISAACS, creator and director of one of the best in the region**
- * WORKSHOPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS with CARYN BRUCKHEIMER**
- *TEACHING PRAYER THE "4MAT" WAY, using SIDDUR SIM SHALOM with ALEX WEINBERG, author of Siddur Sim Shalom, Remix 2.0**
- *SUZI ADELSON WAINER on Multiple Intelligences and How to Ask Questions that Challenge**
- * Consultation and display by TERRY KAYE, of BEHRMAN HOUSE PUBLISHERS**
- *RABBI ROBERT ABRAMSON, National Director of Education, speaking with school committee chairs and VPs about their role**
- LISA HARRIS GLASS, Executive Director, NJ Region USCJ, on navigating through these difficult economic times**

Save the Date!!

Please note the correct website address for MANAJE and this upcoming conference:

MANAJE

New Alternatives in Jewish Education

Who We Are:

We are a group of former CAJE members who, upon hearing that the annual CAJE conference was cancelled, got together in an online social network group to talk about what CAJE meant to us and what we might do in the absence of CAJE. Some of us knew each other from our CAJE experiences, and some of us are new friends. We are Jewish educators from diverse backgrounds, but we are united in the mission to elevate our knowledge of Judaism and expand our educational practices, in order that we may create the most inspiring Jewish educational settings we can.

A strong consensus emerged in our discussions that our CAJE experiences are essential to our continued professional growth. We concluded that we could not afford to miss an opportunity to meet, and thus was born the idea to plan a 'mini' conference for the summer of 2009. A phone call was made to the Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center in suburban Baltimore, MD to inquire about availability – it was beshert! – they could take us in August.

Our online group agreed to go forward with a conference, and a new online group was formed for the planning: The Mid-Atlantic Conference Group. Our group's membership has been steadily growing and reaching out to former CAJE members from all over the country and Israel, as well as more immediate communities in driving distance of Pearlstone: MD, DC, DE, VA, WV, PA, NJ, and NY.

We are energized by each other's willingness to commit valuable time and effort toward this mini-conference, especially at such an uncertain time in the wake of the closure of national CAJE. Nevertheless, our spirit and our resolve is focused on the future; on what we must continue to do to nurture ourselves while also finding ways to encourage and enable the next generation of Jewish educators.

- **FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO [HTTP://MANAJE.ORG](http://MANAJE.ORG)**

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Attention Religious School Directors and Principals:

For those of you who are currently in contract negotiations, please be smart about your negotiations. Go to the United Synagogue website (www.uscj.org) and look up the Guide to Congregational Practice. Go to the section on the EDUCATOR. You will see a sample contract there.

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Seminar at the BJE of Greater New York:

Using Art to Learn About the Holocaust
Tuesday, May 26th from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

We will look at various pieces of art, available online, created during the Holocaust and learn ways of incorporating these resources into the Holocaust education curriculum.

There is no fee for this seminar and a light breakfast will be served.

RSVPs are requested. Please RSVP to Emily Witty at witty@bjeny.org or call (646) 472-5361.

15TH ANNUAL
TEVA SEMINAR

On Jewish Environmental Education
June 1 – 4, 2009
Surprise Lake Camp, Cold Springs, NY

*For information, contact:
Teva Learning Center*

[Leora Mallach: seminar@tevacenter.org](mailto:seminar@tevacenter.org)

co-sponsored by
JNF

SUMMER INSTITUTE AT THE SIEGAL COLLEGE,
CLEVELAND

Here's your invitation to a unique conference for Jewish educators!

Moreh L'Morim: An Educator's Guide to Perplexing Times will be held at Siegal College in Cleveland from August 9-12.

The conference features outstanding national educators like Vicky Kelman and the staff of the Teva Center for Judaism and Ecology, as well as the full resources of Siegal College and the Cleveland Jewish community. Participants can choose intensive tracks of study or pick from a wide variety of workshops and discussions. Participants can also elect to join in a single day of Jewish learning and professional development. Evening cultural and recreational activities will be available, as well as ongoing opportunities to network with Jewish educators from communities across the country.

Visit our website <http://www.siegalcollege.edu/summerinstitute.php> for details and registration! Educators from Cleveland and our MAHAR partner communities (Akron, Canton, Youngstown and Pittsburgh) are eligible for discounted fees.

Contact conference coordinator Lisa Kollins directly with questions: summerinstitute@siegalcollege.edu or (216) 464-4050.

FROM TORAH AURA

May 4, 2009

Volume 16, Issue 9

Great Reading, No Matter Your Attention Span

Haverim,

Welcome to the latest edition of the TAPBB, the Torah Aura Productions Bulletin Board.

It's May, and for some of you, things might be just starting to slow down. The end of the school year is on the horizon, and you might be finding the time to catch up on all that stuff you've been meaning to do. For others, now might be your busiest time of the year. Report cards, graduation, and budgets may be filling every moment of your waking hours.

This week, we have something for both groups. If you've got a moment on your hands, this issue of the **TAPBB** features two thoughtful articles. The first is our response to Jack Wertheimer's recently-published report, [Schools That Work: What We Can Learn from Good Jewish Supplemental Schools](#). The other is a think piece by Josh Mason-Barkin on teaching about Jewish heroes. We hope that both are thought-provoking and question-inspiring.

If you've got a little less time on your hands, you should really check out our Twitter feed. If you're unfamiliar, Twitter is a great internet application that lets users post little snippets of information, 140 character or less. Our [twitter feed](#) is a great way to catch up on what's new at Torah Aura, and to hear about all kinds of sales, teaching ideas, and thoughts on Jewish education. And 140 characters only take a second to read. Check us out over at [twitter.com/torahaura](#).

As always, keep up the good work and be in touch.

Kol tuv,

- Jane, Joel, Alan, and Josh

Helping to Make Schools That Work A Publisher's Response to Jack Wertheimer

In the last couple months, you may have noticed Torah Aura Productions using a new mission statement: "Making success in Jewish education an achievable reality." We're really excited about this new articulation of our mission because it so clearly sums up who we are and what we do. We're in the business of helping

In This Issue

[Helping to Make Schools That Work](#)

[New Techniques for Teaching Heroes](#)

The Torah Aura
Productions
TEACHER GIFT

SALE
is here!

SALE:

Are you looking for a gift for your teachers that celebrates the great job they've done this year and invests in their future?

We know that as the end of the school year approaches, budgets are tight but you still want to show appreciation for the teachers in your school.

That's why we're offering a special deal on teacher gifts, but only for the next 48 hours.

The following books are on sale:

- [Creating Successful Curriculum Enhancers](#) by Dorothy Herman, was \$19.95, now **\$11.95**.

- [Active Jewish Learning](#) by Shoshana Silberman, Ed. D. & Mel Silberman, Ph. D., was \$19.95, now **\$11.95**.

- [Teaching Jewishly](#) by Joel Grubovoy, was

who we are and what we do. We're in the business of helping Jewish schools succeed.

So it was with great pleasure that we read a new study from Professor Jack Wertheimer entitled *Schools That Work: What We Can Learn from Good Jewish Supplemental Schools*. It's an analytical look at Jewish schools that suggests a path towards success. (You can download the entire report by [clicking here](#).)

With the help of a team of top-notch researchers and funded by the Avi Chai Foundation, Professor Wertheimer looks at ten excellent supplemental schools and draws out common elements that contribute to their success.

What is important about this study is that it affirms a truth stated too infrequently: that supplementary schools can succeed. Perhaps more importantly, Wertheimer identifies the elements that help define "success" in schools, offering suggestions for replicating the excellence that he and his team found.

The study presents six "noteworthy characteristics of good schools." Good schools (1) work on building friendships and community, (2) go beyond teaching facts to allow students to work on meaning, (3) use experiential education, (4) actualize a clear vision, (5) value themselves and their students, and (6) involve not only students but their families. Wertheimer makes it clear that it takes "a combination of traits to forge a strong school."

Because we're invested in making success in Jewish education an achievable reality, we take these six characteristics very seriously. Wertheimer's work has pushed us to ask some meaningful questions about our work. How can we help enable schools to actualize these characteristics in their own authentic way? In what ways do these principles inform the curricular materials we publish? What does it mean to be a publishing company whose mission is to help Jewish educators and teachers achieve success?

[Keep reading...](#)

We Need a Hero

Toward a New Technique for Teaching Jewish Heroes

by Josh Mason-Barkin

Old magazines can surprise you.

In 1994, CAJE published an edition of its *Jewish Education News* dedicated entirely to Jewish heroes. Fifteen years later, flipping through dusty papers on a bookshelf, that issue of *JEN* inspired us to publish our new book on heroes, [Eizehu Gibor: Living Jewish Values](#).

None of the many articles in that issue explicitly mention it, but there's a tension throughout the Spring 1994 edition's pages. On one hand, esteemed thinkers of Jewish education argue that we need to introduce our students to the mythological characters of Jewish history like Samson and Herzl. On the other hand, equally esteemed thinkers argue that we need to teach our students about everyday heroes, normal people who can show us how to live

Joel Grishaver, was \$11.95, now **\$9.95**.

To get your discount, simply head to the [Torah Aura website](#), place your order, and enter coupon code **59813** when you check out.

You have exactly 48 hours. Move quickly. When the clock strikes on Tuesday evening, this sale is over.

Find us on Facebook!

We're big techies here at Torah Aura... techies who spend a little too much time at our computers and on our BlackBerries. And though this obsession can be a problem at times, we've also found that the latest technology is a great way to connect with our friends and colleagues.

Enter the Torah Aura Productions facebook page.

If you're a member of facebook, find us online by clicking over to our facebook page (you can find us easily by just typing "Torah Aura" in the searchbar). When you get there, you'll find out about upcoming Torah Aura events, read the latest news on the collest new products, and connect with colleagues in Jewish education. You can even stay updated by becoming a "fan" of Torah Aura. Just click "Become a Fan" in the upper right-hand corner.

mitzvah-filled Jewish lives.

We teach Jewish values not because we want our students to know the Hebrew names for a bunch of ethical principles. Rather, we teach Jewish values because we want our students to live moral lives informed by the Jewish tradition and their connection to God. Knowing that *kavod* means respect is useless if you're not a respectful person.

Recently, educators have been telling us a lot about this struggle to have the Jewish values they teach in the classroom translate into the way students treat each other. Suffice it to say that we hear a lot of frustration in those educators' voices. We think [Eizehu Gibor](#) can help.

How do heroes fit into the equation of values internalization? And why are we publishing a new heroes book this year? Perhaps the best way to explain is to explore the tension between the "big heroes" and the "everyday heroes."

[Keep reading »](#)

Preschool Corner:

The spring publication of "Your Child", a wonderful resource for educators and parents of young children is now available on the USCJ web site.

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Have you seen the Jewish identity series, Look At Me! for pre K – K from Behrman House? There are 4 magazines: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah, I Can Celebrate Shabbat, I Can Do a Mitzvah, and I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue. They are designed to "introduce core Jewish concepts to young children and build their Jewish identities, knowledge, and values while reinforcing counting skills, visual discrimination, and fine motor coordination. Each magazine includes a full page of colorful activity stickers...."

DIRECTORS:

Our next call will be Wednesday, May 13 at 11am EST (10am Central, 9am Mountain and 8am Pacific) the call-in information: 1-218-486-8700 (Midwest) Participant Access Code 84072

Guest: Kimberly Rubinfeld, Project Manager for *Hekhsher Tzedek*, the new ethical certification seal that will be introduced to the kosher food industry in the coming months, a joint project of the USCJ and the RA. Website: hekhshertzedk.org.

Please let me know if you will be able to join the call.

B'Shalom,
Max

Maxine Handelman
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United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
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www.uscj.org
I'd stop eating chocolate but I'm no quitter.

Directors: Not a member of the listserv? Contact
ECDir@USCJ.ORG

For your teachers: contact <http://uscj.org/archives/ecteach.html>

Click on "Join or leave the list (or change settings)" and fill in your information from there.

Why re-invent the wheel? Get in on this exciting exchange of ideas & find solutions to your issues!

COMBING THROUGH MY FILES:

Several articles on religious school report cards

Articles on closing the school year & year's end procedures (repair form,
teacher evaluations, etc.)

Activities for Shavuot

*Lech Lecha: a short ceremony to recognize high school graduates at the end
of the year (very little prep needed)*

61 Things You Should Know About Israel