the iCenter
FOR ISRAEL EDUCATION

Israel Education in Practice

Growth of the Field from the Educators' Perspective

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Executive Summary

"A Field is a community of organizations and individuals: 1) working together towards a common goal, and 2) using a set of common approaches to achieving that goal."[1] In this report, we develop this definition of a Field for the purpose of understanding the core attributes of the emerging community of American Jewish educators who are advancing the goal of improved Israel education for early childhood through high school aged children and share a common approach. These are the teachers, program and school directors, and other educational administrators and policy makers who imagine, design and implement educational activities and programs having to do with Israel education.

This report draws on 32 one-hour telephone interviews completed between September 2012 and January 2013. With this interview sample, we seek to describe Israel education at its best, in a variety of American Jewish education contexts from early childhood through high school age students. We sought out exceptional educators who could provide an understanding of sophisticated Israel education practice in a wide variety of institutional contexts. This report describes the worldviews and practices of these educators. The report is the first of two studies contributing to a larger field mapping project. The second report includes survey research aimed at gaining a broader understanding of the numbers of American Jewish educators who are actively involved in Israel education and who are "qualified Israel educators," sharing the commitment and sophistication of the educators documented in this report.

Major Findings

1. Starting with the Personal

Israel educators have a strong personal connection to Israel. While narratives vary, many highlight personal and familial connections to Israel as what turned them on to Israel education. Some speak about their early (e.g., teen) experiences in Israel as part of that journey, while others had only later Israel experiences. Israel educators build on their personal connection as a major source of motivation and inspiration for their educational work.

2. Connecting the Personal to the Professional

The next question is how to tap the strong personal connection many Jewish educators have to Israel and help them convert that connection into a desire to bring Israel education into their professional work. Once the motivation is in place to work as an Israel educator we then need to inquire into the professional capacity of the educator. Does the educator have the knowledge and skills needed to pull others into a personally meaningful relationship with Israel?

3. Building Professional Capacity

The interviews show three dimensions for thinking about professional capacity: a) Degree of specialization - How much of an individual's job is devoted to Israel education? b) Sophistication of educational practice - To what extent does the educator have a rich educational philosophy and corresponding set of educational methodologies? c) Leadership - Does the individual move beyond his or her students in order to bring Israel education to other educators in his or her institution, movement or broader professional network?

[1] The Bridgespan Group. June 2009. "The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact." Page 2.
[2] The Bridgespan Group. June 2009. "The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact." Page 2.

a. Specialization

There are three levels of specialization among active Israel educators:

1. **The fully-focused Israel educator**
   These are sophisticated educators whose job description is to serve as key change agents for the field;
2. **The specialized Israel educator**
   These are individuals with formally recognized competence to educate about Israel as part of their job and who serve as champions of Israel education in their organization and in some cases for the broader field; and,
3. **The integrators**
   These are educators who seek to integrate Israel education into their broader Jewish educational work. The integrators are found throughout the field of Jewish education. They understand that Israel education requires specialized knowledge and skills and are located on a broad spectrum of sophistication and capacity for leadership.

b. Sophistication

The sophistication of Israel education depends on the ability of an educator to at once develop a conceptual understanding of what good Israel education entails, and to master corresponding knowledge and practices. Three themes arise from the interviews as the core elements of a sophisticated Israel education practice.

1. **Integral to Jewish education**
   Israel education is integral to Jewish education and cannot be effective if educators separate Israel out of their broader vision and strategy for Jewish education.
2. **Promotes a living connection to Israel**
   Good Israel education promotes "a living connection with Israel," which includes the ability of students to experience the complexity of Israeli society, and for educators and students to develop a sense of self-awareness as to what in their connection to Israel is personally meaningful for them. Whether the educator or the student, a meaningful connection to Israel "starts where the person is at," which will, by definition, be different for different people. To enact this "bottom up approach" sophisticated educators will seek a connection to their students' interests and passions and at that point nurture their connection with Israel.
3. **Ability to access a toolkit of strategies**
   Israel educators' success depends on their ability to access a toolkit of diverse educational strategies, which they can mix and match.

c. Leadership

Central to the effort to develop a field are change agents - individuals who champion Israel education in their organizations, movements and in the broader Jewish community. These leaders work to expose other educators to the field and then nurture their continued involvement. Without the presence of "Israel education champions" it is unlikely that a particular organization or institution will integrate and sustain a sophisticated level of Israel education along the lines described above. We illustrate the importance of change agents by looking at the recent surge in interest in Israel education in the American Reform Movement. The case study illustrates the importance of individual change agents for enabling change, and their dependence on resources and support coming from their broader institutional network and elsewhere.

4. To Grow the Ranks of Sophisticated Israel Educators, Connect Personal and Professional

The educators profiled in this report are models from which to build the field of Israel education. They have developed their capacities as educators, and they served as leaders in their organizations and in the Jewish educational community to push forward the agenda of Israel education.

To grow the field, more educators like the ones presented here will need to be developed. And to do that, the most powerful place to start is the common denominator between the Israel educators interviewed in this report and most other Jewish educators: their personal connection to, and in many cases, passion for, Israel. Change initiatives need to connect the "masses" of Jewish educators with a passion for Israel to the knowledge and skills required to integrate effective Israel educational work into their work as Jewish educators. The most committed should be nurtured and groomed as change agents and champions on behalf of the field.

An Educator's Perspective

"A Field is a community of organizations and individuals: 1) working together towards a common goal, and 2) using a set of common approaches to achieving that goal."[2] In this report, we develop this definition of a Field for the purpose of understanding the core attributes of the emerging community of American Jewish educators who are advancing the goal of improved Israel Education[3] for elementary and high school aged children. These are the teachers, program and school directors and other educational administrators and policy makers who imagine, design and implement educational activities and programs having to do with Israel Education.

The educators we present in this report are a small but significant group who are champions for the developing field. The field itself is very new, as is the phenomenon of a growing number of educators who subscribe to a similar educational worldview and pedagogical approach to connecting Jews to Israel, who are presented in this report.

The Growth of a Field

In 2003, Karen Abrams Gerber and Aliza Mazor argued that there was no field of Israel education in the United States and called for "the requisite development of a curricular approach, systemized training, professionalization, and the creation of a central address to coordinate and streamline this process."[4] By 2009, Alex Pomson, Howard Deitcher and Michal Muszkat-Barkan pointed to a tremendous shift taking place, with a dramatic increase in the amount of curricular resources available and the number of organizations offering consulting and support for Israel education in North American Day Schools. A 2012 report, in which iCenter staff reviewed existing research, notes:

> *The key building blocks of field development have been put in place since 2003. Standards of practice have been identified and articulated. Professionalization of the field has begun to happen through regular conferences on Israel Education and certification programs by academic institutions. Makom and the Center for Israel Education at Emory continue their work and in 2009, the iCenter emerged as a North American capacity-building address for the field. And key funders are embracing Israel education as a long-term strategic priority.*[5]

However, despite progress made, a common link between the 2003, 2009 and 2012 reports is a concern with a lack of qualified Israel educators who are capable of pushing the field of Israel education forward. For example, Pomson, Deitcher and Muszkat-Barkan note:

> *"Israel education is a multi-dimensional activity that straddles the formal and informal curriculum; it calls for work with teachers and with a battery of external providers; it requires organizational skills and educational ones too; and it is often conducted in more than one language. There are very few individuals who have mastered all of these skills…."*[6]

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[2] The Bridgespan Group. June 2009. "The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact." Page 2.
[3] For a discussion of the definition of Israel Education see Bethamie Horowitz, "Defining Israel Education." In this report, a similar definition of Israel Education emerges, but from the perspective of educational practice.
[4] Karen Abrams Gerber and Aliza Mazor. 2003. "Mapping Israel Education: An Overview of Trends and Issues in North America." Gilo Family Foundation. Pg. 20.
[5] iCenter. 2012. "Mapping the Landscape: The Emerging Field of Israel Education."
[6] Alex Pomson, Howard Deitcher, Michal Muszkat-Barkan et. al. April 2009. "Israel education in North American day schools: A systems analysis and some strategies for change." Report submitted to the AVI CHAI Foundation. Pg. 15.

To address the dearth of qualified personnel, the iCenter is seeking to add 1,000 skilled, certified and employed Israel educators to the field of Jewish education by 2020.[7] As part of the effort to reach this goal, the iCenter commissioned this report with the goal of creating a systematic understanding of who is a "qualified Israel educator."

Looking at the Exceptional Israel Educator

This report describes the educational worldviews and practices of exceptional educators. The report is a first contribution to a larger field mapping project, which will also include survey research aimed at gaining a broader understanding of the numbers of American Jewish educators who are actively involved in Israel education and who are "qualified Israel educators," sharing the commitment and sophistication of the educators documented in this report. We will also use the survey to seek an understanding of the extent of awareness among Jewish educators of the field of Israel education and the resources available to them for the purpose of professionalizing their work to connect young Jews to Israel.

Methodology

This preliminary report draws on 32 one-hour telephone interviews completed between September 2012 and January 2013. A list of those interviews is found in appendix one. Most of the interviews are with "sophisticated Israel educators," who have knowledge, skills and confidence to educate about Israel. We began with educators recommended by the iCenter and then worked our way out, based upon recommendations of those we interviewed and others.

With this interview sample, we seek to describe Israel education at its best, in a variety of American Jewish education contexts for early childhood through high school age students. In addition, we sought a deeper understanding of how the work of a given individual is influenced by the broader institutional environment in which he or she works. For that purpose, 11 of the interviews focused on educators associated with the largest of the religious denominations, the Reform Movement.

[7] iCenter, ibid., pg. 25.

Who is an Israel Educator?

Starting with the Personal

Without exception, self-identifying Israel educators have a strong personal connection to Israel. As Dr. David Bryfman explains in the text box on this page, for Israel educators, Israel education is about bringing a new generation into relationship with Israel, which they themselves so passionately embrace.

While the educators' narratives vary, many highlight personal and familial connections to Israel as what turned them on to Israel education. Some speak about their early (e.g., teen) experiences in Israel as part of that journey, while others had only later Israel experiences, though strong feelings of connection were already present. There are also Israelis living in the United States who bring their own life narrative to their educational work.

Tapping into an Educator's Inner Israel

Dr. David Bryfman, Chief Learning Officer at *The Jewish Education Project* (http://www.thejewisheducationproject.org) reflects on the role of the personal connection to Israel in motivating educators to engage with Israel education through iCenter- sponsored programs.

"Most people come to iCenter programs because it taps into their inner Israel.... I would almost bet that everyone there has some major Israel experience in their lives, and probably went to a youth movement, school or summer camp that saw Israel as being very important. Therefore they come to iCenter programs to reconnect with their youth, reconnect with their Israel experience and believe that they should be able to offer some of what they have experienced in relation to Israel for another generation. Their expectation is that iCenter will offer them the tools and the pedagogies to make Israel come to life for others, as someone made that happen for them."

From the Personal to the Professional

Many, perhaps most, Jewish educators have a feeling of connection to Israel. They represent a major potential pool of future Israel educators, should they choose to act in a systematic fashion to convert their personal connection into part of their educational practice. However, personal motivations are not enough. Educators need knowledge and skills in order to pull others into a personally meaningful relationship with Israel. Sivan Zakai, who teaches a course on Israel Education at American Jewish University, points out that the intensive personal connection that Jewish educators have to Israel can often prevent effective educational practice (see text box below).

Moving Day School Teachers Beyond Their Personal Connection to Israel

Dr. Sivan Zakai teaches a course on Israel education in the MAT (Masters of Arts in Teaching) program at American Jewish University for veteran Day School teachers.

"A primary challenge to training Jewish educators to teach about Israel is to enable them to distinguish between their personal connection to Israel and their professional approach to educating others about Israel. The thing that I have felt to be most challenging for most of the day school teachers I have worked with is the idea that not everyone has the same beliefs as they do about Israel. This is the most fundamental challenge for them. They come into the course saying, "I love Israel and want the students to love Israel like I do." The goal, of course, is to get them to point where they can say: 'I love Israel, but my goal is not to get my students to love Israel like I do, but to get students to develop independent relationships with Israel.'"

The following is an example of a technique she uses to bring day school teachers to understand the implication of the fact that their personal connection to Israel isn't necessarily shared by others.

"*A lot of the teachers have fundamental core beliefs, which tend to be unexamined and assumed to be universally true. I give them an assignment: If a parent comes to you and asks why are you teaching about Israel, can you give a compelling answer? Once they can answer that challenge well, which they could not do in the beginning of the course, and hear their classmates' answers, there is a big shift in the classroom discourse. They realize that they can't assume that their students' parents 'think like me.' This starts with the realization that even 'my classmates are so diverse in the ways they answer, why they teach Israel' Their answers include a range from classic Zionist answers to Peoplehood-oriented answers. Put those two people in conversation with one another and it's pretty shocking for both of them."*

The interviews show three dimensions for thinking about professional capacity:

1. **Degree of specialization**

How much of an individual's job is devoted to Israel education?

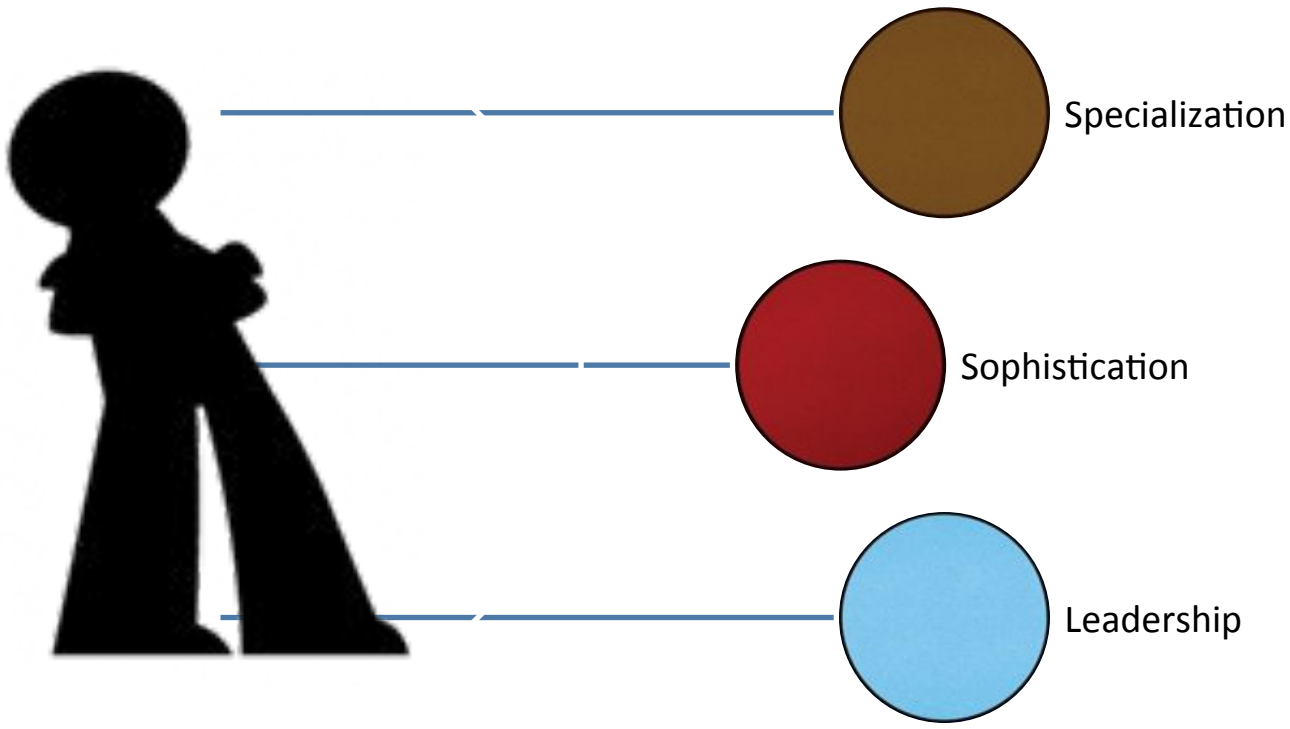
2. **Sophistication of educational practice**

To what extent does the educator have a rich educational philosophy and corresponding set of educational methodologies?

3. **Leadership**

Does the individual move beyond his or her students in order to bring Israel education to other educators in his or her institution, movement or broader professional network?

Dimensions of Professionalization in Israel Education

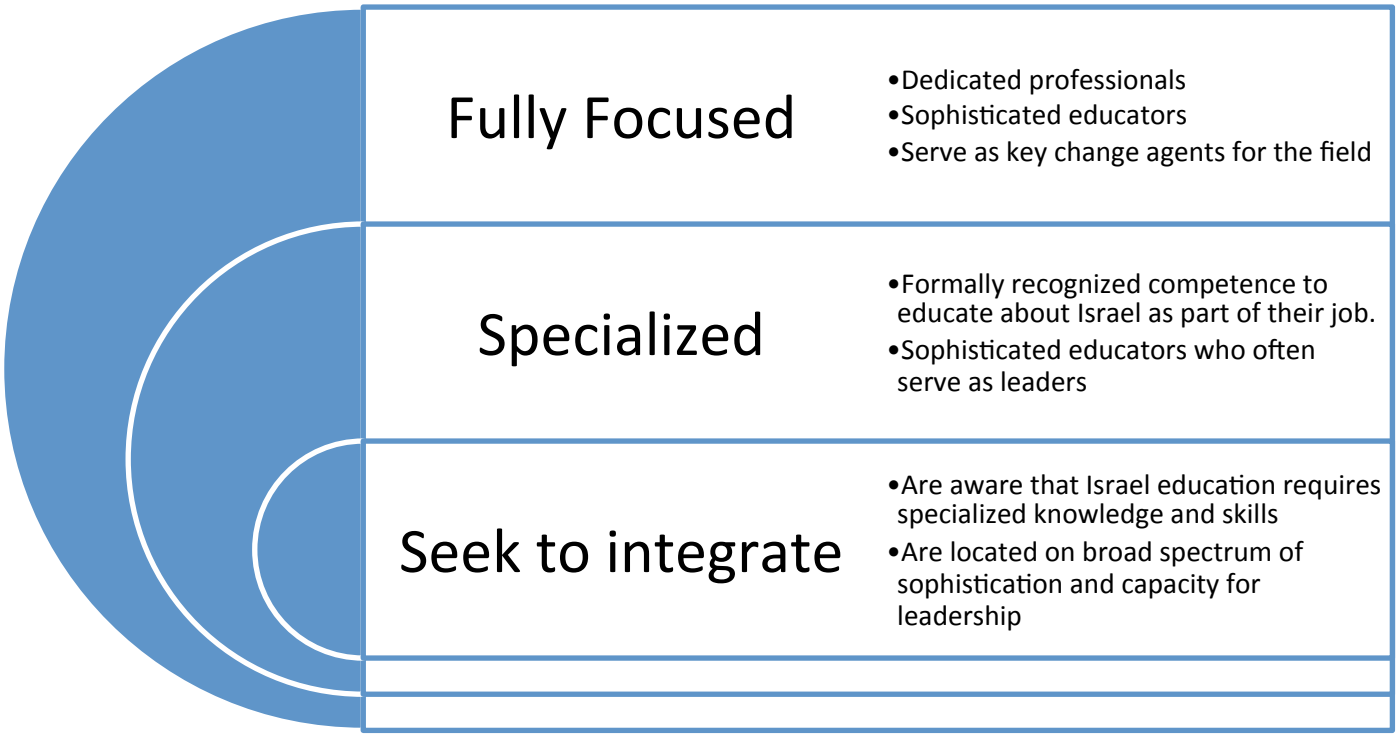


Specialization

The concept of specialization can be understood in two ways: 1) the amount of one's job devoted to Israel education, and 2) the nature of one's expertise. In this section we focus on the former, leaving the nature of an individual's expertise to the discussion below on the area of Jewish education in which an individual works.

There is a small group of individuals whose work is fully focused on Israel education. After this group we find a group of educators who are recognized within their formal job description as "Israel educators," but only engage in Israel education as part of their job; and, third, there is the rest of the field who attempt to advance Israel education by integrating it into their professional responsibilities.

Degrees of Specialization Among Israel Educators



Fully Focused on Israel Education

Individuals who are fully focused on Israel education are often full-time dedicated professionals who seek to bring the sophistication they have acquired as Israel educators to the broader field. The fully focused Israel educator is employed by organizations whose mission includes Israel education. The fully focused Israel educator is hired in order to enable the organization to serve as a change agent for the field.

In our work to date we have instances of individuals who are fully focused on Israel education and are concerned in at least part of their job with advancing K-12 education. They work for three organizations: 1) the Jewish Agency, 2) the Center for Israel Education, 3) the iCenter.

Jewish Agency *Shlichim*

The Hebrew word *shaliach* means emissary. The Jewish Agency for Israel sends *shlichim* (plural) to work in the Jewish Diaspora with the goal of strengthening the connection to Israel. Jewish Agency *Shlichim* are Israeli citizens and work in a variety of educational and communal settings, for short and long periods of time and at different levels of seniority.

On an annual basis, 1,312 shlichim work in the United States and Canada, making them by far the largest group of fully focused Israel educators. They work in contexts which include communities, movements, national organizations and university campuses. Within these categories, they may work in federations, schools, Jewish community centers, synagogues, youth movements and camps.

The shlichim include "senior" and "young" shlichim, working for short (a few months) or long (a year or more) periods. "Senior" generally defines both the shaliach's age and position (e.g., working in a community's federation). Among senior shlichim, there are a total of 17 in communities, 17 in movements and national organizations, and 6 senior *shlichim* who

*Shlicha** - Rabbi Yehudit Werchow

Many of those interviewed point to Yehudit Werchow as a key change agent in the field of Israel education. Yehudit is an Israeli recruited and trained by the Jewish Agency to work as the Central Shlicha for the Union for Reform Judaism with the goal of advancing that organization's efforts to connect American Jews to Israel.

Yehudit works with a diverse group of professionals to develop and implement strategies for advancing Israel engagement among URJ constituencies. Her work includes creating networks of committed Israel educators, professional development opportunities and supporting lay-leadership in their Israel engagement work.

" I believe in a bottom up approach. Investing in educators, which translates into an investment in the institution's (camp/congregation) approach to Israel engagement. We are currently experimenting with a new model of shlichut, *strengthening connections between congregations and camps, creating continuous Israel experiences for teens and expanding the reach of Israel experience by taking it home too."*

**Shlicha, is the feminine form of Shaliach. See full definition on the left hand side of this page.*

manage the Jewish Agency's presence in North America (1 in charge of all North America, 5 in regional offices), totaling 40. Among young *shlichim*, there are 53 in communities, 13 in movements or national organizations, and 57 Israel Campus Fellows, totaling 123. There are also 49 service year *shlichim* (*shin shinim*) working in Connecticut, Toronto, NJ, Ohio, Miami and DC. Finally, each summer nearly 1,100 shlichim work in Jewish summer camps in North America.[8]

Jewish Agency Specialist – Rabbi Reuven Greenvald

"[My work] is to promote a nuanced conversation about Israel and to integrate that conversation into Israel engagement initiatives. We want to see the major institutions of American Jewish life promoting conversations about Israel across their programs, with their educational professionals coming to view Israel as central to their work and not only relevant to one particular program."

Jewish Agency Specialists

Jewish Agency Israel Education specialists work in different branches of the Jewish Agency with the goal of supporting shlichim and providing resources and programming that advance the organization's educational goals for Diaspora Jewry. The Israel education specialists are drawn on to lead the organization's strategic outreach to American organizations and key populations, including the development of platforms and programs that enable American Jewish educators and communal professionals to engage in sophisticated conversations about Israel and bring that into their work.

Makom (http://makomisrael.org/)

Makom is a dedicated unit within the Jewish Agency for the purpose of promoting Israel education. Makom's work includes creating content and cultivating individuals. The Makom team works directly with individuals and institutions for the purpose of Israel engagement.

In addition, there are Israel specialists working to advance projects throughout the Jewish Agency. Examples include:

Support for Project TEN (http://www.tenprogram.org/)
Project TEN is a three month service project in vulnerable communities in Israel and three other countries. It combines service work with immersive service-learning focused on social justice and highlighting Jewish values, with learning materials created by Makom.

Development of School Twinning Benchmarks
http://p2g.jewishagency.org/english/israelschools/partnership2gether-international-school-twinning-network

Israel education specialists work with the Jewish Agency's school twinning program to set educational standards and benchmarks, which includes creating a nuanced conversation about Israel and Jewish Peoplehood education.

[8] *Statistics on number of Shlichim from JAFI.org and Reuven Greenvald*

The iCenter (http://www.theicenter.org)

The iCenter has assembled a network of visionary, experienced, and knowledgeable master Israel educators to teach, consult, strategize, and develop the human and curricular resources for k-12 Israel education to thrive in North America. Collectively known as "the iTeam," the network consists of practitioners and theorists from Israel, the United States, and Canada. The iTeam was the think tank that produced the Aleph-Bet of Israel Education, which now serves as the language for the field. iTeam members write articles in major publications, and convene and speak at major gatherings. In addition, the iCenter's consultants and experts develop Israel educators in the following ways:

Community Consultations
iCenter consultants partner with central agencies in local communities to gather stakeholders, review where Israel education lives across the community, and develop strategies for bringing Israel into Jewish education throughout the community's educational settings.

Curricular Resources and Educational Entrepreneurship
Emerging from the Aleph-Bet of Israel Education, the iCenter partners with other organizations to develop curricular resources that are both content-rich and learner-centered. Examples include iMMERSE, an online initiative of Israel 21c and the iCenter to create educational resources around news from contemporary Israel; introducing entrepreneurial initiatives like the NU Campaign, Israel Lens, and Toldot Yisrael to a wide network of Jewish educators; and the curriculum in modern Israel history developed as part of the Goodman Camping Initiative.

Certification, Mentorship and Networking
iCenter specialists mentor educators who seek to advance the field of Israel education through their work. Mentoring focuses on connecting educators to resources and opportunities for enriching their professional practice. A central element of that work is helping further the iCenter's larger effort to develop and certify a network of Israel educators who can support one another while working to advance the field.

iCenter Specialist – Lesley Litman

A member of the iTeam, Lesley Litman focuses on day schools and community initiatives. Lesley is sent into day and congregational schools to pull together all Israel curricular work to support them in building a conceptual and curricular framework for Israel education.

Lesley's community initiatives work focuses on congregational schools. She works with directors of education, principals and teachers, running seminars and workshops for each group, and following up with each school to debrief towards next steps and serve as a point person in their process.

"As the lead consultant in our process, Lesley was gold… She did a follow-up workshop with the principals after the workshop to jump-start the process, which was invaluable. She used the iCenter's "aleph-bet" of Israel education to frame the workshop. She then provided ongoing support to the principals for their continued work." Steven Baruch, Executive Director, Coalition for Jewish Learning, Milwaukee.

Center for Israel Education

Dr. Ken Stein

The Atlanta-based Center for Israel Education (CIE) conducts week- and day-long seminars on Israel for pre-collegiate educators. Professor Ken Stein, President of CIE, states: *"People engaged in Jewish learning with Israel are often passionate and well organized, but acknowledge they wish they had more content information. This appears to be true also for many in national Jewish organizations. Educators and key personnel are not always sure they understand the ins and outs of Israel or how Jews took destiny into their own hands. Many want to know the role Israel played in Jewish history. Many want to connect to the positive story of Jewish state-seeking, state-making, and state-keeping. Israel's story is more than what happened between 1939-1945. Knowing the Jewish connection to Israel from our origins to the present is a continuum everyone savors, even when blended with contemporary issues."*

To date, 1200 educators have participated in CIE one-day seminars, and 600 have participated in the one-week seminars. The Center also writes curriculum and hosts a robust website.

Specialized Israel Educators

Specialized Israel educators have formally recognized competence to educate about Israel or to prioritize Israel Education as part of their job description. These are sophisticated educators who serve as leaders. It is often part of their portfolio to function as the Israel Education contact for their institution and to serve as the person actively pushing Israel Education forward and keeping it a priority on the organization's agenda. Examples are found among educators charged with national administrative responsibility and educators who are focused on Israel education in their particular organization.

For example, at the national level, Rabbi Ami Hersh (Program Director, National Ramah Commission) is charged with advancing processes having to do with Israel education in the Ramah camps. He works to keep abreast of what is going on in the field of Israel education and pro-actively initiates strategic planning for Israel education with other Ramah camping staff. "It is not just about investing in one person, rather working with key individuals at each camp to help them bring Israel into the broader camp culture" (also see the text box on page 18).

Rabbi Isaac Saposnik

Rabbi Isaac Saposnik, Director of Camp JRF, works as part of a team of three, including his Associate Director (who is formally charged with Israel education at camp) and the year round shaliach, to

advance Israel education at camp. The majority of Israel programming is run by the unit heads, each for their particular unit, who implement programs created by the lead team. The work is intended to build on the enthusiasm of the shlichim, but not to hand over Israel education to them. "We don't want Israel education to be limited to falafel, hummus and the army, which is often the focus of educational programming created by the shlichim. There *is* a place for that, but we want something deeper, which generates a larger atmosphere, which connects campers to Israel at camp."

Integrators of Israel Into Their Work

Integral to Jewish Education

Ana Fuchs is the founder of the Jewish Kids Group in Atlanta, which operates under the slogan of a "ridiculously cool Hebrew school."
http://www.jewishkidsgroups.com/

"Israel is critical to Jewish identity. Good Israel education is wrapped in Jewish education. It's the way we teach. Israel is embedded in what we are teaching. It is not just Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations but it is in all the holidays, in teaching Hebrew, in the references we make to the Land of Israel throughout our curriculum."

Any Jewish educator may integrate Israel education into her or his work. The integrator is aware that Israel education requires specialized knowledge and skills. He or she is located on a broad spectrum of sophistication and capacity for leadership. The following are examples from a congregational educator and an employee of an Israel travel company.

As part of her work at Temple Shaaray Tefila in New York, Hope Chernak started an Israel club. She also manages the congregation's partnership with a community in Israel. "Israel is a natural passion for me so I am happy to take on more responsibility in Israel education via the partnership. The work with Israel also enables me to offer a more serious Jewish education to our youth and as a result my standing as a serious educator rises" (also see text box on page 19, below).

Carine Warsawski is Marketing Director at Authentic Israel, a for-profit company that organizes Israel educational travel for teens, adults and families and works with organizations such as BBYO, Birthright, and MASA. While Carine is on the marketing end of the business, part of her work involves face time with students on the ground, both in Israel and in the US. "In my work, good Israel education is about how to take home the Israel experience and share it with friends; how to digest and talk about it afterwards. Good Israel education teaches teens to articulate their experience and gives them the tools to share it with others." She gives an example in which she helped teens make videos of meaningful moments without using words like "amazing." The videos were then shown in the teens' congregations for the purpose of jumpstarting educational conversations with their peers, rabbis and parents. "For those who have not been in Israel, good Israel education entails helping them feel connected without having been there. This is done by making Israel accessible and being creative."

Sophistication

Sophisticated educational practice depends on the ability of an educator to at once develop a conceptual understanding of what good Israel education entails and to master the necessary knowledge and practices. Three clear themes arise from the interviews, which together form a core body of Israel education knowledge and practice.

1. Israel as Integral to a Good Jewish Education

Israel education is regarded as integral to Jewish education and cannot work effectively if educators separate Israel out of their broader strategy for Jewish education. Some examples:

Hebrew School

Dr. Roberta Goodman, Director of Education at North Shore Congregation Israel in Glencoe, IL, integrates Israel education into the education program of her synagogue's supplementary school. *"At our school, Israel education is part of what we do. Within the Sunday school, we seek to integrate Israel into the curriculum for each of the grades; Yom Ha'atzmaut is part of the religious holiday cycle; and [we] have integrated more Israeli dance as part of Jewish culture. Israel education also includes the Torah and holidays. We send a lot of students to Israel through a bar/bat mitzvah program, through an 8th grade community trip, and a high school program. The trips make a difference to our broader educational program, as Jewish travel -- especially to Israel -- is an intensive form of a life-changing experience. "*

Day School

Rabbi Binyamin Krauss, Principal of the Elementary and Middle Schools at the SAR Academy in New York describes Israel as being integrated into all aspects of Jewish and General Studies. *"Israel is at the center of our school's mission. Almost all of the teaching staff is involved as Israel is potentially integrated anywhere. For example, the year of Israel's 60th birthday, the school dedicated the year to an Israel theme. There was much professional development around Israel for everyone that year. Israel was a part of the teaching in all departments/subject matter, e.g., geography, history, people. Parents were also a part of the learning around Israel. We are now beginning to work with the new Lookstein curriculum, as it is just more comprehensive than anything else out there. The curriculum is designed to be flexible, so that it can be integrated into different subjects by Judaic or general studies teachers."*

Camp

Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, Associate Director of Greene Family Camp in Texas makes sure that the Israeli shlichim are spread throughout the camp, eating, living and working with the American campers and counselors. The result is that the environment of the camp fills with many small conversations about life in Israel, and the connection between Israelis and Americans is generated as part of the work of the camp. *"The shlichim are a part of Israel education in the camp but it is not fully their responsibility. Area directors, unit heads, all areas have responsibility. Our goal is for Americans and Israelis to work together."*

The Israel Trip

For Jewish educational institutions, the Israel educational trip can serve as a platform for enabling wider educational processes. According to Paul Reichenbach, Director of Camp and Israel Programs at the Union for Reform Judaism, the challenge is integrating what happens in Israel back into lives of youth at home. *"Teens need help in connecting their wonderful time in Israel to Jewish life at home. How can we help them maintain the energy at home? We need to build on the experience through the congregations and camps. We need to find a way to help them process and integrate what they learned beyond 'awesome' and 'I loved Masada and my friends'. We need to help them articulate their feelings and journey.*

The Israel program has a highly developed curriculum, but we need to create opportunities within it to connect back at home and make it relevant to their lives. We can no longer afford for the Israel experience to exist in a vacuum; there is too much at stake."

Rabbi Lee Buckman

Greenfield Hebrew Academy's 8th Grade Israel Trip

The Israel Trip as Integral to a Day School's Educational Strategy

Rabbi Lee Buckman, Head of the Greenfield Hebrew Academy in Atlanta, Georgia states: "I'm very proud that the Israel trip is part of a larger fabric of learning in the school." The two week trip in 8th grade occurs immediately after Pesach each year and serves as a peak event integrated into three areas of Jewish education at Greenfield Hebrew Academy.

1. **Limmudei Kodesh**

"We designed our 8th grade Tanach course to focus on biblical sites that the 8th graders will visit while in Israel."

2. **History**

"*A second course which intersects with the trip is the History of Israel. The two year course is very popular; it is also challenging. The teacher is very good about sharing the nuances of life in Israel. The course adopts a pro-Zionist approach, but it is not an Israel advocacy curriculum; it really looks at multiple sides. The teacher also participates on the trip, and after the trip the course continues, which includes debriefing and trip-related projects."*

3. **Hebrew**

"A third line of intersection is the 8th grade Hebrew curriculum – Darcon LeIsrael , which focuses on how to encounter Israel culturally in the context of contemporary Israeli society."

"In addition, one of the things that I'm most proud of and has very tangible results is a meeting between our students and alumni of our school who are studying in Israel in gap year programs. Our school is an orthodox/community school, so we have kids from all types of homes who go on to all types of gap year programs, from Young Judaea to Yeshiva. When an 8th grader sees older kids who are like them in Israel, gap year becomes plausible."

2. Infusing a Living Connection with Israel

Good Israel education is about promoting "a living connection with Israel." Rabbi Isaac Saposnik, Director of Camp JRF shares his approach:

"Israel is like one's family; we love our family but sometimes we want to strangle members of it. The goal for both the camp and Israel program is to find the love and start to approach the challenges, but from a place of love. Camp is really about getting the campers to feel a deeper connection, especially as they get older. Often the Israel participants know the issues (i.e., from their exposure to the media) without having a deep love for Israel. So the goal is also to get them to a place of deeper connection through experiencing a month in Israel. The question then becomes: how do we challenge them and help them see different sides to issues and foster a personal view?"

a. "Hugging and wrestling"

Popularized by Makom, the concept of "hugging and wrestling" or equivalent ideas are often cited as central to developing a living connection to Israel. "Hugging" denotes a feeling of strong emotional connection and commitment to Israel. "Wrestling" connotes the need to grapple with the political and religious diversity of Israeli society (see: http://makomisrael.org/blog/hugging-and-wrestling/). In their recent book on Israel education, Grant and Kopelowitz refer to this same idea as "mature love" for Israel (see text box on this page). Can one maintain a strong positive emotional connection while accepting that aspects of Israel in reality might not be to one's personal political, religious or cultural tastes?

The accepted wisdom among those interviewed is that without a living connection to Israel and the ability to grapple with the complexity of Israeli society, it is unlikely that most young American Jews will develop as intensive and sustainable connection as previous generations (which based their connection on strong emotional attachment), fed on momentous events such as the creation of the State of Israel and the wars which threatened the State's very existence.

Nurturing a Mature Love for Israel

Cited from Lisa D. Grant and Ezra Kopelowitz. 2012. *Israel Education Matters: A 21st Century Paradigm For Jewish Education*. Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education. Jerusalem: Israel. p. 11.

"To be a member of the Jewish People is no different than the challenge of living in a family or a community. We don't identify or enjoy every moment, but we do crave the benefits and experience the love of being part of a greater collective. Such is the complexity of life of what we will refer to in this book as 'mature love.'

It may well be that Israel Education's embrace of the complexity of Jewish belonging and of Israel within that weave, flies in the face of many educators who strive to instill a "love" of Israel. While Israel educators embrace the complexity of Jewish life and as such the complexity of Israel's place in Jewish life, many educators fear that revealing too many of Israel's complexities may alienate students and undermine formation of a strong Jewish identity. Indeed, a strong argument can be made for the need to cultivate a sense of connection and commitment before inviting a more critical approach. Yet, a conventional approach to education about Israel that promotes and perhaps even demands an unreflective love, may ultimately leave Israel as a superficial, peripheral and even an alienating aspect of American Jewish life (Ackerman 1996; Chazan 2005; Grant, 2007, 2008).

Hugging and Wrestling at Camp

Rabbi Ami Hersh, Program Director at the National Ramah Commission, has recently overseen a three-year Israel education curriculum project for the Ramah camps.

"I like Robbie Gringrass' image of 'hugging and wrestling' with Israel. On one hand I want people to feel true Ahavat Yisrael; yet, on the other I want them to be honest and engaged about what is going on in Israel today."

Hugging and wrestling in the context of camps includes:

Wrestling with reality: *"For example, we have taken the myth that everyone serves in the Israeli army and contrasted it with the current reality where everyone does not serve. Groups of campers discuss who serves and who does not serve, examining the reasons why and what those who do not serve do instead. The goal is to discuss the reality, and enable the campers to draw their own conclusion."*

Exposure to living Israeli culture: *"We are also bringing campers to learn about the diversity of contemporary Israel, but going beyond the folk dancing songs of the 50s and 60s, exposing them to current culture, such as Israeli graffiti, rap songs, cartoons and the contentious issues that many of them evoke."*

b. Relevant knowledge and enjoyable learning or "meeting people where they are at"

In order to promote a living connection to Israel, educators need to begin with their own personal connection to Israel and develop a sense of self-awareness as to what is meaningful for them and how their personal connection is similar or different to that of their students. The same rule holds true for the educational body that is working to nurture an interest in Israel education among Jewish educators. Whether the educator or the student, a meaningful connection to Israel "starts where the person is at," which will by definition be different for different people. To enact this "bottom up approach" sophisticated educators will seek a connection to their students' interests and passions and at that point nurture their connection to Israel.

Difficult and/or Interesting Topics

Hope Chernak is the Youth Director at Temple Shaaray Tefila in New York City. As her fellowship project for *Project Incite* (http://projectincite.weebly.com/), Hope developed an Israel club for 11th and 12th graders at her congregation.

"The group started with 8-10 kids coming monthly to talk about Israel. I brought in guest speakers and taught history lessons and challenged participants with conversations on difficult topics having to do with Israel. The goal was preparation for the college campus (i.e. what is going on vis-à-vis anti-Israel behaviors). The club has more recently become a place for preparation meetings for participants in the teen exchange trip with our synagogue partnership in Israel. The club now meets three times a month with topics ranging from art to Hebrew marathon classes (at the teens' request for Modern Hebrew)."

Connecting to Personal Passions

Tamir Goodman is a former star basketball player turned sports educator. Tamir founded and runs *Coolanu Israel*, a program based on a model that focuses not only on improving skills but also on Jewish identity and Israel education.

"Everyone can grow at their level of play….There is also a goal of uniting different groups [of Jews]. Kids who come to camp love basketball and know many of the basics, such as body low, head up. We use these basketball basics as a means to connect [participants] to Jewish values and Israel. For example, when we are deeply rooted in our Jewish identity, we are low to the ground (i.e. roots). Head up = we need to focus around us and on Israel and not just on ourselves. I make connections to what I learned from Israeli coaches and from my service in the Israeli army. Everything we represent is Israel. We use Israeli team names in camp, stretch with the kids in Hebrew. Israel is part of the experience and alive."

3. Ability to Access a Diverse Toolkit

The sophisticated Israel educator is able to access a diverse toolkit of educational strategies which are appropriate for a particular context and age group. Pomson et al.'s research on day schools suggests five primary strategies for Israel education,[9] which likely apply to other sectors of Jewish education as well. Each strategy involves financial and opportunity costs and produces distinct educational outcomes. The sophisticated Israel educator has the capacity to access and utilize these strategies, mixing and matching them as needed:

1. **Educational travel to Israel** – From short trips to year-long study programs, including (amongst others) conventional tours, fully accredited high school programs in Israel and twinning programs that include travel to visit their Israeli peers (see item 5, below).
2. **Informal events** – With widely varying differences in scale and scope, educators utilize, celebrate and memorialize key moments in the history of the State of Israel or share aspects of contemporary Israeli society and culture with their students.
3. **Curriculum** – Formal arrangements and educational materials exist for teaching about Israel in almost every subject area and discipline for supplementary and day schools, in Jewish and/or general studies, Hebrew and/or English, at all age levels, and as discrete teaching units and/or integrated into other concerns. Outside of the school sector, less curricular material is available.
4. **Human resources and professional development** – As discussed above, some organizations have in-house staff with Israel education as part of their job description. The sophisticated educator is able to draw on advice of these specialists or turn to organizations such as the iCenter, Makom or the Center for Israel Education for consulting or professional development to enhance their understanding, commitment and interest in Israel and/or their capacity to teach about it.
5. **Partnerships and person-to-person relationships** – Many educational organizations, particularly day schools, maintain relationships with Israeli schools and organizations to different degrees of intensity and extent. Connected by video, email and letter exchange and shared Internet sites, by visits to one another's schools by individual or small groups of teachers and by trips taken by large numbers of students in both directions, these relationships can be project-focused, connected to an Israel trip, or ongoing throughout a student's career at a given institution.

In addition to the above five strategies pointed to by Pomson et al., we suggest a sixth, namely **the capacity of the educator and/or the educator's organization to fundraise or channel existing financial resources** for the purpose of accessing the necessary toolkit of educational strategies.

[9] Alex Pomson, Howard Deitcher, Michal Muszkat-Barkan et. al. April 2009. "Israel education in North American day schools: A systems analysis and some strategies for change." Report submitted to the AVI CHAI Foundation. P. 30.

Israel - The Soul of a Day School

Jay Leberman (Head of School) and Rabbi Shawn SimonHazani (School Rabbi) lead a school-wide effort to advance Israel education at the Perelman Day School in Philadelphia.

Vision

Rabbi Simon Hazani: "Our goal for the school is that Israel is seen as part of the religious, Jewish, cultural life of the students, just as is the United States. For example, they can as easily listen to Israeli music as American music. We want students to see Israel as a fully functioning hotbed of what is going on and central to our Jewish identity. There is no set agenda on how to define it. The goal is to go beyond elementary knowledge and reach a higher order of questions, the whats and hows. When they travel to Israel, we want them to feel at home and comfortable; that is the best success."

Focusing on Staff

Jay Leberman: "I have raised money from donors to send over 100 teachers to Israel, including maintenance people and secretaries. The result is that Israel is normative in the school; it is part of our soul. In addition, we rotate teachers from the elementary and middle school for the middle school trip each year, in order to enable as many as possible to go."

Curriculum Development

Jay Leberman: "Our number one problem is how to bring up the level of Judaism and Israel to the core standards of what happens in General Studies. My curriculum person is now meeting with Judaic studies staff. They recently spent an entire day creating buckets, that is, ideal experiences and skill sets that we want our kids to experience. At first the Judaic studies staff were suspicious, especially the Israelis, but they are now enthusiastic."

Leadership

The text box on the previous page provides an example of two champions for Israel education in a day school. Mr. Jay Leberman and Rabbi Simon Hazani represent a group who are critical for the development of the field of Israel education. These are individuals who champion Israel education in their organizations and movements. They work to expose other educators to Israel education and then nurture their continued involvement in the field. Without the presence of "Israel education champions" it is unlikely that a particular organization or institution will integrate and sustain a sophisticated level of Israel education along the lines described above. Referring to day schools, Pomson et al. argue:

> *Because Israel education is a multi-disciplinary and multi-contextual 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.*[10]

The importance of change agents is further illustrated by looking at the recent surge in interest in Israel education in the largest of the American religious denominations, the Reform Movement. According to Rabbi Yehudit Werchow, Central Shlicha to the Reform Movement, there has been a focused process of advancing Israel education for approximately four years. Israel educators working in different institutional contexts support each other, both to work for change in their particular camps and schools and to further the cause of Israel education in the broader Movement. This dynamic is shown in the exhibit on the next page, which presents some of the individuals interviewed for this report who are working with one another to advance Israel education.

Rabbi Ana Bonnheim is a champion for Israel education at the URJ Greene Family Camp. As the camp's Associate Director, she describes how she benefits from the work of others in the Movement:

> *"Yehudit Werchow, the Central Reform Shlicha, is the URJ's main point person for Israel education and has made it a priority to visit all movement camps during the summer. She meets with camp staff and helps each camp's leadership push Israel education forward. She has helped us to think critically, get our creative juices flowing. Additionally, everyone in the central URJ office has a role in Israel education. Paul Reichenbach oversees all camping and Israel programming. Paul keeps Israel on the agenda at all meetings and as part of our laarger conversation. He also supervises Yehudit and oversees fundraising to support our work. Rabbi Rick Jacobs, the URJ President, is also a big supporter of high-quality Israel education."*

At the URJ Greene Family camp, Rabbi Bonnheim is working within a well-staffed environment (see text box on next page) in an organization that values Israel education and is benefiting from support from the Reform movement that is also prioritizing support for her work. In contrast, Dr. Roberta Goodman, Director of Education at North Shore Congregation Israel (NSCI), states that on one hand her congregation gets significant support for other education projects from the URJ; but on the other hand, in the case of Israel education she herself found resources by applying for an iCenter grant (see exhibit on next page). She is using the grant to develop staff support for her effort at advancing

[10] Alex Pomson, Howard Deitcher, Daniel Held and Pearl Mattenson. June 2012. " 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. The AVI CHAI Foundation. P. 20.

Israel education at her congregation. Thus in some cases, like that of Dr. Goodman, the advancement of Israel education in a particular institution depends heavily on one person's motivation to champion the cause, who in the early stages often works alone.

A central challenge for the URJ is devising a strategy appropriate for the various branches of Reform Judaism. Rabbi Dan Freelander, Senior VP of the URJ, explains that while the URJ owns the youth movement, camps and Israel programs, the congregational schools function independently, making it harder to inculcate systemic change. Rabbi Freelander sees the congregations and their schools as a primary place for change in Israel education, but the question remains how to do it system-wide, rather than remain working on a small scale. A recent initiative for this purpose is a new project aimed at linking shlichim working with the camps to communities or congregations. Rabbi Freelander: "At best, this will reach 5% of congregations. This is a good start, but not enough."

Rabbi Werchow sees the challenge as "linking the silos" in the Reform movement, connecting the dots between the work being done in the youth movement, camps, Israel experience programs, and congregations in order to enable an acculumative Israel education as a child moves from one educatonal context to the next.

> *"The Reform movement is very good at single silo programs but needs to get better at connecting the dots, creating a journey based on different types of experiences. The camps are becoming more successful at presenting Israel with continuity over time. Israel programs are successful and meaningful but it is a single experience, not like camp which is a multi-year journey. Camps have a bigger sense of journey. Identity formation does not happen in ten days or a month. It needs reinforcement, a longer time. Right now the movement is focused on this question and the need to shift focus and build more bridges between the different experiences. There is potential through several channels. For example, our teens return from camps and congregations; we need to create opportunities for them to continue their journeys and enrich the presence of Israel in their multiple communities. There is a greater potential with semester programs in Israel (EIE); personal growth is greater and there is more time for learning experiences and creating memory. The infrastructure is not there yet to support the potential; this is the challenge. The thinking currently going on in the camps shows the potential, i.e., infusing Israel in a more organic way into our educational experiences: connecting prayer for sharing experiences. We have been investing in our educators, nurturing them to become change agents in their own communities. We wish to implement this principle in other areas of our work."*

Case Study: Championing Israel Education in the Reform Movement

National URJ

Promoting System Wide Change in the Reform Movement

- **Paul Reichenbach, Director of Camp and Israel Programs, Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)**
  "I work to make Israel education a priority for youth programming [camps, Israel programs, youth movement and college] in the URJ. I cheerlead, encourage sharing of best practices, set expectations, build relationships, oversee materials and recognize excellence. I recognize excellence by raising up folks who are figuring out how it works and celebrating models of success."
- **Rabbi Yehudit Werchow, Central Shlicha of the Reform Movement**
  "My work focuses on diverse areas of the URJ work, from the 13 camps, to shlichim, to the URJ professionals and leadership. Our Israel work reaches teens, young adults, and adults. In addition to working separately with each area, a big effort is being made at the URJ to 'cross silos,' for example, working on a new model of shlichut which links shlichim to congregations or communities during the year and camps during the summer months, and working with congregations and our Israel experience programs to help participants in Israel experience programs better process their experiences, "bring the experiences home" and continue their engagement with Israel when they return home. I also work on a variety ventures aimed at promoting Israel engagement in congregations."

Educators

Implementing Israel Education

- **Lori Sagarin, Former President of NATE. Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Beth Israel in Skokie. Consultant to the iCenter**
  "I have been involved in advancing Israel education in the National Association of Temple Educators (NATE) for many years. I chaired the Israel conference in 2000 as a senior board member of NATE. Now as an iCenter consultant I've been working with NATE to prepare their March 2014 Kallah, which will be dedicated to the topic of Israel education. There will also be a a summer 2016 Israel conference for NATE educators to deepen learning and experiences with Israel education. NATE is the professional association for educators in the reform movement reaching over 850 congregations and institutions."
- **Dr. Roberta Goodman, Director of Education at North Shore Congregation Israel (NSCI), Chicago**
  "I am utilizing my participation in the iCenter Chicago Ideas Incubator to institute Camp@NSCI, which involves the development of a Jewish experiential education curriculum for our congregation's Sunday school. A central strand of the new curriculum involves Israel education. The initiative enabled me to send four of my teachers to participate in an iCenter conference; a 5th will also be attending in 2013. If an institution really wants to make a change, they *need* to plan. Excellence is in the details and this also takes money. Planning requires a lot of their time and it is necessary to pay the teachers."
- **Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, Associate Director, URJ Greene Family Camp**
  "Israel education is a significant component of education for all ages at camp. It is part of the educational vision of the camp, ideally integrated into all we do. It is my responsibility, with the help of our education team to make sure it happens. We meet daily to discuss all programming, with Israel education as a central part of the larger educational program."

HUC-JIR

The Next Generation of Educators and Clergy

- **Prof. Lisa Grant. Professor of Jewish Education, Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion.**

"A goal of the HUC-JIR MA in Jewish Education, and the Rabbinic and Cantorial programs is to bring students to engage with their personal Jewish values and to translate the values clarification process into a vision for Jewish life and their professional work. Israel is an important part of the larger process, which includes:

Required educational components

a. A course on ideology in education

b. The year in Israel, including an intensive seminar on Israel education

c. During the year in Israel, all the students participate in a values clarification process sponsored by the Mandel Foundation, which focuses on their visions as Reform leaders for Jewish life, their connection to Israel and the Jewish People. For the Rabbinical and Cantorial Schools, the Mandel seminar in Israel is the first year of a three year process.

Electives

a. An MA concentration in Israel education offered by the iCenter, in which five HUC-JIR Med students are participating in 2012/13.

b. Why Israel Matters course"

- **Rabbi Dr. Jan Katzew, Israel Education Expert, Consultant to the iCenter and Director of Service Learning at HUC-JIR.**

"I hope to help build on the immersive Israel experience first year rabbinical, cantorial and education students have at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem. Currently with a group of colleagues, I am in conversations with the iCenter about developing a long-term Israel education program for HUC-JIR students once they have returned from Israel to one of the stateside campuses in New York, Cincinnati or Los Angeles. I am confident that intentional Israel education, which is both nurturing and challenging, will contribute to shaping the identities of Jewish leaders for whom Israel is an integral, vital element of their professional and personal lives. A year in Israel may be necessary to establish a foundation for a lifelong commitment to Israel, but it is not sufficient. We can and should build on that foundation throughout the experience of our rabbinical, cantorial and education schools".

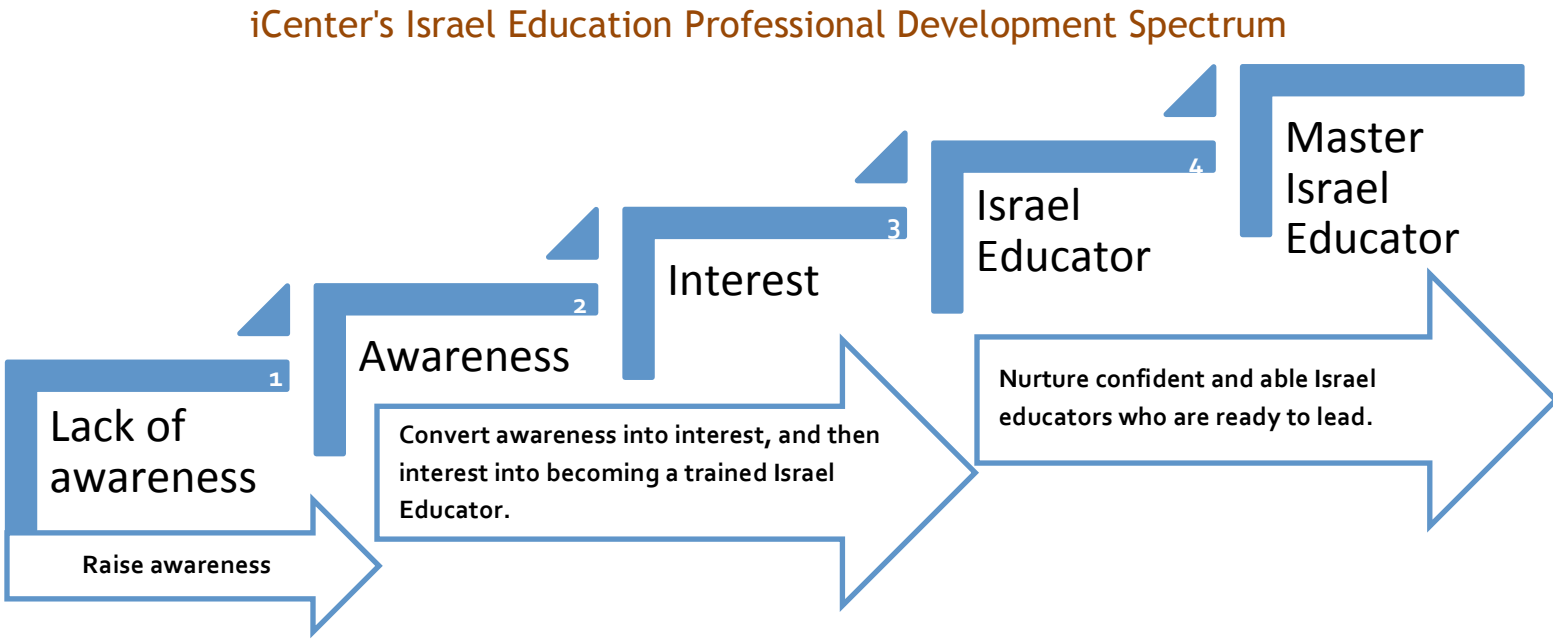
To Expand the Number of Sophisticated Israel Educators, Connect the Personal to the Professional

This report provides a portrait of the elite Israel educator. The interviewees bring sophisticated educational practice to the mission of strengthening the connection of young Jews to Israel. Many also have access to resources, knowledge and skills to act as leaders in their institutions and, in some cases, for the larger field.

In order to grow the number of qualified Israel educators working in Jewish education, there is a need to start with the common denominator between the Israel educators interviewed in this report and many other Jewish educators, namely, their personal passion for Israel. Jewish educators, to the extent that they are highly involved and committed Jews, will in many cases feel a strong personal connection to Israel and when provided a framework and resources for doing so, will embrace the opportunity to strengthen the connection of their students to Israel.

Thus, to grow the field of Israel education, organizations like the iCenter and Makom and any other relevant change initiatives need to connect the "masses" of Jewish educators and their "inner Israel" (see text box on page 6, above) to the knowledge and skills required for integrating effective Israel educational work into their work as Jewish educators. The most committed should be nurtured and groomed as change agents who can push their institutions forward and act as consultants for others who are interested in professionalizing their Jewish educational work on Israel.

The flow chart below shows the iCenter's strategy for increasing numbers of qualified Israel educators and moving those who are qualified into leadership positions.



In the companion survey report to this study, we measure interest in Israel education among Jewish educators to gain a sense of the numbers located at the highest level of the above ladder; and, through a comparison between the qualified Israel educator and other Jewish educators, explore the possibilities and impediments to enabling more Jewish educators to become Israel educators and more Israel educators to become leaders for the field.

Appendix: Interviews Conducted

Name	Sector	Organization	Role	Reform Case Study
Maggie Bar Tura	Camping	Former CEO of Foundation for Jewish Camp	Consultant	
Steve Baruch	Supplementary (+ Day)	Coalition for Jewish Learning	Executive Director	
Rabbi Ana Bonnheim	Denominational Movement	Greene Family Camp	Associate Director	x
Dr. David Bryfman	Expert in Israel Education	Jewish Education Project	Chief Learning Officer	
Rabbi Lee Buckman	Day Schools	Greenfield Hebrew Academy, Atlanta	Head of School	
Hope Chernak	Denominational Movement	Temple Shaaray Tefila	Director of Youth and Informal Education	x
Sonia Dobinsky	BJE and Federation	Central Agency for Jewish Education	Executive Director	
Rabbi Dan Freelander	Denominational Movement	Union for Reform Judaism	Senior VP	x
Ana Fuchs	Entrepreneur / Alternative Supplementary	Jewish Kids Group	Founder and Director	
Jill Ginsburg	BJE / Supplementary	BJE, Buffalo, NY		
Dr. Roberta Goodman	Supplementary	North Shore Congregation Israel	Director	x
Tamir Goodman	Entrepreneur	Coolanuh Israel	Founder and Director	
Prof. Lisa Grant	Expert in Israel Education	HUC-JIR	Professor of Education	x
Rabbi Reuven Greenvald	Consulting and Service	Jewish Agency for Israel	Director of Strategic Outreach	x
Rabbi Ami Hersh	Camping	Ramah National Commission	Program Director	
Rabbi Dr. Jan Katzew	Expert in Israel Education	HUC-JIR/Cincinnati & iCenter	Director of Service Learning, HUC, JIR, and Consultant to the iCenter.	x
Rabbi Binyamin Krauss	Day Schools	SAR Academy, NY	Principal, Elementary and Middle School	
Jay Leberman	Day Schools	Perelman Jewish Day School, Philadelphia	Head of School	
Rachel Levin	Camping	iCenter	Goodman Initiative	
Lesley Litman	Expert in Israel Education	iCenter	iCenter Consultant. Lecturer in Education, Brandeis University	
Rabbi Rebecca Milder	Entrepreneur / Alternative Supplementary	Jewish Enrichment Center	Founder and Director	
Dr. Zohar Raviv	Expert in Israel Education	iCenter + Birthright	Director of Education	
Paul Reichenbach	Denominational Movement	URJ	Director of Camps and Israel Programs	x
Lori Sagarin	Expert in Israel Education	iCenter	iCenter Consultant Former President of NATE. Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Beth Israel in Skokie	x
Rabbi Isaac Saposnik	Camping	Camp JRF and No'ar Hadash Israel Experience (Reconstructionist)	Director	
Rabbi Shawn SimonHazani	Day Schools	Perelman Jewish Day School, Philadelphia	School Rabbi	
Prof. Ken Stein	Teacher Education	President of Center for Israel Education	President	
Brad Sugar	High School Clubs	Jewish Student Connection	Director of Operations	
Shuki Taylor	Expert in Israel Education	Yeshiva University	Director of Service Learning and Experiential Jewish Education	
Carine Warsawski	Israel Experience	Authentic Israel	Marketing	
Rabbi Yehudit Werchow (interviewed twice)	Denominational Movement & Consulting and Service	URJ, the Jewish Agency and iCenter	Central Shaliah for URJ	x
Dr. Sivan Zakai	Teacher education	Department of Education, American Jewish Education		