THE JEWISH TEACHERS' NETWORK

A CAPSTONE PROJECT

By Adam Scheldt

In partial fulfillment of the Masters of Arts in Religious Education degree at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

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These pages represent a unique project with two interrelated yet distinct goals: the presentation of an academic body of knowledge related to a proposed application of social network theory as it might pertain to Jewish education, and the illustration of the development work done to bring such an application to literal fruition. In this way, the pages that follow depict an actual social media venture in both theory and practice.

The first portion of this report (the rationale, user guide, capstone presentation, Laboratory Site slides, and annotated bibliography) supports the theoretical—outlining the supportive principles, the research done thus far, and possible illustrative examples of social network theory as it could pertain to Jewish education. The latter portion of this report serves as a brief chronicle to the development of an actual Jewish Teachers' Network in its infancy (environmental scan, logic model, and The Jewish Teachers' Network seed site). These portions of the project were completed under the auspices of the PresenTense Social Entrepreneur Fellowship. Both the environmental scan and logic model appear in initial draft forms—as they were before review by outside advisors. These portions of this report thus serve to document the initial stages of development of a social media start up in its infancy, and should not be understood as final products.

<h1 style="text-align:center">The Jewish Teachers' Network:
A Rationale</h1>

<p style="text-align:center">by Adam Scheldt</p>

Written in partial fulfillment of the Masters of Arts in Religious Education (M.A.R.E.) Degree at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

Living in the year 2011, we find ourselves in a changing, contemporary culture. The unprecedented rise of living technology-driven and technology-integrated lives has shaped how we work, how we play, and how we interact with one another—and this trend will undoubtedly continue. On 4 February 2004, a website called Facebook revolutionized how we connect and interconnect to friends, family, colleagues, and others. Its wild success signaled a change in how we interact with one another and heralded a new era of social networking. Not even half a generation ago, assuming that the structures were in place to make such connections and programming possible, a handful of children would sit at desks and write to pen pals—their colleagues living halfway across the planet. Today, any child with access to a computer or a library can, in less than 10 minutes, find, connect to, and befriend someone living nearly anywhere on the planet. Where once finding an answer to a question or curiosity meant either asking an expert or physically researching at a library, now we take out our mobile-phones and verbally ask an 'app' to find what we are looking for—where ever we happen to be. And we may now take out that same phone (or mobile device) and use it to connect to any number of social networks—seeing at an instant literally where our friends are, what they are doing, and how they are doing it. Social networks and by extension social networking theory have begun to reshape how we interact with each other.

By using and harnessing the insights gained from social network theory, we can cultivate a cadre of tools, resources, and social opportunities to create new and exciting outcomes in Jewish education. We are able to combine current trends in how we as members of contemporary society work and function with the possibilities of current and future technologies. In effect social networking and an effective application of its school of thought allows us the opportunity to bring out the best in innovation and collaboration to cultivate the best in our Jewish educators—and thus effect better outcomes in Jewish learning. The Jewish Teachers' Network seeks to create an online, social networking, collaboration environment that works to exploit current trends in human interaction to enable Jewish educators to improve their teaching and ultimately effect better learner outcomes.

<u>A Definition</u>

Before we can begin to unpack the ramifications of social networking theory as it pertains to education, we must first work to define the theory itself. We begin by deconstructing the phrase. Networks are systems through which actions and reactions (interactions) occur between actors or entities. Particularly in the social context, they can be analyzed in numerous ways; and as networking researchers Borgatti and Ofem state, analysis of social networks "can combine quantitative, qualitative, and graphical data, allowing for fuller descriptions of the social world that are both ethnographically grounded and quantitatively rigorous." (Daly 19) And to further the social notion of the network, we look at interactions between actors and entities that are human—either as individuals or corporate entities. Social networking theory as a field in and of itself focuses upon relationships between these actors. Instead of looking at various attributes of success, as do many social science theories, social networking theory instead focuses on individual actors and the effectiveness of how they interrelate vis-à-vis other individual actors. Furthermore, social networking theory examines and seeks to analyze where such actors are situated in the greater network of relationships and environments in which they exist.

<u>Populating the Network</u>

In the case of The Jewish Teachers' Network, the actors at stake are Jewish educators. And, while hiring trends and staffing aspirations appear to be renewing current Jewish educator demographics, the majority of Jewish educators presently are educated women (roughly 79% are female, and 80% hold bachelor's degrees) and many are over the age of 50 (43%). (JESNA 6-11) While this demographic is generally understood to lag in technological engagement, recent data from complimentary online resources suggest that more and more Jewish educators are going online to find educational material—particularly content—for direct use in their teaching. (Netpop Reasearch, LLC) Given such data we now understand that the technological lag perceived in the majority of Jewish educators (as outlined above) is shrinking—in favor of greater technological engagement for purposes of teaching and education.

<u>Driving the Network</u>

Beyond a growing demographic of possible users and ever growing trends toward social networking in the greater society[1], there exist a number of solid ideas to support the existence of an online platform such as The Jewish Teachers' Network. Dean of the University of California Berkeley Graduate School of Education, and professor of policy, organization, measurement and evaluation, Judith Warren Little writes, "The stronger the professional network, the more likely educators—at all levels—are to stay in the profession, feel a greater sense of efficacy, and engage in deeper levels of conversation around teaching and learning." (Daly) The Jewish Teachers' Network will allow not only for dedicated fluid communication between colleagues and other likeminded educators, but also will allow those educators to instantly work with one another to collaborate and *learn from one another*.

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[1] See appendix, graphical illustration charting the sharp rise in the use and proliferation of social networks and social networking in education.

Professor Alan Daly, Program Director for the Center for Educational Leadership and Effective Schools at the University of California asserts that, "…knowledge transfer is assumed to move in a rational and predictable manner through formal professional development experiences, trainings, or some form of professional community. However, in the network paradigm, the importance of social structure, position, and the quality of ties has a direct influence on the types of knowledge and information an individual receives." (Daly 2) Indeed, we find that in professional-social networks where collaboration is present, professional learning is disseminated far more quickly and effectively. Learning from one's peers becomes implemented and the possibility for better teaching increases. Dutch academics, Nienke Moolnaar and Peter Sleegers support and further this idea in their work on social networks, relationships, and innovation. Their research shows that, "the sharing of information, knowledge, and expertise increases the likelihood that current knowledge will be retained and multiplied, and new knowledge and practices will be created." (Daly 97)

Further, the social network data culled from user interactions on educational networks can yield a tremendous wealth of knowledge for education directors and principals. As users effectively engage online social networks, their actions and interactions with others are 'trackable.' Analyzing this data, supervising staff can quickly and easily see which educators work well together, address issues stemming from staff interaction, and create better more precise professional learning opportunities geared specifically to staff needs.

Conclusions

Attempts at creating online Jewish educator collaboration have existed prior to The Jewish Teachers' Network. These attempts have largely focused upon lesson banks (deliverables created by educators: lesson plans, teaching materials, etc.), and as such, have by and large by-passed the educators that developed the materials. The failure of prior collaboration attempts stems from this focus. Lesson plans are not interchangeable, and simply giving a teacher a lesson plan ultimately lessens

engagement in the active task of educating. The Jewish Teachers' Network is not a lesson bank, and it seeks to succeed where others have failed by harnessing the power of social networking. The Jewish Teachers' Network will be a laboratory for the creative construction and cultivation of ideas, lesson plans, curricular development, and teaching information—an educational playground, constructed in a way that allows users to organically contribute content, connect with other educators, and receive helpful feedback. The Jewish Teachers' Network cultivates relationships and collaboration, and in so doing illustrates the research and thought behind a burgeoning body of academic research. Through using the power and value of social network theory, The Jewish Teachers' Network seeks to change the conversations we have regarding the cultivation of Jewish educative experiences, and works to give educators the tools and freedom to create the best teaching possible—each bringing strength to the greater whole of Jewish education.
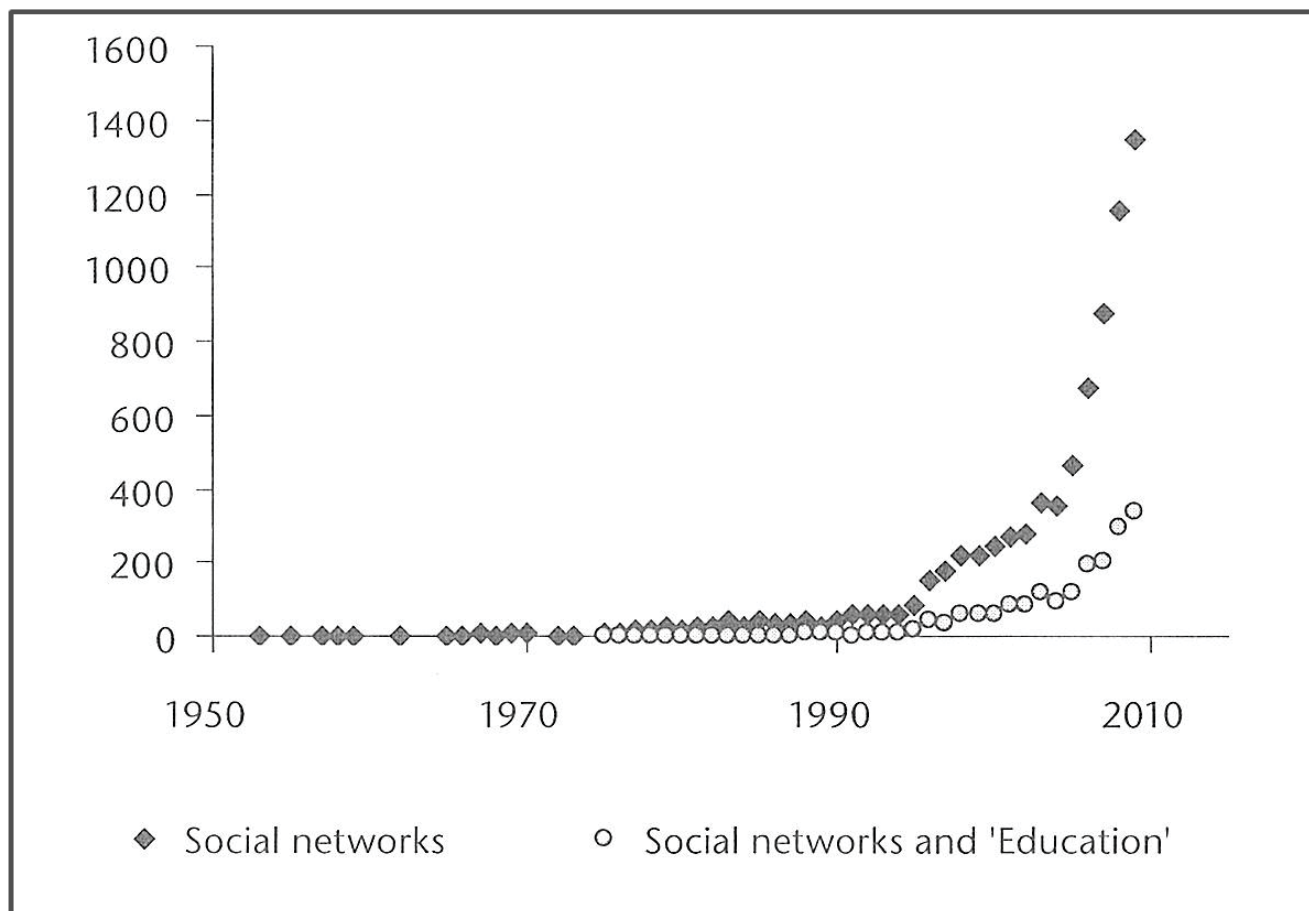
This graph depicts the proliferation (and thus use) of social networks from 1950 until the present. The sharp rise in recent decades reflects the use widespread of the internet. The rise in recent years may be attributed to the subsequent shift in social patterns as electronic interconnectivity has become part of normative culture. The gap between social networks writ large and social networks devoted to the field of education represents the margin of opportunity for organizations such as The Jewish Teachers' Network.

Works Cited

Daly, Alan, ed. Social Network Theory. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2010.

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Netpop Reasearch, LLC. Audience Profile and Satisfaction Survey. Field Survey. New York: MyJewishLearning.com, 2010.

Seel, Norbert and Sanne Dijkstra, Curriculum, Plans, and Processes in Instructional Design. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2004.

The Jewish Teachers' Network, A User Guide

by Adam Scheldt

Created in partial fulfillment of the Masters of Arts in Religious Education (M.A.R.E.) degree at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

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This document is a model of a User Guide to The Jewish Teachers' Network. The following pages are representative of an organization still in process. The services available are either scheduled or proposed and *do not reflect any functioning website or online experience*. The Jewish Teachers' Network is still very much under development and this document represents an aspired final product. It is the hope of The Jewish Teachers' Network that with further work and sponsorship of funders, the collaborative environment described herein may come to fruition.

The Jewish Teachers' Network

Welcome to The Jewish Teachers' Network! The following guide will help you understand and use the Network to improve your teaching through a collaborative and the effective use of all the resources offered by The Jewish Teachers' Network.

Our Ikar

The Jewish Teachers' Network was born from the emerging field of social network theory in education. This theory combines the rigor of academic social theory with the new ways that we have begun to interact and work with each other. Indeed, we find ourselves living, working, and thriving in a world where people collaborate to meet goals and achieve success and information is shared in every direction quickly organically. As we see in so many realms of our contemporary lives, by effectively working together, we have the ability to not only do a better job of meeting our deadlines and accomplish our goals, but we can also learn from each other and ultimately better the field. And in the case of The Jewish Teachers' Network, that means ultimately bettering the Jewish people.

The Jewish Teachers' Network fosters the collaboration, innovation, and effectiveness of Jewish educators. To this end, we have chosen an online platform (a website with multiple access points—i.e. a computer, tablet, smartphone, etc.) in which to operate. At our heart, The Jewish Teachers' Network is a laboratory for the creative construction and cultivation of ideas, lesson plans, curricular development, and teaching information. As an educational "playground" the Network is constructed in a way that allows users to organically contribute content, connect with other educators, and receive helpful feedback. We seek to change the conversations we have regarding Jewish teaching, and work to give you, the educator, the tools and freedom to create the best learning experiences you can create— allowing you to bring your strength to the greater whole.

Where to Begin

Because The Jewish Teachers' Network exists online, it might be a little difficult to understand at first. We are used to thinking about networks and networking in two different realms. On the one hand, we can picture going into a room filled with people, business cards in hand, and talking to new people and meeting new faces that you hope might help you in your work. On the other hand, we've become accustomed to hearing about computer networks in which multiple computers are all tangled together and tech support people keep everything running smoothly. The Jewish Teachers' Network in many ways combines these two ideas—the interpersonal connections to support your career more rich and robust together with the technology to help you creatively succeed. You will soon create an account with us (if you haven't already), and moments later, you will have the opportunity to find, contact, and even collaborate with other Jewish educators just like you—and no tech support guru is required!

Lets get started. Begin by either logging in or by clicking the **Join Us!** link at the top right of your screen. If you are creating a profile with The Jewish Teachers' Network for the first time, you should also notice that you can log in with your Facebook, Google, or Twitter account information as well. Creating your profile is quick and easy, simply fill in each box (paying attention to the required fields!), click finish, and you are set. We will send you a confirmation email to seal the deal and welcome you to The Jewish Teachers' Network. Click the link in the email, and you can immediately begin connecting, creating, and cultivating good Jewish education!

Once you've confirmed your account, you will be able to directly log on to The Jewish Teachers' Network. The first time you log on, the website will walk you through setting up your account and your user page. Through this process, you'll be asked for your school(s) affiliation (where you teach). If your school is part of The Jewish Teachers' Network, you will be asked to join the school's laboratory—where you can directly collaborate with your fellow educators. If you are not part of a school, or your school is not part of The Jewish Teachers' Network, then simply continue in setting up your personal homepage.

You will also have the chance to tell the Network a little bit about yourself. Take a few minutes to fill out your online profile. The information you enter not only let other know who you are, but also help others on The Jewish Teachers' Network celebrate the work you create on the Network. From time

to time, we like to feature outstanding work from a Jewish Teachers' Network educator (with your permission of course!), so don't forget to upload a photo!

You will have the opportunity to link your Jewish Teachers' Network calendar with your personal calendars (Google, iCal, Outlook, etc.)—helpful in seamlessly finding collaboration times. And if you are a member of a Jewish Teachers' Network school, your school's calendar (along with any and all pertinent dates and deadlines set by your school's Education Director) will automatically appear in your Jewish Teachers' Network calendar.

How to Use The Jewish Teachers' Network

As a Jewish educator, The Jewish Teachers' Network can enable you to accomplish your work creatively and effectively. The following information introduces you to a number of the resources that The Jewish Teachers' Network has to offer. The Jewish Teachers' Network is inherently collaborative. We seek to help one another by celebrating our work and our achievements through collaboration, mutual learning, and support. Your work, however, is your own. While we encourage you to share your creations freely to better the education of the Jewish people, your work will be shown to the greater Jewish Teachers' Network only through abstracts and descriptions (posted with your profile name). (If you are affiliated with a Jewish Teachers' Network member school, your work may be fully visible to your Education Director and/or your co-workers, for more information regarding school specific privacy settings, please see the Education Director at your school.) Also, we want to hear from you! On each and every page in The Jewish Teachers' Network, you will find links through which you can send us your comments, your feedback, and your thoughts on how we can improve and make The Jewish Teachers' Network a better place!

Your Personal Home Page

Your personal home page is your own gateway to The Jewish Teachers' Network. From this page, you will be able to navigate all the resources the Network has to offer as well as collaborate with co-workers and other Jewish educators on the Network. On your personal home page, you will find a number of options. On the right side of your screen, you'll find a listing of the upcoming events you need to plan for and work towards. Just below, you'll see photos of your fellow teachers. These are teachers who you have connected with on The Jewish Teachers' Network who are currently or recently online (if your school is part of The Jewish Teachers' Network, you'll see the teachers in your school as
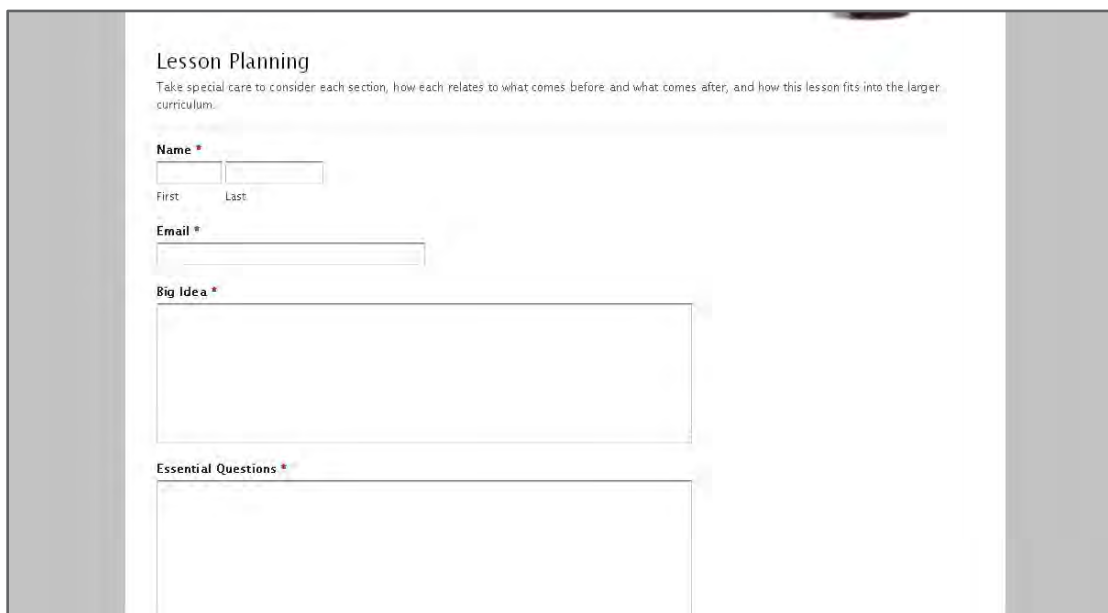
well). To accompany the teachers' photos, your personal home page will also list the title of the projects that each of your colleagues is currently working on. At the bottom of the page (also on the right side), you can see articles from the field of Jewish education to help keep you up to date and abreast of everything that is happening in the world of Jewish teaching. Across the screen on the bottom right corner, you will find a message box, that lets you drop a quick line to your educational director (if your school is a member of The Jewish Teachers' Network), or post a question or thought on The Jewish Teachers' Network's comment board (a network wide community forum for you to pose questions to the entire network and receive comments or respond to others). On the left side of your screen, you will find an opportunity to search The Jewish Teachers' Network to help you find and connect with other innovative Jewish educators. Just below the search option, you will find a list of tools to create effective teaching projects—just click on one to get started

Here's an example of what your personal home page might look like if your school is a member of The Jewish Teachers' Network:
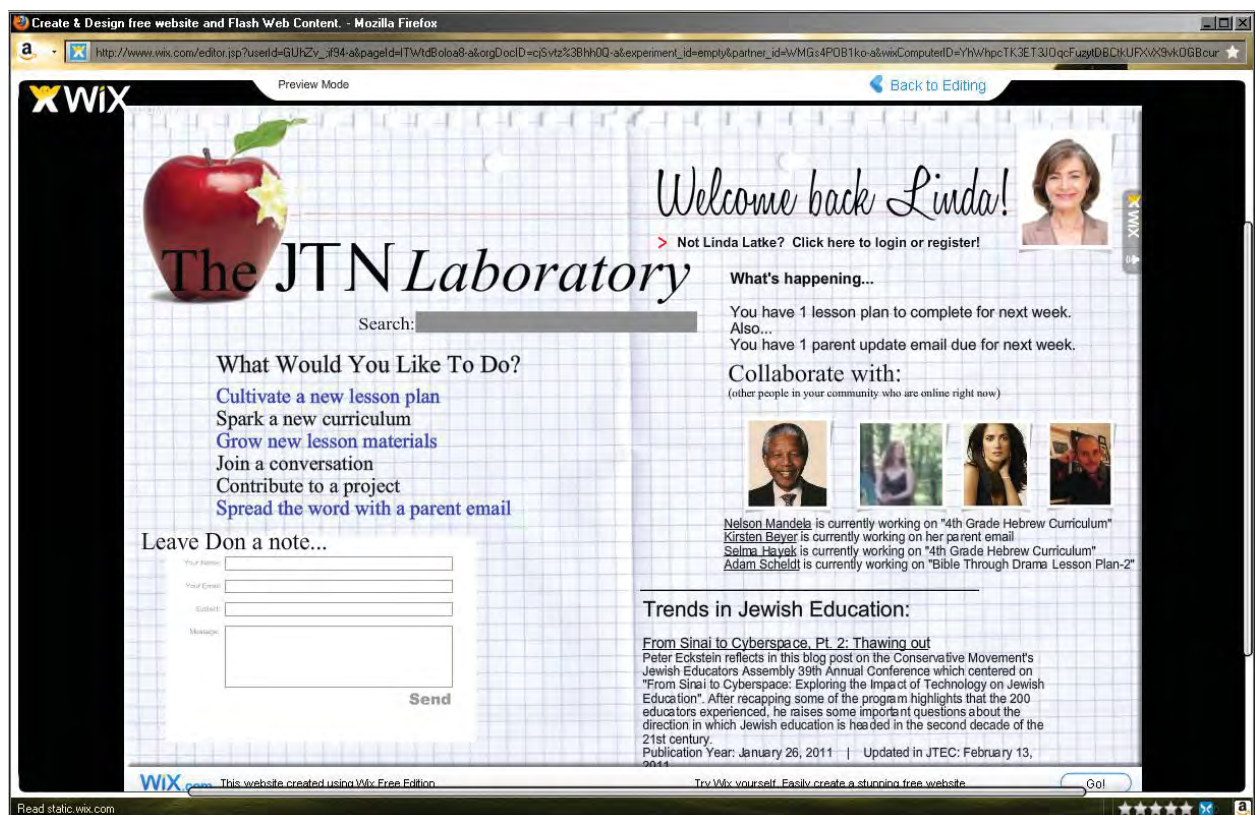
Resource and Teaching Material Creation:

The Jewish Teachers' Network helps you create the materials you need to foster the best learning possible. That's why we offer lesson planning and curricula templates that can be catered to the specific needs of your community. Our lesson planning process helps you effectively create the deliverables you need to satisfy the requirements of your workplace as well as craft the best educational experience possible for your learners. If your school belongs to The Jewish Teachers' Network, your Education Director will select and format the templates that you will use. This insures that your work will be aligned with the standards of your community. If your school is not a member of The Jewish Teachers' Network, then you will have the option of building your own lesson planning template or using a pre-arranged one from The Jewish Teachers' Network's data base—each of our lesson plan templates are designed to help you create the best teaching and educational opportunities for your learners possible. The depiction below shows an example of what a template that you might use would look like.

If you are looking to create a new curriculum or project, or collaborate on work that has already been started, you can use The Jewish Teachers' Network's collaboration tools. You can also use The Jewish Teachers' Network to find new ideas and to work with other educators to cultivate the curriculum you are looking for by selecting the **Spark a New Curriculum** link. New projects and other collaborative opportunities are available to you also through the **Join a Conversation** or the

Contribute to a Project links. Each of the above links will take you to its own collaboration environment where you can post materials and dialogue with other users. The depiction below represents one way in which The Jewish Teachers' Network can help facilitate the joint creation of projects, curricula, and more[i]:

Through this collaboration environment, you are able to post any form of media and receive feedback (either in real time or pre-recorded) on your work. Each photo to the side of the collaboration pane represents another member of The Jewish Teachers' Network. Each member records a voice message, video message, or a written message based upon the work you post. Also, each commenting member has the opportunity to interact with the media you've posted. They can circle, highlight, draw on, etc. onto the work you've posted (be it a video, photograph, or written work) in order to either help you with your project or to literally build a new on collaboratively.

Another option for collaboration available on The Jewish Teachers' Network is geared more toward the written word—in working with lesson plans and curricula. Below is a depiction of an interactive editing environment in which you can receive feedback on your own work, or comment on the work of others.

Simply follow the link available on The Jewish Teachers' Network and follow the easy to follow prompts that will help you both post your work as well as interact with the work of other members.[ii]
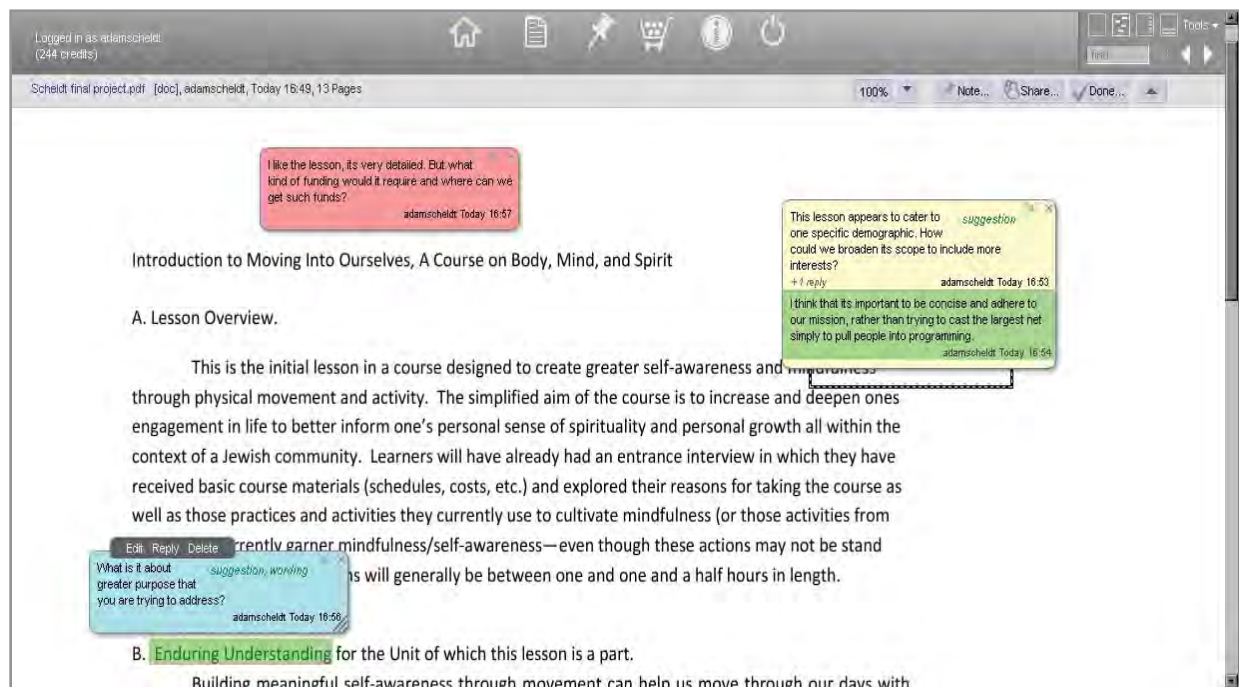
As part of The Jewish Teachers' Network, you have the ability to create your own graphics and pictures, edit your own photos, and create visual materials to use in your teaching. Simply click on the **Grow New Lesson Materials** link, to be taken to our menu of creative resources.
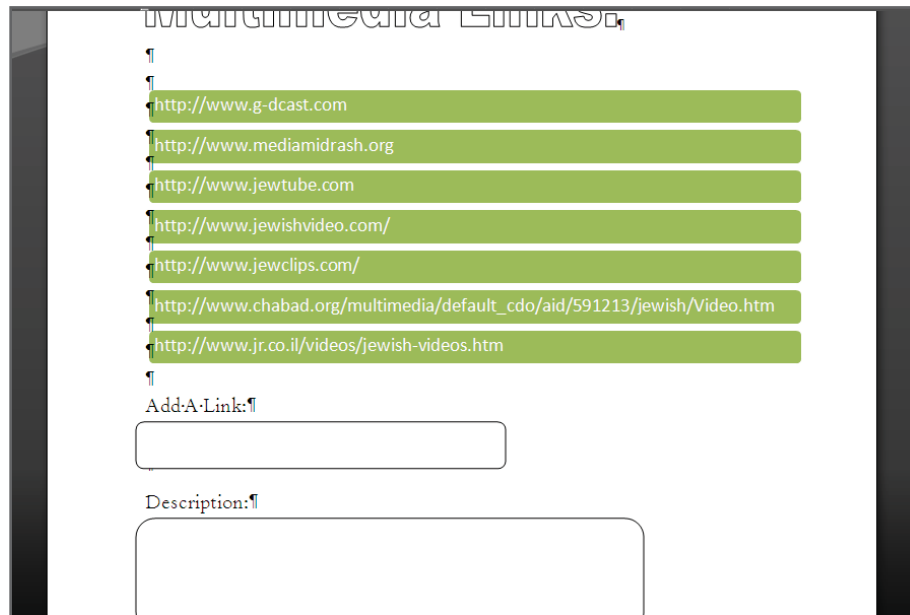
Easier to use than Photoshop, our design tools allow you to make the most out of your ideas and create compelling visual components to your teaching. No more using out of date, low-grade clip art to make your educational materials come alive. Our graphic design resources allow you to create new visuals from scratch as well as edit or compile existing graphics, pictures, and photos to create relevant, new, and engaging visual materials. Even our beloved Jewish Teachers' Network apple was created using our own graphic design resources! And remember, if you want help with your artistic creations (no matter how simple or complex), you can save your work to your community's shared storage folder where your colleagues and co-workers can pick up where you left off, or help you create the art you want.
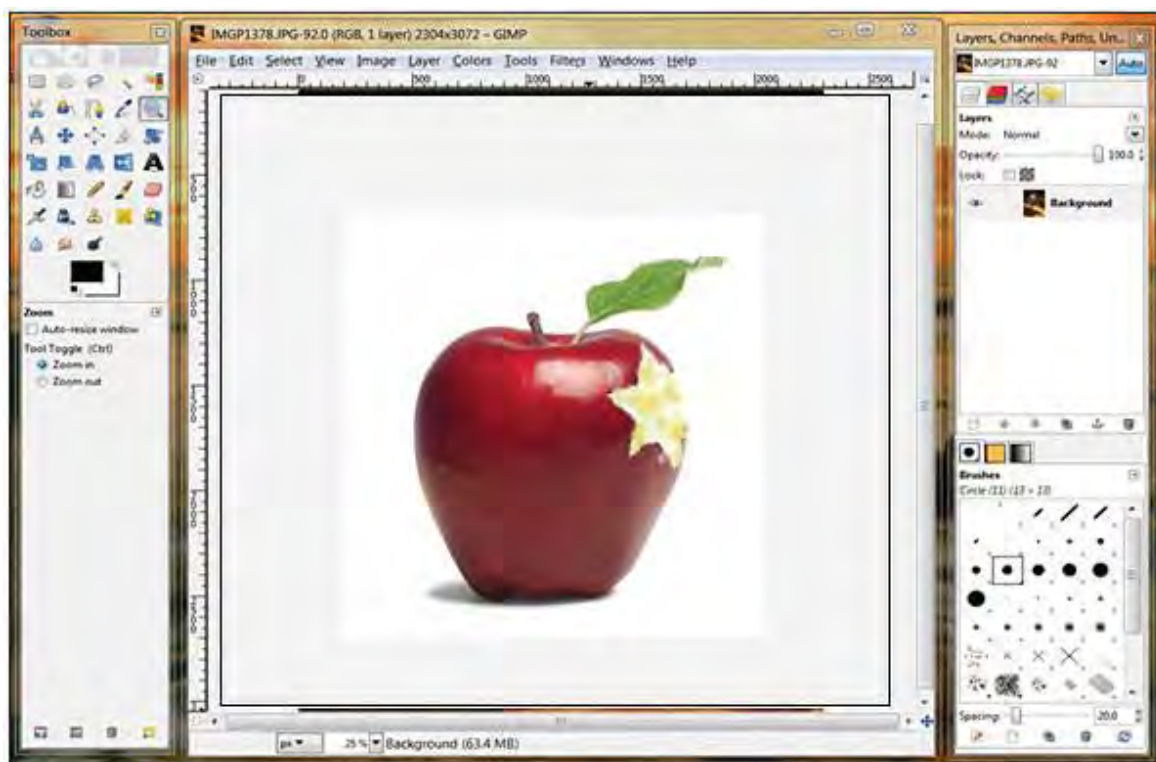
For more information on how to use and operate the mechanics of our design materials, just open the graphic design environment by clicking on the Create New Artwork link on your personal Jewish Teacher's Network web page, click "Help" at the top of the screen, and then select "Tutorials" from the drop down menu.[iii]

Looking for quality video or audio content? The Jewish Teachers' Network can help with that as well! By clicking on the Audio Visual Media Resources link on your personal Jewish Teachers'

Network home page and check out the links to engaging, useful media sites that we all have found! And just as importantly, if you know a great site that either produces or houses great audio or visual content that could be used in Jewish education, add the link and help others make their teaching better!

Multimedia Links:

http://www.g-dcast.com

http://www.mediamidrash.org

http://www.jewtube.com

http://www.jewishvideo.com/

http://www.jewclips.com/

http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/default_cdo/aid/591213/jewish/Video.htm

http://www.jr.co.il/videos/jewish-videos.htm

Add·A·Link:¶

Description:¶

Communications

With The Jewish Teachers' Network you can streamline your communication with parents, other teachers, and your Education Director. By clicking on the Spread the Word with a Parent Email link on your personal home page, you can craft informative email updates for parents, guardians, and others that need to be kept in the loop.

If your school is a member of The Jewish Teachers' Network, then your Education Director will craft the formatting and lay out of the email. All you will need to do is fill in the blank with the information you have to contribute. After clicking the submit button, your email will be sent to your Education Director for approval, before automatically being sent directly to recipients. And best of all, because The Jewish Teachers' Network can be accessed wirelessly via smart phones and other mobile devices, you can compose your emails on the go anywhere you are!

If you are not associated with a Jewish Teachers' Network member school, then you will have the opportunity to craft your own automated emailer, with customizable information fields that will allow you craft both the formatting of your email and its overall appearance.

Get Started!

Now that you've had a quick introduction to how The Jewish Teachers' Network works and what it has to offer, you are ready to begin collaborating, innovating, and improving your teaching. If you would like more information, please visit our help desk or work through any of our online tutorials (available through our main page). We hope that you've found this informative and educative, and we look forward to seeing your work and your creations on-line soon!

The Jewish Teachers' Network

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[i] Graphic taken from Voicethread.com, and represents an projected model of proposed Network-site deliverable. Prototype dependent upon funding, development, and licensing availability.

[ii] Graphic taken from A.nnotate.com, and represents an projected model of proposed Network-site deliverable. Prototype dependent upon funding, development, and licensing availability.

[iii] Graphic edited and compiled from online imaging software sites and does not represent a working Network-site deliverable. Prototype dependent upon, funding, development, and licensing availability.

The Capstone Presentation

The following depictions represent slides from the PowerPoint presentation given during the live presentation of The Jewish Teachers' Network Capstone Project at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion on 14 March 2011. Presentation given in partial completion of the M.A.R.E. degree at HUC-JIR

Slide 1

Slide 2

THE JEWISH TEACHERS' NETWORK

BY : ADAM SCHELDT

Slide 3

Who?
What?
When?
Where?
How ?
Why?

THE
BIG
QUESTIONS

מי? מה? מתי? איפה? איך? למה?

Slide 4

Who?
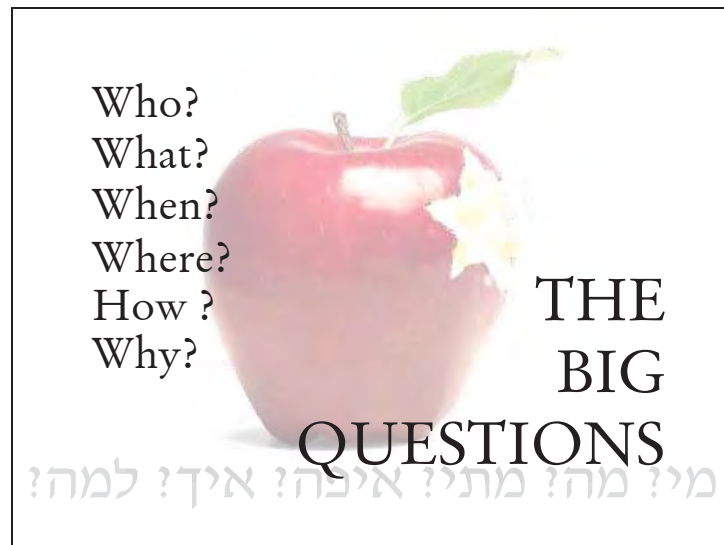
Who?

- 79% women
- 43% over age 50
- 85% American, 9% [born] Israeli
- 80%+ hold bachelor's or master's degrees

(Aggregate data for both supplementary and day schools)

Who?

Although nearly half of our educators have had experience working in public schools…

Slide 7

Who?

A significant portion of our teachers
do not hold recognized or accredited
teaching certification.

Slide 8

Who?

Movement Affiliation for Supplementary School Teachers

- 36% Reform
- 34% Conservative
- 9% Orthodox
- 9% "Just Jewish"
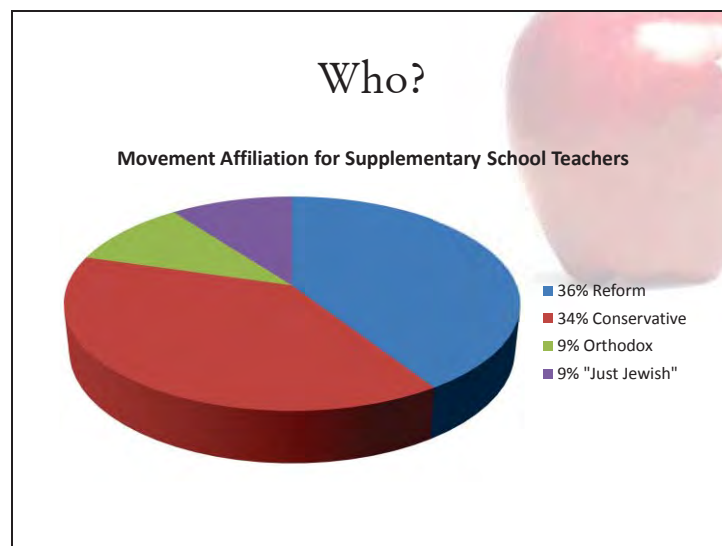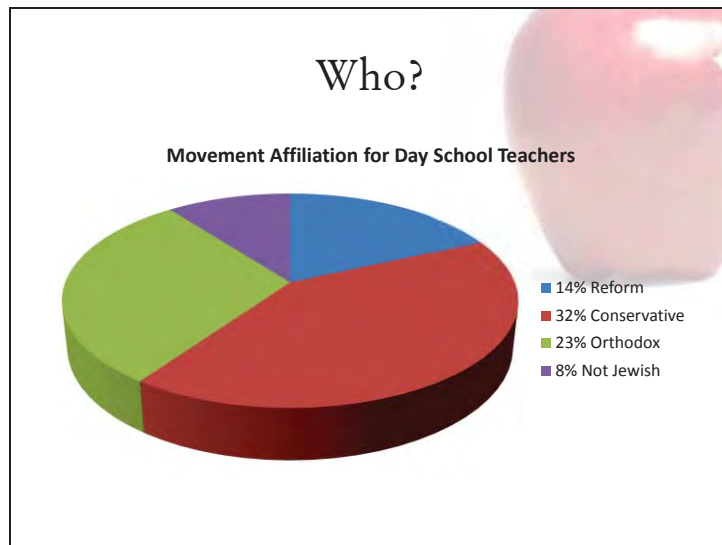
Slide 9

Slide 10
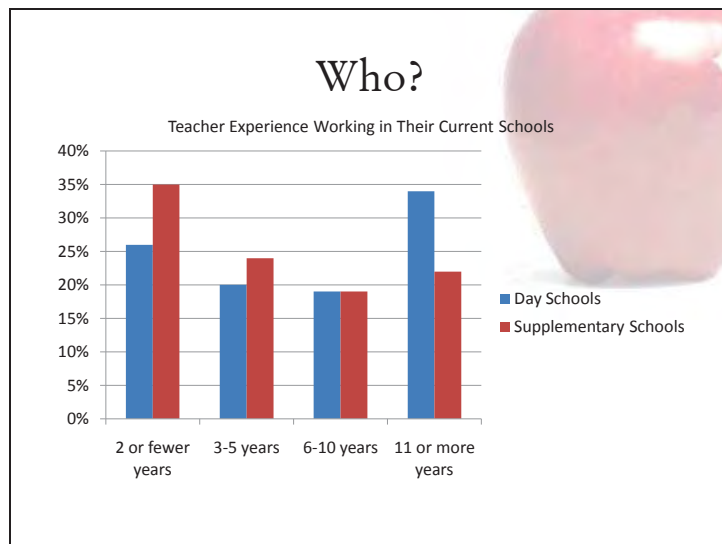
Who?

A changing landscape…

While schools strive to improve teacher
retention, trends toward generational
renewal in staff hiring appear to be
on the rise.
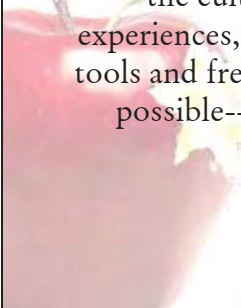
What?
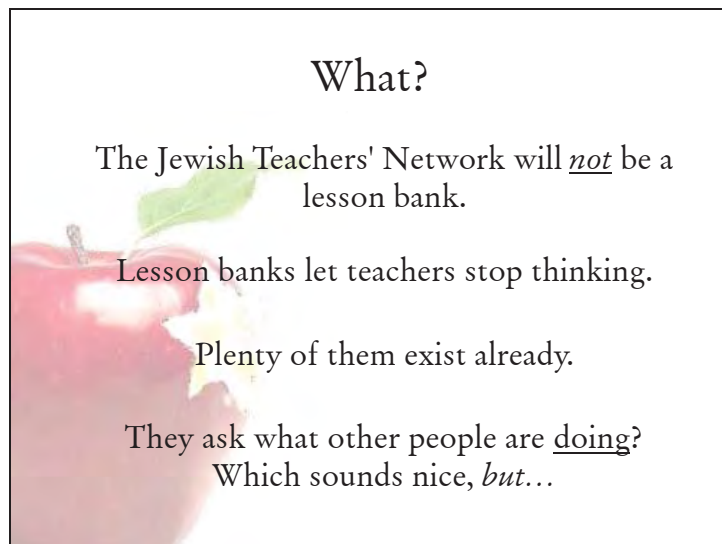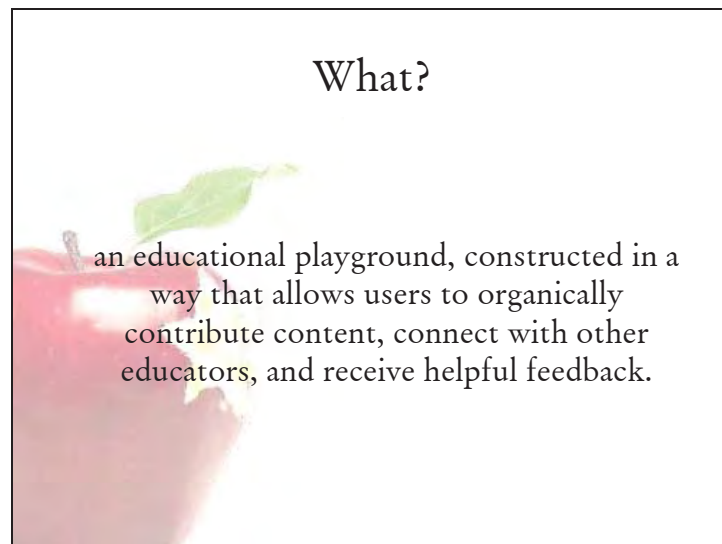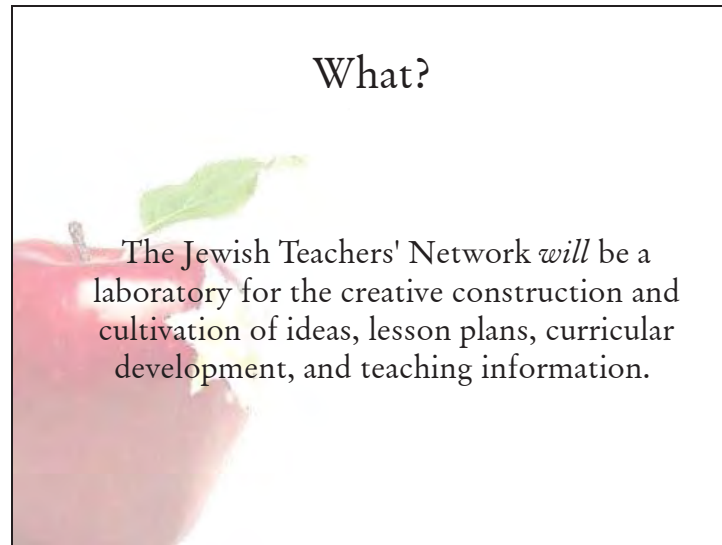
The Jewish Teachers' Network

What?

The Jewish Teachers' Network will _not_ be a lesson bank.

Lesson banks let teachers stop thinking.

Plenty of them exist already.

They ask what other people are doing? Which sounds nice, *but…*

What?

The Jewish Teachers' Network *will* be a laboratory for the creative construction and cultivation of ideas, lesson plans, curricular development, and teaching information.

What?

an educational playground, constructed in a way that allows users to organically contribute content, connect with other educators, and receive helpful feedback.

What?

The Jewish Teachers' Network seeks to change the conversations we have regarding the cultivation of Jewish educative experiences, and works to give educators the tools and freedom to create the best teaching possible--each bringing strength to the greater whole.

What?

Sounds lovely, right?

But what is it exactly?

Slide 19

Slide 20
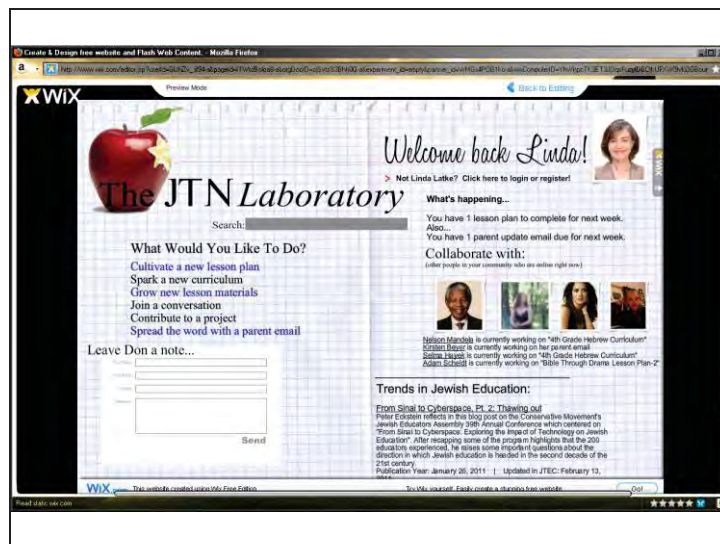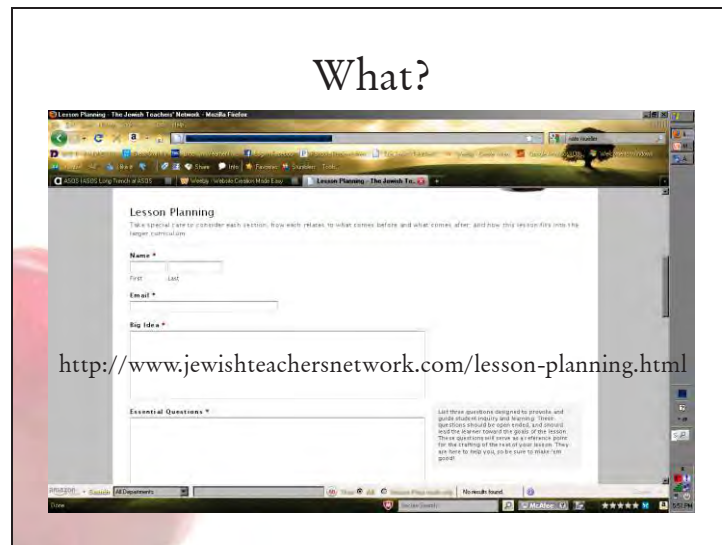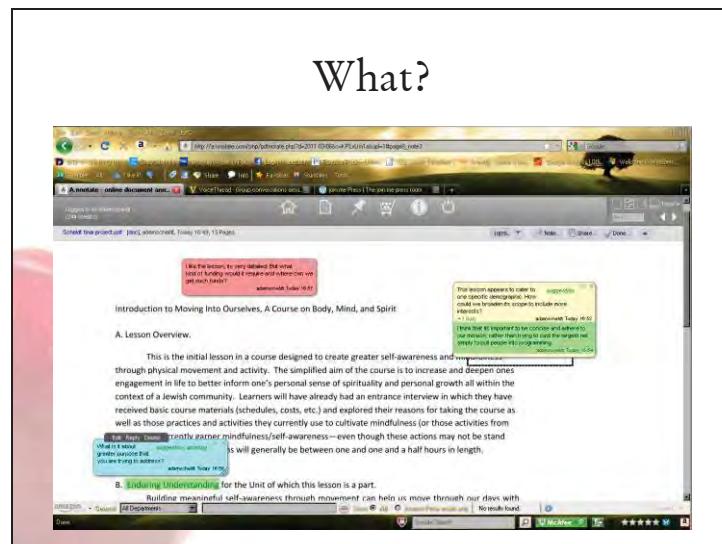
Slide 23

Slide 24

Slide 25

When?

Slide 26

Now.

Where?

here
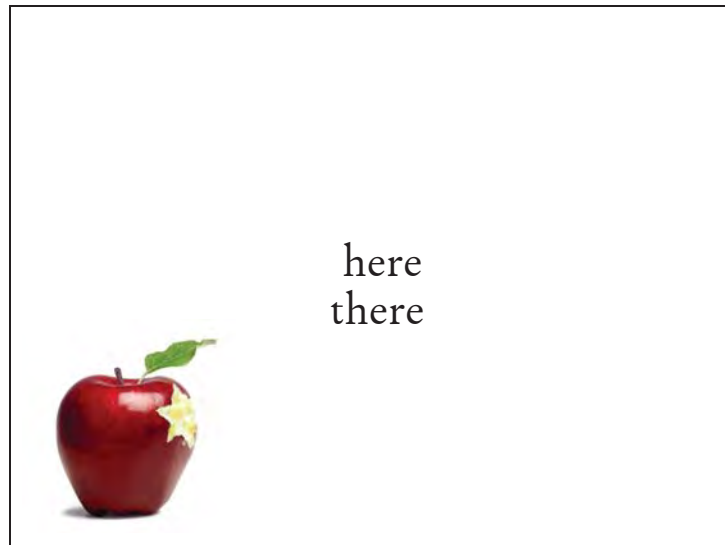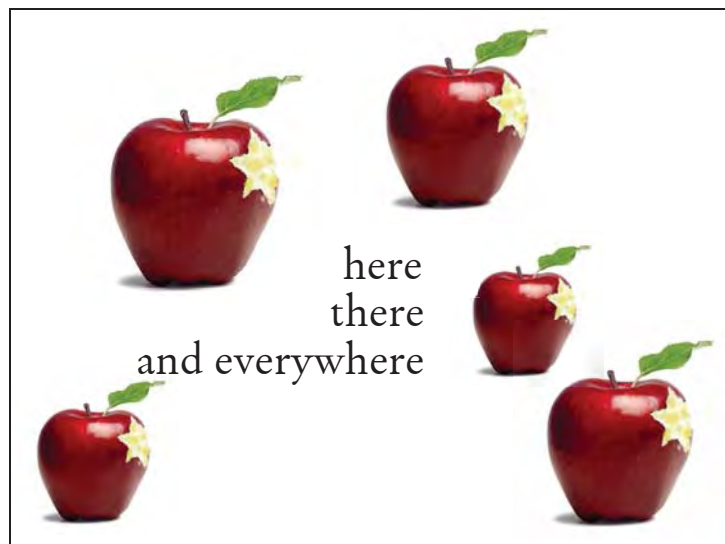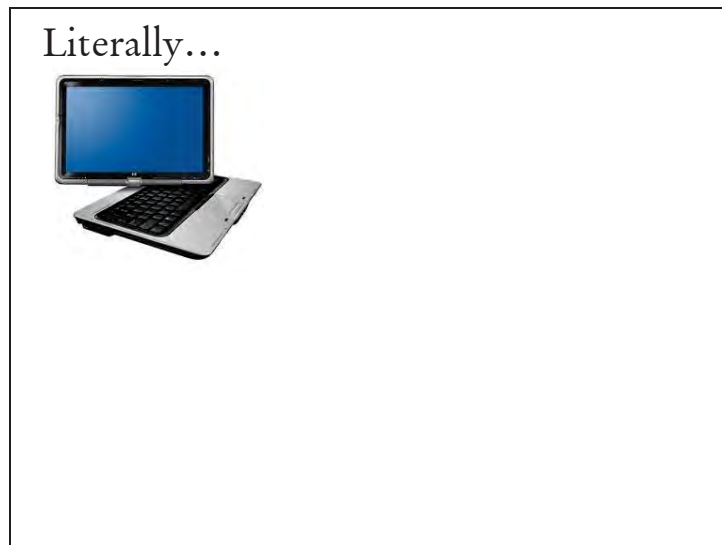
here
there

here
there
and everywhere

Literally…

Literally…

…everywhere

How?

Its Your Turn

Why?

Why?

"*The stronger the professional network, the more likely educators—at all levels—are to stay in the profession, feel a greater sense of efficacy, and engage in deeper levels of conversation around teaching and learning.*"

-Judith Warren Little

Why?

"…*knowledge transfer is assumed to move in a rational and predictable manner through formal professional development experiences, trainings, or some form of professional community. However, in the network paradigm, the importance of social structure, position, and the quality of ties has a direct influence on the types of knowledge and information an individual receives.*"

(Alan Daly)

Why?

We are moving from
"*'Its not what you know, but who you know'*
to
Who you know defines what you know."

-Alan Daly

Slide 41

Why?

"The sharing of information, knowledge, and expertise increases the likelihood that current knowledge will be retained and multiplied, and new knowledge and practices will be created."

-Nienke Moolenaar & Peter Sleegers

Slide 42

Why?

Social Network Theory. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2010.
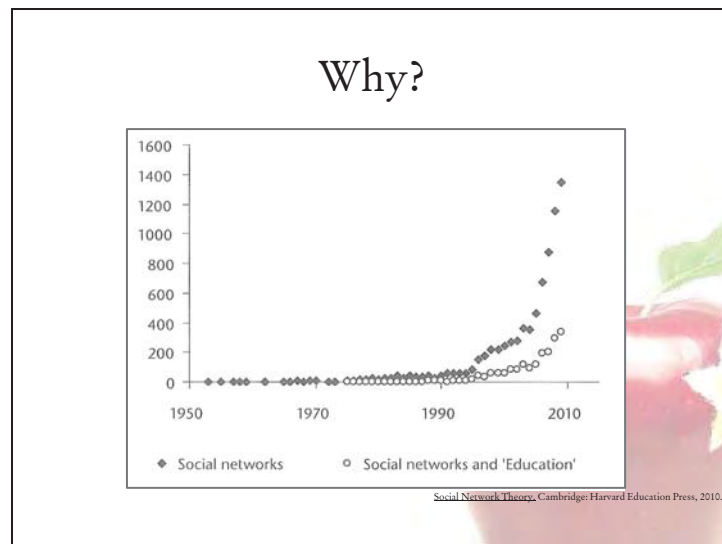
Why?

"Social network data can be especially helpful in engaging school practitioners in reflection on leadership and management arrangements in their schools."
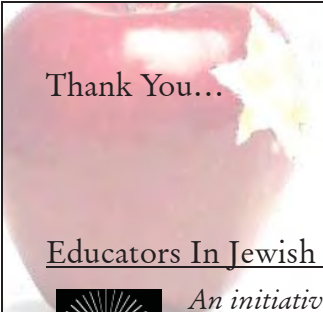
-James Spillane, Kaleen Healey, & Chong Min Kim

My Gratitude Goes To…

Slide 45

Thank You…
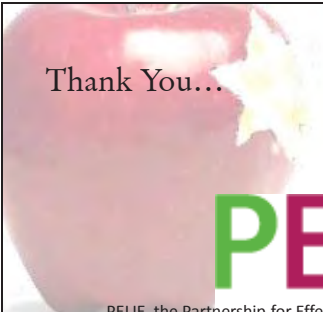
Educators In Jewish Schools Study (EJSS)

An initiative of JESNA's Berman Center for Research and Evaluation in Jewish Education
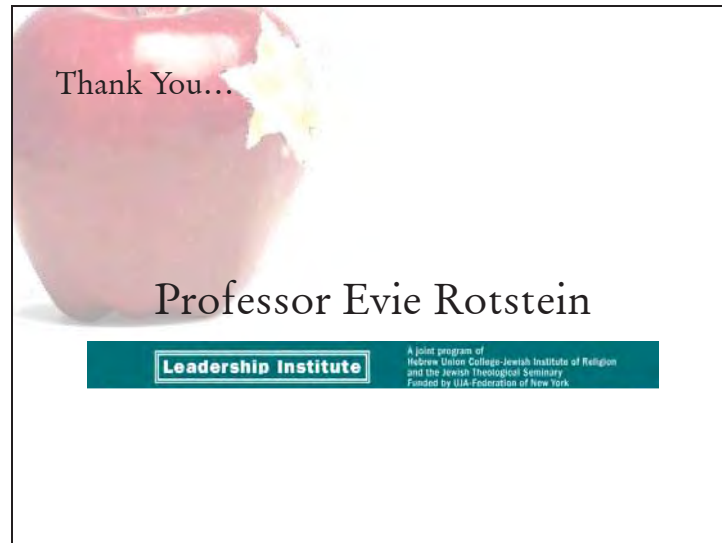
And Don Sylvan

Slide 46

Thank You…

PELIE

PELIE, the Partnership for Effective Learning and Innovative Education

Slide 47

Slide 48

Slide 49

Slide 50

The Jewish Teachers' Network

www.jewishteachersnetwork.com

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory Site
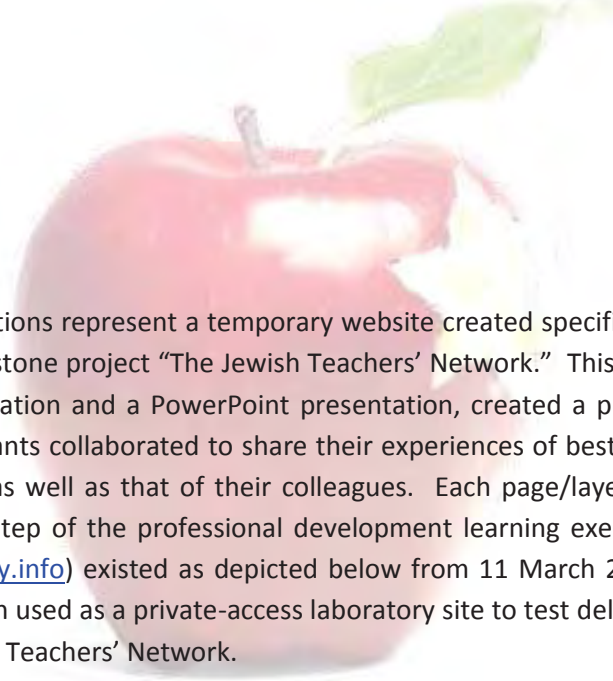
The following depictions represent a temporary website created specifically for the purposes of the presentation of the capstone project "The Jewish Teachers' Network." This website, in concert with both a frontal, oral presentation and a PowerPoint presentation, created a professional development workshop in which participants collaborated to share their experiences of best practices in an effort to better their own teaching as well as that of their colleagues. Each page/layer of the site self directs users to each subsequent step of the professional development learning exercise. This website (site address: www.jtnlaboratory.info) existed as depicted below from 11 March 2011 until 11 April 2011, and since that time has been used as a private-access laboratory site to test deliverable web-products in development for The Jewish Teachers' Network.

The JTN Laboratory

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory

Home   Collaborate   Innovate   Disseminate   The Jewish Teachers Network

Welcome to The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory Site.

What it is...

The JTN Lab Site is a space that allows us to try out new ideas and see what they might look like online before they go live to the main site (or even our current seed site). Today, however, the entire site has been truncated and designed to facilitate the interactions described to you during Adam's capstone presentation.

What to do...

1. Form (mini) Laboratories
2. Collaborate
3. Innovate
4. Disseminate

Get Started...

Create a free website with weebly

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory

Home   Collaborate   Innovate   Disseminate   The Jewish Teachers Network

Collaborate.

Take a few minutes to discuss the very best *collaborative* experience you've had in one of the subject areas below.

What made that collaborative experience great?
Who was involved and what did they contribute?

- Lesson Content
- Project Development
- Curriculum Development
- Learner Relationships
- Lesson Planning
- Pedagogy
- Personal Development
- Professional Development

The Jewish Teachers' Network

Moving on to the next step...

Have a comment or question about the process?
Just let me know!

Name *

First   Last

Email *

Comment *

Submit

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory

Home   Collaborate   Innovate   Disseminate   The Jewish Teachers Network

Innovate.

Innovation comes in many forms and degrees. The simplest form of innovation are variations of an existing product that may cause us to look at its function in a new way. Improvements on existing products can be considered innovative even if it is simply a matter of changing what it looks like.
-Merrick Russel, *Nine Strategies for Innovation*, 1998

How could you evolve or improve upon the collaborative experiences you just discussed? Could your collaborative successes be transferred to other areas of your work?

Try cultivating your own ideas, or use a method listed below...

- New Technologies--Do you know of something that could have taken your collaborations to the next level?
- Old Technologies--What would your interaction have looked like if you had used nothing technological at all? Where would you go? What would you do to achieve the same, or an even better outcome?
- If you took something away or subtracted a key feature from your success, how might you work to still achieve excellence?
- What would your situation look like if different people were involved? Could your success be replicated? If your initial answer is *no*, what might you do to insure that it is *yes*?
- How might you constructively explore the weaknesses while exploiting the strengths of your successful collaboration?

Moving on to the next step...

Have a comment or question about the process? Just let me know!

Name *

First   Last

Email *

Comment *

Submit

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory

Home   Collaborate   Innovate   **Disseminate**   The Jewish Teachers Network

Disseminate.

dis·sem·i·nate/diˈseməˌnāt/
Verb1. Spread or disperse (something, esp. information) widely.

Take the next few minutes to briefly share your findings with someone outside your group. *Please feel free to do so through any form of communication that you comfortable with... g-chat, IM, txt, facebook, email, phone, smart-phone chat platform, or even just simply turn to your neighbor.*

Have a comment or question about the process? Just let me know!

On to a note of thanks!

Name *

First   Last

Email *

Comment *

Submit

The Jewish Teachers' Network

The Jewish Teachers' Network Laboratory

Home   Collaborate   Innovate   Disseminate   The Jewish Teachers Network

Thanks SO much for attending my HUC-JIR Masters In Religious Education Capstone Presentation! I very much appreciate all your time, care, and effort!

Let me know what you thought of the presentation, the collaboration work-shopping, The Jewish Teachers' Network, or anything else! I'd love to know what you're thinking!

Name *

First   Last

Email *

Comment *

Submit

Annotated Bibliography

Written in partial fulfillment of the Masters of Arts in Religious Education (M.A.R.E.) Degree at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

Arnof, Stephen Hazan. "A Sustainable Future." Sh'ma (2011): 3-4.

> This article addresses the resources, opportunities, and challenges facing Jewish day school education. Hazan asserts a need for transparent and entrepreneurial communities that are built upon diversity and work to support educators and learners.

Bedord, Jean. I've Got a Domain Name--Now What? Silicon Valley: Happy About, 2010.

> This book serves as an introductory text to the online development of a personal 'web-presence.' Dedord outlines the process of basic website creation and offers insightful tips and techniques for both introductory and seasoned web builders.

Ben-Peretz, Miriam. The Teacher-Curriculum Encounter. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.

> Ben-Peretz examines and analyzes teachers' use and design of curriculum and curriculum materials. The text examines structures, modes of working, concepts and strategies that teachers employ (or can employ) in their work as educators.

Bolman, Lee and Terrence Deal. Reframing Organizations. SanFrancisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher, 2003.

> Authors Bolman and Deal work to present four frames of leadership for organizations. A thorough understanding of these four frames of leadership is immensely helpful in understanding systems and modes of exchange and networking within existing structures, and offers insight into the construction of future networks and collaborations.

Bowles, Cennydd and James Box. Undercover User Experience Design. Berkeley: New Riders, 2011.

> "Undercover User Experience Design" outlines the basics of user interface and user experience for web sites. The authors craft their explanations from the inside out—offering ways to innovate within larger systems, and methods of learning from existing structures in order to improve future web designs.

Collins, James and Jerry Porras. "Building Your Company's Vision." Harvard Business Review (1996).

> Collins and Porras write about the creation and formation of solid vision statements. The authors provide methods and examples of effective visioning and mission statement crafting.

Daly, Alan, ed. Social Network Theory. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2010.

> "Social Network Theory" is a cohesive compilation of essays and articles that directly address and explicate the burgeoning body of work that explores social networks and social networking theory—particularly insofar as it pertains to the field of education. This text has been a seminal resource for this capstone project, and provides a trove of information to support the fast growing importance of social networks in bettering learning.

Davenport, Thomas. "Competpeting on Analytics." Harvard Business Review (2006).

> This article explores the effective use of data and field analytics toward producing positive results and development in organizations. Author Thomas Davenport surveys the latest tools and modes of analytic data gathering and analysis, as well as provides case study information regarding how successful organizations have used such data and techniques to achieve success.

Grantmakers for Education. "Innovation in Education Redesigning the Delivery System of Education in America." GFE Member Briefing. San Francisco: Grantmakers for Education, 2010. 15.

> This brief outlines current trends in evolving education and the delivery of teaching and learning as well as forecasts future trends. The document is geared toward the fundraising world, and as such carries succinct and valuable information toward what leading and innovative institutions are currently (at time of publication) moving toward regarding the future of education. Document findings include focuses on whole-learner education, systems thinking, collaboration, and effective use of resources (technology).

Haynes, Cynthia and Jan Rune-Holmevik, High Wired: On the Design, Use, and Theory of Educational MOOs. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001.

> "High Wired" is an effective resource and technical guide that relates both scholarly theory as well as practical information regarding multiple-user-object-oriented environments (MOOs). MOOs, once generally thought of as platforms for online social interaction have begun to figure highly in networking, social network theory, productivity, and professional collaboration. "High Wired" explores the development, use, and possibilities of MOOs.

Hunter, Madeline. "7 Step Lesson Plan Design." 7 February 2006.

> This document is an articulated and instructional model/guide that relates Dr. Madeline Hunter's lesson planning scheme. Hunter's lesson planning methods have been widely used and provides an alternative to the Understanding By Design model (albeit a similar one).

JESNA. Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS). Survey and Study. New York: JESNA Learnings and Consultation Center, 2006.

> The EJSS Study provided much of the background demographic data for The Jewish Teachers' Network. The report surveys the landscape of Jewish educators and illustrates not just who

Jewish teachers and educators are, but also provides information relating to their motivations, and satisfaction with their work.

Johnson, Jeff. Designing with the Mind in Mind. Burlington: Morgan Kaufmann, 2010.

"Designing with the Mind in Mind" presents a guide and technical reference in the design and implementation of online user interfaces. The text surveys the major rules for good design in web development and user interface while illustrating examples of best practices in the field.

Kouses, James and Barry Posner. "To Lead, Create A Shared Vision." Harvard Business Review (2009).

In this article, Kouses and Posner explore key strategies in vision creation. Their insights focus upon the importance of coalition building and the gathering of support for visions, visioning, and core values within organizations.

Lieberman, Ann and Lynne Miller. Teachers Caught in the Action. New York: Teachers College Press, 2001.

Lieberman and Miller explore professional development for educators vis-à-vis educational reform in schools. The text addresses both the purposes of professional development for educators as well as the context, strategies, and structures needed for such professional development actions.

Moskowitz, Nechama Skolnik. "Beyond Apples and Honey: The Editor's Soapbox." The Ultimate Jewish Teacher's Handbook. Ed. Nechama Skolnik Moskowitz. Springfield: A.R.E. Publishing, 203. 1-12.

This article directly addresses the importance, function, and difficulties of effective curriculum and instructional design in the Jewish educational context. The article serves as an entrée into the articles that follow it, and was central in much of the understandings from which this capstone project came forth.

National Staff Development Council. Professional Learning in The Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad. Palo Alto: National Staff Development Council, 2009.

This report examines recent progressions of educator development. Focusing in the United States, but also examining education in other countries, the report provides helpful, data driven, information helpful in the professional development of educators.

Russel, Merrick. "Nine Strategies for Innovation." 1998. Industrial Technology and Design Teachers' Association. 5 March 2011 <http://www.intad.asn.au/conference/Russell%202.pdf>.

This article provides a practical guide for the creation of innovation in the field of industrial design. Adaptations of the ideas presented by Merrick, easily translate into creative methods

and strategies that can be used in the generation of innovative new ideas in education as well as in the implementation of learning.

Seel, Norbert and Sanne Dijkstra, Curriculum, Plans, and Processes in Instructional Design. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2004.

"Curriculum, Plans, and Processes in Instructional Design" is a topical compendium of essays and articles that presents research and findings in the use of technology driven collaboration in educational settings. Many articles focus on case studies and aggregate data from institutions of higher learning and schools across the globe, and presents strong evidence in favor of technology based collaboration in instruction and education.

Skolnik-Moskowitz, Nechama, ed. The Ultimate Jewish Teacher's Handbook. Denver: A.R.E Publishing, 2003.

"The Ultimate Jewish Teacher's Handbook" is a compilation of topical articles and essays spanning the field of Jewish education. The text covers such topics as curriculum design, lesson planning, management, and professional development—all of which are germane to this capstone project.

The Case for Collaborative Consumption. Perf. Rachel Botsman. TED. TED, 2010.

This filmed lecture, given by Rachel Botsman at a recent TED conference (an annual conference bringing together leading innovators from the fields of **t**echnology, **e**ntertainment, and **d**esign), explores her findings and research on growing trends in contemporary Western society. Botsman's findings assert a distinct rise in collaboration regarding nearly every aspect of consumer life and professional behavior.

Weissman, Cyd. "Seamless Learning: New Thinking about Congregational Education." Sh'ma (2011): 5-8.

Weissman's article serves as a captured conversation amongst leaders in the field in discussing new ways to consider education in congregational settings. In the article, Weissman addresses issues of leadership, success, and family dynamics.

Wertheimer, Jack, ed. Learning and Community: Jewish Supplementary Schools in the Twenty-first Century. Lebannon: Brandeis University Press, 2009.

This book surveys the landscape of contemporary Jewish supplementary schools. Subjects include: innovative small institutions, larger suburban congregations, and high schools.

Wiggins, Grant and Jay McTighe. Understanding by Design. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005.

"Understanding by Design" (UbD) is a seminal text regarding lesson planning and curriculum design in contemporary education. Wiggins and McTighe outline and support each step of the backwards design model of instructional design.

—. Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Design, 2004.

This 'workbook' provides numerous UbD templates, diagrams, and workshopping opportunities that help craft substantive and effective learning design. This text as well as the greater UbD book itself, provided the scaffolding for much of the curriculum design information involved in this capstone project.

Environmental Scan
26 February 2011
Compiled by Adam Scheldt

The following appraisal represents a survey of the field in which The Jewish Teachers' Network seeks to operate. To this end, we sought out and examined a number of organizations that fall into four major categories. This appraisal is descriptive in form and was conducted over the course of two months (January and February, 2011).

Definition of Terms:

Competitors: A venture that addresses the same target demographic and seeks to solve the same problem as the Jewish Teachers' Network.

Comparatives: A venture that seeks to solve the same problem The Jewish Teachers' Network is addressing while addressing a different target demographic.

Compliments: A venture that addresses the same demographic The Jewish Teachers' Network does while seeking to solve a different problem.

Collaboratives: A venture that does not target the same demographic or seek to solve the same problem as The Jewish Teachers' Network, but is within the same general field and holds the same interests at heart (same bottom line).

Note:

This survey is not exhaustive. The Jewish Teachers' Network recognizes that many more organizations and even the work of individuals could easily fall into the categories examined and set forth in this document. We openly welcome any amendments and additions that readers may have and look forward to the collaborative conversations that our findings produce.

Competitors

Teacher Center at the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland

The Teacher Center, housed in the greater website of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland, provides various deliverables for Jewish educators--ranging from lesson ideas to games, posters, etc. Materials are searchable by either key word search or category selections (available categories are: subject, such as bible, holidays, and Israel; sub-subject, such as specific holidays etc.; and age group, such as kindergarten, elementary school, college, etc.) Users must register. Selected materials are placed in a shopping cart and upon check out, a message is sent thanking registrants for their order and noting that more information will follow. An email is then sent requesting mailing address and billing information, at which point the price of the materials is made apparent (and the buyer may then refuse the purchase). Materials appear to be of good educative quality, however user interface appears dated, not intuitive, and time consuming. There appears to be no teacher-teacher interaction.
http://www.jecc.org/TeacherCenter/TeacherCenter.aspx

Morim.org

Morim.org is a teaching and education resource website that offers consulting, articles, newsletters, and teaching and project ideas. The site is produced by JewishPrograms.org--an off-shoot of a collaborative effort between the American Joint Distribution Committee and the JDC International Centre for Community Development. The site also offers a "my morim" section available to registered users. While it took two attempts at registering before receiving an automated confirmation from site administrators, the registered service offers the opportunity to "save, comment and organize all of the projects that are of interest of you"--with further options to share your work with colleagues and craft a personalized profile and calendar that can also be shared with other users. The site also offers a search matrix similar to the Teacher Center at the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland, although Morim.org appears to have a less robust program offering. User interface is simple and intuitive, programs do not appear to be editable or collaborative, and the site is very well organized.
http://www.morim.org

Jewish Educators' Network

The Jewish Educators' Network (JEN) is a venture based in the UK, and backed by the L.A. Pincus Fund for Jewish Education in the Diaspora and the World Zionist Organization. JEN's focus lies in Jewish text

learning and provides teaching materials (projects, lesson ideas, lesson plans, and a developed text bank). JEN does not offer or require registration or a register user platform; however, it utilizes Google Groups to facilitate forum discussions, and offers the opportunity for users to contribute to their network via imbedded web forms. Posted materials are user rated and searchable through a familiar age, subject, and format matrix or keyword search option. JEN also offers in-service training to assist teachers in their text skills and their abilities in teaching Jewish texts, virtual and face-to-face discussion forums for support, brainstorming and problem solving, and mentoring to Jewish educators. JEN is available for free and is open to any Jewish educator, administrator, etc. The Jewish Educators' Network's focus on text carves out its niche in the world of Jewish education and educational resources. Similarly, however, such focus precludes its involvement in whole teacher learning and thus falls short of the mandate of its title. Its user interface is relatively intuitive and its organization and presentation is elegant and fits user expectations.

http://jewisheducators.org.uk/

Chinuch.org

Chinuch.org is a stellar example of collaboration between Jewish teachers. Its self described mission: "to facilitate the sharing of finished and raw printed materials, and to encourage networking ideas and solutions," states its raison d'etre clearly and succinctly. Chinuch.org works to "enable Torah educators to share quality educational ideas and materials." Because they believe that "access to the best resources and inspiration from hundreds of *mechanchim* and *mechanchos* worldwide enhances the quality of *chinuch* everywhere." The site is designed to take educators quickly and efficiently to the materials, lesson plans, and programs which they are looking for. The site is divided via tabs (similar to those found in the latest iterations of many web browsers)--each tab representing an age group. Within each age group/sub-site, information and thus site traffic is directed via subject matter, content popularity, highlights, and chronology. A number of other site navigation opportunities are available throughout each sub-site to direct users to possible complimentary teaching materials--such as clip art, audio/visual materials, and educator forums. Each page also offers the opportunity for users to submit their own work, and thus contribute to the site. Additionally, the educator forums mentioned above also address a rich variety of topics for discussion. The site, itself, is decidedly Orthodox (and may trend toward the right wing of the Orthodox spectrum) in its language, content, and personality. Further, the site is essentially a well structured and interconnected lesson bank with options for dialogue between educators and information (teaching materials) sharing. While Chinuch.org does what it does well, it appears to also be self aware of an acute problem of its construction. To this end, the site states: "It has never been our intention to serve as a substitute for the efforts a teacher must expend in the preparation and presentation of suitable materials. While we screen each submission for general quality and accuracy of content, it is incumbent upon the user to thoroughly examine each item to ensure that it is appropriate for your particular students' needs. As with all materials, the ultimate responsibility lies

with the teacher." Nevertheless, the site is regularly applauded by its users and has been acclaimed by Orthodox community leaders for its usefulness as a professional resource in Jewish education.
http://chinuch.org/index.php

The Lookstein Center for Jewish Education

As effectively stated on their site, "The Lookstein Center for Jewish Education of the School of Education at Bar-Ilan University was established to promote Jewish education in the Diaspora. It focuses on leadership programs, teacher and curriculum development, as well as interactive communication and networking for Jewish educators worldwide." The Lookstein Center offers a rich tapestry of professional development material for Jewish educators as well as a vast array of resources from which educators may cull both content for teaching as well as educational methodology. The Lookstein Center also offers a matrix of lesson plans arranged by age and subject matter as well as banks of educational activities, multimedia resources, games, and educational "mini-sites." Further, The Lookstein Center offers a number of connection points to engage Jewish educators in dialogue via email based comment forums as well as Yahoo.com-based discussion boards—both with the site itself as well as with other Jewish educators. And, multiple forums requiring separate membership are available and coordinated within the site. Additional site offerings include school development materials, an array of newsletters, and e-learning materials in English, Spanish, and Russian. The Lookstein Center is funded and operates in partnership with the UJA Federation of NYC, the Jim Joseph Foundation, and many other notable donors and organizations. The website places its emphasis on educator development and educator education. While teaching resources are available, their number and scope are less than the attention given to bettering the process of Jewish education through better informed educators. Full access to all materials requires registration, and registration carries a cost ranging from $50.00 (for individuals) to $200.00 (for organizations).
 http://www.lookstein.org/home.htm

Comparatives

Edutopia

Edutopia.com is an initiative of The George Lucas Educational Foundation. Focusing on innovation and information literacy, it seeks to help the world of education keep pace with the growing and hastening changes in society and societal interaction. Instead of focusing on one group in the educational framework (i.e. a site dedicated to teachers or a site dedicated to students or administrators etc.), Edutopia brings together every stakeholder in the educational endeavor. Offering forums and platforms covering both subject areas and age groups for discussion for teachers, administrators, support staff and the like provide a massive opportunity for discussion. Blogs, articles, and video documentaries also provide rich sources of educational development information. Further, information is presented in a way that models good teaching. The user interface is well designed, and provides for an engaging and effective user experience. Schools and educational programs that are achieving excellence are highlighted in ways that promote the cross-breeding of information, leadership styles, and effective programming. Direct teaching materials do not readily appear on the site, instead, holistic information on development and educator enrichment is provided in a compelling way and paired with opportunities for productive communication between registered users. Edutopia is secular in nature.
http://www.edutopia.org

Teachers Network

The Teachers Network is a *major* network of educators that works to facilitate change and development in the world of education. The scope of the Teachers Network is one of the largest surveyed in this report and works to affect every level of education. The Network's website describes itself by the following: "**Teachers Network** is a national and international non-profit organization that identifies, supports, and connects innovative teachers who exemplify professionalism, independence, and creativity in the classroom." The reality of the organization, however, is far greater than this statement. The Teachers Network works toward governmental policy change and keeps its finger on the pulse of governmental interactions with the world of education. The Network also provides grants for innovative educators to not only develop their own excellence, but to then implement and effectively share that excellence with other teachers. The organization also offers a vast array of professional development tools for teachers ranging from online videos and mentoring to online courses and an online not-for-profit store where educators can purchase professional development programs and materials (this store also provides content based teaching resources as well). The Teachers Network also offers lesson plan and curriculum materials that are searchable through a combination of a search matrix as well as a

keyword search. The Teachers Network appears to be a vast and robust resource drive to make teachers better at their craft. A repeated trope throughout the website, however, is "by teachers for teachers." And, while this may very well hold true for the content of the Network, few options appeared to be available for teachers to actively contribute. The Teachers Network caters to a secular audience.

http://teachersnetwork.org/index.htm

Teachers.net

Teachers.net is essentially a networking organization that appears to be fueled by a couple Harry and Rosemary Wong. While the Wongs clearly have a professional stake in the website and its ability to augment their careers, Teachers.net provides a plethora of chatting opportunities and message boards through which educators can communicate and exchange ideas. Teachers.net also provides a lesson bank. Lesson plans may be easily submitted by users and are searchable through a navigational matrix and a key word search (similar to other sites). Uniquely, Teachers.net provides a way for registered users to receive information from the site tailored specifically to user need (users note their desired grade level, subject area, and geography ((state). This tailoring helps to sift through the numerous postings and messages available on the site. Most resources and networking opportunities are available for free. User interface, however, appears dated and is less than intuitive and the site posts no declared mission or vision statement. Teachers.net is secular in nature.

http://teachers.net/

The Guardian Teacher Network

The Guardian Teacher Network is a service by the Guardian Newspaper and media group. While working to link many of its resources to its newspaper and online media content, The Guardian Teacher Network provides thousands of free innovative resources and the opportunity for users to contribute and share both ideas and resources. The site provides assessment building materials where educators can log-on, create tests, administer the tests, and track student performance. The Guardian Teacher Network also provides a resource building page where users can download templates (in Microsoft word, PowerPoint, or pdf format) to create new teaching resources that may then be loaded onto the site at large (users also have the opportunity to load their own resources to the site without the use of the provided templates). All resources available on the site are searchable via a keyword search or through a familiar subject matrix and are only available to registered users. The Guardian Teacher Network also situates itself vis-à-vis a small network of other Guardian produced educational websites that form a complimentary network of sites and resources that work to better the world of education. The site's user interface is inviting, intuitive, and elegant. The Guardian Teacher Network is secular in nature.

http://teachers.guardian.co.uk/teacher-network/Homepage.aspx

Sunday School Network.com

The Sunday School Network appears to be a for profit venture based on the work, interests, and publication of Sarah Keith. The site offers a message board-networking platform that provides its subscribers with a way to dialogue and exchange ideas with other subscribers. Full use of the site requires a paid membership, however, a less expensive membership level is available that allows for less use of the site. The Sunday School Network is a devoutly Christian organization. Use of the site is not intuitive, and user interface is dated and in some respects works against effective browsing. Nonetheless, The Sunday School Network works to connect teachers in a collaborative effort to improve Christian teaching and its newsletter is received by more than 30,000 subscribers.

http://www.sundayschoolnetwork.com/page3.html

Tapped In

Tapped In is a governmentally funded website that works to improve the quality of teachers and teaching through teacher collaboration and communication. A thorough system of chat rooms and messaging platforms connect and link educators both in groups and privately to exchange ideas, network, engage in professional development sessions, and dialogue to collaborate on creating new resources and projects. A calendar function helps teachers keep on track of their schedules and groups are able to hold virtual meetings. The services are available only to registered users, and registration is free and available to anyone in the field of education (including university level students). Tapped In does not offer lesson plans and direct curriculum materials, but has been online since 1997 and boasts more than 2,000 users. User interface, however, is dated and not always intuitive. Nevertheless, Tapped In represents one of the first and longest lasting educational networking site that effectively connected educators with one another under the auspices of improving education and increased teacher collaboration. Tapped In is secular in nature

http://www.tappedin.org

Compliments

Mofet, The Jewish Portal of Teacher Education

Mofet works to provide an online work environment for educators and teachers in the Jewish world that includes: a content portal and a periodic newsletter; a virtual academy for Jewish subjects; online discussion forums – virtual discussion platforms for discussing central issues in the field; and virtual activities and events – study days, academic conferences, encounters, and lecture series. Mofet also endeavors to create an environment for face-to-face activity that includes: conferences on topics concerning the Jewish world, with the emphasis on training teacher educators and teachers in Israel and the Diaspora; seminars in Israel for teacher educators and teachers and for representatives of small communities abroad. Continuing accompaniment programs and/or virtual programs are also offered in the countries of origin; and a multi-campus college for Jewish youngsters – a group of Jewish students who are studying in the colleges of education as part of the curriculum in their mother countries. Mofet, however, does not focus on curriculum and lesson planning or the direct collaboration toward the creation of such materials. Its posted information and highlighted articles, however, are incredibly valuable.
http://mofetjtec.macam.ac.il/Pages/default.aspx

YU 2.0

YU 2.0 is an initiative of Yeshiva University and aims to foster "an online community for educators interested in the development and advancement of educational technology integration." Offering connections points, discussion forums, videos, project ideas, articles and more, YU 2.0 seeks to connect educators and develop greater use of leading and future technologies in Jewish classrooms. The site requires registration for full participation in its resources and forums. Registration is free. And while Yeshiva University is a clearly Orthodox institution, YU 2.0 appears to cast a wider net in appealing and welcoming all Jews.
http://yu20.org/

The Jewish Education Project

Formerly known as the Board of Jewish Education New York-SAJES, The Jewish Education Project (JEP) works to pioneer new approaches in Jewish education. They labor to connect forward-thinking educators to powerful ideas and resources so they can create new models that change how, what, and where people learn. They have a number of partners and initiatives that aim to effect the changes they work toward. Their scope spans all areas of Jewish education, at all ages, and in every location. JEP has spearheaded LOMED, an initiative to reshape education design in congregations to focus upon 'whole learner' learning and effective meaningful learner outcomes. The JEP also works to network and connect educators and educational programs to foster the best and most innovative effective modes of Jewish education. Further they work to develop great ideas in Jewish education and disseminate them

to the more 200,000 Jewish children, teens, and families that they have within their broad network of influence.
http://www.bjeny.org/index.php

Brandeis University Institute for Informal Education

Based in Braindeis University, the Brandeis University Institute for Informal Education works to take part in meaningful Jewish experiences that enable Jews to live a vibrant Jewish life. The Institute for Informal Jewish Education's (IJE) mission is to support Jewish educators in creating meaningful Jewish experiences. The IJE supports Jewish educators through a range of professional development opportunities including: pre-service experiences, in-service experiences related to educators' practice, practitioner research, curriculum development, and strategic organizational support. The IJE focuses on professional development and learning for Jewish educators, asserting and developing excellence in various modes and areas of informal Jewish education.
http://www.brandeis.edu/ije/

JESNA, The Jewish Education Service of North America

JESNA is one of the largest umbrella organizations for Jewish education. Its stated purpose is "to strengthen communities and their educational offerings by providing tested solutions, leveraging partnerships, promoting synergies, and building the connections that strengthen us all." Truly, JESNA works effectively to foster just that. JESNA works to implement leading technologies and innovative ideas in conjunction with tried and reliable programs and methods, while at the same time, providing sound research and data in Jewish education to promote effective initiative outcomes. To this end, JESNA offers a resource bank and a multitude of connections to others in the field and development for a number of Jewish educational organizations.
http://www.jesna.org/index.php

Collaboratives

Adobe Ed and Collaboration

The Adobe Corporation is a major software and computing technology company. It is perhaps best known for its Acrobat file software, photo editing, and Flash software development. A somewhat lesser known division of its enterprise lies in education and educational software development. Working with major universities and educational organizations, Adobe creates and develops software to enable e-learning and online collaboration environments for its users/customers.
http://www.adobe.com/education/solutions/hed/elearning/?sdid=FCTIV&

The Jewish Education Change Network

The Jewish Education Change Network seeks to enable all who are working for change in Jewish education – educators, parents, volunteer and professional leaders, financial supporters, advocates, and learners – to connect with one another, to learn what leaders in the field are doing, to share our work, and to access ideas and resources that can help us make Jewish education a more engaging, satisfying, and impactful experience for learners of all ages. To this end, the Jewish Education Change Network emphasizes holistic learning, learning empowerment and partnership, and the creation of a new operating culture in Jewish education. The Jewish Education Change Network works to accomplish its goals through offering, blogs, videos, links, forums, conference announcements, and more. Full use of the site is available only to registered users (registration is free), and the organization is maintained by JESNA as a collaboration between JESNA and The Jewish Education Project.
http://www.jedchange.net/

Understanding By Design Exchange

The online Understanding By Design Exchange (UBDEx) website offers registered/subscribed users the opportunity to utilize the Understanding By Design (UBD) materials—lesson plan templates and curriculum development tools—designed by education experts Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Drawing from the widely used and celebrated developments in curriculum and lesson plan design, the UBDEx offers educators and schools the opportunity to interact with each other in the creation of teaching materials while using the materials Wiggins and McTighe developed. Use of the site comes at an annual subscription fee ($89 per user for 1-9 users, the cost diminishes with more users). The work created by users is searchable, and state and local requirements can be easily integrated into user projects. And feedback is offered for the resources created by users.
http://www.ubdexchange.org/

CAJE-Miami, the Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education, Miami

As stated in its mission statement: "CAJE is devoted to creating, fostering and nurturing a community of Jews with deep knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Jewish traditions, culture, values and heritage." Through its extensive network of day schools, early childhood programs, congregational schools and adult education programs, CAJE endeavors to create an exciting and meaningful Renaissance for Jewish living and learning in the Greater Miami Jewish Community. Underscoring CAJE's mission and vision is its commitment to educational innovation and experimentation anchored in a philosophy of excellence and model practice. CAJE offers a number of educational resources and services ranging from professional development for educators to a network of links to a rich array of likeminded sites. CAJE is based in Miami.
http://www.caje-miami.org/index.cfm

NATE, the National Association of Temple Educators

NATE is the professional association of Reform Jewish Educators. NATE offers job placement for Reform Jewish educators, as well as consulting for Reform Jewish schools. Each year, NATE also hosts a number of conferences, kallot, and symposia rooted in improving Jewish education in the Reform world. Most recently, NATE hosted its annual conference—the topic of which was technology in education. Further such programming is planned for future professional development endeavors.
http://www.natenet.org/index.cfm

RAVSAK, the Jewish Community Day School Network

RAVSAK works to strengthen and sustain the life, leadership, and learning of Jewish community day schools, thus hoping to ensure a vibrant Jewish future. Toward this end, RAVSAK offers numerous programs and initiatives toward professional growth and development for educators, administrators, etc. RAVSAK also facilitates job searching for those working in the world of Jewish day schools and publishes HaYidion—a well known trade journal. During its most recent annual conference, RAVSAK brought together more than 600 Jewish educators and administrators.
www.ravsak.org

The Avi Chai Foundation

The Avi Chai Foundation states its mission and objectives as follows: "AVI CHAI is a private foundation established in 1984 which functions in the United States and in Israel. Eventually AVI CHAI intends to function in all regions with major Jewish populations. Whereas we are committed to the perpetuation of the Jewish people, Judaism, and the centrality of the State of Israel to the Jewish people, the objectives of AVI CHAI are simply stated: to encourage those of the Jewish faith towards greater commitment to Jewish observance and lifestyle by increasing their understanding, appreciation and practice of Jewish traditions, customs and laws; and to encourage mutual understanding and sensitivity among Jews of different religious backgrounds and commitments to observance." Avi Chai roots itself in the thought

and philosophies of Rabbi Avraham Kook. As one of its more recent endeavors, Avi Chai has taken a great interest in educational technology. Indeed, as it has begun to spend down its endowment it has begun to take a strong interest in partnering with day schools and camps.

http://avichai.org/home/

Logic Model

The following pages represent an *initial draft* of a logic model for The Jewish Teachers' Network. What follows is not finalized and some information has been redacted (monetary amounts) for purposes of legality and confidentiality. The information contained herein should be treated as confidential and should not be reproduced without author consent.

Definitions:

Outcomes –the long range impact of the venture; the ultimate goals and purpose of the organization

Outputs –the immediate products, experiences, results of the venture's activity

Activities –the actions of the venture that will enable the outputs; those activities that will produce the desired outputs

Inputs –the necessary requirements and resources to produce and enable productivity; what the venture needs to bring its activities to fruition

Outcomes

- Meaningful learner outcomes
- Empowered and enabled Jewish educators and communities
- Increased Jewish educator productivity and effectiveness

Outputs

- Effective Jewish educator collaboration
- Community specific collaboration laboratories
- Site-wide searchable educator-produced deliverables (abstracts of lesson-plans, curricula, projects, etc. with educatorcontact information)
- Access to site for individual educators, unafilitated with a Jewish Teachers' Network community-lab

Activities

- Advertisement -directly soliciting marketing from complimentary organizations, using behavioral targeting, and semantic advertising.
- Freemium Subscriptions -aimed at individual users, but scaled for community/organizational use as well.
- Foundation/Organization Based Funding -grant based funds from sponsoring and partnered organizations.

Inputs

- Garnering marketing and promotional networking -to develop robust user populations .
- Developing infrastructure and tech. development -creation, maintenance, and support of website.
- Development -costs associated with research, development, networking, expansion, and future planning.
- The money needed for staff salaries and paid talent.
- The funds needed for legal costs --both initial and recurring.

Notes

Outcomes (notes):

Initial Outcomes: Jewish educators are able to collaborate and work together in a smoother and easier way.

Intermediate Outcomes: Jewish educators are able to network with others in their field and Educational Directors are able to better manage and develop professional development opportunites for their staff.

Longer-term Outcomes: The task of Jewish education becomes more fluid, collaborative, and ultimately more effective through the creation of a robust network of allied Jewish educators.

Outputs (notes):

Community specific labs offer educators from one school or educational entity to operate collectively under the auspices/supervision/direction of an educational director. Directors would have the opportunity to manage the lab site, post due dates, communicate with, set calendars, create collaboration events, edit lesson planning and curriculum design templates, and also see data on educator usage and interactions.

Site-wide searchable educator-produced deliverables includes lesson plans, projects, curricula, classroom resources, articles, etc. produced by educators on the website. The content of such media would be searchable but not obtainable by other users. Instead, abstracts of the deliverables together with the opportunity to contact the originating educator will be offered—thus networking educators and furthering genuine educator collaboration.

Activities (notes):

Advertisement revenue would be generated from a three-fold approach: 1) the direct solicitation of complimentary organizations and institutions (such as schools offering profesional development opportunites and degrees for Jewish educators, other educational web-sites, organizations offering Jewish programming and content based educational opportunites, etc.); 2) behavioral targeting (automatic advertisement generation based upon an individuals 'click-stream;' and 3) semantic advertising (automatic advertisement generation through semantic analyzation meant to accurately interpret and classify web page content)

Freemium Subscriptions would be offered to users. A free membership plan offering partial web-site functionality would be made available to individual users. Full individual use of the website would then require the payment of a monthly or annual membership fee. Incentive

toward purchasing a subscription could inlcude monthly featured edcuators with full educational materials, special monthly programming, etc.

Institutions or organizations wishing access to community based labs would pay a membership fee—no freemium option would be available.

Foundation Grants would be applied for to help offset start-up costs and initial development. Diminshing reliance on grant funds will be aimed for in their use to offset regular opperating costs. Possible grant sourced funding may include funds from current sponsoring organizations and other Jewish funders such as the Schusterman Foundation and United Jewish Federation (possible one time or initial grant funding estimates range from $████ to $█████).

Inputs:

Marketing will be essential in gathering and maintaining unaffilitated users as well as keeping The Jewish Teachers' Network on the forefront of minds in the Jewish Education field. Web marketing costs can be estimated as between $███ and $███ per day.

Infrastructure and tech development is essential in creating the website itself. Further, such skills will also be essential regarding site maintenance and troubleshooting for users. Such costs may range between $█████ and $█████ dollars.

Development costs will required in order to insure that the Jewish Teachers' Network remains on the forefront of technology, social networking, and education. Such costs would also be directed toward future planning and/or expansion of the Network. Such costs can be estimated as between $████ and $████ annually.

Salary costs will be expected with the creation and concretization of a robust and sustainable organization. Staff costs for both salaries and hired talent for immediate or short term tasks will be necessary. Initial estimates relating to salary and staffing costs lie between $█████ and $█████ anually.

Legal Costs should also be expected during initial start up, and as needed throughout the duration of the Jewish Teachers' Network's life. Average expected cost for new web based businesses fall between $████ and $███.

The Jewish Teachers' Network 'Seed Site'

The following depictions represent the initial incarnation of The Jewish Teachers' Network—an initial website designed for purposes of marketing and to garner information helpful for development. The site as it appears is designed with no collaboration options, but is replete with information describing a projected future for The Jewish Teachers' Network. As such is it known as a 'seed site.' The depictions represent the site as of 11 April 2011.

Home Page:
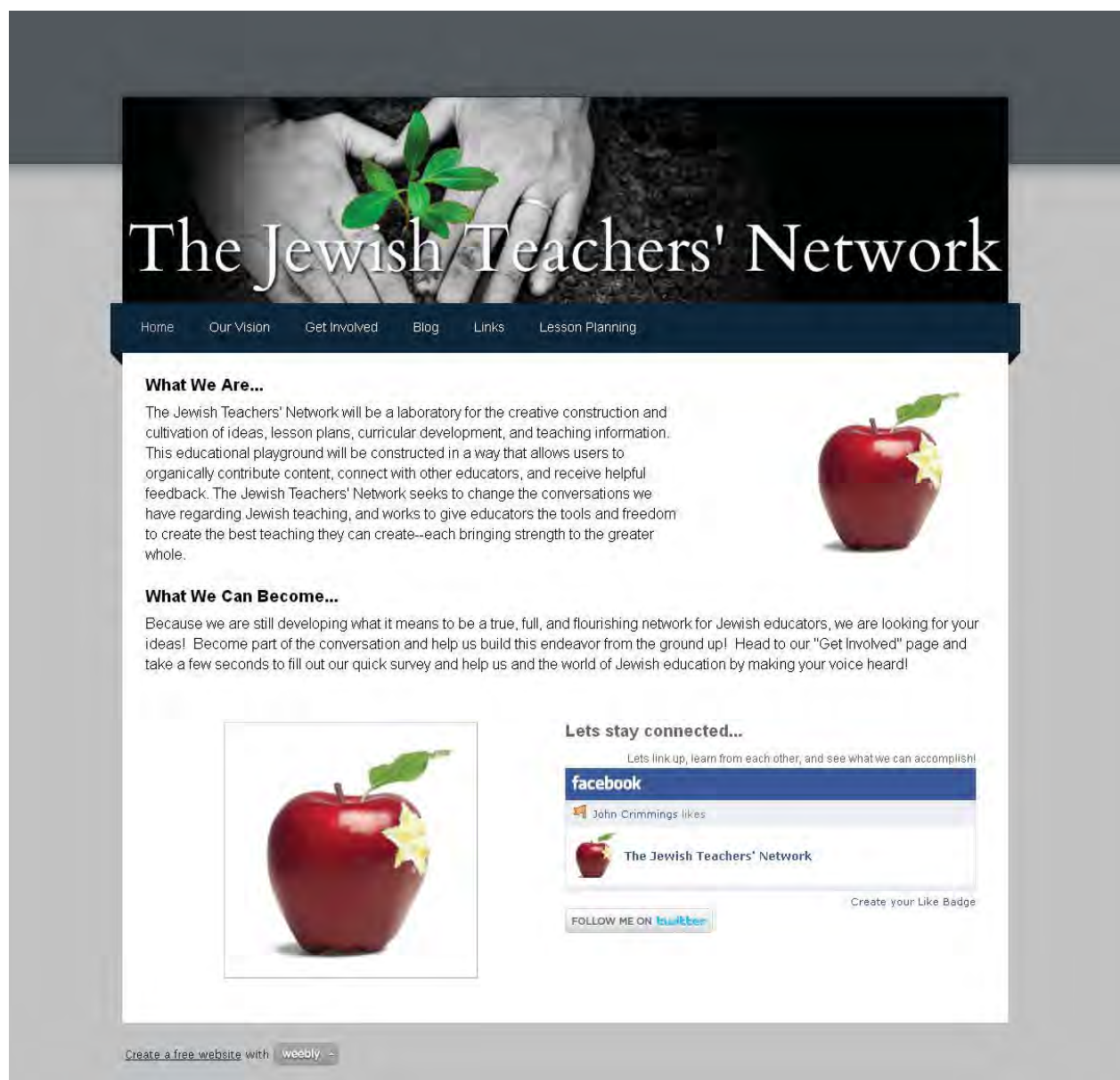
Vision Page *(This page houses a slide show that walks visitors through the organization's mission-vision statement. Depictions including full text of the mission-vision statement as of 11 April 2011 follow.)*:

Slide 1

The Jewish Teachers' Network

Our Vision

Slide 2

Without vision a people turns wild,
   but happy is he who follows the teaching.

בְּאֵין חָזוֹן, יִפָּרַע עָם ; וְשֹׁמֵר תּוֹרָה אַשְׁרֵהוּ.

-Proverbs 29:18-

translation: Robert Alter

Slide 3

…a people turned "wild"

We are Jewish educators.

Slide 4

…a people turned "wild"

We have so much on our minds, we multitask, and our time is at a premium.

Slide 5

…a people turned "wild"

We rush from thing to thing, from event to event, and from job to job.

Slide 6

…a people turned "wild"

We get frustrated, because we care—but we never have the time and resources to prepare as much as we would like.

Slide 7

...a people turned "wild"

The work we do can feel uninspired, our
methods seem antiquated. Often our
possibilities are limited...

Slide 8

...a people turned "wild"

We know we can do better
—for our students, our communities,
and ourselves...

Slide 9

...but happy *are we*...

We would like to experience, living and
teaching in a better world.

Slide 10

…but happy *are we*…

A world in which we have the knowledge
and tools we need (and dream about) to
effectively craft and create Jewish
teaching.

Slide 11

…but happy *are we*…

A world where we feel sure about crafting
what we might teach and how we might
teach it.

Slide 12

…but happy *are we*…

A world where we could easily explore a
rich tapestry of ideas and resources to
improve ourselves and our teaching.

Slide 13

...but happy *are we*...

We want a world where we can connect to one another because we know that the strength of the many produces the strength of the whole.

Slide 14

...but happy *are we*...

A world in which we can work fluidly and seamlessly...

Slide 15

...but happy *are we*...

A world where possibilities are endless.

Slide 16

…who follows the teaching.

The Jewish Teachers' Network will
cultivate the world we want.

Slide 17

…who follows the teaching.

- Crowd sourced lesson planning, helpful
  information on lesson crafting,
  innovative templates, and resources
  from which new teaching might
  emerge, will provide tools to better
  craft our classroom interactions.

Slide 18

…who follows the teaching.

- Useful articles and guides with
  information that is directly applicable
  to teaching will enrich our educational
  environments.

Slide 19

…who follows the teaching.

- Development resources will provide much needed information to better us—both personally and professionally.

Slide 20

…who follows the teaching.

- And community-specific laboratories will help teachers and directors create teaching tailored specifically to their needs.

Slide 21

Our Core Values
What we believe…

Slide 22

Our Core Values

Jewish education can always be better.

What we believe…

Slide 23

Our Core Values

Resonant learner outcomes are central to the cultivation of meaningful Jewish identities

What we believe…

Slide 24

Our Core Values

Substantive teaching addresses the entirety of the learner and makes Judaism flourish.

What we believe…

Slide 25

Our Core Values

Teachers are the bedrock of our lives.

What we believe…

Slide 26

Our Core Values

The strength of the many produces the strength of the whole.

What we believe…

Slide 27

Our Core Values

Technology can open doors. We are bound only by our imaginations.

What we believe…

Slide 28

Our Core Purpose,
*a people with a **Vision***

Slide 29

The Jewish Teachers' Network exists to promote and enable the cultivation of better Jewish educators. We seek to empower communities, institutions, and most importantly individual educators to cultivate themselves, their teaching, and their capacity to improve the Jewish endeavor through education.

Slide 30

The Jewish Teachers' Network

Contribution Page *(this page offers viewers/users to offer their thoughts, talents, and insights to the creation of The Jewish Teachers' Network)*:

Blog Site/Page *(This blog contains articles written to describe the process of creating The Jewish Teachers' Network as well as relevant information for the field of Jewish educational collaboration and innovation)*:
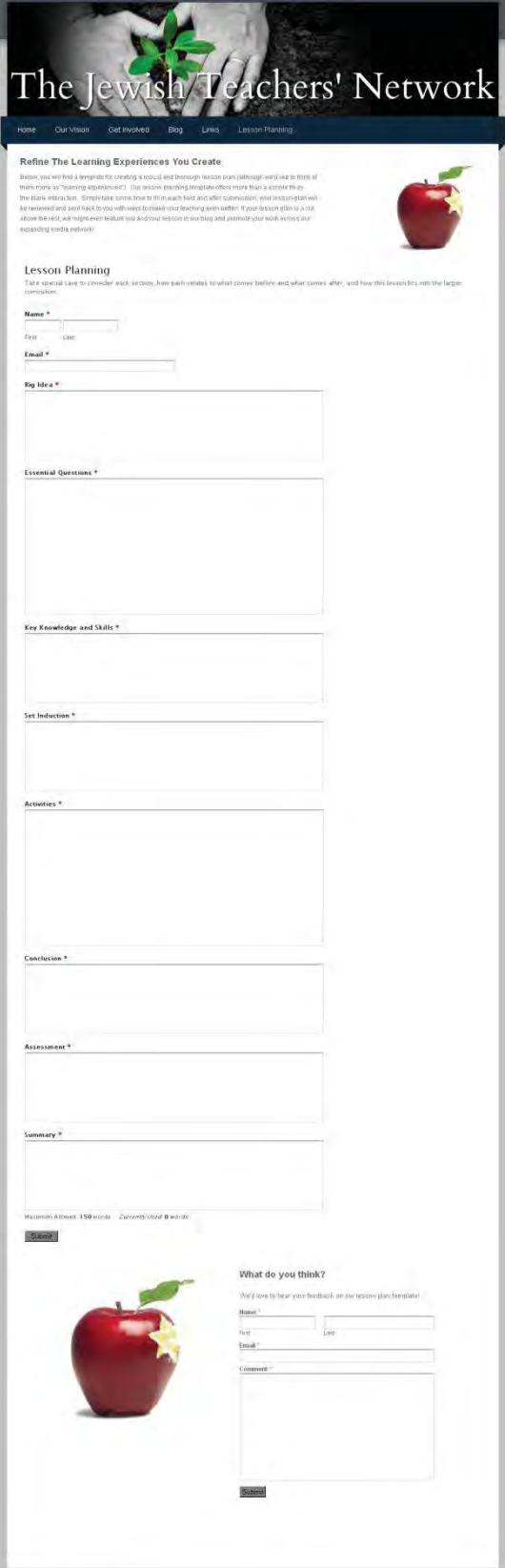
Links Page *(This page contains outbound links to sponsors and affiliates of The Jewish Teachers' Network)*:
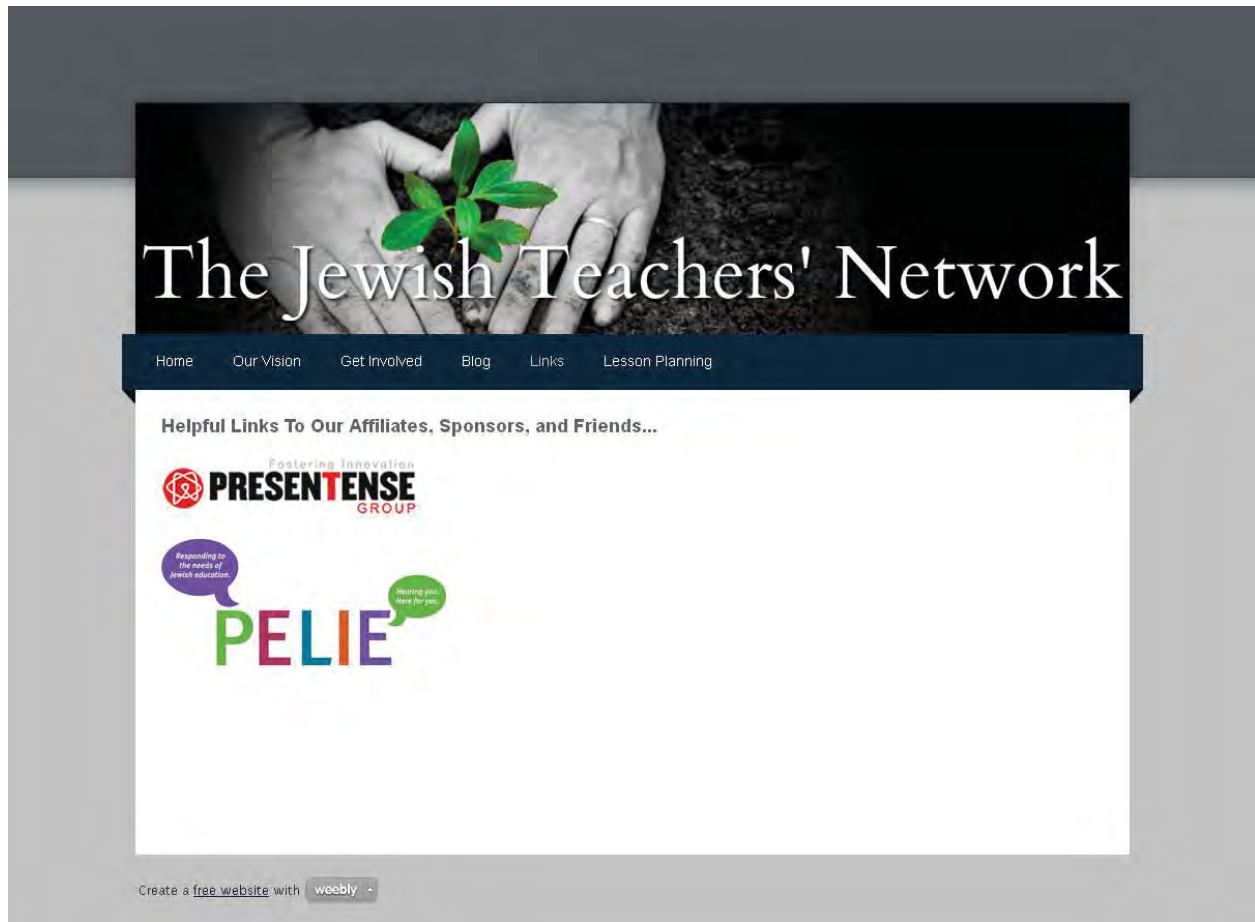
Lesson Plan Template Page *(this page enables users to create and submit lesson plans to The Jewish Teachers Network. Submitted lesson plans are viewed by Jewish education professionals and returned to submitters with helpful, constructive feedback.)*: