

## What should I have learned as a Jew after 12 years in a Jewish school?

### A Curriculum Study of Centrist-Orthodox Jewish Day Schools in the UK

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#### Abstract

What is the ideal Jewish Education for children going to Jewish schools in the Diaspora in the 21st century? This paper aims to offer some directions in response to this question within the context of centrist orthodox Jewish day schools in the UK.

In June 2005, the Lookstein Center for Jewish Education at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel was approached by the United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA) of the UK to design a Scoping Paper outlining the Jewish studies curriculum expectations of graduates from central orthodox day schools in the UK. This work was to provide the foundations for intensive curriculum work in Jewish studies in these schools.

The paper focuses on the process by which these curriculum expectations were reached. The conceptual model that is presented attempts to show how a synthesis between Fullan's collaboration model and Schwab's 'commonplaces' concept can yield a fruitful foundation for a successful curriculum process. The paper also outlines the weaknesses of the Fullan/Schwab model as evidenced in the process of consultation undertaken with various stakeholder groups within the UK Jewish school setting and subsequent implementation of the curriculum model.

**Key words:** curriculum development, commonplaces, Jewish schools, curriculum framework

## Introduction

What is the ideal Jewish Education for children going to Jewish schools in the Diaspora in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? This paper aims to offer some directions in response to this question within the context of centrist orthodox Jewish day schools in the UK.

In June 2005, the Lookstein Center for Jewish Education at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel was approached by the United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA) of the UK to design a Scoping Paper outlining the Jewish studies curriculum expectations of graduates from central orthodox day schools in the UK. This work was to provide the foundations for intensive curriculum work in Jewish studies in these schools.

In this paper we first outline the educational and philosophical underpinnings of the overall curriculum design model adopted in the writing of the Scoping Paper and the process of consultation undertaken within the UK school setting. We then offer some reflections about the model and challenges in its implementation, which could be relevant to other educational settings.

## Educational Underpinnings for the Scoping Paper

The conceptual questions that lie at the basis of this paper, such as “What is an educated Jew?” or “What would we consider to be the product of a successful Jewish education,” have been considered and reflected upon by some of the foremost Jewish thinkers and educators of our time. Scheffler (1992), for example, discusses the challenges being faced in educating the Jew in the modern period. He writes:

*Now every feature of the pre-modern context has been destroyed or rendered problematic in the modern period. The emancipation and entry of the Jew into the mainstream of Western life broke the tightly knit harmony of home, school and community. The general breakdown of the medieval worldview shattered the inherited conception of nature and history shared by Jew and non-Jew alike, undermined traditional attitudes to their religious Scriptures, and destroyed the uniform traditional response to Jewish existence which constituted the basis of education in the past.*

What, then, should be the purposes and contents of Jewish education in the modern period when large numbers of Jews have become ignorant of Jewish knowledge and alienated from Jewish life? In

the 1990s a group of educational philosophers and thinkers met under the auspices of the Mandel Foundation to initiate a discourse within the Jewish community to respond to these core questions about the purposes of Jewish education. The members of the group were both learned in their special fields of study and knowledgeable about Jewish education, and so were deemed likely to integrate these qualities into visions of Jewish learning. Fox, Scheffler, and Marom (2003) analyze the visions of the individual members of this group in their seminal work “Visions of Jewish Education”; we summarize here briefly the views of a number of them.

Twersky, the historian and specialist in Jewish thought within the group, saw the Bible as the primary source of Jewish education. The learning of Halacha was central not only to strengthening the commitment to traditional but also for deepening the philosophical understanding of such practices. Another member of the group, Menachem Brinker, a scholar of Hebrew literature and philosophy, moved in quite a different conceptual territory from that of Twersky. Brinker’s outlook is secular rather than religious, his orientation pluralist rather than orthodox. For him, acquisition of the Hebrew language is one of the keys to a successful Jewish education, as is familiarity with the concepts and events of Jewish history preserved in the collective memory. A third member of the group, Michael Meyer, emphasizes the importance of educating toward core Jewish values. The goal of Jewish education today, declares Meyer, is the creation of an individual whose primary identity lies in being a Jew, yet who is open to a world of multiple traditions. For him, freedom and autonomy of choice lie at the heart of the education of the Jewish student.

While this discourse has enriched my own reflections about the critical question concerning the purposes of a Jewish education that is at the heart of this study, such thinking, I posit, should not be the exclusive province of educators or scholars. If it is to be effective, it should elicit the reflections of all segments of the Jewish public, whatever their vocation, profession, or communal affiliation. It is for this reason that the scoping paper for the UK Jewish community adopted a curriculum based on a theoretical model that builds on varied perspectives within the community and engenders a respectful educational dialogue from which all may learn.

## Theoretical Model for The Scoping Paper

Following curriculum models designed in the Lookstein Center's work with schools in North America and Australia we decided to adopt Fullan's (1999) partnership curriculum model, which involves collaborative relationships between school stakeholders on the one hand and external curriculum developers on the other. In Fullan's terms, such partnerships involve "across boundary collaboration." Fullan offers the "lessons" that curriculum change is multi-dimensional and is most effective when collaborative partnerships are employed.

However, who exactly should these "school stakeholders" be within the context of the UK centrist-orthodox day school system? We felt that we needed to refine Fullan's model to more accurately define the "partners" in this process. Cognizant of the important work of Schwab and Fox on the curriculum development process, we decided to incorporate their ideas into our work. Schwab has argued that instead of focusing on the substance of a discipline, its basic concepts and findings, the curriculum should also, if not primarily, teach the syntax of a discipline, its methods of discovery and justification. In this inquiry-based curriculum students would learn the tools of investigation and critical assessment that have been used by scholars to discover new knowledge (Schwab, 1982). Schwab recognized that designing such a curriculum would be a complex process involving scholarly discussion and debate. This process, which Schwab called "curriculum deliberation," engages representatives of the essential ingredients of curriculum in dynamic discussions about how best to translate theory into practice. He called these ingredients "commonplaces"—teachers, students, subject matter, and milieu. Since there is no one right way to teach a discipline, the creation of practical pedagogic wisdom requires the "art of eclectic," which can be defined as the process that integrates and applies the most compelling and relevant theories created through the dynamic engendered by the four commonplaces curriculum deliberations.

It is important to emphasize that Schwab's original commonplace model applied to subject-specific matter. The context we are presenting here is much broader than this traditional model, in that we apply it to the Jewish education that a graduate should have learned after 12 years in a Jewish school. Nevertheless, we believe that this model offers a powerful conceptual framework by which we can engage the various stakeholders within the Jewish day school community.

Following Schwab's four "commonplaces" model, we consulted

with representatives of teachers, students, subject matter, and the UK milieu, in order to be actively involved in deliberations on expectations for the “ideal graduate of centrist orthodox schools in the UK”: the results of the deliberations are described below. In order for the reader to better understand the particular context in which centrist orthodox Jewish day schools in the UK work we first discuss the milieu in which these schools operate.

### Context of the UK Model

The importance of Jewish education in the UK, and particularly of Jewish schools, has grown significantly within the Jewish community over the last three decades. Today, more than 60 per cent of Jewish children in the UK are educated in Jewish schools, the majority of them within the state system, as compared to less than 20 per cent in the early 1950s.

There are about 35 Jewish primary and secondary schools in the UK that have a centrist-orthodox orientation. The majority of these Jewish schools identify themselves as centrist orthodox, though the number of pluralistic schools on the left and ultra-orthodox schools on the right is growing (Commission on UK Jewish Day Schools, 2009). In the majority of centrist orthodox homes it can be said that adherence to Jewish study and observance is at best uneven, and more often quite limited. For many homes, sending pupils to a Jewish school or youth group is virtually the family’s only link with Jewish educational or religious institutions, including the synagogue.

The majority of centrist orthodox schools are state-aided. This means that they can take advantage of the public funding that supports the general UK school system and are at the same time fully accountable to the government in all aspects of secular education that must be provided in state-aided schools.

The implications of state-aid to UK Jewish day schools are significant. The state provides funds to cover all expenditures, apart from those related to Jewish education. To pay for the human and material resources needed to ensure a Jewish education each school asks for a voluntary annual financial contribution from each family whose child is a pupil. As this contribution is voluntary, in most Jewish schools only about 70 per cent of parents pay the levy (Miller, 2009). A shortfall in parental contributions is sometimes compensated for in part by fundraising, but the outcome often seen is poor resourcing of the Jewish

studies departments.

Funding arrangements for Jewish education have implications for teachers as well as for resources in Jewish studies departments. In many schools insufficient funding means that Jewish teachers are paid below the UK national teaching salary scales. Good, experienced teachers are therefore not attracted to Jewish studies posts and morale remains low, as these teachers compare their lot with teachers of secular subjects in the same school (Miller, 2009). Even where a full complement of capable teachers is in place, there has frequently been insufficient funding to run rich programs of professional development or to support classroom programs. Currently this problem is being addressed by initiatives taken by central Jewish agencies in Britain and an increasing range of initial and in-service training opportunities like the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP).

### Curriculum Context in the UK

The fact that most Jewish schools are state aided means that they are subject to legislation with respect to their curriculum. In 1988 the first version of a national curriculum for the entire age-range from 4-18 was introduced into state schools, identifying core and foundation subjects that should form part of a balanced curriculum. Core subjects for pupils from 5-16 years old are English, mathematics, and science. Foundation subjects that provide a broadening of the curriculum are information and communication technology, geography, history, art, design and technology, music, physical education, languages, and citizenship; the last of these has been compulsory for pupils at secondary level since 2002.

### Implications for the Jewish Studies Curriculum in UK Jewish Schools

Alongside these subjects is religious education, which must be taught in every day school, and “daily collective acts of worship” which have been compulsory since the 1944 Education Act. In Jewish schools “daily collective acts of worship” will usually include *shaharit* (morning prayers) or *minhah* (afternoon prayers).

For Jewish day schools, although the national curriculum provides pupils with the framework of a well-balanced secular education, it poses various challenges. First, the number of hours required to teach the

national curriculum takes up the whole school day. Even when the time allotted for collective worship and religious education is implemented, no more than three hours each week are available for Jewish education. Many Jewish state schools make the time for Jewish education by extending the school day by one hour or more. Some Jewish schools have addressed this issue by extending the number of days in the school week from five to six, making school compulsory on Sundays. The majority of mainstream centrist orthodox Jewish day schools, however, try to keep the teaching week to five days. The result is that often relatively little time is devoted to Jewish studies and Hebrew in these schools.

In summary, when compared to North American community day schools with an average of two-three hours for Jewish studies per day, in state-aided Jewish schools in Britain, Jewish studies is more likely to occupy something between forty five minutes to an hour per day. The implications of this situation mean that the greater number of hours devoted to Jewish studies in North American Jewish day schools may well lead to more knowledgeable and confident Jewishly educated students compared to their UK counterparts.

When examining curriculum models in order to compensate for the relatively few hours available for Jewish studies in UK schools, some institutions have opted for integration. Zeldin (1998) and others have put forward powerful arguments for a single unified curriculum in which deliberate efforts are made to bring Judaism and the culture of modernity in contact with one another. Zeldin charts a variety of structural ways in which this can happen in a school context, referring to them as co-ordination, integration, and interaction. The constraints of the national curriculum mean that at best, interaction is what usually takes place in British day schools. Interaction, according to Zeldin, is where there are separate opportunities for Jewish and general learning, plus times when deliberate efforts can be made to bring the two together. The possibilities of integrative curriculum models will be discussed later in the paper.

### **Designing Curriculum Expectations for Jewish Day Schools in the UK**

In light of the above challenges to Jewish education in UK schools, and especially the need to focus scarce resources in a way that would be most cost-effective, in 2005 community leaders of the United Synagogue, which is the UK centrist orthodox umbrella organization

under the auspices of the Chief Rabbi, and the United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA), the major UK Jewish fund raising body, came together to form the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP). The rationale for the Partnership was that instead of each centrist orthodox school using its own very limited funding to design its Jewish studies curriculum, a concerted effort could be made to create partnerships between schools and provide Jewish studies curriculum and associated professional development in a collaborative way that would be to the greater benefit of all the centrist orthodox schools.

Following substantial funding support from the Sebba Trust, this writer was appointed Educational Director of the JCP and, supported by Gabriel Goldstein, a recently retired HM Inspector of Schools, began writing a scoping paper which would lay the foundations of the curriculum partnership. The scoping paper would try to answer the above question, “What is the ideal graduate profile of a Jewish studies student after 12 years of study in a UK centrist orthodox Jewish day school?”

Following Schwab’s commonplaces model and mindful of Fullan’s emphasis on collaboration as a key to successful curriculum implementation, we attempted to synthesize their approaches in our work. We consulted widely on draft versions of the Scoping Paper. Representatives of the four commonplaces were chosen to be actively involved in the curriculum deliberation process. These included Judaic studies teachers led by the Headteacher and Heads of Jewish Studies (teachers); student body representation (students); Lookstein Center subject and curriculum experts (subject matter); and representatives of school governors, Shlichim, and the wider community (milieu). Learning from the curriculum development experiences of Holtz (1992), we made explicit the central role of the curriculum expert within these deliberations. Firstly, we acted as facilitators of the process, ensuring that timetable benchmarks were successfully implemented. In addition, because of the technical difficulties of organizing on-going meetings that would bring the representatives of the commonplaces together, this facilitation included deliberations with representatives of the commonplaces in separate meetings. Through this form of “shuttle diplomacy,” (a term coined by Holtz, 1992), the facilitators aimed to ensure that the views of the commonplace representatives were aired and understood by all parties.

At the beginning of the project the facilitators presented participants with a three-stage model for curriculum development. This model,



based on the principles of the “Backward Design” curriculum concept (Covey, 1994; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998), was particularly suited both to the educational milieu of the UK national curriculum and the desire of commonplace representatives to clarify for themselves the end goal for students with 12 years of Jewish education.

In the words of Covey, “To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you’re going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.” In the backward design model, the curriculum planner starts with the end, the desired results, and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of the learning that is called for by the attainment expectations, and the teaching needed to equip students to perform and meet these attainments.

Applying this model to the UK Jewish day school scene, we designed the following three stages:

1. Definition of the centrist orthodox Ideal Jewish studies graduate. Judaic studies teachers, student representatives, inspectors of Judaic studies, and school governor members were all asked to determine the standards for this. They were presented under five headings: Beliefs and Philosophies; Behavior Characteristics; Jewish Knowledge; Skills in Jewish Learning; General Knowledge. These five headings mirrored quite closely the UK National Curriculum categories of knowledge, skills, and understandings, but focused more heavily on the “understandings” category by placing particular emphasis on beliefs and values as the primary ideal graduate headings, reflecting the desire of commonplace participants,
2. Definition of subjects to be taught and the time to be allotted to each.
3. Definition of overall goals of each subject in terms of knowledge, skills understandings, and attitudes. Such definitions parallel the parlance of the National Curriculum in general studies.

The purpose of these consultations, which focused on Stage 1 of the above process and took place in 2005-2006, was to set out some of the main aspects of a Jewish curriculum that might be an entitlement for all youngsters attending Jewish centrist schools in the UK. We tried to examine the relevance of these expectations to a generation that has grown up in an age of change, of ubiquitous access to the media and to information technology, and where the nuclear family is not necessarily the norm.

Our premise was that by defining and agreeing on a common set

of curriculum entitlements, educators with various roles, such as heads, teachers, rabbis, and learning support staff, would share a language about Jewish learning and behavior, and promote high expectations of pupils who maintain consistent progress in attainment. Moreover, defining the curriculum in terms of what pupils should attain in their Jewish learning would help teachers to cooperate in realizing learning outcomes, and to share criteria for assessing pupils' progress in personal growth and attainment.

It was a source of frustration that many of the senior educators and leaders consulted about the Scoping Paper declared themselves in broad agreement within it, but without indicating that they had read the paper critically. Thus, the curriculum language used was acknowledged to be helpful and unifying, but its implications for action were not given sufficient attention by some respondents.

### **Consultations on the Aims of the Jewish Studies and Hebrew Curriculum in UK Schools**

As stated in the above three stage model, before defining the Jewish curriculum in terms of subjects that every pupil might reasonably encounter, and in terms of attainments to be expected at successive stages in a student's life in school, we attempted to reach some consensus as to what personal traits this Jewish curriculum should help to develop and reinforce.

Amongst those consulted, we found a broad consensus about the 4 personal traits of the ideal graduate of centrist orthodox schools, which we formulated as follows:

1. The Jewish Curriculum in centrist Orthodox schools should promote in ALL graduates, including those with differing needs of all ages, abilities and religious adherence:
2. a personal commitment to and involvement with Jewish practice, ethics, tradition and culture and a motivation for lifelong learning;
3. an understanding of Jewish belief, heritage, practices and values;
4. a familiarity with classical and modern Hebrew; a knowledge of selected classical (Biblical and Rabbinic) texts; a knowledge of the main Jewish prayers and rituals; and
5. an identification with, and understanding of the background of the Jewish people and their history throughout the world; knowledge, understanding and love for the land of Israel, the State of Israel and its inhabitants and the commitment and skills to play a responsible

part in the Jewish and wider community

The above consensus statement of the traits of the ideal graduate was reached after discussion within each of the commonplace groups. As most statements of mission or intent which are finally agreed upon between different parties, it was born out of compromise and a culture of “give and take,” which we as curriculum facilitators endeavored to foster between the commonplace groups.

However, in order to better understand the nuances of the statements that were agreed to concerning the above ideal graduate, we need to appreciate in more detail the issues of controversy and debate that transpired both within and between the commonplaces groups.

### Issues of Controversy and Debate

The main issues of controversy were discussed in various stakeholder commonplace groups that met during the period 2005/6. The discussions that focused on Hebrew Language took place in a combined group of about twenty-five Shlichim and Hebrew Language teachers from Jewish secondary schools in the UK. Most of the Shlichim were involved in informal Israel education activities in Jewish schools while the Ivrit teachers generally taught in Jewish schools on a part-time basis. The Jewish text commonplace group consisted of about thirty Jewish studies teachers from both primary and secondary UK Jewish day schools and included about fifteen Heads of Jewish Studies programs in these schools. We subsequently had the opportunity to meet with these Heads of Jewish Studies in follow-up meetings. In addition, we met with a group of about ten Head teachers from a diverse group of UK Jewish schools.

We also met with a group of governors and parents from a variety of schools. Finally, we met with a group of students from different UK secondary schools. These students provided very interesting perspectives, especially about the Israel curriculum strand, as we will see below. The main issues of controversy were in the following three areas:

1. The relative importance of modern Hebrew in the ideal graduate profile.
2. The tension between a skills- versus values-based approach to the study of Jewish texts.
3. The place of Israel and student responsibility to the Jewish and wider community in the curriculum.

### ***Modern Hebrew***

We shall now consider the main points of discussion within each of these three areas. The most heated area of discussion was the place of Modern Hebrew in the curriculum. Hebrew Language teachers and the Shlichim “milieu” very naturally contended that Ivrit must be a central pillar of the curriculum and complained that graduates of Jewish schools in the UK are illiterate in the Hebrew Language. In the words of one Shaliach: “How can it be that a student goes through 12 years of life in a UK Jewish school and cannot put together even half a sentence in Hebrew when he is in Israel?”

The parent and governor milieu were almost equally concerned by the poor attainments achieved in Hebrew language acquisition. However, in general Jewish Studies teachers were much less concerned about this aspect of students’ Jewish education. In the words of one:

*When our time is as limited as it is, our focus has to be to try and transmit Jewish knowledge and values to our students. What do I care if they know how to say “how much a falafel costs” in Hebrew when they visit Israel?*

*We are battling to ensure our students remain Jewish and marry Jews. All our efforts have to be channeled to reach that goal. Knowledge of Ivrit does not help with this at all.*

Furthermore, the difficulties of teaching Ivrit in the Diaspora were emphasized by all parties, particularly the dearth of competent Ivrit teachers. It was agreed that Ivrit fluency can only be realistically achieved if there are qualified teachers who are both fluent in Hebrew and fully trained to teach it as a foreign language in the UK. As there is a dearth of such suitably trained teachers worldwide, advance thought should be given to how one might recruit and train qualified teachers of Ivrit before starting to write curriculum materials and implement them.

Another challenge is time. Assuming suitable teachers are available, it seems that aiming for some level of fluency requires a minimum allocation of 2-3 50-minute periods per week for teaching just the modern Hebrew language. When considering the curriculum of the future this amount of language study may not be unrealistic, as the new Government strategy for foreign languages comes into effect in 2011.

Because of all these issues, the term “familiarity” with rather than “fluency” in Modern Hebrew was agreed as the compromise statement for the ideal graduate profile above.

### *Study of Jewish Texts*

As this particular debate took place mainly in the teachers commonplace group it is important to provide some context about the place of teachers' beliefs and thinking in curriculum discourse. The role of teachers' beliefs or ideologies in the curriculum development process has been given much attention in academic literature. Connelly and Clandinin's (1988) pioneering work, for example, in understanding teachers' narratives as central to curriculum planning and implementation, has been particularly influential. More recently Atkins (1997) demonstrated the weight of the teachers' epistemological approach and the extent to which the teachers' values influence their curricula decision making. Others, like Schremer and Bailey (2001), have focused on the centrality of teachers' ideologies, and their overall outlook and belief system as central to the understanding of the curriculum design and implementation process. It is not simply a question, in their view, of whether the teacher likes the curriculum or not. As regards Jewish studies in general and Jewish text study in particular, teachers are concerned whether the orientation of the curriculum concurs or conflicts with their own individual ideologies or system of beliefs, and whether they can be comfortable with it. It was evident, therefore, that a deeper understanding of teachers' views and ideologies needed to be a crucial part of this curriculum process.

Jewish Studies teachers differed strongly in their commonplace discussions about the purpose of textual study in the curriculum. While all agreed, for example, that Bible should be a core text in the curriculum, they differed as to what their students should gain from the learning of such texts. Some were adamant that it was the values that needed to be emphasized. In the words of one teacher:

*We are wasting our time if we think that students will achieve any fluency in Hebrew textual skills. We have to focus on these texts in English and emphasize the values that emanate from the texts and their relevance to students in today's age.*

Other teachers argued strongly that students need to be challenged to analyze traditional Jewish texts and commentaries, whether in Hebrew or English. In the words of one:

*Why should a student, just because he is personally not observant of all mitzvot, be robbed of appreciating the nuances and deep readings of the Biblical text. He gets a top notch and rigorous English and Science education-why not a challenging and probing Jewish education as well?*

Underlying these different teacher perspectives about the purpose and outcomes of teaching and learning Jewish texts are, I posit, more fundamental issues about their orientations to both the goals of religious education in general and the teaching of biblical texts in particular.

Rosenak (1987) defines two differing orientations in religious education. He refers to them as explicit and implicit religious education. Explicit religious education concerns itself with what is “imposed” on the learner and teacher by tradition and authority. This orientation focuses on what we believe and practice as loyal adherents of a specific faith and members of a believing society. It sets down norms that are incumbent upon members of the religion, who are expected to accept them. The text is the authoritative voice of the tradition which needs to be analyzed and understood according to a fixed set of rules that are the embodiment of what is “ideal” or “good.”

Implicit religious education, however, begins not with God’s commandment to man expressed through an objectively authoritative text, but with human hopes and fears. It is the depth of the student’s questions which is important in the process of teaching and learning rather than the authority of the answers. The student arrives at meaning through individual discovery, rather than through the acceptance of an objective authority. Authenticity is to be strived for in the process of education rather than conformity to tradition.

Rosenak’s thesis is that in attempting to educate to a sense of “religious wholeness” the Jewish studies teacher must incorporate both explicit and implicit religious education orientations in their teaching. Cognizant of Rosenak’s work, we attempted to include both elements of these orientations in our work. While most of the teachers in our commonplace deliberations appear to identify with the “explicit religious education” orientation, some are clearly motivated in their teaching by the desire for students to find their own personal meaning and value in their study of text.

An interesting illustration of the inherent tensions that lie within Rosenak’s explicit and implicit orientations arose in a discussion within the text commonplace group about allowing students to question the authority of the Chumash text. One teacher said, “I encourage discussion in my class but only to a point; I do not wish to foster discussion on the authority of the text—it is written by God and I won’t encourage students expressing their own views on this.” Only a minority of Jewish studies teachers within the commonplace group expressed willingness to “encourage” their pupils to express their own personal views on these issues.

These different orientations are clearly integrated in the design of the secondary school Bible text curriculum, which attempted to incorporate elements of both orientations. As we shall see, this approach proved challenging, and an attempt to integrate the differing approaches led to compromises that were difficult for some teachers to accept.

In order to categorize the differing views of teachers regarding the specific teaching of biblical texts, we utilized what Schremer and Bailey (2001) have called Bible teachers “ideologies” or Holtz (2003) has named Bible teachers’ “orientations.” “Orientation” as a term encompasses aspects of both the knowledge and belief elements of a teacher’s relationship to the subject matter. It includes the individual teacher’s motivational drive that would mobilize him or her to teach the material in a particular direction. Grossman (1993) has described how teachers come to these orientations, which she attributes to “a probable combination of personal values and disciplinary training.” Schremer and Bailey and Holtz have all made their own categories for the different modes of teacher orientations or ideologies in Bible teaching. These categorizations were important to the design of our model, as they helped define the type of teacher-orientations to Bible study that we could expect within our diverse group of teachers.

Schremer and Bailey formulated four composite profiles of teaching ideologies into which teachers of Bible studies could be classified. They include: focus on values and ethics, focus on text study, focus on Bible identification and continuity and focus on the value of Bible study itself

#### *Focus on Values and Ethics*

The aim of this approach is to teach Bible as a book of instruction regarding the values, ethics, morality, and behavior that a Jew should learn and practice. The primary focus of teaching Bible, according to this ideology, is to reveal to students the central values, practices, and ethics of Judaism inherent in the narratives and teachings of the Bible as explained by the Rabbinic Sages. The skills of reading, translating, and analyzing text are secondary. This approach needs to be distinguished from the “values clarification” approach to moral education, which focuses on the student responding to stated Bible values in a personal, subjective way rather than moral imperatives to which the student should aspire. The teacher does not require personal opinions or critical thinking of students, because they need to learn the fundamental Torah values first. This ideology or orientation is prevalent among ultra-orthodox Bible educators.

*Focus on Text Study*

The primary focus of teaching Bible in this orientation is to convey to the student the depth and sophistication of the biblical text as a complex erudite work, and to show that it is internally consistent, intricate, poetic, spiritual, and profound—as well as the source text of all that comprises Judaism. In order to do this, the teacher focuses on skills such as analysis of language and structure of the text, as well as the story themes, the images, and the concepts of social law and ritual. Nechama Leibowitz, a professor of Bible at Tel Aviv University during the mid-1900's, was a principle proponent of this ideology.

*Focus on Bible Identification and Bible Continuity*

For the teacher adhering to this approach, it is of ultimate importance that students see Bible study as the foundation for their contemporary identification with biblical topics or ideas that may be reflected in their personal experience or in community participation. The Bible represents our collective memory of what has made Jews different from everyone else. Therefore, the curriculum focuses on the birth and development of the people of the Bible, their history, and their customs. All of these biblical topics and issues are shown within the context of contemporary communal and national life, which conveys a sense of self definition and belonging.

*Focus on the Value of Bible Study Itself*

What is most important in this approach is that today's students value learning Bible. The primary goal of teaching is not mastery of text skills or even comprehension of specific content but rather to create an experience that will attach the student to Bible learning in a positive way. This teaching approach focuses on those texts that evoke inspiration, excitement, and surprise, and are wholly engaging to a modern adolescent.

Holtz (2003) added additional orientations. In particular, his contextual orientation (category 5) is relevant to our discussion. This approach aims at the meaning of the biblical texts in its own times. It views the Bible as the record of an ancient civilization, and includes the use of various tools that help locate the Bible within its historical setting. This orientation to teaching Bible has also been very influential in the secular school system in Israel, though much less so in the Diaspora.

Clearly, these profiles or categories are flexible, and as Greenstein has noted (1999), the notion of multiple ideologies or orientations can exist simultaneously in the practice of one teacher.



Within our Jewish studies text commonplace group we asked teachers to state which of the above four orientations they identified with most. We looked at the general trends of teacher response rather than examining the response data through statistical analysis. The majority of the thirty teachers in this group identified most with the first two orientations. The focus of their Bible teaching, they described, was primarily linked to Jewish ethics and values and concentrated on textual study. Interestingly enough, the primary school Jewish studies teachers generally focused their teaching on textual study, while the secondary teachers were more concerned with a focus on Jewish ethics and values. Among the latter, there seemed to be a general correlation between the perceived level of Jewish identification of their students and the teaching orientation chosen. Where students are perceived to have little Jewish education or commitment to Jewish practice, secondary school teachers of Jewish studies generally do not see textual study as their primary educational goal for the class, but rather link their teaching to their students' perceived need for a stronger Jewish identification. This finding in our commonplace group is supported by other research in this area (Schremer & Bailey, 2001)

Utilizing and integrating these various orientations, especially those that combined both skills and values components, initially proved very helpful in designing a curriculum model, though it led to challenges in implementation, as we shall see.

As regards the wording of the ideal graduate profile, we came to consensus that “familiarity” rather than “fluency” with classical Hebrew, again based on the time restraints within the specific UK school context. “Knowledge” of selected texts is also used rather than “independent analysis of text.” These terms were agreed upon as a compromise between the various positions which were mainly elicited in the teachers' commonplace group.

### ***Israel and the Community***

The third issue, the place of Israel and the community, was highlighted by the “student” commonplace group. Because of the technical difficulty of organizing groups of students from various schools we met with smaller focused groups of students in a number of UK Jewish secondary schools. These students were aged 16-18. When asked which area within the Jewish studies curriculum they wished to learn more about, many students felt that the study of Israel and the Jewish community both in the UK and worldwide were areas that were

neglected in the formal Jewish studies curriculum. In the words of one 17- year-old student:

*All our schools have Israel programs in which students visit Israel for different lengths of time during their years in school. But not all our schools give sufficient time in the formal curriculum to the study of Israel. I'd also love to know more about Jews in other parts of the world too. I know nothing about the Jews in Europe or America and too little about the make-up of the UK Jewish community. What about our responsibility to the wider community and particularly issues of social justice? Let's talk more about people rather than books.*

It is interesting that there seemed to be an apparent dissonance between students' views on Israel and the views of other commonplaces, in particular Headteachers and Jewish Studies faculty. We questioned various stakeholders, including governors and Headteachers, about this, and it became evident to us that the student views had emphasized an area which was at any rate important to these other stakeholders, but that the latter had not identified earlier the need to place greater emphasis on Israel and the wider community within the formal curriculum. When this lacuna had been identified, it was generally accepted by all. Students were in fact the main catalysts for the 4<sup>th</sup> point D of the ideal graduate profile, in which Israel and the wider community were given a more prominent place in the formal curriculum.

### **How Might Teaching Be Organized and More Detailed Aims Be Formulated to Produce the “Ideal Graduate” Outcomes?**

In the commonplace groups it was generally agreed that the ideal graduate profile statements may be promoted by a variety of formal and informal experiences in school and beyond. Within the curriculum, there normally are structured activities and subjects, each of which promotes at least one, and often most, of the above statements.

It was understood by those involved in the process that the precise forms, labels, and timetabled slots for these activities will vary from school to school and across age-groups. In most schools, however, the Jewish curriculum is organized and described in terms of some broad strands. The time devoted to a strand may vary across age groups, but each strand aims to promote selected cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal traits. The overall curriculum is based on the assumption, however, that an average of at least one period of 60 minutes per day is devoted to Jewish studies

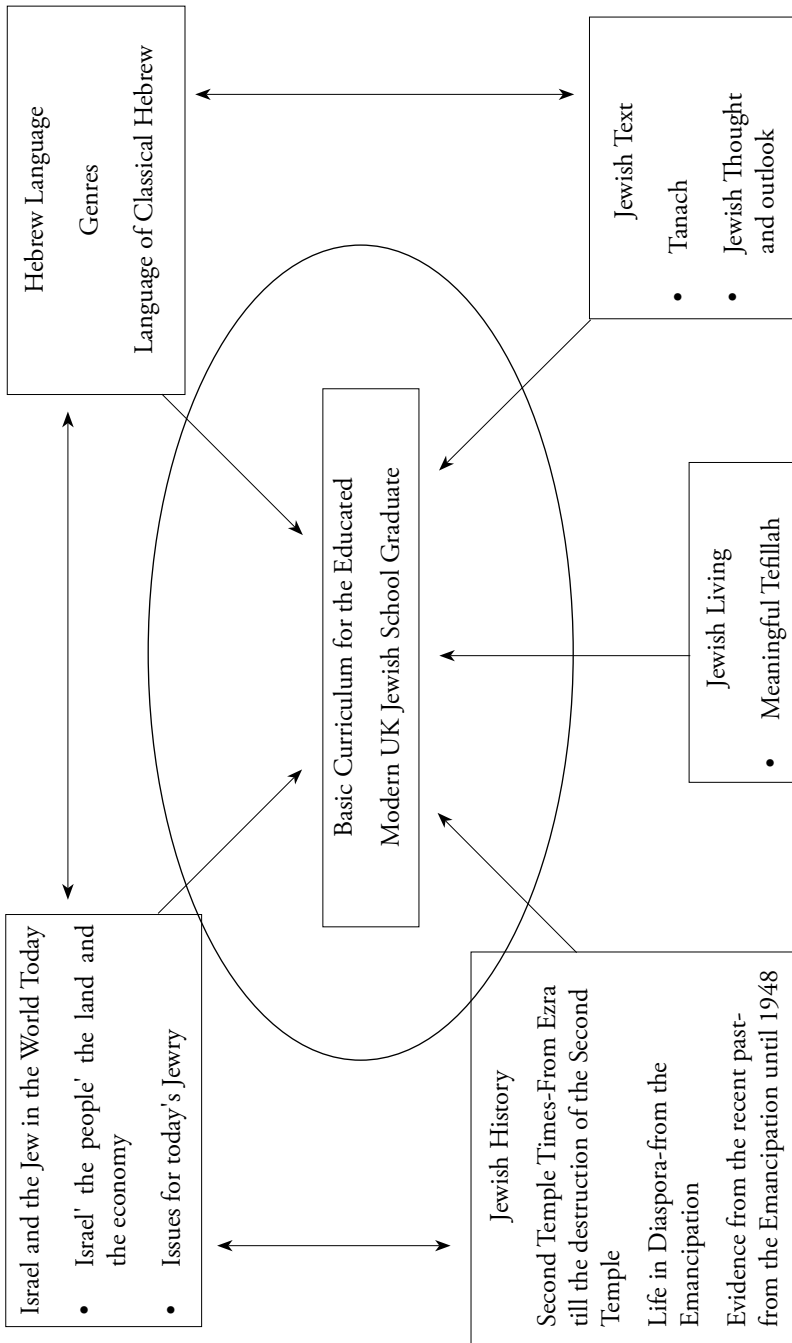
for children from ages 5-18, not including time allotted to prayers. This is a minimum entitlement for all pupils in centrist orthodox day schools in the UK without which, we contended, the above four aims cannot be achieved. On the other hand, this entitlement is realistic within the present constraints of the demands of the national curriculum and the typical timetable of a UK school.

The curriculum facilitators suggested five strands that contain all the main elements of the Jewish curriculum in the UK centrist orthodox day-school. Each strand contains several related topics or subjects of study. The diagram below indicates how these five strands could contribute to an overall basic curriculum and suggests that they are far from independent. They are, rather, merely convenient labels for broad areas of study that combine and interact with each other to form the whole curriculum. For example, the study of Jewish texts involves an important Hebrew language component and a fundamental understanding of their historical context. The double-headed arrows indicate palpable links between strands while the circle shows that all five are intrinsically connected, for instance, in the realms of understanding and attitudes.

The strands that follow are particularly suited to the UK day school milieu because:

- They take into account the minimum amount of time available in the UK for Jewish Studies and Hebrew Language (one hour a day)
- They directly relate to the principles and priorities agreed upon in the stakeholders groups about the attributes of the ideal graduate of UK schools
- They offer a coherent framework, with associated knowledge, skills, understandings and attitudes outcomes, that match the familiar model of the UK National Curriculum in general studies

The curriculum facilitators suggested for each of the above, a matrix of expected attainments in terms of Knowledge, Skills, Understandings, and Attitudes (KSUA). These expectations for Jewish 18-year olds in the UK were similar in language to the ones formulated for various subjects in the National Curriculum. In writing these expected attainment levels effort was made to consider National Curriculum attainment levels and expectations for corresponding age-groups, especially in modern foreign languages and history. In addition, the curriculum was based on the assumption that teachers will be provided with appropriate



professional development opportunities in order to ensure its successful implementation

Below we provide two examples, one taken from a section of the Jewish history levels of attainment and one from part of the table of standards of Hebrew language attainment. They illustrate how we attempted to match both the form and content of the national curriculum history and languages standards, and the attainment targets.

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Key stages	<p><b>4. Jewish History</b> (from Ezra till 1948. The period before Ezra is covered in the Nach section)</p> <p>Aim of the strand: To allow the individual to link with his Jewish roots in the recent, medium-term and distant past by understanding, and valuing, the contexts, events, and personalities that have shaped Jewish communities through the ages.</p>
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KS3-5 (11-18 year olds)	<p><b>4a Biblical times</b> ( from Ezra till the destruction of the second Temple)</p> <p><b>4b Life in the diaspora</b> ( from the destruction of the Second Temple till the Emancipation) <i>[ more is to be added re Jewry in the UK]</i></p> <p><b>4c Evidence from the recent past</b> (from the emancipation till 1948)</p>
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Expectations for this subject in Key stages 3-5 (11 -18 year olds) are presented below first in terms of a set of the major aspects of the subject and thereafter as a set of statements of attainment leveled at a number of particular Understanding and Knowledge aspects chosen.

We can note the following points in the attainments tables below:

- These examples of attainments are the standards within a number of particular Understanding and Knowledge aspects that we would expect for most pupils graduating from a course of Jewish history in a UK Jewish secondary school at age 18.
- The Jewish history attainments as described below are linked to the general history National Curriculum standards of attainment both in content and form.

- In content: study of the second temple period in Jewish history links to the study of the history of Greece and Rome as prescribed in the general history National Curriculum. Life in the Diaspora includes a study of British Jewry in the 19th and 20th century- which again parallels the requirement of the general history national curriculum that focuses on the history of Britain at this time.
- In form: the Jewish history curriculum attainments places a great emphasis on understanding and reflecting on events and personalities learned, and on applying lessons to pupils' lives and experiences. For example, in a study of the Hasmonean period pupils are challenged to reflect on the implications of the revolt to modern Jewish statehood. This mirrors the general history National Curriculum focus of linking past events to students' lives in a meaningful way.
- The skills component of the Jewish history attainment standards also mirrors National Curriculum targets in its emphasis on developing students' questioning skills about the past and their providing and analyzing primary evidence to support arguments and points of view.

We can note the following in above section of the Hebrew Language attainments table:

- These attainments include the overall Hebrew Language standards we would expect for most pupils graduating from a Jewish primary school at age 11. Further detail is provided in more specific documentation. Progression is built in a separate table for secondary school graduates.
- The Hebrew Language attainments as described here are linked to the 4 components of language learning as expressed in the National Curriculum; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This communicative approach to language acquisition is opposed to the traditional language "learning" approach which focuses on the rote learning of words and grammar structures.
- This approach also mirrors that of the National Curriculum strategy in language learning that emphasizes listening to and speaking the language before reading and writing it. This has very practical implications for the way that the Hebrew language is learned.

## Conclusions and Reflections on the Process

Four years after the writing of the scoping paper for the UK centrist orthodox school system we can reflect back on the process and consider its implications, not just for the UK Jewish community but for curriculum processes in other contexts as well. Here are a number of thoughts.

1. A synthesis between Fullan's collaboration model and Schwab's "commonplaces" concept can indeed yield a fruitful foundation for a successful curriculum process. On the basis of this model and the development of the "ideal graduate profile," the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP) has developed a Chumash curriculum for both primary and secondary schools. Over the last 4 years the number of primary schools using JCP resources has grown from three to nineteen. The collaborative nature of the partnership, in which curriculum experts takes the views of teachers and students seriously in the process, is cited by teachers as one of the main reasons for this success.
2. However, the Fullan/Schwab synthesis model has its weaknesses as well. In particular, the approach that aims for consensus between varied groups or constituencies can lead to compromises that no group is completely comfortable with. The Bible curriculum for secondary school, for example, in light of the various teacher views, blends both values- and skills-based pedagogies in the curriculum. This does not always satisfy proponents of either camp. Therefore, some secondary schools that have approved the aims and Scoping Paper simply do not "buy-in" to units of work in Bible that were piloted in other schools, claiming that they do not suit their adolescents or their style of teaching.
3. In order to build further on the successes of the curriculum process, more efforts could be made to integrate informal and adult education possibilities into the curriculum. For example, should the curriculum recommend the teaching of Shabbat in the Jewish Living Strand in year 5 of Primary school? Informal education opportunities could be designed to consolidate the attainment goals outlined for this topic. Similarly, adult education possibilities, such as parent-pupil evening learning activities, could be integrated into the educational program to complement curriculum goals and objectives. Such a comprehensive and holistic view of pupils' Jewish education will ensure that these attainments are indeed maximized.

Understanding/Attitudes	Knowledge	Skills
<p>1.1 Understand major events and personalities in Jewish history and their relevance to one's own life.</p>	<p>2.1 Know the various periods in Jewish history</p>	<p>3.1 Ask questions about the past</p>
<p>1.2 Understand how Jews lived in the past and how this impacts on Jews today</p>	<p>2.2 Know about major events and personalities</p>	<p>3.2 Analyze primary evidence about the past</p>
<p>1.3 Understand the historical context in which Jews lived</p>	<p>2.3 Know about daily living, religion, and society</p>	
<p>1.4 Understand the relationship the Jews had with other peoples and how this impacts Jews today</p>	<p>2.4 Know the historical context of events in Jewish history</p>	
<p>1.5 Discern patterns in Jewish history and their meaning for Jews today</p>		
<p><b>1.1 Understands major events and personalities in Jewish history and their relevance to one's own life.</b></p>	<p><b>2.1 Know the various periods in Jewish history</b></p>	<p>3.1.1 Ask simple factual questions about the past and try to discover, with support, answers to these questions.</p> <p>3.1.2 Ask factual questions about the past and try to discover, independently, answers to these questions.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ask why a particular event in Jewish history occurred and attempt to discover, independently, reasons for it.</p> <p>3.1.4 Question assumptions about the past like: "the Jews did not have the power to resist the Holocaust."</p> <p>3.1.5 Ask why particular events in Jewish history occurred and try to find, independently, connections between them.</p>
<p>1.1.1 Understand that events in a period of Jewish history being studied have meaning and relevance for the Jew today. For example, the victory of the Hasmoneans over the powerful Greek empire may have been political initially, but turned out to be an expression of cultural strength and religious supremacy in the face of oppression.</p>	<p>2.1.1 Know the time framework of the period being studied. E.g. the Second Temple period ended about 2,000 years ago and lasted approximately 580 years.</p>	
<p>1.1.2 Know significant dates of events in the period being studied.</p>	<p>2.1.2 Know significant dates of events in the period</p>	
<p>1.1.3 Are familiar with the terms B.C.E., C.E. century and decade.</p>	<p>2.1.3 Are familiar with the terms B.C.E., C.E. century and decade.</p>	



<p>1.1.2 Understand that there may be a number of varied interpretations of events in a particular period studied. E.g. the Hasmonean victory seen as a manifestation of Divine Providence in an era, like today, where there are few overt Divine manifestations, vs a more naturalistic interpretation. Reflect on the implications of this phenomenon for the birth of the independent, multicultural, democratic State of Israel after 2000 years of exile.</p> <p>1.1.3 Explain, with support, the causes and results of an historical event in a period being studied and adopt values that it teaches us. For example, according to Jewish tradition, the Second Temple was destroyed because of "Sinat Chinam"—groundless hatred.</p> <p>1.1.4 Analyse factual knowledge and understanding of history to explain reasons for, and results of, the historical events in a period being studied. For example, why the disintegration of the Shabtraut movement led to the rise of Chassidut.</p> <p>1.1.5 Analyse the relationship between events and personalities in the period being studied and examine critically the influence of these personalities on developments in history. For example, how the Baal Shem Tov's new philosophy influenced the development of mainstream Judaism in his time and impacts on Jewish life till today.</p> <p>1.1.6 Evaluate independently some of the moral and ethical issues raised during a period of Jewish history. E.g. causes of anti-semitism then and now; keeping one's Jewish identity while adopting secular culture; the right of the Jews to have a Jewish state in the Land of Israel even though that land is claimed by another people; the concept of K'dush Hashem and its boundaries.</p>	<p>2.1.4 Know the time framework and significant dates of a range of periods and events in Jewish history.</p> <p><b>2.2 Know about major events in Jewish history</b></p> <p>2.2.1 Know major events in a particular period being studied e.g. the rise of the Zionist movement</p> <p>2.2.2 Know the major events in a particular period being studied in chronological order</p> <p>2.2.3 Know a good number of important events across a range of periods in Jewish history.</p>	<p>E.g. Why was the second temple destroyed? Why were Jewish communities in the holocaust destroyed?</p> <p><b>3.2 Examine sources about the past</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Read information from secondary sources such as textbooks and teacher's source material in order to answer simple questions about the period in Jewish history being studied.</p> <p>3.2.2 Read information from a range of sources including primary texts and museum exhibits to answer more challenging questions about the period being studied.</p> <p>3.2.3 Gather information from a range of sources such as encyclopedias, internet sites, historical maps and primary texts, in order to back up their ideas with evidence about the period being studied.</p> <p>3.2.4 Analyze, with support, a primary source such as a museum exhibit and uses the information to explain historical processes.</p> <p>3.2.5 Analyze, independently, a range of primary sources such as selections from the book of Maccabees and Josephus and uses, independently, the information embedded in them to explain historical processes.</p> <p>3.2.6 Use their knowledge of events and the author of a source to make judgments about the credibility of what the author is telling us about the events.</p> <p>3.2.7 Challenge independently the version of events of a particular source they have studied and develop their own ideas and understanding of these events.</p>
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4. Integration opportunities with the general studies curriculum have already been alluded to in this paper (Zeldin, 1998). These will offer more opportunities to better utilize /greatly needed time in the curriculum. Recent efforts by the JNF to integrate Israel Studies into the national curriculum geography attainment levels have shown how valuable this approach to curriculum development can be in one school, given staff involvement and staff development. However, we need to be cognizant of both the ideological and practical challenges involved in integration. Pomson (2001) has highlighted a number of these complications. Firstly, it is immensely difficult to translate complex philosophical constructions of integration into curriculum guidelines, no matter how inspiring the words and personal example of those who have expressed them. In addition, it is generally agreed that the integrated curriculum ideal is necessarily dependent on the participation of teachers who themselves embody or “typify the concept of integration” (Lookstein, 1978, p. 38), for if teachers of Jewish or general studies can themselves only provide partial examples of the integrated and integrative personality, students will find it difficult to make their own ways towards this ideal. An integrated curriculum cannot be delivered without integrative teachers. Unfortunately, integrated Jewish educators continue to be rare, because there are few programs that prepare teachers who are not exclusively Jewish studies specialists or specialists in other subject areas. Finally, as Lamm (1990) demonstrated, Jewish philosophies of integration invariably assume the commitment of the individual to his or her own religious tradition (pp. 3, 15). They presuppose the individual’s commitment to God and his laws and explore how the individual might be committed both to humankind in general as well as to the particular society in whose midst he or she lives. Research has shown, however, that many students in Orthodox day schools do not exhibit the foundational Jewish commitments on which a philosophy of integration is predicated (Lasker, 1976–1977). In these circumstances, Jewish day school educators have been reluctant to develop curriculum models that encourage an encounter between Torah and worldly wisdom when they are unsure about the extent of the students’ commitment to, or interest in, Torah.
5. Our model of partnership and collaboration has been supported by central educational agencies within the UK community. To succeed in other contexts and countries, a similar process would need the backing of a central educational organization within that community.

An example of a similar model is the initiative of Yeshiva University's Association of Modern Orthodox Day Schools (AMODS) with the Lookstein Center in 2003. This initiative was founded to support the writing of a Bible and Israel curriculum for modern orthodox day schools in North America. Unfortunately, since the demise of AMODS the fruits of that partnership have not been sufficiently shared with modern orthodox schools in the United States and beyond.

6. Challenges have arisen in the implementation of this curriculum model in secondary schools in the UK. While primary schools are content to encourage partnership and collaboration between schools, this has not been the case with secondary schools. One of the major reasons for this is the increased competition between these schools to attract students, particularly over recent years. With the opening of the new cross-communal Jewish secondary school in London (JCOSS) in September 2010 there appear to be more places in UK Jewish secondary schools than pupils that can take them up. This new development within the UK school landscape has not been conducive to our collaborative, partnership approach to curriculum development.

This development also highlights how a deep understanding of individual school contexts and specific geographical, cultural, and social "milieu" is essential to the design and successful implementation of curriculum development models. While Schwab's curriculum philosophy understood milieu as only one of the four commonplaces, our curriculum experience indicates that it may be the most important one of them all.

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