Developing a Learning Plan –

Calendaring Learning Experiences for Year 3

**Introduction:**

Mazal Tov! Your congregation is committed to engaging children and their families in meaningful, powerful Jewish learning experiences. You have written a thoughtful grant application which describes your model. Your team must now map out your “Learning Plan.” To do this you will need to consider the how, what, when, where and why of the learning experiences that comprise your model.

*What is a Learning Plan*? A Learning Plan is a calendar of Express Innovation learning experiences. A Learning Plan begins with your congregation’s priority goal, the Big Idea or Essential Question(s) of your model as well as your Learner Goals (Knowing, Doing, Believing and Belonging). Your Learning Plan maps out, on a chart, each of the powerful learning experiences you will provide in 2013-2014 and identifies the following components of each learning experience:

* Pre Learning – date and format
* Experience – date and format
* Post Learning – date and format
* Big Idea of the Learning Experience
* Way(s) this experience will contribute to reaching your end of the year learner goals

Before planning your upcoming year’s learning experiences you need to give serious thought, as a team, to what you really want to accomplish. The tools in this guide are intended to support your work as you prepare your learning plan this year and in the future. As you may have done in the past, you may find it helpful to schedule one or two extended team meetings in order to allow sufficient time for these important conversations.

Here is a “sample” Learning Plan chart. The full chart for your use is on pages 10-12.

**Learning Plan SAMPLE -- Calendar of Express Innovation Learning Experiences**

***Congregation and Team Information***

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| **Congregation:**  **Team Members:** |

***Learning Plan Priority Goal and Big Idea***

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| --- |
| **Priority Goal:**  **Big Idea of your model:** |

***Learner Goals (See Page 8)***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Knowing:** |  |
| **Doing:** |  |
| **Believing/ Valuing:** |  |
| **Belonging:** |  |

***Learning Plan Calendar:***

|  | **Pre Learning – date and format** | **Experience – date and format** | **Post Learning – date and format** | **Big Idea of the Learning Experience** | **In what way(s) will this experience contribute to reaching your end of the year goals?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Learning Experience #1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #2 |  |  |  |  |  |

**Developing Your Learner Plan**

**The following steps are a guide to help you complete the Learning Plan Calendar as you develop your Learning Plan.**

***Steps 1-3: Identifying your Priority Goal; the Big Idea or***

***Essential Question(s); and the Learner Goals***

**Step 1: Identify your congregation’s Priority Goal.**

Most likely, your team identified your Priority Goal when you first began designing your Express Innovation model. Revisit your original Priority Goal. As a team discuss if this is still your Priority Goal or if your model is now aligned to a different Priority Goal.

“Priority goals are the long term accomplishments that stand beyond subject matter mastery and are transferable to daily life.” (Cyd B. Weissman, Re-Imagined Goals and Bold Plans to Reach Them, p. 1)

Some congregations have identified the following priority goals:

• Learners will be on a journey of applying Torah to daily life.

• Learners will be on a spiritual journey rooted in Jewish tradition.

• Learners will be in an ongoing dynamic relationship with Am Yisrael and/or Eretz Yisrael.

• Learners will be on a journey of mending the world guided by a

Jewish moral compass.

Once you have decided on your Priority Goal, include it at the top of your Learning Plan.

Note: You can find the initial Express Innovation process for identifying your priority goal on Bloomfire, titled “Identifying Your Priority Goal.” You may also review the section on Priority Goal in the LOMED Guidebook pages 7-11 (as of May 30, 2013), which can be found here: <http://innovatingcongregations.weebly.com/lomed-handbook.html>. Please, check back over Summer 2013 for an updated book.

**Step 2: Identify the Big Idea and/or the Essential Question(s) of your model.**

Your Big Idea or your Essential Question(s) must be in alignment with your Priority Goal.

What is a Big Idea? According to Grant Wiggins, “An idea is ‘big’ if it helps us make sense of lots of confusing experiences and seemingly isolated facts. It’s like the picture that connects the dots or a simple rule of thumb in a complex field.”

* A Big Idea connects a wide variety of learning experiences.
* Big Ideas should serve as the focal point of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
* Our understanding of Big Ideas deepens over time.

Here is an example of a Big Idea aligned to the Priority Goal:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priority Goal | Learners will be on a journey of applying Jewish teaching to daily life. |
| Big Idea | The Torah is a sacred guide which helps us lead a meaningful and purposeful life. |

Your consultant will help you with formulating your Big Idea. Once you all agree on your Big Idea, add it to the top of your Learning Plan.

Note: Some congregations find it more helpful to work with Essential Questions, rather than with Big Ideas. Essential Question(s) are questions that address dilemmas of living that extend far beyond the classroom. They are never simple or obvious, and likely will never be fully answered; yet they often open up new ways of thinking and understanding the world. Some examples are “In what ways can Shabbat enrich our family life?” and “How does doing *tikkun olam* impact my Jewish identity?” Articulating Essential Question(s), like identifying a Big Idea, will help you focus your planning for the year.

**Step 3: Identify Learner Goals (Knowing, Doing, Believing/Valuing, Belonging)**

To identify Learner Goals, you begin by thinking about your congregation’s Priority Goal and the Big Idea or Essential Question(s) of your model. Next, you imagine your families at the end of year in May and consider the following with your team:

* What do we see the learners **doing** differently as a result of the year of learning?
* What would they need to **know** to do that?
* What **values and beliefs** do we want them to have opportunities to reflect upon?
* With whom/what do we want them to build a stronger relationship and sense of **belonging**?

Use the worksheet with these questions provided on page 9 of this packet. Then write

your responses to these questions under the Learner Goals in your Learner’s Plan.

**Step 4: Data and Principles that will guide you in planning Learning Experiences**

***During “Step 4” you will gather information from a variety of sources:***

# Parent and Key Personnel Surveys

# Social connector, participant and facilitator reflections

# Individual observations and experiences

* Reflections

# 21st Century Design Principles

As you have done in previous years, you will gather information about your learners and your community before deciding the who, what, when, where, and how of the learning experiences. The following tools will help you shape the kind of learning that will be most suitable for your learners. You may choose to use some or all of these tools. Of course, the more data and information you have, the more informed and equipped you will be to plan the learning. There is no particular order that you must follow when considering these sources of information. You will most likely weave the information and data together as you find out more about your learners. You will also use the 21st Century Design Principles as you plan for powerful learning experiences.

# Parent and Key Personnel Surveys

As part of Express Innovation, your congregation has important information obtained through surveys. Your team should have reviewed and analyzed the data from these surveys when preparing your grant application. Consider the data once more and ask:

* What do these surveys suggest you need to incorporate into your learning?

# Social connector, participant and facilitator reflections

From your first conversation with the social connector families, through all of the reflections collected after each learning experience, you have a treasure trove of reactions, likes and dislikes, hopes, dreams and valuable input that can help shape your learning experiences. You may find these questions valuable in reflecting on all this data:

* What does this feedback suggest people find most meaningful? What does it seem they most enjoy?
* What do these reflections suggest you need to incorporate into your learning?

*You can find the tools for the Social Connector conversations on Bloomfire.*

The documents for Social Connector Conversation from Year 1 are:

* Texts for Social Connection Conversation
* Guide to Engaging Social Connector Families
* Script for a Connecting Conversation

The documents for Social Connector Conversation from Year 2 are:

* Social Connector Conversation #2 – Facilitators Guide
* Social Connector Conversation #2 – Text

\*You can find all documents related to Social Connector Conversation #2 in the Bloomfire *Series* – “Social Connector Conversation #2 – All Elements”. You can find all Social Connector Conversation materials in the Bloomfire *Series* – “Booster – Social Connectors.”

# Individual observations and experiences

Each team member’s input, based on his or her empirical knowledge, is important to factor into the formulation of your Learning Plan.

**Reflections**

As you develop your Learning Plan, ask yourselves:

* What new insights about your congregation have you gained over the past year?
* What is important for you to keep in mind about your congregation as you move forward?

# 21st Century Design Principles

In Year 1 of Express Innovation, your team was introduced to 21st Century Design Principles. In Design Principles for the 21st Century we read, *“To fulfill the purposes of Jewish education it is vital that we fashion learning experiences that draw on and nurture the yearning for connectedness.”*

As you develop your Learning Plan, refer back to these four Design Principles and ask yourselves if your model and its Learning Plan follow the Design Principles.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 21st Century Design Principle | Ask: |
| Learning will be anchored in caring purposeful relationships. | *Does the learning provide opportunities to deepen relationships among learners and with educators? If so, how?* |
| Learning will seek the answers to the questions, challenges,  and meaning of everyday life. | *Is the learning designed to help the learner seek answers to the questions, challenges, and meaning of everyday life? If so, how?* |
| Learning will enable individuals to construct their own meaning through inquiry, problem solving, and discovery. | *Does the learning enable individuals to construct their own meaning through inquiry, problem solving, and discovery? If so, how?* |
| Learning will be content rich and accessible. | *Is the learning shaped so that it is rich in Jewish content and learners fully grasp its meaning and relevance? If so, in what way(s)?* |

*“All four design principles are needed to achieve powerful learning experiences. These design principles for 21st century education are by no means new, but they are radical. Only a Jewish education that empowers learners as active agents shaping their own educational journeys, that fosters relationships and connections in a world at once fragmented and homogenized, and that addresses the full scope of our lives will be effective in engaging a generation of students — children and adults — who are both demanding and searching. Such an education will be able to absorb technology without being distorted by it, accommodate choice without abandoning its integrity, and offer multiple options for diverse learners without collapsing into anarchy.* ***This is the kind of education we will need in order to thrive in the 21st century.”***

* From “Design Principles for the 21st Century,” Woocher, Woocher and Ross

**Step 5: Calendaring your Express Innovation Learning Experiences**

Now that you have your Priority Goal, Big Idea or Essential Question(s), Learner Goals and have gathered the necessary data, your team, along with your consultant, is ready to calendar the learning experiences for 2013-2014. Use the provided Calendar of Learning Experiences template (pages 10-12) to plot out the flow and arc of your learning. You will see that the template asks you to stay attuned to your Big Idea or Essential Question(s) and learning outcomes. Schedule your learning experiences for the entire year, along with how you intend to prepare participants in advance and follow-up with them afterwards. You may find it helpful to group the experiences into thematic clusters when it comes time to articulate the Big Idea or Essential Question(s) and learning outcomes.

**Identifying Learner Goals for the Year**

This worksheet is a tool to support your team’s thinking about your learner goals for this year. We look at learning goals for the “Whole Person” – and consider what the learner will Know, Do, Believe/Value, and how the learner’s sense of belonging will be impacted as a result of your learning model. These Learner Goals will help inform the direction and planning for the individual learning experiences.

Think about your congregation’s Priority Goal and the Big Idea of your model. Now, imagine your families at the end of year in May. Consider the following:

* What do you see them **doing** differently as a result of the year of learning?
* What would they need to **know** to do that?
* What **values and beliefs** do we want them to have opportunities to reflect upon?
* With whom/what do we want them to build a stronger relationship and sense of **belonging**?

**Learning Plan -- Calendar of Express Innovation Learning Experiences**

***Congregation and Team Information***

|  |
| --- |
| **Congregation:**  **Team Members:** |

***Learning Plan Priority Goal and Big Idea (see pages 2-3)***

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| --- |
| **Priority Goal:**  **Big Idea of your model:** |

***Learner Goals (see page 8)***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Knowing:** |  |
| **Doing:** |  |
| **Believing/ Valuing:** |  |
| **Belonging:** |  |

***Learning Plan Calendar:***

|  | **Pre Learning – date and format** | **Experience – date and format** | **Post Learning – date and format** | **Big Idea of the Learning Experience (You may choose to use Essential Questions in place of or in addition to Big Ideas.)** | **In what way(s) will this experience contribute to reaching your end of the year goals?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Learning Experience #1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #5 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #6 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #7 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #8 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #9 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #10 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #11 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Experience #12 |  |  |  |  |  |

NOTES: