

CHANGING THE CULTURE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Results of a Survey of the Graduates of
the Mandel Teacher Educator Institute

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[TEI] has helped me to understand teacher development as a discrete universe of the work in the field of Jewish education in a more coherent way. It has brought me together with others in the professional learning community who care about this in a serious way.
Director of a new teacher education program

The Mandel Teacher Educator Institute (TEI) is an intensive two-year program aimed at changing the quality of teaching and learning in Jewish schools by creating a cadre of senior teacher educators who can upgrade the knowledge, skills, and instructional practices of teachers and related personnel in Jewish school settings. The need for such individuals was supported by research done by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) on both Jewish educators and the nature of professional development existing in the Jewish community at the time TEI was initiated.

The TEI program consists of six 4-day long seminars over two years, with assignments in the field between seminars. TEI began in 1995 with support from the Mandel Foundation.¹ The second cohort benefited from one 12-day seminar in Israel planned and implemented with the faculty of the Mandel School in Jerusalem. (Graduates of Cohort 1 were invited to participate in this seminar as well). At the present time, three cohorts of TEI participants have completed the program (n=89) and a fourth cohort (n=35) is in progress. We began our first community-based program in Boston Jewish Community in August 2002. The Mandel Foundation, the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University and the Boston Jewish Community (Bureau of Jewish Education and the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston) sponsor this program. There are 33 school-based educators as well as 10 field advisors enrolled.

The primary goal of TEI is to create a group of ‘*morei morim*’, teachers of teachers, who can work with teachers to improve their teaching and increase their Jewish subject matter knowledge. TEI is guided by a vision of excellent practice from the best of current ideas in secular teacher education integrated with a sustained focus on the importance of Jewish text and concepts. The TEI vision endorses a view of teaching as intellectual, reflective work, not a discrete set of skills. The TEI program provides concepts, techniques, and experiences to help participants develop new views and strategies for professional development of teachers.

A second goal of TEI is to establish a network of senior educators focused on issues of teaching and learning in the Jewish community. Improving the knowledge and repertoire of Jewish teachers through professional development is a daunting task, one

¹ In its early years it also received grant monies from the Nathan Cummings Foundation. These grants went toward partial funding of participants and support for the creations of a videotape bank of materials.

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that requires not only knowledgeable, talented individuals, but also a group of like-minded colleagues, who can support and challenge each other in the development of new structures and new initiatives. A group of professionals can collaborate with each other in this endeavor and engage directly in the substance of professional development and advance the work intellectually.

Rationale

CIJE research, based on surveys and interviews of teachers and educational leaders during 1993, showed that teachers in Jewish schools lacked Jewish content knowledge and pedagogic training. Nevertheless, many teachers considered Jewish education to be their career and they were stable in holding their jobs (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Tammivaara, & Goodman, 1998). A relatively stable teaching force suggested that professional development efforts could make a difference over time, but the quality of professional development offered to Jewish educators needed significant improvement.

A 1995 assessment of in-service and professional development opportunities in communities from which TEI participants in Cohort 1 were drawn showed that the most prevalent form of professional development was the one-shot workshop devoted to generic teaching skills and devoid of Jewish content (Holtz et al, 2000). Existing professional development programs followed an old paradigm that relied on single workshops that were disconnected from teacher's work and that emphasized the technical features of teaching. Topics of such workshops included issues such as classroom management, asking better questions, or working with children in small groups. Rarely did they include content. And even more rarely were content and pedagogic issues combined. Such professional development could not begin to address the challenges of improving Jewish education by addressing the documented deficiencies of many teachers.

Two things were needed to address this systemic problem: Teachers of teachers (teacher educators) and an approach to professional development grounded in more recent work in teacher education and which followed a new paradigm (Holtz, et.al.2000).

Old (Training) Model

New Model

<u>Old (Training) Model</u>	<u>New Model</u>
One-shot workshops	Sustained, ongoing deliberations
Disconnected from teachers' work	Integrated/situated in teachers' work
Focused on generic strategies and/or increasing subject matter knowledge	Focused on subject matter and the teaching/learning of subject matter
Participants as isolated individuals who are receivers of knowledge	Participants as members of learning communities who generate knowledge
Oriented around answers and solutions	Oriented around questions and investigations of practice
Based on a view of teaching as technical work	Based on a view of teaching as intellectual work
Teacher Educator as expert	Teacher Educator as facilitator of teacher learning and co-learner

Educational research (Little and McLaughlin; 1993; Little, 1993) shows that significant teacher learning and development occurs over long periods of time so effective professional development programs must be sustained and coherent, providing enough time for teacher reflection and growth. Research also demonstrates that significant change in educators' thinking and practice requires that educators work as members of a professional community. Studies (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001) show the importance of membership in a professional community as a pivotal factor in sustaining growth and development among professionals working with complex ideas. TEI incorporated these new principles of excellent practice along with a sustained focus on the importance of Jewish text and concepts. Most Jewish educators in the field were not familiar with these new ideas and strategies, and TEI was born to create a group of senior educators with expertise in new ways of conducting professional development for Jewish teachers.

The TEI Vision of Professional Development

The TEI vision begins with **a view of teaching as intellectual, reflective work**, not a discrete set of skills. To support teacher development and learning in keeping with this vision, professional development programs must be

- Long-term
- Incorporate active teacher deliberation
- Be situated in teacher's work
- Be meant for a specific, target audience
- Explore questions and investigate practice
- Focus on subject matter (e.g., Bible, Prayer) and the teaching and learning of subject matter
- Be collaborative in that participants become members of a learning community which generates knowledge, and whose members value making teaching a public activity
- Be led by a teacher educator who facilitates teacher learning and development as opposed to handing down expert knowledge.

The TEI program introduced this vision of teacher development to participants and provided a variety of experiences, techniques, and strategies with which they could come to understand and learn to plan and enact this new model of professional development. Strategies such as investigating videotapes of Jewish classrooms gave professionals the opportunity to develop systematic ways of thinking and talking about good Jewish teaching. Studying curriculum materials gave them tools to explore goals of teaching and learning and extend teachers Jewish subject matter knowledge. Investigations such as these provided powerful ways to explore facets of teaching and learning and develop analytic, reflective ways of thinking and talking about practice. The regular inclusion of text study in TEI provided a model for incorporating Jewish subject matter in professional development and provided participants more experience with Jewish learning. Overall, the TEI program itself was constructed in line with the vision being taught to its participants and provided them with first-hand experience of

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collaborative and reflective inquiry. The TEI program modeled the educational stance that it wanted its graduates to incorporate in their own work.

Recruitment of TEI Participants

Recruitment targeted senior educators with substantive Jewish educational backgrounds who were in position to establish and implement high-quality professional development programs in Jewish schools and related settings. Most participants were directors and consultants at central agencies of Jewish education or education directors of supplementary schools.

We recruited participants to TEI in clusters from communities or organizations (e.g., Melton Adult Mini-School) or individually. Clusters were recruited for two reasons: To create teams of educators who could work together and support each other at the local level, thereby increasing the potential for change, and to begin to form a network of colleagues who could support one another in the new professional activities spurred by TEI.

The eighty-nine graduates of the program and the communities and organizations with which they were affiliated at the time of their participation in the program appear in Appendix A.1 and A.2. The map in Appendix B shows where they lived in 2002.

Research and Evaluation on TEI

TEI has had an evaluation and research component from the beginning. In the first years of the program, evaluation data were used to provide formative information to faculty regarding the efficacy of the program activities. Subsequently, evaluation interviews documented a decided impact on how participants *think* about good teaching and learning and how their views of professional development aligned with the “TEI vision.” (Wohl, 1999) To explore the connection between changed thinking and changed practice, case studies of four graduates were then undertaken. These cases provided detailed insight into how TEI ideas were actually *translated* into programs of professional development and some of the challenges TEI graduates still face (Dorph, Stodolsky, and Wohl, 2002). With the previous evaluation efforts in hand and three cohorts of graduates, it seemed important to document the work of *all* graduates.

The TEI Alumni Survey Study

We designed the TEI alumni survey to learn what impact TEI had on its graduates and what impact the graduates of TEI are having on the field of Jewish teacher education. We wanted to learn the extent to which graduates were offering professional development in line with the TEI vision and the extent to which the graduates formed a professional network of teacher educators. Questions about a number of other issues, such as recommendations for future activities for alumni, were also included in the survey. We chose a survey procedure so that we could document the work of all graduates. By its

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nature a survey is limited in terms of depth and detail, but represents an excellent way to gather targeted information from a relatively large group of respondents.

In general terms, the following topics were addressed in the survey

- What were the current professional responsibilities of the alumni, including their jobs and main responsibilities?
- What was the structure of the programs alumni design and implement? (Duration and number of sessions)
- Were alumni offering professional development that had the core attributes espoused by TEI? What were the qualities and techniques embedded in their work?
- What audiences were being served by the professional development activities?
- To what extent were the alumni forming a professional network through contacts with one another, through use of the listserv?
- Do TEI alumni engage in further professional learning?
- Finally, alumni were asked to comment on the influence of TEI on their job responsibilities and on the conduct of their professional activities and to make suggestions about future activities the Mandel Foundation might undertake to support their professional growth.

Procedure. The TEI Alumni Survey (See Appendix C) was mailed in December 2001 to each graduate of TEI with a request for a written response. Follow-up emails and phone calls over a number of months were used to obtain a high rate of return. We obtained 83 out of a possible 89 completed surveys. The 83 responses were distributed across the cohorts as follows:

- 12 out of a possible 15 from Cohort 1 (July '95-May '97)
- 37 out of a possible 38 from Cohort 2 (June '96 – May '98)
- 34 out of a possible 36 from Cohort 3 (January '99—April 2000).

The Organization of the Survey Study Results

This report of survey findings begins with a description of the jobs and main responsibilities of the alumni. We then turn to a description of the professional development programs alumni offer, including the structure of their programs, the techniques and strategies used in the programs and the audiences they serve. In examining programs we compare the current work of alumni with the programs that were offered in the Jewish community at the time of TEI's inception.² We then examine the extent to which alumni form a professional network. Throughout we consider the reported impact of TEI on the professional activities of the graduates. We summarize suggestions for future activities that would sustain and enhance the professional growth of the alumni. Finally, we discuss implications of the survey results.

² Gamoran (1998) reports on the professional development opportunities available in five of the communities that participated in the first cohort of TEI.

RESULTS

WHAT POSITIONS DO TEI ALUMNI FILL AND IN WHAT ORGANIZATIONS DO THEY WORK?

Table 1 shows the nature of the primary jobs held by the graduates. As a group, the alumni have been in their current positions an average of 6.5 years with a range from new in the job to 25-year tenure.

Table 1: Positions Held by TEI Alumni * (N=83)

Position	N	%
Head of school	22	25.3
Consultant for Central Agency	19	21.8
Director/executive	8	9.2
Director Central Agency	7	8.0
National Movement	5	5.7
Melton Adult Mini-School (FMAMS)	4	4.6
Teacher with PD responsibilities	4	4.6
Teacher	3	3.4
Rabbi	3	3.4
Professor/researcher	1	1.1
Other	11	12.6
Total	87	100.0

* Total exceeds number of alumni as some individuals hold two primary jobs. For example, a member of Cohort 1 splits her time between faculty development for the Melton School and directing a teacher resource center for the BJE

About one-fourth of the graduates are heads of schools, primarily supplementary schools. Twenty-two percent act as consultants in central agencies with a variety of responsibilities including assisting day and supplementary schools, preschools, family education, Hebrew language and curriculum development. Seven graduates are Directors of Central Agencies and a similar number occupy teaching positions in day or supplementary schools, often accompanied by responsibility for professional development among colleagues.

Eight individuals serve as directors of other agencies. For example, one directs the School of Education at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in NY, one directs the North American program of the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School

(FMAMS), one directs DeLeT, a new teacher education initiative to prepare day school teachers at Brandeis and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in LA, and one serves as the associate director of the American Conference of Cantors.

There are also individuals employed as staff at foundations or in the offices of national movements. In addition, some TEI alumni are self-employed, carrying out consulting activities for a variety of clients, and a small number are retired or full-time parents who engage in occasional consulting or teaching.

These are busy people with responsible positions, yet 41% hold additional part-time jobs! We assume this reflects the great need for personnel in the field and the high caliber of the TEI alumni whose services are in demand above and beyond their full-time positions. It may also reflect relatively low compensation in their primary jobs and for some, the financial necessity engendered by expenses associated with a committed Jewish life style such as day school and summer camp tuition for children.

- **Overall, the TEI graduates are well positioned to influence the field of Jewish teacher education.**

WHAT ARE THEIR MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES?

Table 2: Most Important Responsibilities of TEI Alumni * (N=83)

Responsibility	N	%
Working with Teachers	48	58
Administration/ Supervision	41	49
Adult Education	22	27
Curriculum Development	17	20
Working with Principals	15	18
Higher Education	5	6
Research	3	4
Other	17	20

* Each respondent was asked to choose two responsibilities. A few chose more.

More than half the graduates indicate that working with teachers is a primary responsibility, while 49% report that administration and supervision is one of their primary tasks. When asked if they provide professional development, 90% indicated that they did. Adult education, curriculum development and working with principals are reported by about 20% of the graduates as well. (See Table 2) In addition, over half (n=45) of the respondents create and supervise budgets and almost two-thirds (n=53) work with a lay board.

- **Ninety percent of the graduates provide professional development.**

- **The most important task of the graduates is work with teachers, or supervising those who work with teachers.**

WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES CREATED BY ALUMNI?

The structure of professional development programs created by TEI alumni incorporates conditions that strongly support sustained learning. Two features, the number of sessions in a professional development program and the total hours in the program reveal the extent to which professional development programs afford the opportunity for concentrated learning over time. Tables 3a and 3b (in the next section) show that conditions for sustained learning are clearly in place in the TEI Alumni programs where about 2/3 have 6 or more sessions, with over half having more than 10 sessions a year. Similarly, over ¾ of the TEI programs last for 10 or more hours, with more than half lasting over 20 hours.³ At the extreme, some programs occupied 180 hours.

Many alumni specifically remarked on the importance of on-going professional development.

A rabbi commented, “It has increased the amount of time I spend on doing professional development for teachers from 2 hours/year to 20 hours/yr.”

A consultant on family education noted, “TEI has had a profound impact on how I think about designing PD opportunities and it led to our development of an intensive leadership preparation program for principals and future principals.”

HOW DOES THE STRUCTURE OF ALUMNI PROGRAMS COMPARE TO THOSE OFFERED IN 1995-96?

The extent to which the alumni professional development programs represent a marked change in Jewish education can be seen in Tables 3a and 3b that contain data from alumni and data gathered in 1995-96 by Gamoran et al. (1998) from five communities—Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Hartford and Milwaukee. Three of these communities (Atlanta, Baltimore and Milwaukee) were involved in a pilot project sponsored by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) and were called “Lead Communities.”

- Whereas 65% of TEI alumni programs consist of 6 or more sessions, only 12% of the programs in the five communities had 6 or more sessions.

³ Survey responses sometimes required estimation of the number of sessions or hours in a professional development program. For example, a respondent might indicate that a program met monthly which could refer to 12 meetings a year in some settings and 9 or 10 meetings in some school settings. We believe both underestimates and overestimates occurred, but the general pattern of findings should not be affected by the need to estimate.

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- 13% of TEI alumni programs occupy only one session while 39% of the programs in the five communities are one-shot programs.

Table 3b shows the alumni programs have longer durations than programs in these five communities.

- In terms of hours in the program, over 75% of the TEI alumni programs last 10 hours or more while 36% of the programs in the five communities lasted at least 10 hours.
- A striking difference occurs in programs of 20 hours of more with only 7% in the five communities compared to 56% of TEI alumni programs.

Table 3a: Comparison of Sessions per Year in PD Programs of TEI Alumni and Those in Five Communities *

Sessions per Year	TEI Alumni (%) N=132	Five Communities (%) N=146
1	12.9	39.0
2-5	22.0	42.0
6-9	8.3	6.0
10+	56.8	6.0

Table 3b: Comparison of Total Hours of each PD Program of TEI Alumni and Those in Five Communities*

Total Hours	TEI Alumni (%) N=132	Five Communities (%) N=146
2 hours or less	3.8	27.0
3-9 hours	18.5	38.0
10-19 hours	21.5	29.0
20 hours or more	56.2	7.0

* Gamoran (1998) based on an unpublished study of professional development in the five communities that participated in the first TEI cohort. Data were collected in 95-96.

- **TEI Alumni programs are structured to support sustained, reflective teacher development.**
- **The structure of TEI Alumni programs represents a marked shift in Jewish education with respect to how professional development programs are deployed.**

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT TEI ALUMNI CREATE?

It is important to realize that changing the structure of programs is only one element required for improving professional development. Real change requires focusing on the improvement of teaching and learning, “the core of educational practice” (Elmore, 1996). The TEI faculty aimed to develop in the participants a coherent and sophisticated vision of professional development encompassing teacher reflection, collegiality, focus on Jewish text study, and sustained attention to the educational enterprise, its goals and enactment. Creating these capacities in senior educators was at the heart of TEI.

TEI introduced participants to a variety of professional development techniques that would support the kind of work with teachers and principals embodied in the TEI vision. For example, the use of videotape investigation of teaching and learning supported the development of teachers' capacity to reflect on their own practice. A set of real-life videotapes of Jewish teaching from supplementary school classrooms was created for use in the program with support from the Mandel Foundation.⁴ The tapes are related to the specific Judaica subject matter content that is being studied at that particular TEI seminar. They are presented *not* as examples of "model lessons" but rather as opportunities to create conversations around the question: what makes for good teaching and learning of *this particular* Jewish subject matter. Indeed the videotape becomes a kind of "text" for exploration and participants use some of the same strategies that they employ in the study of text for these investigations. (Lampert & Ball, 1998; Ball, 1996; McDonald, 1992; Yinger, 1990).

Participants view and discuss excerpts from tapes of lessons. Individuals or small groups develop "investigations" into particular aspects of the tapes that they find of interest and generative of future learning. They explore the various supporting materials that have been created to encourage these conversations: transcripts of the lessons, tapes and transcripts of interviews with the teacher and students who have appeared on the tape, examples of teacher's lesson plans and students' class work. Ultimately the goal is that tapes will be taken *out* of TEI—that is, participants in the program will use these tapes as part of a TEI-created "toolbox" in their own work creating and implementing professional development sessions for teachers in the field.

Similarly, the development of mentoring techniques supported long-term reflection and collegiality. To be a teacher educator requires one to develop strategies and approaches for helping teachers learn in and from their own practice. This implies creating educative opportunities for more experienced educators (mentors) to work with less experienced teachers. TEI participants are introduced to an approach to mentoring that goes beyond the classical notions of support. This approach is grounded in mentor and novice "unpacking" the planning and implementation aspects of teaching, working together to investigate and analyze these complicated practices in order to improve teaching and learning.

We asked alumni to indicate which professional development techniques they used in their programs from a list of professional development techniques, many of which were taught in the TEI seminars. Table 4 shows the percentage of graduates who use each of a variety of techniques and strategies. Curriculum investigation, mentoring, and text study are reported in use by about 2/3 of the graduates. Studying Jewish content other than text study (48%), videotape investigation (41%), and the development of classroom observation skills (40%) are incorporated by many. Fewer alumni report teaching evaluation skills (29%) and conducting study groups (33%).

⁴ Reading the Classroom as Text: A Videotape and Resource Guide for Investigations of Teaching and Learning, A Project of the Mandel Foundation, 2000.

Table 4: Number and Percent of TEI Alumni using Professional Development Techniques, for all Alumni (N=83) and By Cohort

PD Techniques Used	N	%	Cohort 1 %	Cohort 2 %	Cohort 3 %
Text Study	57	68.7	75.0	59.5	76.5
Mentoring	56	67.5	50.0	67.6	73.5
Curriculum Investigation	54	65.1	75.0	64.9	61.8
Study Jewish content (except text study)	40	48.2	50.0	45.9	50.0
Videotape Investigation	34	41.0	50.0	40.5	38.2
Develop classroom observation skills	33	39.8	41.7	37.8	41.2
Conduct study groups	27	32.5	50.0	32.4	26.5
Evaluation	24	28.9	33.3	29.7	26.5
Text Study (Hevruta)	21	25.3	25.0	21.6	29.4
Other	20	24.1	58.3	16.2	20.6

The extent of inclusion of Jewish text study (69%) and other Jewish content (48%) in the professional development activities of alumni represents a major shift from the typical programs offered to Jewish educators. For example, the study of communities from which the first cohort of TEI were drawn (reported by Holtz et al 2000) found 13% of professional development programs were focused on Jewish content and 18% stressed methods for teaching specific content.

Inclusion of Jewish texts and content in professional development for teachers addresses the documented need for enhancing the content knowledge of Jewish teachers. Presumably as teachers become more conversant and comfortable with text they will embed more text in their classroom instruction, creating richer educational experiences for their pupils.

The impact of TEI with respect to the inclusion of Jewish content in professional development is evident in participants' comments.

An early childhood consultant in a central agency wrote, "My work with teachers has changed dramatically—I use text in all of my interactions with groups of teachers. Whenever possible, I work with teachers on an ongoing basis, developing and deepening the professional relationships. I encourage more exploration and creation of their ideas and try to integrate Jewish text whenever possible. On a personal note, I have become more comfortable with text."

A school director commented, "[TEI] made me conscious of incorporating text study into my staff meetings."

A rabbi educator wrote, “I have used TEI to develop a PD program at my school and stopped going to the regional conference. I try to incorporate more text into all my work as a result of TEI.”

A supplementary school director said, “Staff development must be embedded in content and mutual trusting relationships.”

The landscape of professional development in both Jewish education and secular education has been dominated by workshops to develop a specific pedagogical technique, often in one session. TEI, on the other hand, envisions professional development programs that support the development of reflection and collegiality; programs that require sustained effort to achieve their purpose.

Alumni seem to be building professional development programs that will indeed support sustained teacher learning and reflection. Program structure supports long-term and sustained learning. The high level of use of mentoring, curricular investigation and analysis of videotapes and classroom observations suggests many of the ingredients for effective professional development in the “TEI mold” are being implemented.

As a director of a central agency said, “TEI has profoundly influenced my views on what types of opportunities we should develop and offer; this has led to a far greater emphasis on mentoring, ongoing study and reflective practice.”

There is some variation in use of professional development techniques by cohort, in part reflecting the emphasis given to each in the TEI program for each cohort. As can be seen in Table 4, curriculum investigation and videotape investigation are used by a larger percent of Cohort 1 graduates and Cohort 1 also report more of them conduct study groups than is the case in the later cohorts. In contrast, the use of mentoring shows increased use in each subsequent cohort with almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of Cohort 3 members incorporating mentoring into their practice compared to half of Cohort 1 using mentoring.

A somewhat greater proportion of later cohort graduates run multiple session programs (74% vs. 58% in Cohort 1) while fewer use videotape and curriculum investigation as techniques for professional development. Text study, including Jewish content that is not text study, and the development of classroom observation skills and evaluation procedures are incorporated by similar proportions from all cohorts.

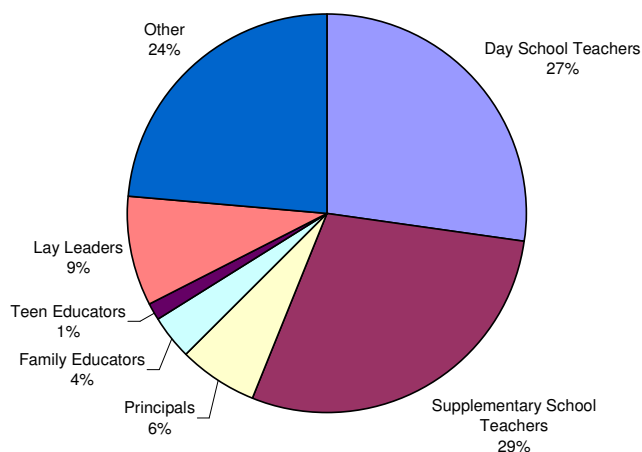
- **TEI alumni are using new techniques and strategies learned in the TEI program.**
- **Programs emphasize Jewish content and text, use techniques such as mentoring, curriculum investigation and videotape analysis, and are structured across many sessions and hours.**
- **The landscape of professional development in Jewish education has begun to change significantly in the communities in which TEI alumni work.**

WHO BENEFITS FROM TEI ALUMNI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES?

Almost 7,200 individuals benefited directly from the professional development programs enacted by TEI alumni during the year of the survey. Over half the recipients are teachers, equally divided between day school and supplementary school faculty members and including some early childhood educators. Lay leaders, principals, family and teen educators account for another 20% of the target audience. The large “other” category includes rabbis and rabbinical and cantorial students, undergraduate and graduate students including preparing teachers, camp directors and personnel, JCC staff, education staff at foundations, and participants and faculty in the Florence Melton Adult Mini-Schools, among others. Figure 1 shows the percent distribution of the individuals who receive professional development services

According to the figures in *A Time to Act* (1991), there are some 30,000 positions for Jewish education in North America. (Only 5,000 of those positions are full time.) The 83 TEI graduates have provided some professional development for approximately 4800 educators in the last year. This finding suggests that TEI is on the way to creating a lever to upgrade the skills and knowledge of many educators in the Jewish community.

Figure 1: Types of participants in professional development (n = 7,188)

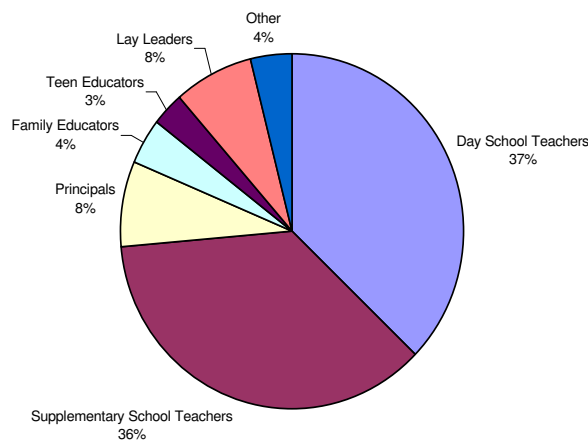


WHAT IS THE SCALE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT TEI ALUMNI ARE OFFERING?

The sheer scale of the professional development enterprise as enacted by TEI alumni is impressive. We have seen that almost 7,200 individuals participated in professional development initiatives created by TEI alumni during the survey year. Since participants often attend sessions on multiple occasions, we wanted to gauge the hours of effort actually involved in the alumni programs. Using the information on the numbers of participants, the length of sessions and the number of sessions, we calculated the contact hours (or person hours) in professional development provided by TEI alumni. (For example, a group of 10 teachers who attended 5 sessions, each of which lasted 2 hours, would represent 100 contact hours [10x5x2] in professional development activity.)

Alumni programs in total represent approximately 172,000 person hours or contact hours in professional development, a major effort indeed. Figure 2 shows the distribution of contact hours in professional development across different types of participants in TEI alumni programs. The primary recipients of the alumni professional development effort are teachers. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of all contact hours were targeted to day school and supplementary schoolteachers. Teachers, teen and family educators, and principals attended eighty-eight percent of professional development hours. The remaining time was devoted to mobilizing support for the role and importance of professional development by working with lay leaders and others.

**Figure 2: Percentage of contact hours by type of participant
(N = 171,853)**



A comparison of Figures 1 and 2 shows that more hours are devoted to programs for teachers and other educators than for lay leaders and others.

- **The professional development programs of TEI alumni serve many audiences, but their efforts are directed primarily to teachers and other educators, consistent with the intended outcome of TEI.**

HAS TEI CREATED A NETWORK OF JEWISH TEACHER EDUCATORS?

One of the motives for creating TEI was the documented lack of a cadre of individuals who could form a professional network around issues of teaching and learning for Jewish educators. In order to upgrade the knowledge and professional competence of teachers in Jewish schools, a group of senior educators needed to take on that mission and share their experiences and resources. A key concept of TEI was that teachers need to be “critical colleagues”—professionals who can learn and reflect on practice with one another. Thus it was very important to provide a forum for teacher educators to develop and practice these critical thinking skills and analytic tools as well.

A number of strategies were incorporated into TEI to foster collegiality and networking. Prominent among them was the recruitment strategy that encouraged educators to join TEI as teams—individuals from the same community or educators from the same national program (e.g. the Reconstructionist movement or the Florence Melton Mini-Schools). While some participants came as individuals, each cohort of TEI mainly consisted of groups of individuals who worked intensively together over a two-year period and formed professional (and personal) ties.

In addition, participants were directly exposed to the concept of *critical collegiality* (Lord, 1994) and experienced professional exchange on many levels in the TEI seminars and through assignments accomplished between seminar meetings. An internet listserv was established through which TEI faculty could distribute materials and raise issues, and individuals could exchange papers, curriculum ideas, raise questions, share news and new developments, and otherwise develop and sustain professional communication. Articles that introduce new professional development practices or that extend our knowledge of research in the area of professional development are sent out periodically as well.

Last, but certainly not least, faculty has maintained contact with alumni through alumni conferences, which take place almost annually. These conferences serve as an opportunity to learn together and to share the products of new work in the field.

In the survey, we asked alumni about their contacts with members of their cohort, other TEI alumni in their communities, alumni from their team, and current enrollees in Cohort 4 of TEI. We also collected information on alumni use of the TEI listserv and on their contact with TEI faculty.

TEI alumni have definitely formed a professional network. Over 80% report having contact with other TEI graduates in their community or organizational team and the contact is frequent for half of them, weekly or almost daily. The high degree of contact reflects the fact that many TEI graduates are located in the same workplace or affiliated with the same institution or organization--an explicit part of the TEI recruitment strategy. But the high level of collegial contact is not just a result of proximity or allied job responsibilities.

The nature of the contacts often centers on topics and concerns that were explored and nurtured in TEI. Thus, in some communities, such as Atlanta and San Francisco, TEI alumni formed study groups that meet regularly. These groups sometimes study Jewish text and on other occasions read education literature. The groups also serve as a place where individuals present professional plans and obtain collegial suggestions and feedback. Contacts in communities and organizational teams also occur through professional meetings such as an Educators' Council or local seminars. The Chicago educators have planned their yearly Central Agency in-service program together, even recruiting TEI graduates from other communities in the Midwest beyond Chicago.

Another example of networking is the collaboration among the Reconstructionist rabbis who attended TEI. Though in different parts of the country, they have planned and executed a mini-course on teaching text for the national rabbinical convention. They are also collaborating on writing articles on teaching text for the Reconstructionist magazine. TEI alumni also see one another at national meetings such as CAJE.

Members of the same cohort had the opportunity to get to know one another well and shared the same learning experiences in TEI. About 60% of the survey respondents said they had some contact with other members of their TEI cohort. About one-fourth reported daily or weekly contact, but for many the contact among members of the same cohort was notably less frequent than among those who were members of a team. Half of those reporting contact said it occurred rarely. Contacts were often by email rather than face to face. Nevertheless, it is interesting that even alumni who do not have contact with other members of their cohort seem to feel that they could call on one another should the need arise. A congregational school director indicated she had little contact with members of her cohort, *"but if I needed to, I trust I could be [in touch.]"*

TEI alumni also call on one another for professional activities. A number of alumni mentioned asking another graduate to serve as a speaker in a program they were organizing or to help in a workshop for teachers or principals. Sometimes a fellow graduate might be asked to help in program planning. Email contact and phone calls of both a professional and personal nature were reported. A number of graduates mentioned gaining professional support from others as an important facet of their on-going connections.

The picture that emerges suggests that it is residence in the same community, association with the same organization, or enactment of similar roles that seems to

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maximize regular contact among TEI alumni. For example, graduates of different cohorts in Atlanta, San Francisco, Boston, Suffolk County, and Cleveland and members of organizations such as the Florence Melton Mini-Schools have frequent, regular contacts. In addition, individuals who have similar roles report important connections with others that were made through TEI. For example, some directors of early childhood programs and early childhood consultants in central agencies made connections through TEI and actively relate to one another even though they are in different communities and were not recruited as a team.

The pattern of association across cohorts continues with regard to the current participants in Cohort 4 of TEI. As might be expected, there are many preexisting ties between Cohort 4 participants and members of earlier cohorts. A deliberate effort was made to continue to build expertise in communities and organizations that had prior involvement with TEI as well as to expand TEI's influence. Seventy percent of the graduates report contact with current TEI participants. Often, new participants are part of the staff in the institutions and agencies where alumni are employed. Often graduates integrated new participants into their informal discussions and study groups.

The TEI listserv was established to electronically connect all TEI alumni and faculty to encourage questions, dialogue and joint work as well as the dissemination of materials of mutual interest. TEI faculty uses the listserv to distribute materials of interest to TEI alumni and to communicate about programs and activities. Individuals use the listserv to ask for resources, raise issues, and inform others of professional activities and opportunities.

For example, a member of Cohort 1 is editing a Teacher Handbook for Jewish educators and solicited chapters and suggestions for topics to include by using the listserv. A number of alumni became authors of Handbook chapters. Some messages inform the community of job changes, as well as honors and awards received by TEI alumni, and significant family events.

Most of the alumni (86%) read the messages on the listserv. Over 60% have posted a question or a request for information or disseminated information to others in the last year. About 11 individuals are more active users of the listserv having posted queries on it more than 3 times during the past year.

The ability of TEI graduates to work and learn together, as well as be friends, serves the important function of reinforcing and deepening the learning that began in TEI. Reflective practice and on-going learning require like-minded colleagues for sustenance. The network of TEI graduates and current participants provides a solid base to help individuals hone their thinking and their skills in working with Jewish educators. A central agency consultant summed it up well, "*The sense of being part of a professional network with a shared language is invaluable. I find myself using articles, artifacts, language and 'lenses' directly from TEI.*" While there are some individuals who do not keep in touch and feel somewhat isolated, most of the graduates are solidly connected to others.

Finally, we asked TEI graduates the extent to which they are in touch with TEI faculty. About half (51%) of alumni indicated they had some contact with TEI faculty, often through email or at the TEI alumni seminar or other professional meetings such as CAJE or NATE. Some connections occurred because faculty and alumni are engaged in joint projects or serve as advisors to a given institution.

Some contacts were more specifically targeted around needing advice or resources for a specific program that was being planned, trying to elicit faculty to participate in a particular program or to provide a consultation in a local community. In one instance, graduates mentioned that Gail Dorph as helping a community set up a monthly study group. Another graduate noted that Elie Holzer provided advice about texts for use in a teachers' seminar.

On occasion, graduates have consulted with faculty members about very practical issues, such as fees to charge for consulting or how to recruit personnel for a particular position. A few graduates mentioned instances in which faculty mentored them with respect to specific strategies for dealing with professional challenges or helped them conceptualize aspects of their work.

- **TEI alumni are members of a strong professional network. As such, they are poised to continue growing as teacher educators and enhance their impact on Jewish education.**

DO TEI ALUMNI ENGAGE IN FURTHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING?

TEI faculty hopes that alumni continue to participate in learning and educational opportunities after completing TEI. Survey responses indicate that TEI graduates are continuing to invest in their own education and in on-going learning. Ten graduates earned additional degrees after completing TEI, and two others were awarded honorary doctorates from HUC. Four doctorates in education were earned and two more are at the dissertation completion stage. One individual earned a Doctor of Ministry in pastoral counseling while others obtained masters degrees or advanced certificates in Jewish education, special education and organizational development. The TEI experience inspired a number of these individuals to pursue advanced degrees, although multiple factors contribute to such a major investment.

Almost 60% of the alumni have participated in workshops or courses since graduating TEI. A broad spectrum of educational experiences has captured TEI alumni's interest. As examples, alumni have attended the Harvard Principals Seminar, BJE courses on mentoring and administration, courses offered through NATE, JECC, CAJE and Cleveland College, Hadassah Leadership Academy, courses on the preschool program of

Reggio Emilio, text study groups, training to lead Great Books discussions, and workshops on middle school education. Four individuals are taking courses on the Internet in pursuit of degrees at Cleveland College and JTS. Alumni also participate in, and sometimes create, informal learning opportunities such as Jewish text study groups, book clubs, and Hebrew language circles and study groups on educational topics.

Overall, many TEI graduates embody the model of “lifelong learner.” TEI does not claim credit for the on going learning of its graduates. However, individuals who continually invest in learning more about their profession and the subject matter of Jewish learning increase their capacity to upgrade the professional knowledge and skills of Jewish educators with whom they come in contact.

IN WHAT WAYS HAS TEI INFLUENCED ALUMNI’S JOBS AND JOB RESPONSIBILITIES?

Most of the findings described in this report can be taken as evidence that the TEI program has changed significantly the way in which graduates do their jobs, particularly the conduct of professional development. When asked, “In what ways, if any, has TEI influenced the nature of your job responsibilities?” Eighty-one per cent of the graduates reported a direct influence. Graduates report incorporating specific features of the TEI vision of professional development.

- A director of a congregational school said, *“more text emphasis; developing learning communities, curriculum investigation.”*
- Another commented, *“Staff development must be embedded in content and mutual trusting relationships.”*
- Another director indicated, *“TEI has helped me think about the need for teachers to put into practice, report on and evaluate what they learn.”*
- A Bureau staff member noted, *“changed pedagogic language, have fewer classes for longer periods of time, journal writing is included.”*
- Another said, *“Since my TEI experience I have become much more reflective, my practice has changed and my teaching has changed. TEI had a significant impact on my work.”*
- The director of a new teacher education program said, *“It has helped me to understand teacher development as a discrete universe of the work in the field of Jewish education in a more coherent way. It has brought me together with others in a professional learning community who care about this in a serious way.”*
- Another director said he experienced TEI influence *“greatly, in mentoring individuals and in the teaching of Jewish texts.”*

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- Another said, “*My vocabulary has changed along with my outlook and vision: ‘What does it look like?’-- teachable moments and the concept of life long learning.*”
- Another congregational school director said, “*I think asking questions and helping teachers learn to frame questions about their own teaching that would move a lesson forward with reflection.*”

Of particular note, eight graduates indicated that TEI led to a major redefinition of their job or to the creation of a new job consistent with TEI training. New programs and institutions were created to conduct professional development and teacher education, sometimes at the urging of TEI alumni.

- For example, one Midwest educator reported that “*TEI inspired and informed the creation of the Center for Jewish Teacher Education*” at a central agency and she assumed the role of Center Director.
- An administrator in higher education reported the development of a Continuing Education Program that will include significant professional development sessions for people in the field.
- A central agency consultant reported, “*The New Educator Institute I direct was created as my project for TEI and is now in its 5th year at the BJE.*”
- Last, a director of professional development in a central agency on the West Coast said, “*TEI completely influenced development of my program 100%.*” She holds a new position created during TEI that involves directing a two-year professional development initiative for teen educators. She comments, “*the program design was based wholly on TEI philosophy and methodology.*”
- **Almost every TEI graduate has altered the way in which they do their work to incorporate facets of the TEI vision. Some have created totally new programs or institutions that offer professional development aligned with a new paradigm.**

LOOKING FORWARD

WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT COULD TEI OFFER ITS ALUMNI?

When alumni were asked how TEI or the Mandel Foundation could support their professional activities and growth in the future, three activities that have occurred in the past—the listserv, disseminating articles and the alumni seminars—were strongly endorsed for the future. One participant wrote, “*Continue to do what you do. Cull and distill the best scholarly work on professional development and bring us together for study, networking and research.*”

The alumni seminars were seen as particularly valuable in terms of networking and the ability to continue growing as teacher educators. About 40% of the alumni explicitly mentioned their desire to attend alumni seminars in the future. A number of graduates urged that regional or local alumni seminars be created and possibly involve other Jewish educators in the community, such as master teachers, who may not have participated in TEI. The alumni seemed to think that it was a good idea to ground professional activities in the community and that it is more practical to attend a local seminar. Related to this idea, a few suggested that TEI faculty “go on the road” to give courses and seminars in local communities. Some graduates also mentioned they would like to see the seminars in Israel continue.

Some alumni mentioned specific topics or areas they would like to see explored further. Early childhood educators want more opportunities to figure out how to apply TEI ideas and practices to their settings and to preschool teachers. As one said, “*continue to explore ways to reach teachers of young children with activities in addition to text study.*” A family educator wrote, “*I would love to meet with other people involved with preschool teachers.*” More training in mentoring was requested by some alumni and expanding the focus to include teaching of Hebrew language was also mentioned.

Videoconferencing was suggested as another strategy that might be used for on-going exchange, as was the use of the Internet for on-line study groups. Other uses of the Internet were also suggested. These included the creation of chat rooms in which participants could “talk” about specific projects or issues, perhaps with the participation of TEI faculty. Another suggestion was the creation of a website on which specific projects could be posted.

The articles that faculty have distributed to alumni were commented on by many. Without exception they urged this practice be continued. Sometimes the articles are used in local study groups, other times they are read by individuals. Uniformly the articles are valued as a way for alumni to continue to learn about new practices in education and to keep thinking about issues raised at TEI. In addition, a few respondents requested additional video and audio-visual materials to be used in their work with teachers.

A few individuals mentioned the need for financial support for action research projects and matching grants to help support teachers engaged in professional development activities. Grants to support mentoring programs were also seen as valuable.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the impact of TEI on how its graduate teacher educators think about teaching and learning and how they conduct professional development has been profound. Although their numbers are not yet large, a network of professionals now exists to support the beginning of the needed transformation of education for teachers in the Jewish community.

The work of TEI graduates, like the work of the TEI faculty and program, is intensive and requires effort over many years. Much remains to be done, but the “TEI vision” seems to be making its way to professionals in the Jewish education world. Some of the ideas and practices taught at TEI are becoming familiar to members of the Jewish education community at large. Since Cohort 1 was the first to be exposed to TEI practices and concepts, every member reported that TEI had an influence on their job responsibilities and the way they work. In Cohort 2, 89% reported a direct influence of TEI, while 65% of Cohort 3 did so. This pattern shows increased prior knowledge of TEI practices in each successive cohort.

As TEI ideas and practices spread, teacher educators may come to accept certain practices as normative, leaving more room for greater sophistication and depth in their application. Anecdotally, members of TEI Cohort 4 seem more familiar with TEI philosophy and more participants are primed to study key concepts and practices from the start of the program.

Survey responses have some limitations. We cannot fully describe the professional development programs of the alumni as we did not request detailed written descriptions nor did we observe their work, as we were able to do in our case study research. Nevertheless, the frequency with which Jewish content was included and techniques that support teacher reflection were present in the context of sustained programs presents a picture of professional development that is very different from the norm in Jewish and secular education. The survey data show that TEI has achieved its primary objectives.

IMPLICATIONS

The 83 senior graduates of TEI who responded to our survey are clearly changing the character of professional development offered to Jewish educators in their communities and organizations. Educational research suggests that as sustained and reflective, content rich professional development becomes more normative, teaching and learning in Jewish supplementary and day schools will improve.

We need to know more about the conditions under which teachers in classrooms actually display new practices and how the culture of schools is transformed. What scope of effort is required to saturate a community or create a “tipping point” (Gladwell, 1996)? The new Boston TEI, which focuses on a specific metropolitan area and is school-based, may teach us a lot about these issues.

As the work of TEI continues, the graduates themselves are taking on the training role that TEI faculty held rather exclusively in the beginning. The prominent role of TEI alumni in Boston TEI as program organizers and field advisors attests to a growing penetration of TEI influence in the Jewish education community, a pattern that should

increase over time. There may also be other models of intervention tied to communities with which to experiment in future iterations of TEI.

As successful as TEI has been, it seems clear that profound change in schools and teachers requires time, and that professional development alone cannot bring about a major cultural shift in an institution. Professional development is certainly pivotal, but other factors from family orientations to financial resources are also in play. Different approaches may be needed in day schools, supplementary schools, and preschools to successfully bring about change with a professional development strategy at the core. The possible impact of disseminating the key elements of the “TEI vision” to parents and lay leaders might also be explored more systematically and in more depth.

The pattern of responses from graduates in terms of professional connections suggests that having a number of TEI graduates in a given geographic community is a particularly powerful intervention. The graduates even suggested that programs for alumni might be most effective if carried out in their local communities and if other senior educators were included. The inclusion of non-TEI graduates might support dissemination of ideas and practices to a broader base in a given community. The possibility of focusing on new communities in future cohorts of TEI seems a productive approach, given the evident success of the geographic team strategy so far.

The recruitment of participants who were affiliated with certain organizations or who occupied certain roles generally seemed more powerful than an individual attending on her own. Selecting members of specific organizations to participate in TEI or tailoring a program for specific role incumbents such as early childhood educators or Judaic studies coordinators in day schools should also be explored. Occupants of these roles should benefit from a focused effort to enhance professional development in their settings.

We went out of our way to recruit teams from denominational movements, hoping that they would be able to develop professional growth initiatives for their own teachers. This strategy was successful for the Reconstructionist movement and for the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School, where TEI became a strategy to develop their lead professionals. Although educators from the Conservative and Reform movements came to the second cohort of TEI and educators from the Hebrew Union College’s ECE (Experiment in Congregational Education) came to the third cohort, the initiative never took hold in their enterprises. Perhaps it was because their leadership never really understood how TEI could help them develop teacher educators for their movements. Perhaps it has to do with the ways in which their national operations are organized. We really don’t know.

The evaluation and research component of TEI has been one important source of documentation of the program’s efficacy and impact, as well as new directions it might pursue. A continued effort in evaluation and research, tied to some of the issues raised in this report seems advisable. In particular, a community approach to fostering knowledge

of effective professional development that is focused on school-based personnel, such as is underway in Boston, should be carefully examined for its potential as a means of adapting the TEI program in communities. Boston TEI should also provide more insight into the contribution of specific school contexts as sites for fostering professional development initiatives. We should learn more about day schools versus supplementary schools, for example, in the context of professional development. More generally, this school-based initiative provides an opportunity to learn more about the professional cultures of Jewish schools and the attitudes and competencies of their personnel.

Another avenue of investigation might focus on the specific needs of teacher educators who work with preschool and early childhood educators in Jewish settings. Early childhood educators who participated in TEI expressed a need for better articulation of the program with the specific needs of teachers who work with young children. The mission of early childhood educators in Jewish communities needs attention from many sources, but on-going attention by TEI faculty and research personnel could contribute to strengthening the professional development work in this sector.

The cumulative experience and knowledge of TEI faculty in honing both the theory and practice embedded in TEI is substantial. A chronicle of the underlying principles and practices of TEI, along with what has been accomplished and what has been learned would make a significant contribution both to Jewish education and the broader field of teacher education and professional development. The planned book based on the TEI experience can serve an important role in dissemination, both informing a wider professional audience of this sustained effort and permitting collegial scrutiny of the work of TEI.

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Appendix A.1 - Summary of Participants in TEI by Community 7/95 - 5/00

Communities	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Total Participants
	7/95--5/97	7/96--5/98	1/99--4/00	
Atlanta	2	3	5	10
Baltimore	2	3	1	6
Boston	1	4	2	7
Chicago	2	3	2	7
Cleveland	3	5	3	11
Columbus			2	2
Dallas			1	1
Hartford	1	0		
Kansas City	1	3	0	4
Los Angeles		3	5	8
New Jersey		1	0	1
New York City		6	0	6
Ontario		1	0	1
Orange County			3	3
Pittsburgh		1	0	1
Rochester		3	1	4
Salem, OR			1	1
San Francisco	3	1	3	7
Seattle			3	3
St. Louis		1		1
St. Paul		1		1
Suffolk County, NY			3	3
Totals	15	39	35	89

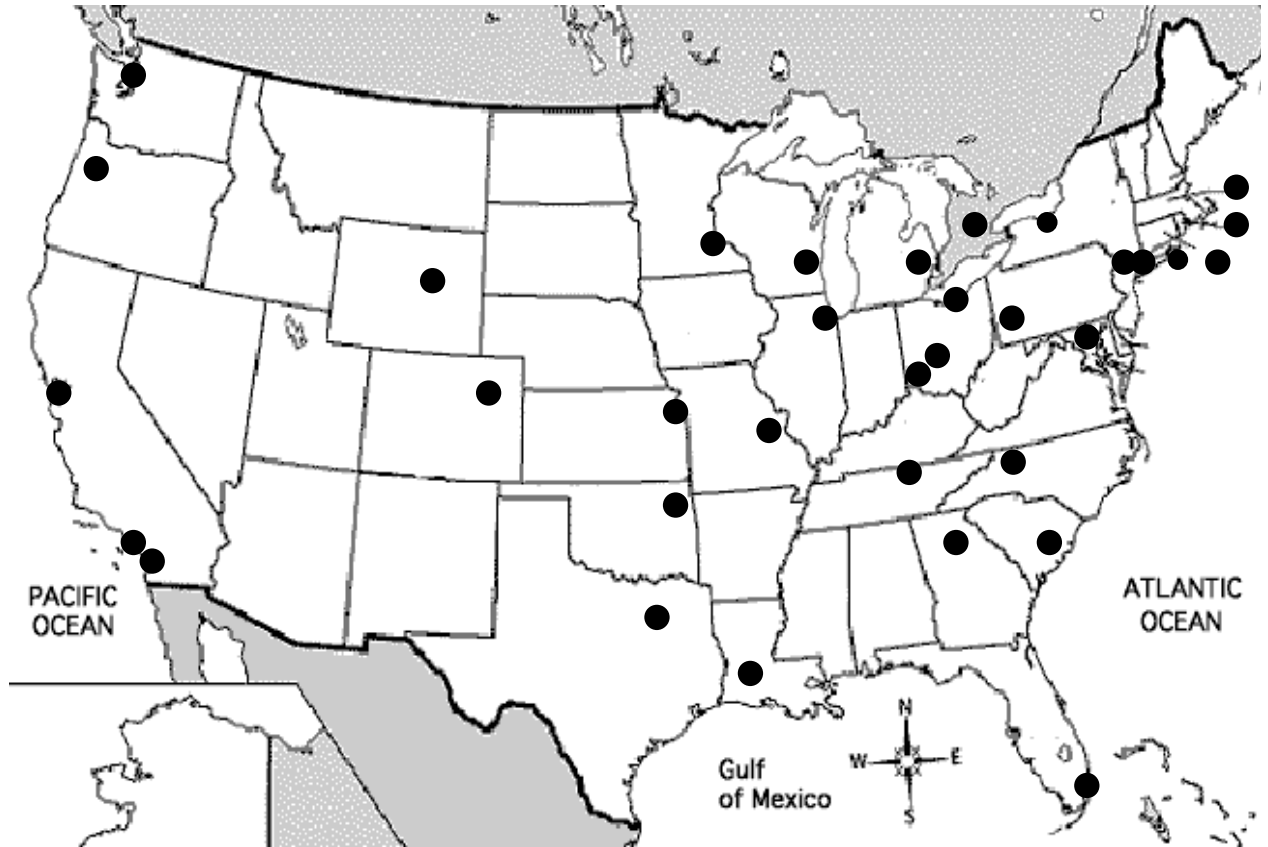
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Appendix A.2 - Summary of Participants in TEI by Sponsoring Agency 7/95 - 5/00

National	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	National Totals	
Conservative		0	3	0	3
Boston			1		
New York			2		
ECE		0	0	3	3
Boston				1	
Chicago				1	
Dallas				1	
FMAMS		2	4	0	6
Atlanta			1		
Chicago		2	1		
Pittsburgh			1		
St. Louis			1		
Independent		0	2	0	2
St. Paul			1		
New York			1		
Reconstructionist		0	3	3	6
Boston				1	
Chicago			1		
Cleveland			1		
New Jersey			1		
Los Angeles				1	
Salem, OR				1	
Reform		0	3	0	3
New York City			2		
Ontario, Canada			1		

* These individuals have already been counted in the community groups in the previous chart. This chart indicates sponsoring agencies that are not community based.

Appendix B- Distribution of Alumni in Cohorts 1—3 in 2002



**Atlanta, GA * Baltimore, MD * Bergen County, NJ * Boston, MA * Chicago, IL * Cleveland, OH *
Cincinnati, OH * Columbus, OH * Dallas, TX * Detroit, MI * Denver, CO * Hartford, CT *
Kansas City, MO * Los Angeles, CA * Miami, FL * Milwaukee, WI * Nashville, TN * New York, NY *
Orange County, CA * Pittsburgh, PA * Rochester, NY * Rockland County, NY * Salem, OR *
San Francisco, CA * Seattle, WA * St. Louis, MO * St. Paul, MN * Suffolk County, NY *
Toronto, Ontario * Tulsa, OK**