

# Looking Outward

## Part 2

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### What's in this Document?

As part of Looking Outward, RCE Task Forces will divide into working groups of 2-3. Each group will engage in a guided inquiry of a particular model, exploring that model through artifacts (articles, videos, or products produced by learners in the programs).

Note: There are probably too many models here for a single Task Force to consider. Use the exercises in Looking Outward part 1 to narrow the scope of the inquiry. Consult with your coach on how to best organize this with your congregation!!

## Guided Inquiry

- Step 1: Read the overall model's description and the specific programs' descriptions.
  - What seems intriguing about this model/these programs?
  - What questions do you have at this point?
  
- Examine the artifacts for each program by clicking on the links. These may be articles, videos, or products produced by learners in the programs.
  - How does this model engage learners?
  - In what ways is the learning hands on or active?
  - To what extent does this model convey broad vs. deep knowledge?
  - How does this model *enculturate\** learners?
  - What resource needs (such as space, equipment and transportation) does this modality seem to have?
  - What kind of *community* does this modality foster, and for whom is this community?
  - Community among kids
  - Community among families
  - Multi-generational community will all members of the synagogue
  - Did this program involve incremental or transformational change?
    - What kind of change would implementing a program like this involve in **our** congregation?
  - What questions do you **still** have? What information do you still want to know? Which member of your team will you assign to get this information?

\*Enculturate: The process of taking on the values, practices and traditions of a group so that an individual can become a member of the group, in this case, the Jewish community, or perhaps specifically of one synagogue or of Reform Judaism.

## Community Building:

The school structure exemplifies its commitment to building community amongst the children. Students are grouped into *chavurot* or tribes. Learning in these smaller groups may take place at the synagogue or in other settings, such as people's homes.

- [Mayim](#), Temple Beth Shalom, Needham, MA
  - This program utilizes combined grade-level learning to enrich their students' experience. [This video](#) illustrates one example of the kind of work their students engage in.
  
- [Tribes](#) (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade), Temple Emanu-el of NYC - video
  - This program combines a values curriculum with a multi-grade level learning experience for 3-5th graders, led by teens and teachers together. It is designed to strengthen and deepen relationships in the school by giving them opportunities to engage with students with whom they might not otherwise interact and learn in a more interactive way.

## Day camp replaces religious school

- [Camp Beth Am](#) (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> gr), Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills - [video slideshow](#)
  - This program, which can replace a religious school model entirely, consists of a once a month camp experience and a more immersive camp experience during the summer for grades 5-8 (8th are Madrichim-in-training). This is supplemented through participation in retreats.
  - Follow up call: Mike Mason
- [Machane Jehudah](#) -- B'nai Jehudah, Overland, Park, KS - Summer day camp
  - Monthly family experiences and a two-week summer intensive are the core components of this non-school modality for 3-6th graders, which includes field trips and activities at off-site locations.
  - Follow up call: Dayna Gerson
- Also call Bruce Raff, formerly at Temple Judea, Los Angeles, where they had a program called Nisayon, which was the first day camp to replace religious school, but is no longer being done.

## Family Learning

Parents are educated along with the children in an ongoing program that meets multiple times each month. There may be a whole family learning time, age-graded sessions in which parents and children study separately, as well as whole group activities like *t'filah* or *shirah*. Learning may take place at the synagogue or in other settings, such as people's homes or parks.

- [Shabbaton](#), Temple Israel of Hollywood, LA (grades 3-6)  
Watch the video and read the statement of philosophy
  - Like many others around the country, this program offers families an alternative to the conventional religious school. Families attend from 4-6 pm on Shabbat afternoons. Additionally, once a week, children meet in small groups for Hebrew learning (often at a home). There is also a family retreat.
- [MASA](#), Temple Shaarey Tefillah, New York, New York (Pre-K-5th, 6-7th grade)  
This one includes a video
  - The program consists of both family learning which is multi-grade level, and parallel learning, which divides students by grade, and ends with a shared *t'fillah* experience. Multiple tracks run at once, allowing families to choose the content area that is of greatest interest to them.
- [B'Yachad](#), Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles  
Watch this [video](#) made a few years ago.
  - This program includes a *t'fillah* experience, parallel learning for parents and students, and a shared meal. This program is noteworthy for the eligible students' b'nai mitzvah ceremonies, which are integrated into the *B'Yachad* sessions and allow for the entire *B'Yachad* community to attend.
- [Shabbat School](#) Havurah Shalom, Portland, OR (Reconstructionist, K-6)  
Particularly look at the downloadable parent handbook, as it describes the goals and structure of the program.
  - This program is unique in that the parents take turns serving as the teachers. There is an explicit goal of establishing parents as Jewish role models and leaders for students. This also has a goal of strengthening parents' Jewish literacy and confidence.

- [Chavurah](#), Community Synagogue of Rye, New York (5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade)  
An overview of the program, the curriculum and how it compares to the conventional classroom model they also offer.
  - This program combines small-group learning, occasional family learning, and Hebrew tutoring one-on-one to strengthen ties between multi-age learners and their families. Families are expected to engage with their *Chavurah* through learning, worship, and connection opportunities, which the *moreh derech*, teacher, will guide families in.
  
- [Shabbat Shelanu](#), Congregation Sinai, Milwaukee, WI  
Blog post about their vision and process
  - [This program](#) includes 6 Shabbat sessions, which may occur on Friday night, Saturday morning, or Saturday afternoon. On other weeks, the program meets on Sundays.
  
- [Shabbat School Experience](#), Reconstructionist Synagogue of the North Shore, Planedome, NY (1-6th grade)
  - This program allows students to choose a lens through which to study Torah. Students have an opportunity to choose a lens four times throughout the year. School meets twice a month, one of which the parents are also invited to attend and engage in their own study.

## **Intergenerational Learning**

Younger and older children are regularly grouped together for learning enabling the building of relationships with peers and across generations. Older youth (teens) may be involved in the planning or take leadership roles. This can also include learning that brings together distinct generations to engage in learning together (such as seniors and children).

- [Tribes](#) (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> gr), Temple Emanu-El of NYC
  - This is a separate component of the programming for 3-5th graders in addition to Hebrew and a Judaic content. The content is values-based and is taught in an interactive way in a multi-age grouping. Teens play a leadership role within the tribes, in addition to teachers.
- [Bubbe & Zayde's Kitchen](#), Temple Shaaray Tefila, New York
  - This is one of a number of that brings together teens and seniors in a shared learning and storytelling experience. This particular program is team-taught by a professional chef and a Jewish educator who work together to develop a curriculum that brings together culinary and Judaic learning. Although this is a program that was run with teenagers, we believe it could easily be adapted to work with younger students. In this list of [URJ-run Better Together programs](#), a number of other possible content areas are showcased, which might be more easily adapted to a younger cohort.
- [Temple Shir Tikvah Learning Corps](#), Winchester, MA - [video](#) - children are paired with adult committees in the congregation
  - In this program, religious school families and synagogue committees are brought together in service projects related to the work of the committee and to which they can contribute and participate in real-life experiences as active and engaged members of a Jewish community.

## Lego Model

### Kids and families can do their own IEP's

The conventional school has been deconstructed in order to maximize convenience for families. Students fulfill requirements by selecting from a variety of learning opportunities that meet at different times and places. Their frequency and length may vary.

- [Jewish Journey Project](#)
  - This could be adopted to a synagogue setting in a large congregation or if a number of Jewish educational institutions worked cooperatively.
- [Nisayon](#) (6th grade only), Temple Emanu El, Westfield, NJ
  - This program is offered for 6th graders only (but could be scaled to apply to a broader range of students). The weekday evening component brings together all the students in the grade, in an intentional plan to facilitate community-building. The program also includes a retreat which everyone participates in, includes optional supplemental Hebrew labs, and a menu of experiences from which the students and their families are expected to choose to attend throughout the year. There are experience options which occur at the synagogue and outside in the larger community.
- [Har HaShem](#), Boulder, CO
  - This program allows families the opportunity to work with school staff to create an individualized plan for Hebrew based on [four levels of competency](#) the school has identified.
- Discuss with Rabbi Carrie Vogel her experiment with this

The next 2 are for older kids, but could be adapted:

- [The Academy \(7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> gr\)](#), Temple Israel of the City of NY, New York – website description of the structure of the program with several downloadable ancillary documents
  - This program consists of options for students to choose from in each of the following categories: *limud* (learning), *avodah* (synagogue events), and *tzedek* (volunteering/youth group events and weekend trip). Students who want to do more than the program requires are encouraged to do so at no extra cost and can gain credits towards subsidized international trips which are available to older students. The concept could easily be adapted for a younger student cohort, but the program's structure may become more about convenience for the family than student autonomy and interest.
- [Next Dor 2.0](#), Temple Shalom, Dallas, TX – website description, handbook and lists of electives
  - This program offers a number of different elective classes for students to choose from, as well as interspersed special worship, *tikkun olam*, and community events. This program could be adapted for a younger student cohort.



## **Project Based Learning**

Students participate in long-term projects that allow them to develop a multi-disciplinary and in-depth understanding of a topic or area of Jewish life. Projects are “real,” requiring inquiry as part of the learning process, the acquisition of new knowledge and/or skills, and lead to the creation of something new that can be used in the community.

- Project Based Learning Explained
  - This [video](#) that explains why PBL makes sense for today’s world, and this [article](#) explains how PBL is being implemented in some supplemental schools.
- [Mayim, Temple Beth Shalom](#), Needham, MA
  - This program utilizes combined grade-level learning to enrich their students’ experience. [This video](#) illustrates one example of the kind of work their students engage in.
- [Sulam](#), Temple Chayai Shalom, Easton, MA
  - This program consists of curricular “expeditions” that allow students to deeply engage in the curricular material in a real and hands-on way. This [Gallery of Student Work](#) showcases some of the impressive results of the students’ learning. To learn more about how this program was created and implemented, see this [article](#).
- [Lese Center for Living Judaism at Central Synagogue](#), NYC
  - This program offers K-12 students the opportunity to build on what they’ve learned each year in this spiraling curriculum that aims to answer the question, “How is Judaism relevant to me in the 21st Century?”

## Service Learning

Learning happens through regular and ongoing service learning and social justice work both within and outside the synagogue walls.

- [Seventh Grade Mitzvah Corps, Temple Emanu-El of NYC](#) – video with more detailed description of the program structure and curriculum and how it is structured as service learning. There is also a [video with testimonials](#) from the students
  - This program combines traditional learning about Jewish morals and service learning opportunities, paired so that the learning can then be directly applied through an action.
- [Adopt-A-Survivor, Temple Sinai of Roslyn](#), Roslyn, New York
  - 7<sup>th</sup> graders interview and collect stories of survivors, then plan the Yom HaShoah observance for the congregation. Parents also have the opportunity to participate in the program as well. This program is one of a number of service options available to 7th grade Mitzvah Makers, the service component of B'nai Mitzvah.
- [Temple Shir Tikvah Learning Corps](#), Winchester, MA - [video](#)
  - In this program, religious school families and synagogue committees are brought together in service projects related to the work of the committee and to which they can contribute and participate in real-life experiences, several of which involve service learning, as active and engaged members of a Jewish community.

### **Shabbat Centered: (kids only)**

Learning happens during various parts of Shabbat. Learning is often family-based, and may include time for kabbalat Shabbat, Shabbat t'filah or havdalah.

- [Torah School](#) Temple Emanu-El Beth Shalom, Montreal
  - Parents are encouraged to attend Torah study or morning services while students meet every Saturday for class, where the CHAI curriculum is utilized. School concludes with a family service each week.
- [Shoresh](#), KAM Isaiah Israel, Chicago, IL (Pre-K-10th grade)
  - This PBL program meets on Friday afternoons, concluding with a weekly Shabbat family service.
- [B'Yachad](#), Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles Josh Mason Barkin's video
  - This program includes a *t'fillah* experience, parallel learning for parents and students, and a shared meal. This program is noteworthy for the eligible students' b'nai mitzvah ceremonies, which are integrated into the *B'Yachad* sessions and allow for the entire *B'Yachad* community to attend.

## Tracks

The conventional school has been deconstructed in order to maximize convenience for families. Students fulfill requirements by selecting from a variety of learning opportunities that meet at different times and places. Their frequency and length may vary.

Note: this involves a *limited* number of choices, unlike the Lego Model, in which the entire curriculum is deconstructed, and each student creates an IEP (individualized education plan)

- [Hagigah \(2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> gr\)](#), Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills, CA  
A theater program that meets weekly.
  - This program is one of three options available to families in this age bracket (in addition to a traditional religious school model and a camp model). The choice component here is in choosing this track, not within the program itself.
- [Tagliyot, Omanut, and Sifrut \(4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> gr\)](#) – Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley, MA  
3 different tracks for learners to choose, each with its own method of exposing the same overarching themes.
  - In [Omanut](#), students engage in learning content through artistic exploration of concepts. The program includes 4 family programs and two field trips, as well as opportunities for parents to study in a parallel track with clergy. [See video here.](#) In [Tagliyot](#), a science and technology-based exploration, students meet twice a month, family programs happen at the end of each of the three units, and two field trips round out this program. There are opportunities for parent parallel learning as well. [See video here.](#) In [Sifrut](#), students participate in learning through literature, via a book club model. Parents are expected to read and engage with their children in discussing the books, and students engage in sessions with a teacher and other students to explore themes.
- [JQuest \(3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> gr\)](#), Temple Isaiah, Lafayette, CA  
Website with a description of the tracks and curricular themes
  - JQuest offers a variety of year-long tracks for students to choose from, and may choose to repeat a track or change each year.
- [Har HaShem](#), Boulder, CO  
This program allows families the opportunity to work with school staff to create an individualized plan for their child based on [four levels of competency](#) the school has identified.

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## Hebrew Learning

Moving away from “decoding,” alternative curricula shift the learning to (a) a focus on learning through hearing Hebrew first, performing the actions, and then eventually learning how to read, (b) prioritizing Jewish life vocabulary and/or (c) focusing on modern conversational Hebrew.

[The JECC of Cleveland](#) has become the focal point for critiquing the conventional ways of teaching Hebrew (that begin with decoding) and introducing new approaches (such as Hebrew through Movement). See articles by Lifсах Shachter and Nicole Greninger (we will post these on the tent)

### **QUICK LINKS TO JECC HEBREW-FOCUSED WEBSITES:**

[jPrayer](#)

[Hebrew Through Movement](#)

[I'm Gonna Stand Up](#)

[Let's Learn Hebrew Side-by-Side](#)

### **Congregations that use the JECC approach include:**

- [JQuest Hebrew](#), Temple Isaiah, Lafayette, CA
  - This is a multifaceted Hebrew program that includes HTM, Jewish life vocabulary, 12 week 6<sup>th</sup> grade Hebrew boot camp.
- [The Temple-Tifereth Israel, Cleveland](#)
  - This program offers a number of models of Hebrew learning, including one that invites the parent into the learning space and requires parent and child to engage in homework to reinforce the in-class learning. There is also a hands-on program similar to tech crew that is an option for more hands-on, group-oriented learners. A “flash mob” of teen helpers comes into classrooms to assist learners.

Also worth looking at:

- [Har HaShem](#), Boulder, CO
  - This program allows families the opportunity to work with school staff to create an individualized plan for their child based on [four levels of competency](#) the school has identified.

Resources for teaching Hebrew that fit with the “sound to print” approach

- Behrman House - Hebrew in Harmony
- AR tiny app