

## *Chofetz Chaim–Yavneh Day School Merger Attempt (1959–1968)*

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Although a handful of Jewish day schools were created in the first decades of the twentieth century—mostly in the New York metropolitan area—the period between the late 1930s and mid-1960s witnessed exponential growth in the number of day schools across the continental United States and Canada. In 1940 there were about thirty-five schools in four American states and two Canadian provinces, enrolling approximately 7,700 students. By 1964 there were more than three hundred schools in twenty-nine states and five provinces serving more than 65,000 students. While the baby boom, Jewish migration to the suburbs, and a postwar religious revival accounted for some of the overall growth in the Jewish education sector during this period, the growth in day school enrollment significantly outpaced that of supplementary schools, even outside of New York. Jewish day school enrollments also grew faster than Catholic parochial schools during these decades. Various factors contributed to this rapid growth, including a growing interest in preserving Jewish culture and religious life after the Holocaust, excitement surrounding the creation of Israel, and the post-World War II immigration of Holocaust refugees who had little allegiance to the American public school system.<sup>1</sup>

Two day schools were founded in Cincinnati during these years. In 1946 Rabbi Eliezer Silver, the city's leading Orthodox rabbi, founded Chofetz Chaim Day School, known today as the Cincinnati Hebrew Day School (CHDS), in the community of Avondale. Eight years later, in 1952, a group of Labor Zionists led by Joseph Gootman established

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1 Alvin Schiff, *The Jewish Day School in America* (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), 48–49; 74–78.

Yavneh Day School, known today as Rockwern Academy, also in Avondale. Some of these individuals, including Gootman, initially supported Chofetz Chaim but soured on the school due to its non-Zionism and insufficient emphasis on modern Hebrew language and culture. Yavneh was conceived as a community school, and while it took a sympathetic approach to religious practice, it declined to affiliate with any religious movement. The focus of its Judaic studies program was on Hebrew language, Jewish literature and culture, and Israel.<sup>2</sup>

The existence of two day schools in a Jewish community the size of Cincinnati was unusual, and both struggled to attract enough students to remain financially viable. Silver and the leaders of Chofetz Chaim felt particularly aggrieved, since theirs was the first institution. Although their school was under strict Orthodox auspices, it welcomed the children of non-Orthodox families. Initially, Yavneh's founders were able to mitigate some of the criticism by insisting that it was a K–3 foundation school. But in 1958–1959, Yavneh moved to the Roselawn Talmud Torah building, in the heart of Cincinnati's fastest-growing cluster of Jewish neighborhoods, and began adding a grade each year, with the intention of growing into a full elementary school. Chofetz Chaim, meanwhile, was still in Avondale—which by then was hemorrhaging Jewish families to points north—and struggling to attract students. An alarmed Silver attempted to shut Yavneh down or force a merger between the schools in 1959, when he summoned Yavneh's president, Morris Weintraub, to a *din Torah*, a hearing before an Orthodox rabbinical court (see Document 1). The charge was *hasagat gvul*, a rabbinic prohibition against unfair business practices. Weintraub, who had no intention of facing off against Silver in an ostensibly hostile arena, waited more than two weeks before responding to Silver's letter and then insisted that he could not act while most of his board members were vacationing outside the city (see Document 2). But the letter indicates that Weintraub tried to diffuse the situation by meeting personally with

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2 Unless otherwise noted, background on the founding and early development of Yavneh comes from Daniel Plotkin, "A History of the Yavneh Day School of Cincinnati, Ohio," unpublished rabbinic thesis, 2002, Hebrew Union College, SC-14946, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH (hereafter AJA).

Silver and reassuring him that Yavneh's board did not wish to harm the Chofetz Chaim school. Indeed, in the view of Yavneh's lay leaders, the two schools were too different in ideology and curriculum to be viewed as direct competitors. Despite the incendiary nature of Silver's missive, Weintraub kept his letter cordial, signing it "your friend, as ever." Silver ultimately changed tack and addressed his school's demographic challenges by following Yavneh's example and relocating Chofetz Chaim to Roselawn in 1963. As part of the move, Chofetz Chaim merged with an afternoon school, Yeshiva Eitz Chaim, and officially became known the Cincinnati Hebrew Day School, although the name Chofetz Chaim continued to be used colloquially and in some correspondence.

Even so, both schools continued to struggle to attract students. In 1965–1966 there were seventy-one students enrolled in grades 1–8 at CHDS and seventy students at Yavneh in grades 1–6. Yet both were receiving allocations from the community's Jewish Welfare Fund, covering between one-quarter and one-third of their operating costs.<sup>3</sup> Officials at the JWF (and, later, the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati) believed that a merger of the two schools would create one viable, economically efficient entity. They predicted that the resulting efficiencies and economies of scale would save thousands of dollars. Yavneh's board attempted to cut costs through a merger with the Cincinnati Community Hebrew Schools (CCHS) in 1962, which allowed the schools to share administrative, teaching, and facility costs.<sup>4</sup> But the JWF continued to push for a merger of CHDS and Yavneh.

While negotiations continued on and off over the next decade, they reached their most serious point in the mid-to-late 1960s.<sup>5</sup> Two of the

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3 "Digest of Information Supplied by Witnesses Appearing Before the Study Committee of Community Hebrew Schools on the Subject of Merger with Community Hebrew Day Schools," 29 December 1965, MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

4 "Community Schools, Yavneh Day School Announce Merger," *American Israelite* (15 March 1962): 1.

5 See, for example, "Digest of Information"; "Report of the Community Hebrew Schools Merger Study Committee," January, 1966; Stanley Chyet, "Report by Chairman, Cincinnati Community Hebrew Schools Merger Negotiation Committee," 17 July 1966; Stanley Chyet, "Report by Chairman, CCHS Merger Negotiations Committee," 10 October 1966; "Minutes of a Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Consolidation of Day

most prominent rabbis in the community, Rabbi Fishel Goldfeder of the Conservative Congregation Adath Israel and Rabbi David Indich of the Orthodox Golf Manor Synagogue, negotiated a merger proposal, with the support of the JWF, which was circulated in 1966 (see Document 3). The document is interesting because it provides insight into how two relatively moderate community leaders tried to bridge the ideological and philosophical gaps between the institutions. On its face, the proposal required more concessions from Yavneh than the CHDS. The phenomenon of a community school deferring to the religious requirements of its most traditionally observant constituents was not unusual. Many day schools that were created in the 1940s and 1950s were nominally Orthodox while catering to a religiously diverse clientele. But in this case, where two schools already existed, any attempt to create a broadly acceptable community school model was more controversial. In a concession to the Orthodox camp, the proposed school would be modern Orthodox in religious orientation and practice, and all of its religious studies staff would be Torah observant. The key provisions designed to attract Yavneh supporters involved the centrality of Hebrew and the school's Zionist orientation. While the word *Zionist* does not appear in the document, the schools identified as providing curricular models for the proposed institution were all religious Zionist in orientation. Likewise, the stipulation that the school's director be an observant Jew and a fluent Hebrew speaker all but guaranteed the selection of a religious Zionist.

Goldfeder's openness to a single day school under Orthodox supervision makes sense in historical context. As Jonathan Sarna observed, despite its affiliation with United Synagogue of America, Adath Israel had "for many years walked a tightrope between the Conservative and Orthodox movements."<sup>6</sup> When the congregation's board voted in 1952

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Schools," 2 July 1968; "Statement on Yavneh Day School by CCHS Representatives on the Jewish Federation Sub-Committee on Consolidation of Day Schools," 16 July 1968; "Minutes of a Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Consolidation of Day Schools," 25 July 1968; all in MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

6 Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Debate Over Mixed Seating in the American Synagogue," in *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed*, ed. Jack Wertheimer (New York:

to institute mixed seating, opponents initiated a lawsuit. In the wake of that bruising battle, Goldfeder craved “Achdut (Unity) and the well-being of the entire Jewish community.” But the lay leadership of both Yavneh and CHDS did not share his accommodationist mindset. On the CHDS side, a small but growing middle-class Orthodox laity exhibited a newfound confidence in the durability of Orthodoxy on the suburban frontier.<sup>7</sup> Yavneh’s emphasis on Jewish culture, *Klal Yisrael* (Jewish peoplehood), and Israel, as well its sympathetic but nondogmatic approach to Jewish belief and observance, won it an eclectic group of supporters, including Zionists, Conservative Jews, and even some members of Cincinnati’s Reform community. It is notable that at a time when the Reform movement declined to endorse day schools, (Zionist) members of the Hebrew Union College faculty, including Drs. Ezra Spicehandler, Ben Zion Wacholder, and Stanley Chyet, sent their children to Yavneh and were involved in the lay leadership of the school. The latter served as chair of the Yavneh committee charged with studying the merger proposal and was involved in the negotiations. Even Jacob R. Marcus, a longtime opponent of day schools, returned from a trip to Yavneh impressed by the academic program and convinced that “it is a most worthwhile undertaking.” Explaining to Chyet that, “What pleases me in particular is the school’s dedication to a liberal view of Judaism and Jewish life,” Marcus made a donation to Yavneh and wrote a letter to leaders of the JWF opposing the merger and insisting on both schools’ unique contributions (see Document 4).<sup>8</sup>

In 1967 the JWF and the Associated Jewish Agencies merged into the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, and talk of merger between the two schools entered a new phase. The Federation commissioned the American Association for Jewish Education (AAJE) to study the day school situation in Cincinnati. In a strongly worded report, the AAJE panel concluded that the schools were ideologically and philosophically

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Cambridge University Press, 1987), 382–383.

7 An early observer of this general phenomenon was sociologist Charles Liebman. See “Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life,” *American Jewish Year Book* 66 (1965): 21–92.

8 Jacob R. Marcus to Stanley Chyet, 24 May 1966; Morris Weintraub to Jacob R. Marcus, 30 October 1967, MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

too far apart to effect a successful merger (see Document 5). Moreover, it recognized the determined lay leadership of both schools, steering their institutions in very different directions. The AAJE recommended that the Federation support both schools for a period of three years and then evaluate the health of each institution and determine whether conditions were riper for a merger.

The merger talks were an occasion for both schools to clarify their missions and values. By the 1970s enrollment at both schools was growing, and each was becoming more ideologically distinctive. The opening of non-Orthodox day schools in other Rust Belt Jewish communities, including Hillel Day School in Detroit (1958), Agnon Day School in Cleveland (1969), and the Community Day School in Pittsburgh (1972), helped to normalize the existence of Cincinnati's two Jewish day schools in the eyes of Federation leaders. But they were quick to point out that those Jewish communities were far larger than Cincinnati.<sup>9</sup> It was the anomalous nature of Jewish Cincinnati, as a center of Labor Zionist activity and the seat of the Hebrew Union College, that facilitated Yavneh's founding and contributed to its viability. Both CHDS and Yavneh proved themselves to be enduring institutions on Cincinnati's Jewish landscape.

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9 Federation officials continued to promote dialogue between the schools and remained committed to the idea of merger. Jewish Federation of Cincinnati Minutes, Day Schools Merger, 8 July 1969, MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

## Yavneh–Chofetz Chaim Merger

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### Document 1:

### Rabbi Eliezer Silver Summons Yavneh Day School's President to a Rabbinical Hearing<sup>10</sup>

August 2, 1959

Mr. Morris Weintraub<sup>11</sup>

One of the leaders of the so-called Yavneh Day School, Cincinnati  
Finance Building  
Newport, Ky.

My dear Mr. Weintraub:

I am compelled to send you a summons in the name of the orthodox Rabbis of Cincinnati and of the Board of Education of the Chofetz Chaim Day School to have a *Din Torah* “rabbinical trial”<sup>12</sup> to decide if you have the right to lead the Yavneh as a separate Day School in opposition *Hasagath Gvul*<sup>13</sup> to the Chofetz Chaim Day School which exists and is incorporated since twelve years and which the orthodox City recognizes as the best Hebrew School in town.

The Yavneh can help *Chas-vsholom* [Heaven forbid] to destroy or to minimize the Chofetz Chaim Day School.

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10 MS-851, box 4, AJA.

11 Morris Weintraub (1909–1996), a lawyer and politician, was the founding president of Yavneh Day School. A Democrat, he served in the Kentucky State Senate from 1940–1945 and the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1946–1960. He also served as Speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1958–1960. He had deep ties to Newport’s casino industry and counted numerous gambling figures among his clients. He was able to use these connections to raise money for Yavneh. Weintraub was also the final president of the United Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Kentucky. Paul Tenkotte and James Claypoole, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2009), 945.

12 A *din Torah* is a hearing of a dispute in front of a traditional *beit din* (Jewish court).

13 *Hasagat gevul* (literally, infringement of boundary) is a rabbinic concept, based on an expansive interpretation of Deut. 9:14, used to refer to improper business competition.

We want to have a *Din Torah* before Orthodox rabbis from outside the city before the school starts. We are waiting for your answer accepting the *Din Torah* and appointing the name of a Rabbi of your side and we will let you know the name a Rabbi of ours before August 20.

We are still ready to accept all the students and the Rabbis should unite us.

Sincerely,

Rabbi El. Silver<sup>14</sup>

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## Document 2: Yavneh President Morris Weintraub Responds to Rabbi Silver<sup>15</sup>

August 19, 1959

Rabbi El. Silver

696 Glenwood Avenue

Cincinnati, 25

Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Your letter of August 2<sup>nd</sup> summoning me to a *Din Torah*, received.

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14 Rabbi Eliezer Silver (1882–1968) was founder of the Chofetz Chaim Day School in 1949 and Cincinnati's leading Orthodox rabbi from 1931 until his death. Silver was born in Lithuania and immigrated to the United States in 1907. After serving congregations in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (1907–1924), and Springfield, Massachusetts (1925–1931), he became the spiritual leader of Congregation Kneseth Israel, a position he held until his death. He also established the Vaad Ha'ir of Cincinnati in an attempt to unify Cincinnati's Orthodox community and centralize *kasbrut* supervision. Silver was a national figure, serving as president of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis and a founder of the Agudath Israel of America. During World War II he led the Vaad Hatzalah (Rescue Committee), launching a fundraising campaign that raised more than \$5 million, which was used to secure more than two thousand visas for prominent rabbis and other Eastern European refugees. "Eliezer Silver, Rabbi, 87, Dead," *New York Times* (9 February 1968): 27. See also, Aaron Rakeffet-Rothkoff, *The Silver Era: Rabbi Eliezer Silver and His Generation* (New York: Feldheim, 1982).

15 MS-851, box 4, AJA.

As I told you when I visited your home on Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the matter with you on an informal, personal basis, at which time Rabbi Cohen<sup>16</sup> was present, it has never been, and never will be, my desire or intention to do anything in Cincinnati or in any other community which will jeopardize intensive Jewish education. My only desire at the outset—as you well know—was to save a situation and to continue with the intensive Jewish education of more than fifty children who were left “high and dry” at the time the Talmud Torah-Beth Am dropped Yavneh from its program.

It came as a distinct shock to me when you told me that you were under the impression that I founded and commenced the Yavneh Day School. Actually, Rabbi Silver, as I thought you well knew, Yavneh was founded and formed by the Talmud Torah about six or seven years ago and continued to operate under the auspices of the Talmud Torah until on or about July or August 1958, at which time a group of parents and other persons interested in the continuation of Yavneh formed an association to continue it in existence. As I told you at your home, while the summons to me is in the nature of a personal one, yet I feel a distinct moral duty and obligation to discuss it with the officers and members of the Board of Yavneh. Along with them, with the exception of one, or possibly two, are out of the City, and will not return until the early part of next week. I intend to take up the matter with them immediately, and you can rest assured that I shall contact you as soon as possible thereafter.

It is obvious, therefore, that even in the event the matter could not be straightened out without a Din Torah, it would be utterly impossible for me to name a Rabbi of my choice before August 20<sup>th</sup>, the date you mention in your letter.

With kindest personal regards, I remain  
Your friend, as ever,

Morris Weintraub

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16 Rabbi Hyman Jacob Cohen (1908–1976) was the director of the Chofetz Chaim Day School.

### **Document 3: Proposal for a Merger of the Chofetz Chaim and Yavneh Day Schools<sup>17</sup>**

n.d. (c. 1967–68)

[Merger] Proposal of Rabbis Indich<sup>18</sup> and Goldfeder<sup>19</sup>

In the interest of Jewish education, Achduth (Unity) and the wellbeing of the entire Jewish Community, we recommend that these guidelines should be followed in order to achieve a just and fair merger of the Yavneh and Chofetz Chaim Day Schools.

Realizing that in a merger situation each school must move a little closer to a “Central” position without sacrificing any principles, we have met and discussed, searched and counselled together, and find that a Hebrew Day School, serving the needs of all who seek an intensive Jewish Religious Education, could be achieved.

We feel that, if merger is realizable at all, it should be a total merger of the CCHS system<sup>20</sup> (including both afternoon and day divisions) with

17 MS-726, box 47, folder 3, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH.

18 Rabbi David Indich (1924–1991) served as rabbi of Cincinnati’s oldest existing Orthodox congregation, Congregation Agudas Israel, popularly known as the Golf Manor Synagogue, from 1952–1988. He was ordained at the Rabbinical College of Telshe, Cleveland, Ohio.

19 Rabbi Fishel Goldfeder (1912–1981) served as rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel from 1945–1980. Goldfeder presided over the congregation’s move from Avondale to Amberley Village and its evolution from a traditional “Conservadox” synagogue with separate gender seating to a mainstream Conservative congregation with family pews. He received his ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He was supportive of both the founding of Chofetz Chaim and Yavneh.

20 The Cincinnati Community Hebrew Schools (CCHS) was the centralized Jewish supplementary school agency in Cincinnati. The CCHS was supported by the Jewish Welfare Fund (JWF) and, later, the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, which was created by a merger of JWF and the Associated Jewish Agencies. The history of the CCHS dates back to 1887 and the creation of the Talmud Torah Society in Cincinnati. It underwent a number of iterations, adopting the name CCHS after a merger with Beth Am Nursery School (1953), Golf Manor (1957), and Ohav Shalom (1957). Yavneh Day School’s relationship with CCHS was complex, having originally operated as a Foundation School

the CHDS.<sup>21</sup>

1. A merged traditional Hebrew Day School using the Manhattan Hebrew Day School, Flatbush Yeshiva, Hebrew Academy of Miami, or Central Queens Yeshiva Curriculum could be acceptable to all.
2. Ivrit B'Ivrit<sup>22</sup> should be the policy of the merged Day School.
3. The educational director of the system must be a trained educator, thoroughly conversant with all aspects of the Jewish Heritage, and fluent in modern Hebrew.
4. The director and the teachers in the system must observe Jewish tradition and shall teach Judaism in a positive manner.
5. New Hebrew teachers should be graduated of an accredited Hebrew Teachers College and licensed by either Vaad Chinuch Charedie [*sic*],<sup>23</sup> Torah Umesorah,<sup>24</sup> Jewish Agency,<sup>25</sup> or Jewish Education Committee,

(N-3) out of a Talmud Torah building in Cincinnati's Avondale neighborhood. Yavneh officially merged with the CCHS in 1962.

21 Chofetz Chaim merged with Yeshiva Eitz Chaim, a supplementary school, in 1963, and was officially renamed the Cincinnati Hebrew Day School (CHDS); however, the names CHDS and Chofetz Chaim continued to be used interchangeably after that date.

22 Ivrit B'Ivrit (literally, Hebrew in Hebrew) is an immersive method of Hebrew study patterned after the natural or direct method of language instruction, in which students are taught a foreign language using only the target language (rather than translation from the students' native language). Hebraist educators championed Ivrit B'Ivrit, and it was popular in many American Jewish supplementary and day schools between the 1920s and 1960s.

23 The Vaad Chinuch HaCharedi le-Yad Mizrahi was the Religious Zionist movement's education organization. It was tasked with facilitating the creation of and the advising of part-time (supplementary) and all-day schools.

24 Torah Umesorah, the National Society of Hebrew Day Schools, founded in 1944, is a loose network of Orthodox Jewish day schools under the policy-making authority of a committee of rabbinic elders affiliated with the ultra-Orthodox Agudas Harabbonim (Union of Orthodox Rabbis). Under the leadership of Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky from 1948–1980, Torah Umesorah assisted in the founding of scores of Jewish day schools outside of New York City and provided them with various services, including professional placement and curriculum development.

25 The Jewish Agency for Israel, known in Hebrew as *HaSochnut HaYehudit L'Eretz*

New York.<sup>26</sup>

6. We recommend that teachers of whatever department, Hebrew or English, presently employed for five years or more should be retained in the system, provided they meet all other requisites.
7. Teachers in the English Department must be accredited and certified.
8. The English Department curriculum is to be based on the curriculum of the Cincinnati Public School system.
9. Kashrut should be observed on institutional premises.
10. Kippot—Skullcaps—are to be worn by male children on institutional premises.
11. Tefillah—prayer—shall be based on the traditional Siddur.
12. The merged system would be called the United Community Hebrew Schools (UCHS), and the Day School would be called the Yavneh-Chofetz Chaim Day School.

The Board of Directors or Board of Education, should be so comprised as to make secure that the new merged school will follow the course upon which it embarks. If these new rules are followed in good faith, we are confident that merger can take place.

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*Yisra'el*, was founded in 1929 as the operating arm of the World Zionist Organization. Over the years it was involved in a number of programs to connect Diaspora day schools with Hebrew-speaking Israeli teachers.

26 The Jewish Education Committee of New York, originally known as the New York Bureau of Jewish Education (founded in 1910), was the central Jewish educational agency serving Greater New York. It operated a teacher certification and licensure program for Jewish educators and administrators. It is currently known as the Jewish Education Project.

**Document 4:****Jacob R. Marcus<sup>27</sup> Letter Opposing the Merger of the Chofetz Chaim and Yavneh Day Schools<sup>28</sup>**

n.d. (c. 1968)

It has come to my attention in recent days that there is again talk of merger between Chofetz Chaim and Yavneh Day Schools. You will not take it amiss, I know, if I allow myself the liberty of acquainting you with my views on the matter.

Tho' I have not been known in the past as a proponent of the day-school movement, I can well understand why such schools have a following, and no one can question the fact that schools like Chofetz Chaim and Yavneh have made their contribution to Cincinnati Jewish life. Certainly, they are deserving of [Jewish] Welfare Fund support, in my opinion. You will note, I hope, that I say *they*. These are two different schools and each one is distinctive in its own way. The Chofetz Chaim school is an Orthodox institution, devoted as such to the interests and advancement of Orthodox Judaism. Yavneh, on the other hand, is a community school; it is not at all unsympathetic to Orthodoxy, but it does devote itself to a wider area of Jewish concern. Any parents who seek an intensive Jewish education for his children will not be disappointed by the Yavneh school, whereas only a parent who wishes his child exposed to Orthodox Judaism will be fully comfortable at the Chofetz Chaim school.

It would, I believe, be a tragic mistake to merge these very divergent institutions into one. The only outcome of such a merger can be, Orthodox Judaism being what it is, a subordination of Yavneh's communal spirit to the Orthodox discipline represented by Chofetz Chaim.

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27 Jacob Rader Marcus (1896–1995), was a historian, rabbi, and a faculty member at the Hebrew Union College, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Marcus founded the American Jewish Archives in 1947 and served as its first director. He was also the founding editor of the *American Jewish Archives Journal*.

28 MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

Proponents of a merger may argue otherwise, but that will not change the fact. I would urge you, therefore, to oppose merger if and when it is debated in the councils of the Welfare Fund. Our community has a rather enviable record of intensive Jewish education for those who wish it for themselves and their children. It has this record because parents have a choice between a school dedicated to Orthodoxy and a school of more liberal character. To deprive parents of such a choice is to render a great disservice to Cincinnati Jewish life.

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## **Document 5:**

### **American Association for Jewish Education<sup>29</sup> Study Panel Advises Against a Merger<sup>30</sup>**

Report on the Status of Jewish Education in Cincinnati

Submitted to the Study Committee of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati by the Survey Panel of the American Association for Jewish Education, April 1968

... The survey of the Cincinnati Hebrew Day School and the Yavneh Day School demonstrates, among other things, significant differences between both schools in sponsorship, parental body, ideological preferences of lay leadership, curricular orientation, instructional emphases, language medium, preparation and outlook of Hebrew studies personnel (instructional and supervisory), academic and religious concerns re continuation beyond elementary level. There are significant differences, too, in the organization of the lay leadership and the motivations behind lay and professional interest in the school.

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29 The American Association for Jewish Education was founded in 1939 to professionalize, improve, and advocate on behalf of Jewish education in the USA. Its functions included research and evaluation, as well as the promotion of communal funding for local Jewish education organizations.

30 MS-726, box 47, folder 3, AJA.

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These differences in quantity and quality make it unwise at this time to suggest a merger of both schools—despite some apparent immediate financial and long-range educational advantages. One sponsorship characteristic in particular suggests a non-merger recommendation: In each of the schools there is a core of young, vibrant lay leadership strictly dedicated to the total progress and ultimate success of their respective institutions and to developing *their* school according to its own philosophy as they perceive it. These core leadership groups are equally strong in opposing “any kind of merger on any terms.” ...