

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS: RESEARCH BRIEF #4

Jewish Vision and Values in Jewish Day School Leadership



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About this Brief

The Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) is a community of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers dedicated to improving the quality of knowledge that can be used to guide Jewish education and learning. CASJE is committed to developing high quality research that is responsive to critical questions across diverse sectors in Jewish education. CASJE's programmatic and fiduciary home is located at the George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD).

Fourth in a series, this brief reports on findings from a secondary analysis of data collected for CASJE's Jewish Educational Leadership in Day Schools study. Together these briefs offer insight into the day-to-day experiences of Jewish day school leaders, teachers, and students with implications for practice, policy, and purpose.

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SUMMARY

How do Jewish vision and values matter in Jewish day school leadership?

Day school leadership guided by Jewish vision shapes school communities both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers in Jewish day schools are consistently satisfied with their work, and students find these environments comfortable and affirming. They experience their schools as Jewish communities: environments where people enjoy a sense of fellowship with one another, informed and inspired by distinct and distinctive shared values. Division Heads impact this dimension of the school experience through “compass-setting” work, providing teachers and students with a sense of direction and a larger purpose informed by Jewish values.

Many **Division Heads** of Jewish day schools—including Heads of General Studies—perceive themselves as contributing to the Jewish vision and ethos of their schools. It seems they make this contribution in the course of serving as managers of their schools’ daily affairs and by infusing their management with Jewish vision.

Day school **teachers** are highly satisfied with their jobs. Teachers who perceive that their supervisors model Jewish vision and provide support in engaging students around Jewish values are especially satisfied.

Day school **students** view their schools in relatively positive terms. Students point to the social dimensions of school (their relationships with teachers or with peers) as the most positive feature of these settings. This social dimension is more salient to a positive climate than the explicitly Jewish aspects of students’ learning. Younger students express the most appreciation for their teachers, while older students most appreciate their peers. From the perspective of older students, their teachers’ infusion of Jewish values is positively correlated with their peers’ engagement with Jewish studies and values.

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North American Jewish Day Schools: Finding Common Ground

It is hard to make generalizations about North American Jewish day schools. They are denominationally varied in contrast to European day schools, for example, where more than 90% of schools espouse a religiously Orthodox ethos even when the great majority of students are not observant.¹ North American day schools range in size to a degree that is rare in private education: dozens of schools have fewer than 25 students; others, more than 2,500.² And their missions and modus operandi are inflected by the distinctive cultures of different regions of the continent; for example, Community day schools on the West Coast are much more religiously liberal than those on the East Coast. If making generalizations about these institutions is difficult, then it's meaningless to talk about the average school. That theoretical school would be located somewhere between the New York tristate area and Southern California. Denominationally, it would fall out somewhere between Reform and Chassidic, and it would enroll 296 students.³

Day school stakeholders sometimes struggle to find common ground when the ideological orientations of the

institutions with which they're associated are often so different. They're reluctant to conceive of themselves as members of the same system, although the day school sector is small in comparison to the Catholic school system, and minuscule in comparison to the public school system. This perception undermines readiness to share educational resources or common professional development frameworks. It also diminishes the willingness of schools to lobby for philanthropic support that would benefit more than one institution. If we can identify common features among the members of this system and at the same time pinpoint how and when they differ from one another, the schools themselves might be encouraged to more readily collaborate to address their shared needs.

Shared Jewish Dimensions

CASJE's study of day school leadership offers a rare opportunity to share meaningful insights about commonalities among the more than 400 schools in North America that make up the non-Haredi/Ultra-Orthodox sectors from which CASJE's study participants have come.⁴ The CASJE study was conceived to explore "the extent to which and ways in which Jewish educational leaders and their leadership influence Jewish and general educational outcomes in Jewish day schools."⁵

1. Bouganim, 2014; Miller, 2001; Muller, 2008.

2. Data about the number and size of schools come from Schick, 2014.

3. Schick, 2014.

4. The estimated 442 schools include all schools not identified in Schick's census data as Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox, Centrist Orthodox, Community, Outreach, and Special Education.

5. CASJE, 2014.

DATA AND METHODS

The findings reported in this brief come from secondary analysis of data generated by surveys fielded to Division Heads, teachers, and students at the schools participating in CASJE's study of Jewish educational leadership.

These surveys included:

1. The "Jewish Educational Leaders Survey - Division Head Survey" administered in 2014 to individuals identified as Division Heads at 161 Jewish day schools across North America ($N = 236$). See Appendix A for more information about the sample.
2. A teacher survey sent to teachers whose Division Head or Head of School was participating in CASJE's study of Jewish educational leadership. The survey was fielded during the 2015-2016 school year. Responses were received from 546 teachers at 28 schools. See Appendix B for more information about the sample.
3. The "Conditions for Learning Survey" administered to students between 2014 and 2016. Three age-appropriate versions of the instrument were fielded for elementary school (Grades 3-5, $N = 1,444$ students from 20 schools), middle school (Grades 6-8, $N = 1,441$ students from 20 schools), and high school (Grades 9-11, $N = 1,125$ students from 11 schools). See Appendix C for more information about the sample.

Data from each of the surveys has been reported in three separate briefs:

Brief 1: How "Second-in Command" Leaders in Jewish Day Schools Spend their Time and Why it Matters

Brief 2: Students' Perceptions of their Jewish Day School Climate

Brief 3: Teacher Satisfaction and the Promise of Jewish Leadership

To address this question, the researchers collected the responses of senior personnel, teachers, and students about leadership practices, teacher pedagogy, school climate, and everyday life in participating schools. Secondary analysis of these data has helped piece together a composite picture of some of the most important features of the North American Jewish day school today.

The fact that it is possible to form a composite picture from these data may prove to be one of the most important findings of this work:

For all the diversity of the participating schools, they share certain features with respect to the Jewish dimensions of Jewish day school education.

Historically, these Jewish dimensions have often been intangible, created by the juxtaposition of explicitly Jewish moments (prayer, Jewish text study, communication in Hebrew, for example) with the normal events of school (such as time spent in the full range of general studies, recess, and sports). A sense of the schools' Jewishness derives from their being majority-Jewish settings, unlike the world outside their doors. In this brief, we offer a research-based

account of some of the sources of these shared Jewish dimensions, drawing together findings from the three other briefs concerned with this study. We find that those sources are not always explicitly Jewish—they don't wear a Magen David around their neck.

Leaders infuse management with Jewish vision

Modeling Jewish vision and values is one of the three core functions of the Jewish day school Division Head role.

Division Heads indicate that whatever the setting in which they work and regardless of their specific areas of responsibility, over the course of a typical school day, they are most frequently occupied with **engaging, supporting, and modeling**. They engage with and respond to members of the school community (parents and students especially). They support their teachers and guide their professional development. And they exhibit a passion for and model their schools' Jewish visions, engaging students and teachers in discussions about Jewish values.

Exhibit 1 indicates the individual behaviors (survey items) that make up each function. (See the CASJE Brief "How 'Second-in-Command' Leaders in Jewish Day Schools Spend Their Time" for the frequency reported for each of the behaviors and a more in-depth look at Division Head leadership practices.)

Exhibit 2 provides examples drawn from interviews with second-in-command

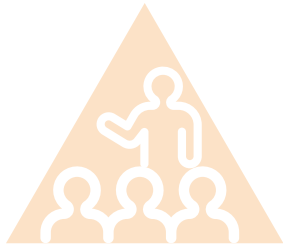
leaders in Jewish day schools that indicate the various ways they model Jewish vision for staff, students, and parents. (Each quote is matched with one of the survey items listed above as part of the factor "modeling Jewish vision.")

Overall, Division Heads "engage with students, teachers, and parents" most frequently, but they report performing all three core functions (engaging, supporting and modeling) "often." In other words, a great many Division Heads perceive themselves as contributing to the Jewish vision and ethos of their schools. Modeling Jewish vision is performed more often by those who serve as Heads of Jewish Studies than by Heads of General Studies.

Modeling Jewish vision is an important part of the role of Heads of General Studies as well.

Division Heads report devoting the preponderance of their time to administrative matters that ensure the smooth running of their schools. Still, in the course of serving as a manager of their school's affairs and needs, they see themselves as advancing their school's distinctive Jewish vision.

Exhibit 1: “Modeling Jewish Vision” is a Core Leadership Function



Engaging Students, Teachers, and Parents

I talk with students throughout the day in the hallways, classrooms.

I initiate dialogues with stakeholders to reflect on school practices from a variety of perspectives.

I model character values in my personal interactions with students and adults.

I make myself available throughout the day to meet with students, teachers, and parents.

I solicit feedback from parents.



Supporting Teachers

I help teachers reach their professional development goals.

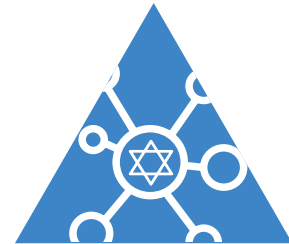
I help teachers understand how their teaching supports the schools' vision.

I encourage teachers to support the school by appealing to their values.

I ask for feedback on how my actions affect teachers' job satisfaction.

I implement my teachers' ideas and suggestions.

I develop cooperative relationships among my staff.



Modeling Jewish Vision

I demonstrate a personal passion for Judaic knowledge.

I articulate how my actions are guided by my Jewish knowledge and values.

I exhibit a passion for contributing to the Jewish community above and beyond my job and beyond my job responsibilities.

I talk to teachers about the importance of infusing Jewish values into the classroom culture.

I try to understand what being Jewish means to my students.

I appeal to my faculty to share the school's vision of Jewish life.



Exhibit 2: Modeling Jewish Vision in the Words of Leaders

I demonstrate a personal passion for Judaic knowledge.

"I feel it, I believe in it, it's really important to me. And so giving kids a Jewish experience that feels meaningful and personal is really important to me, you know? ... It's not just about maintaining our tradition, it's about becoming better people, and making the world. That's just what I believe. So, that's the kind of school I want, is a school that takes Judaism seriously as a tool for improving the world." –Division Head

I articulate how my actions are guided by my Jewish knowledge and values.

"And I made banners, and posters, and put them around the school, and we talk about it at our [tefillah] on Monday, and I wanted to see it grow from there, because there we had our kids understanding, okay, when I'm done with my lunch I throw away my trash. And then, I can find why I do this in the Torah. And then, we can discuss it." –Head of School

I exhibit a passion for contributing to the Jewish community above and beyond my job and beyond my job responsibilities.

"And with current faculty ... we need to think beyond your classroom. Our boss for all of us is our mission, the school's mission, which speaks for example about the joy of Jewish practice. We have a set of standards, professional practice. Which includes in it that one of the standards we expect each teacher to uphold is an embrace of, or commitment to, the school's values." –Division Head

I talk to teachers about the importance of infusing Jewish values into the classroom culture.

"I work really hard to always see behavior and expectations through a Jewish lens and encourage our teachers and students to understand that we have a responsibility as Jewish students to act this way." –Division Head

I try to understand what being Jewish means to my students.

"I've always encouraged kids to ask questions because I believe that kids need to explore and investigate and ask the difficult questions because if they don't know the why behind what we do, if they don't know the thinking behind, the philosophy behind what we do, it's going to be something that's very shallow to them." –Division Head

I appeal to my faculty to share the school's vision of Jewish life.

"Yeah, the cultural change for the adults is, but if it doesn't happen for the adults, I think one of the challenges, and common conversations, is about how do we make things happen for the kids? What kind of work are we going to do with the kids so that they'll be kinder, more compassionate, more accepting human beings, and we don't talk about the adults—and ultimately the modeling of the adults is much stronger than the conversations we have with the kids, and so my belief is that when we're really looking at cultural change, you have to start with the adults in the building." –Division Head

Teacher infusion of Jewish content relates to Division Head practices

Teacher Survey respondents were asked how frequently they infuse their teaching with different types of Jewish content. Those who reported doing so most frequently: (a) teach in an Orthodox Jewish school; (b) teach Jewish studies; (c) are male; and (d) are veteran teachers.

While these patterns are not especially surprising, it is noteworthy that teachers who rate their Division Heads highly on the engaging, supporting, and modeling functions noted above are also more likely to infuse their classroom teaching with Jewish content; this is true regardless of context, teachers' responsibilities, or personal characteristics.

This suggests that Jewish leadership practices of engaging, supporting, and modeling have an impact both outside and inside the classroom.

The fact that Division Head practices are correlated with teachers' infusion of Jewish content suggests that more teachers (not only those in Orthodox schools or who teach Jewish studies) might feel comfortable and adept at infusing Jewish content in their classrooms with the right support from school leadership.

Modeling Jewish vision relates to teacher satisfaction

The extent to which teachers are satisfied with their work in schools, and to what they attribute their satisfaction, is tied to Division Heads' modeling of Jewish vision.

To examine the contribution of school leadership to the quality of teachers' functioning in school, teachers were surveyed regarding their level of satisfaction with their work. The survey results reveal that day school teachers are highly satisfied with their jobs overall, with varied levels of satisfaction related to the length of their teaching tenure. Satisfaction levels among Jewish day school teachers mirror those of American public school teachers and are only somewhat lower than for private school teachers.

"I mean the whole place, in terms of all of our teachers, not just our Judaics and Hebrew staff, speak about Jewish values a lot. I think where I come in with a more critical lens is are we just throwing around [phrases], or are we actually living it? So that's my emphasis, right? So we've brought in composting into our kitchen and to our dining room. Like, are we living this thing? I want to give it the name, I want you to know it's rooted in a Jewish value, but I don't want to talk about it as words on a piece of paper. So I think that's where there's more work to do."

—Division Head

FINDINGS: HOW DO JEWISH VISION AND VALUES MATTER IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

The CASJE study reveals that both the contexts in which teachers work and the content of their work make a difference to how satisfied they feel.⁶ In particular, teachers' supervisors (specifically their Division Heads) impact their satisfaction. The survey asked teachers about their perceptions of their Division Heads regarding three areas of Division Head responsibility: the extent to which the Division Head (a) actively models the school's Jewish vision; (b) provides support for teachers' instructional practices; and (c) supports teachers in engaging students around Jewish values.

Regardless of their own areas of responsibility (whether Jewish studies or general studies), teachers' perceptions of their Division Head actively modeling Jewish vision and providing greater support in engaging students around Jewish values predict higher teacher job satisfaction.

"I would say in terms of shifting a culture to be thinking in that way, we're very much in that process, and those values are—leading sounds terrible, that word, but really impacting everything from our news and weather, to our report cards, to what's

happening in the classroom right. So even conversations, let's say for me difficult conversations that I might have to have with parents, have been made easier because I can ground them in those values. It's not a 'me or them.' It's [about] this is where we are as a school. These are the values that we are working by and this is how I've come to this decision. And so, I work and support and encourage the teachers to be doing the same work."

—Division Head

This finding is strongly aligned with the well-established principle that compass-setting leadership—leadership that is guided by and that enacts a clear school vision—makes a difference to school outcomes. Numerous studies have found that teacher satisfaction is positively correlated with, for example, responsiveness to guidance from one's principal, willingness to adopt new initiatives, and commitment to contribute to a positive school climate. Teachers who are less satisfied are less likely to be effective as educators.⁷ The data generated by this study do not allow one to make connections to student outcomes in the schools that participated in this study, but they do indicate that day school teachers—whatever their teaching responsibilities—appreciate compass-setting leadership guided by Jewish vision and values.

6. Unfortunately, the design of the CASJE study did not make it possible to probe systematically the extent to which particular aspects of the Jewish context are salient factors—something that has been suggested by previous research—but there is evidence

here to suggest that this, indeed, may be the case. See the CASJE Brief "Teacher Satisfaction and the Promise of Jewish Leadership" to learn more about teacher satisfaction in Jewish Day Schools.

Students positive about culture but Jewish aspects ranked lower

CASJE’s Jewish educational leadership dataset opens another window on day-to-day life in day schools based on the responses of more than 4,000 students to the “Conditions for Learning Survey.” This survey adapts a widely employed instrument for assessing school climate, a dimension of school life that some researchers refer to as “the heart and soul of the school.”⁸

The data gathered reveal that day school students view

their schools in relatively positive terms.

The great majority are certainly not inclined to switch to other schools. What they appreciate about their schools is revealing. Younger students—those in the elementary grades—are most positive about the support and intellectual challenge they receive from their teachers. Older students—those in middle school and high school grades—value what their teachers offer, but they most appreciate their fellow students (see Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Student Assessment of Climate Dimensions Varies by Age (on a 4-point scale)

ELEMENTARY		MIDDLE/HIGH	
Teachers' Support for and Challenge of Students	3.18	Social-Emotional Climate Among Students	2.95
Students' Attitudes Toward Jewish Studies and Hebrew	2.97	Work Ethic and Integrity of Students	2.75
Teachers' Investment in Student Learning	2.88	Teachers' Support for and Challenge of Students	2.74
Teachers' Fairness with Students	2.84	Teachers' Nurture and Modeling of Jewish Learning and Jewish Values	2.7
Social-Emotional Climate Among Students	2.81	Students' Attitudes Toward Jewish Studies and Hebrew	2.51
Average Mean	2.97	Average Mean	2.74

Responses for the elementary school items were on a 3-point scale of 1 = *No*, 2 = *Sometimes*, and 3 = *Yes*. They were rescaled to a 4-point scale to allow comparison to the middle/high school items (with 1 representing *Strongly Disagree* and 4 representing *Strongly Agree*).

7. Yildirim, 2015; Eller & Eller, 2013.
8. Freiberg & Stein, 1999, 11.

FINDINGS: HOW DO JEWISH VISION AND VALUES MATTER IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

Older students' responses indicate that in social-emotional terms day schools are comfortable, affirming environments for students. For many, they feel like a home away from home (heimish, one would appropriately say in Yiddish).⁹ Numerous qualitative studies of contemporary Jewish day school education place the social, communal, and interpersonal dimensions of school climate at the heart of their appeal to parents and long-term impacts on students. Their nurturing culture of belonging, trust, and safety is central to their promise and their provision of shared community.

"Even though we pride ourselves on all the Jewish values and we do all these things, look, kids can feel excluded at times... And it's all about how you deal with it. And the fact that you do deal with it. Because, the reality is that if it was a big public school, they don't deal with these things. These things happen all the time. But nobody stops to really deal with it unless it's something truly major that's interfering with the learning in the classroom. But in a Jewish day school, we deal with it. It fits in so much with the values and all of the Judaic learning that we take the time to deal with it."

—Divison Head

Interpreting ambivalence about Jewish aspects of school

As seen in Exhibit 4, whatever the denomination of their school, students assess the dimensions of school climate

associated with Jewish studies and Hebrew more negatively than the more universal social-emotional aspects of school. What to make of the more limited appeal of the schools' Jewish cultural and religious content when we might view these as the very *raison d'être* of day school education?

School denomination seems to be an important differentiator in students' assessment of aspects of their schools' culture. Orthodox students of all ages give higher rankings to the Jewish aspects of school culture, while more universal aspects that are associated with positive climates are generally ranked higher by students in Conservative/Community schools.

Older students rate Jewish dimensions of school climate lower than younger students. It's not clear whether this response reflects adolescent ambivalence with facets of Jewish tradition or whether it indicates a lack of alignment between students' orientations to Jewish life and that of their schools. This pattern does not seem to be associated with students' views of their teachers' contribution to school life, which, as can be seen, is in fact quite positive.

Students' perceptions of Jewish life at school is shaped by their experiences in the classroom studying Jewish texts, learning about Israel, and working on

9. We note, though, that there are variations in these patterns: elementary school students view the dimensions of school climate significantly more positively than do middle/high school students; girls are more likely than boys to see school in positive

terms. While many will find these last data points disappointing, in both respects these findings are consistent with the broader literature on schooling.

FINDINGS: HOW DO JEWISH VISION AND VALUES MATTER IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

their Hebrew. Their perceptions are also colored by their peers' attitudes and behaviors toward Jewish rituals and values in school. Likewise, their perceptions of teachers are not only shaped by what happens in the classroom. They also appreciate teachers as role models and as adults with whom they can talk about Jewish matters. These diverse elements in the Jewish dimensions of school life are captured in the items displayed below that make up the two climate dimensions: "Students' attitudes to Jewish life at school" and "Teachers' contribution to Jewish life at school"

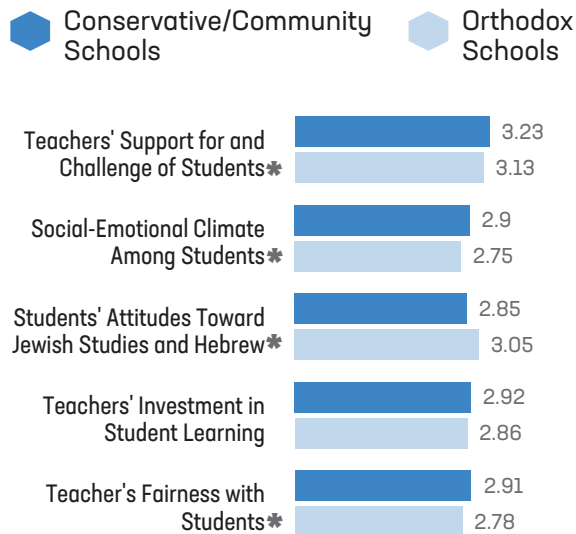
(see Exhibit 5). These specifics suggest what it is about school that leaves older students feeling more ambivalent.

These data and those explored earlier in this brief point to an important insight:

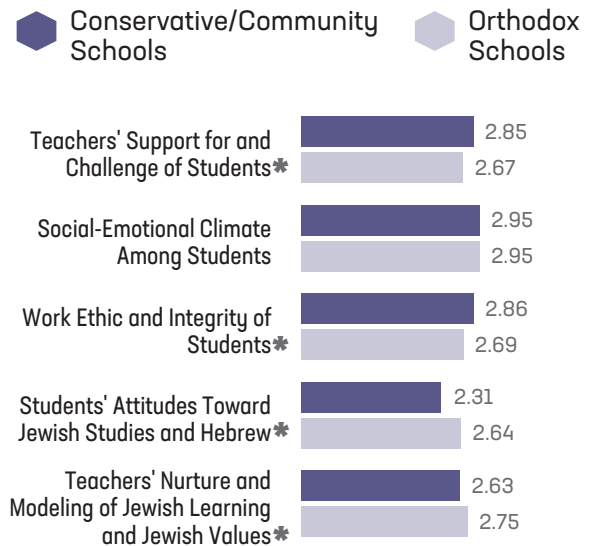
Students' perceptions of their teachers' approach to Jewish life are positively correlated to their assessment of their peers' attitudes toward Jewish studies.

Exhibit 4: Denomination Matters for Jewish Aspects of School Culture

Elementary



Middle/High



* Statistically significant difference between Conservative/Community and Orthodox schools, at $p < .05$.

FINDINGS: HOW DO JEWISH VISION AND VALUES MATTER IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

Students' attitudes are related, then, to the contribution they see their teachers making. In turn, the teachers themselves indicate that their own contribution is influenced by the vision articulated and modeled by their supervisors. While the data do not allow for a direct link between the work of school leaders and the experience of students, such a link is certainly plausible.

Exhibit 5: Students' Attitudes to Jewish Life at School and Perceptions of their Teachers' Contribution

**Students' Attitudes
Toward Jewish Life
at School**
($\alpha = 0.84$)

Most students in my school: Enjoy Jewish practices and rituals.
Most students in my school: Feel that Hebrew is an important language to know.
Most students in my school: Appreciate the way we do tefillah (prayer) at our school.
Most students in my school: Work hard to understand Jewish texts.
Most students in my school: Are very interested in learning about Israel.
Most students in my school: Model the Jewish values they learn in class.

**Teachers'
Contribution to
Jewish Life at School**
($\alpha = 0.83$)

My teachers: Encourage students to share their own interpretations of Jewish texts.
My teachers: Take the time to talk to me about Jewish ideas and practices.
My teachers: Often give assignments that help me learn how to live Jewish life.
My teachers: Often connect what we learn in Jewish studies to what is going on outside of class.
My teachers: Are good role models of Jewish life.
My teachers: Do a great job teaching students what is special about Shabbat.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The compass-setting work of day school leadership

The findings from these different strands of CASJE's day school leadership study suggest that students will look back on their time in day schools with fondness. Older students, especially, appreciate the social-emotional dimensions of this setting. All students seem generally happy about their day-to-day experience at school. It is surely no coincidence that their teachers also enjoy their work in schools so much. It is plausible that teachers who find the work less satisfying tend to leave quickly, leaving behind a highly contented workforce. Teachers enjoy the work they do, the people with whom they work (both adults and students), and the setting in which they work. Research has shown this to be the kind of atmosphere that contributes to a positive school climate for students, too.

In other words, teacher satisfaction and students' positive assessment of overall school climate indicate the functioning of a kind of virtuous circle.

"I often say that my job is to be like the grout in a mosaic or the glue that oozes in the cracks. So that it's what holds all the pieces together to make this beautiful picture, but when you look at a mosaic, your eye isn't drawn to the grout. It's drawn to the beautiful pieces of stone or jewels that are assembled together, but something has to

adhere them all together. So I find that that's often how I define my role."

—Division Head

CASJE's study was conceived to explore the extent to which and the ways in which school leadership contributes to these circumstances. As indicated above, causal links are hard to derive from these data, but it is striking that Division Heads see themselves modeling and exhibiting a passion for their schools' Jewish values and vision—tasks they fulfill in the course of performing their administrative roles, the largest part of which is engaging, meeting, and responding to members of the school community (parents and students especially).

These Division Heads are typically the cadre of school administrators most visible to students and teachers. In this role, they contribute to teachers' satisfaction by providing a strong feeling of purpose and direction. They also contribute positively to the school climate that students experience by establishing a clear sense of shared values and identity among members of the school community.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Functioning less frequently as instructional leaders than most of their peers in other school systems, these day school leaders are engaged more often in steering members of their communities away from the rocks of dysfunctional relationships out toward the open water where those members can develop in their own space and at their own pace. This is what compass-setting leadership looks like day to day.

“So over the years it had different styles of leadership, governance, etc. And now the school [is] very much a centrist institution and aims to bring people into a big tent environment. So we tell people on the outside, you’re gonna meet people who are to the right of you, you are gonna meet people who are the left of you and we work together because we have 90% to agree on about our learning, about what our values are, etc. So it’s created a very nice vibe in the school.”

—Head of School

Day schools as communities

Jewish day schools are ideologically diverse and structurally varied, but for many of their inhabitants—their students and teachers—they are experienced as communities. They are where people come together for the shared purposes of teaching and learning, enjoying—and most likely benefiting from—the collegiality and comradery forged by common values and interwoven lives.

The schools may be different in profound ways from one another but ultimately

whatever their distinctive mission and makeup, they provide both adults and children with a similar shared sense of belonging: a sense of Jewish community, experienced as fellowship with one another, informed and inspired by shared Jewish values.

Building community is a task that never ends. It is work that is always in progress, and it is work that touches directly on the central mission of Jewish day school education. In this context and given that Jewish aspects of school climate rank lower in student assessments of school culture than more universal aspects, one of the most pressing questions for Division Heads is how more intense attention to “climate setting” might make Jewish values and vision a more compelling aspect of school culture for students.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Teachers and students value the relational component and the values of their school communities. What resources are available to help further strengthen these dimensions of the school experience?

What kinds of professional development can support school leadership to model values-driven leadership?

Given how important values-driven leadership is to teachers and students, how can leaders continue to foreground and articulate shared values in a time of crisis? How can our values lend clarity of purpose in challenging times?

Do times of crisis help school stakeholders distill their core values? How can they model Jewish values at such times?

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APPENDIX A: DIVISION HEAD SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Survey responses were solicited from 377 Division Heads across the United States. A sample of 236 Division Heads responded to the survey (63% response rate). A little over half of the sample identified as female (58%, n=136) and the rest identified as male (42%, n=100). Half of the division heads were from Orthodox schools and half were from non-Orthodox schools (Conservative, Reform, or Community schools). The majority of the respondents were heading both the General Studies division and the Jewish Studies division (see Exhibit A1).

Exhibit A1: DH Role

	n	%
General Studies	23	9.7%
Jewish Studies	43	18.2%
Both General and Jewish Studies	170	72.0%
Total	236	100.0%

Over half of these leaders are in charge of elementary school divisions (58%, n=137), about half are in charge of middle school divisions (53%, n=125), and about a quarter are heads of high school divisions (23%, n=55). [Division Heads can lead more than one division, hence the total percentage is over 100%.] Exhibit A2 shows how these data break down by the specific combinations of divisions that DHs might lead.

Exhibit A2: Division that DH Oversees

	n	%
Elementary	50	21.2%
Middle	36	15.3%
High	46	19.5%
Elementary + Middle	89	37.7%
Middle + High	3	1.3%
Elementary + Middle + High	12	5.1%
Total	236	100.0%

A sizable group of the division heads (41%, n=90) were quite new in their role, serving as Division Heads for three years or less. Over a third were in their role between 4 and 10 years (38%, n=82). A minority of the sample respondents were well established in their role, serving as Division Heads for 11 years or more (21%, n=47; see Exhibit A3).

APPENDIX A: DIVISION HEAD SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Exhibit A3: Length of Time in Current Position

	n	%
Less than 1 year	38	17%
2-3 years	52	24%
4-6 years	41	19%
7-10 years	41	19%
11-20 years	29	13%
More than 20 years	18	8%
Total	219	100.0%

Exhibit A4 demonstrates the breakdown of regions in which Division Heads' schools are located.

Exhibit A4: School Region

	n	%
Northeast	98	41.5%
Southeast	48	20.3%
Southwest	20	8.5%
Midwest	30	12.7%
West	40	16.9%
Total	219	100.0%

APPENDIX B: TEACHER SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The teacher survey was fielded during the 2015–2016 school year. Responses were received from 456 teachers at 28 schools. Of the full sample of the teachers, about half (51%) teach in Orthodox schools (representing 15 schools), and about half (49%) teach in Conservative/Community schools (representing 13 schools). The majority of the teachers teach full time (78%), and the rest (22%) teach part time. Exhibit B1 shows the breakdown of teachers by their role in school.

Exhibit B1: Teacher Roles

	n	%
General Studies	207	45.4%
Jewish Studies	175	38.4%
Both General and Jewish Studies	40	8.8%
Other	34	7.5%
Total	456	100.0%

Respondents were asked to provide the exact number of years (a) they have been teaching overall and (b) they have been teaching in the specific school they were in. The number of years teachers have been teaching overall ranged from 1 year to 40 years, with an average of 14.8 years (SD = 10.7) and a median of 12 years. The number of years teachers have been teaching in their respective schools ranged from 1 year to 40 years, with an average of 8.6 years (SD = 8.2) and a median of 5.5 years. Exhibit B2 summarizes these distributions by using five categories for teachers' longevity. As can be seen, about a quarter of the teachers were quite new to their job (24%) and about a quarter have been teaching for over 20 years.

Exhibit B2: Teacher Longevity

	OVERALL		IN THEIR SCHOOL	
	n	%	n	%
1-5 years	108	24.4%	220	50.0%
6-10 years	90	20.3%	94	21.4%
11-15 years	73	16.5%	54	12.3%
16-20 years	57	12.9%	30	6.8%
More than 20 years	115	26.0%	42	9.5%
Total	443	100%	440	100%

In terms of gender breakdown, the majority of the teachers identified as female (73%, n = 337), a fifth of the teachers identified as male (21%, n = 94), and the rest declined to identify (6%, n = 25). As seen in Exhibit B3, female teachers were almost evenly split between Orthodox schools and Conservative/Community schools. Conversely, there were more male teachers in Orthodox schools compared to Conservative/Community schools.

APPENDIX B: TEACHER SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Exhibit B3: Teacher Gender by Type of School

	CONSERVATIVE/COMMUNITY		ORTHODOX	
	n	%	n	%
Female	174	51.6%	163	48.4%
Male	34	36.2%	60	63.8%
Declined to State	15	60.0%	10	40.0%

Exhibit B4 demonstrates the breakdown of regions in which teachers' schools are located.

Exhibit B4: School Region

	n	%
Northeast	252	55%
Southeast	29	6%
Southwest	24	5%
Midwest	108	24%
West	43	9%
Total	456	100%

APPENDIX C: STUDENT SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The Conditions for Learning survey was fielded between 2014 and 2016. Responses were received from 1,444 third to fifth grade students at 20 schools, 1,441 sixth to eighth grade students at 20 schools, and 1,125 ninth to eleventh grade students at 11 schools. (Some divisions were in the same school. There were 27 schools in total.) Exhibit C1 shows how these data break down by the specific combinations of divisions.

Exhibit C1: Breakdown of Data Received by School Division

	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS			NUMBER OF STUDENTS		
	Orthodox Schools	Non-Orthodox Schools	Total	Orthodox Schools	Non-Orthodox Schools	Total
Elementary	0	2	2	0	68	68
Middle	0	1	1	0	63	63
High	4	1	5	607	188	795
Elementary + Middle	5	8	13	987	1,072	2,059
Middle + High	0	1	1	0	162	162
Elementary + Middle + High	5	0	5	863	0	863
Total	14	13	27	2,457	1,553	4,010

Exhibit C2 shows the distribution of students by grade level. The distribution of the elementary school students is quite balanced with about a third of the respondents in each of the grades (37% in 3rd, 33% in 4th, and 30% in 5th). Grade information for middle and high school students is limited given that 60% of the students had missing data (i.e., they did not report their grade). Yet, the distribution of grades for middle and high school students who did report their grade is quite balanced, as well.

Exhibit C2: Students by Grade

	n	% including Missing	% excluding Missing
3rd	523	13.0%	21.1%
4th	473	11.8%	19.1%
5th	437	10.9%	17.6%
6th	160	4.0%	6.4%
7th	208	5.2%	8.4%
8th	159	4.0%	6.4%
9th	161	4.0%	6.5%
10th	208	5.2%	8.4%
11th	152	3.8%	6.1%
Missing	1,529	38.1%	
Total	4,010	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX C: STUDENT SURVEY - SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

As shown in Exhibit C3, the distribution of gender across the different divisions is evenhanded with half identifying as girls and half as boys. As with the grade information, gender information was not reported by 62% of the middle and high school students.

Exhibit C3: Students by Gender

	GIRLS		BOYS	
	n	%	n	%
Elementary School	718	50.4%	708	49.6%
Middle/High School	468	50.2%	465	49.8%
Total	1,186	50.3%	1,173	49.7%

School size information was provided by the schools' principals and is only available for 10 elementary schools (out of the 20 in this division) and 12 middle/high schools (out of the 25 schools in this combined division). A total of 1,742 of the respondents (43% of the sample) are missing school size data. Exhibit C4 shows the distribution of students by school size for students for whom data are available. As can be seen, three quarters of the students are from large schools with over 500 students enrolled.

Exhibit C4: Students by School Size

	ELEMENTARY		MIDDLE/HIGH		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
101-200 Students	28	3.2%	157	11.2%	185	8.2%
201-300 Students	150	17.4%	99	7.1%	249	11.0%
301-400 Students	76	8.8%	43	3.1%	119	5.2%
401-500 Students	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
501+ Students	610	70.6%	1105	78.7%	1715	75.6%
Total (excluding missing)	864	100.0%	1404	100.0%	2268	100.0%



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