Research Brief | #1

Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators in the United States

The Journeys of Jewish Educators

Prepared by
Rosov Consulting

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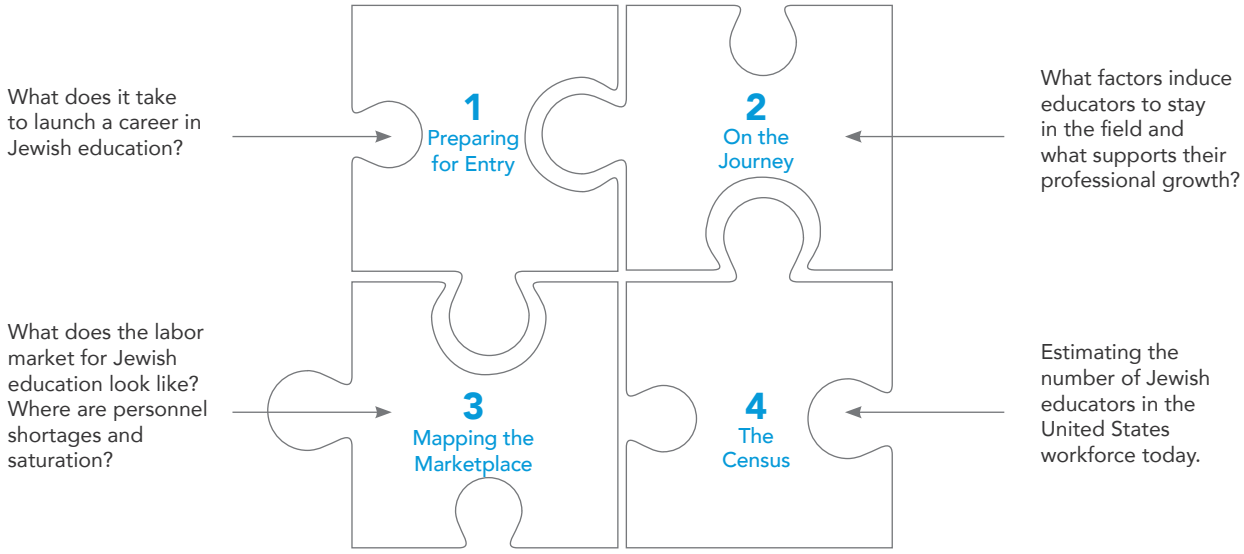
About this Report

The Collaborative 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).

This brief is first of a series of four that shares findings from *On the Journey*, one of four research strands of the CASJE Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. The larger CASJE study seeks to understand the recruitment, retention and development of Jewish educators in the United States. You can read more about this study at www.casje.org

The Career Trajectories Study is organized around four central research questions:



On the Journey is designed to elucidate the career pathways of Jewish educators, including their professional growth, compensation, workplace conditions and lived experiences. In 2019 CASJE published the white paper *On the Journey: Concepts That Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators*, which lays out the framework and key questions that underlie this inquiry and serves as a companion to these research briefs.

Acknowledgments

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Summary

On the Journey—the first strand of a multi-year, comprehensive study of North American Jewish educators—explores the roles Jewish educators play across multiple settings, what motivates people to commit to this work, how they grow professionally, and in what ways their lived experiences shape their professional journeys and choices. Other briefs in our series delve deeply into key workplace conditions that impact Jewish educators across sectors: salary and benefits; professional development opportunities; and supports such as autonomy, collaboration, supervision, and mentoring. This first brief is a holistic exploration of Jewish educators' professional lives, characterized by three "journeys" that many educators traverse during their careers: (1) Journeys Through Time—entering the field, becoming established, and advancing to higher roles; (2) Journeys In and Out—the "on-ramps" that bring people to the field from other professions and "off-ramps" that drive some to leave; and (3) The Inner Journey—how professional meaning and motivation develops and evolves.

In addition, this brief presents portraits of five individual educators, bringing to life how the personal and professional are woven together in their journeys. These are not meant to be "representative" portraits, as no five individuals could adequately represent the universe of Jewish educators. Rather, these portraits serve to highlight and contextualize many of the key themes explored in the *On the Journey* series.

Key Findings

Journeys Through Time

- Many Jewish educators enter the field in response to an opening rather than out of a purposeful choice to join the profession. When asked to identify what inspired them to become a Jewish educator, the most common response was, "I had a job opportunity and decided to take it."
- As educators become more established in their roles, they also become more satisfied, empowered, and committed. Interviewees highlighted three factors that lead to these positive outcomes: the confidence that comes with time; learning from mentors and supervisors; and having opportunities for substantive professional development, such as fellowships, certificate programs, and graduate degrees.
- Although some interviewees shared stories of how they had moved up within their organizations, quite a few instead emphasized their uncertainty or discouragement about their future career options. This was particularly true for those outside of formal Jewish education, or those within formal education who don't see administration in their future.

Journeys In and Out of the Field

- Many Jewish educators experience discontinuous journeys with "on-ramps" and "off-ramps" in and out of the field. Fully 60% of survey respondents—the "switchers"—had previously held a primary job in a non-Jewish organization.
- Overall, switchers are more professionally satisfied, motivated, and committed than non-switchers. Interview narratives suggest that two reasons for this difference may be that many switchers join the field to seek a career with more meaning and purpose, and that they benefit from the skills and expertise they bring with them.

- On the opposite end are the "leavers," who exit the field to pursue other career paths or leave professional life altogether (not including retirees). The most common reasons expressed for leaving Jewish education are toxic work environments, inadequate compensation and/or benefits, lack of professional growth opportunities, personal issues such as work/life balance, and seeking different professional missions (such as working with diverse populations).

The Inner Journey

- Even if many Jewish educators enter the field for largely practical or circumstantial reasons, nearly all come to see their work as a source of deeper meaning and purpose. Fewer than half of respondents said they were motivated "a lot" in their work by practical concerns such as "making a living."
- Overall, professional motivations fall into two categories encapsulated in the very term "Jewish educator:" shaping lives and cultivating minds through education, and seeking to inspire love of Judaism and create rich Jewish identities for those with whom they work. The dedication expressed is emblematic of professionals who see their work not merely as a job or even a career, but as a "calling."
- Some interviewees identified a darker side to the assumption that Jewish education is inherently a "calling." The intrinsic rewards of fulfilling, values-based work can be used to justify skimping on the extrinsic rewards that are equally necessary—good pay and benefits, reasonable work hours, and even professional respect. Historically, this has been an all-too-prevalent challenge of the field.

▶ *Even if many Jewish educators enter the field for largely practical or circumstantial reasons, nearly all come to see their work as a source of deeper meaning and purpose.*

Data and Methods

This brief reports data gathered as part of CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators." Quantitative data come specifically from the *On the Journey* survey fielded over January and February 2020 to Jewish educators, defined as professionals "involved in designing and delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning." Qualitative data come from follow-up interviews and focus groups with a subsample of 52 survey respondents and an additional 20 people who had left the field.

Specifically, study participants were employed in five occupational sectors: (1) formal Jewish education (day schools, early childhood, supplemental schools); (2) informal/experiential settings including both immersive (e.g., camp) and non-immersive (e.g., youth organizations, JCCs); (3) those involved in engagement, social justice, and innovation (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable); (4) communal organizations that may employ someone in a related role (e.g., scholars in residence at Federations or Jewish educators at Jewish Family Services); and (5) non-organizational networks and online learning (e.g., independent B'nai Mitzvah or Hebrew tutors).

The survey was fielded in eight communities selected to represent a range of sizes of Jewish populations and include diverse geographic regions of the United States. The communities were: Austin, TX, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Detroit, MI, Las Vegas, NV, Miami-Dade, FL, Nassau and Westchester Counties, NY, and San Francisco Bay Area, CA. (For more information about the communities' Jewish educational ecosystems, please see "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments**.")

The total number of survey respondents was 1,278, of which approximately 40% are day school educators, 20% supplemental school educators, 20% early childhood educators, 10% informal/experiential educators, and the remainder in innovation/social justice organizations, federated institutions, or working as independent educators. All respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years.

The *On the Journey* survey was designed to explore the relationships between "background" characteristics of individual educators and their work settings, the interventions and workplace conditions that educators may experience in their careers, and the desired outcomes for educators (self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and career commitment) that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. Interviews and focus groups were designed to bring both additional richness and nuance to the findings from the survey data.

More information about the sample, methods, and instrumentation can be found in "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments.**"

▶ *Qualitative data come from follow-up interviews and focus groups with a subsample of 52 survey respondents and an additional 20 people who had left the field.*

Background

Why Jewish Educators' Journeys Matter

If, as Rawidowicz famously put it, the Jewish people is widely conceived as "the ever-dying people," then Jewish education must surely be the ever-expiring profession. More than 10 years ago, following a large-scale study of Jewish educators in North America, its authors concluded that the community faced "a critical shortage…of fully qualified educators," a situation that called for a comprehensive strategy of recruitment, retention, and professional development.[1] Their alert echoed one made more than a decade earlier by the authors of *A Time to Act,* who called attention to a "severe shortage of talented, trained and committed personnel for the field of Jewish education." As many have done before and since, these authors traced the challenges of recruitment and retention to "the salaries, training, working conditions and status of Jewish educators."[2]

CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators" is a fresh attempt to explore these challenges. At its core is an appreciation that if talented educators are to be attracted to this work and inspired to stick with it, we must better understand the journeys taken by those already working in the field today, as well as those who have chosen to leave. Educators' journeys—or what have also been called their career trajectories, career cycles, or professional pathways—have been the subject of extensive scholarship over the last 70 years, at least since Howard Becker's 1952 study "The Career of the Chicago Public Schoolteacher."[3] This body of scholarship has important practical implications. Introducing another seminal study—Michael Huberman's *The Lives of Teachers*—Andy Hargreaves explains how, as we gain a fuller understanding of educators' lives (their development, their careers, their relationships with colleagues, their working conditions, their status and rewards), we come to discern those things that make a difference to the quality of their practice. The more we know about these circumstances, the more wisely we might intervene in constructive ways.[4]

We know from inquiries into a wide variety of professions that how and when people come into a field of work informs how they approach that work over subsequent years.[5] We know, too, that the workplace conditions and cultures they experience as well as the professional opportunities with which they're provided substantially influence their efficacy and commitment.[6] The extent to which the rhythm of their work aligns with the trajectory of their personal and social-psychological development also shapes their appetite and capacity to be productive.[7] In addition, beginning with the work of Bellah and his colleagues, in their landmark study *Habits of the Heart*, sociologists have distinguished people's relationships to their work as jobs, careers, and callings,[8] a distinction that is particularly relevant for educators who very often feel a vocational calling regarding their professions. These phenomena all contribute to the contours of the educator's journey. Until now, scholars of Jewish education have tended to view these elements of the educator's journey discretely. This brief constitutes an attempt to connect these pieces with new data in a meaningful and policy-useful manner.[9]

1 Kress & Ben Avi, 2007.
2 Commission on Jewish Education in North America, 1991.
3 Becker, 1952, 470–477.
4 Hargreaves, 1993.
5 Troesch & Bauer, 2017, 389–398; Gubler et al., 2017, 1–14; Kindt, 2018, 958–976.
6 Johnson et al., 2012, 1–39; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017.
7 Huberman, 1993.
8 Bellah et al., 1985; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997, 22.
9 The *On the Journey* briefs share data from Jewish educators already established in the field. *Preparing for Entry* will report on launching a career, and *Mapping the Market* will analyze the career paths through the perspective of those who hire and prepare Jewish educators.

The Many Roles of Jewish Educators

Before delving into what our data reveal about the paths that Jewish educators follow during their careers, we offer a brief overview of the roles and characteristics of the educators in our study sample. (*See the Data and Methods section above for a snapshot of the sample's general composition.*). All respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years. Overall, the large majority of respondents (83%) consider themselves to be "Jewish educators;" only 3% do not (and 11% do "sometimes").[10] Nine in 10 respondents identify as Jewish; of those who do not, the largest percentage work in Early Childhood Education (20%), and the lowest (0%) in Supplementary Schools. Finally, using a composite score measuring the extent of experience of Jewish education from a young age and work in the Jewish community, 18% of the sample can be characterized as "born and bred" to become Jewish educators, with numerous experiences as both learners and educators; 5% are "joiners" with very limited Jewish background and work experiences; and the rest fall in the middle.

The survey gathered additional data about the specific, and often multiple, professional roles that Jewish educators hold within their institutions:

- **Day School:** Just over half (55%) of the day school educators in our sample teach Judaic studies or Hebrew, while 47% teach general studies—two categories that are not mutually exclusive. (General studies teachers were included in the analysis if they self-defined as Jewish educators.) One in 10 of these day school educators provide special needs support, either as a teacher or paraeducator, while one in 12 define themselves as an "experiential educator." Although the study excluded those who are not frontline educators, it did include those who serve in both teaching and leadership roles. Thus, 8% are Division Heads and 4% Principals or Heads of School. Finally, 6% serve as teaching assistants and 2% as administrative assistants.
- **Early Childhood:** The large majority of early childhood educators in our sample—7 in 10—have positions as teachers, while 16% are teaching assistants. Nearly 20% are Directors or Assistant Directors, while also being frontline educators. Small numbers—2%–3%—fill specialist roles such as music or fitness teachers, Hebrew teachers, or (self-defined) experiential educators. While the survey didn't gather data on these educators' institutional settings, we know that most Jewish early childhood centers are housed within JCCs and congregations; far fewer operate as independent organizations.
- **Supplemental School:** Three-quarters of supplemental school educator respondents are teachers and about one-third are Directors or Assistant Directors. They are based in congregations and in other independent, afterschool frameworks. Small percentages fill a number of other educational roles, generally within congregations: 16% Hebrew language tutor, 14% B'nai Mitzvah tutor, 10% experiential educator, 8% specialist (music, arts, etc.), 5% Junior congregation leader, and 4% special needs support.

10 Questions about how and why people come to define themselves as Jewish educators (or not) are explored in the "Preparing for Entry" study about pathways into the field.

- **Informal/Experiential Educators:** Although there were those in each of the above settings who labeled themselves an "experiential educator," the survey also reached informal educators—working in camps, youth-serving organizations in congregations, and on campus, for example—who serve in a wide range of other roles, the most varied of any of the four primary sectors. Six in 10 in this group serve as a "program manager," while just over half define themselves as an "engagement professional." Adding a bit more specificity, one-quarter have a role as a "trip leader;" 21% are "youth group advisors;" 9% are "counselors;" and one respondent each said they are a "fellow," "song leader," and "*shaliach*." Over 60% of respondents in this sector said they are a Director, Assistant Director, or Division Head. This is by far the largest percentage in any sector who hold leadership roles, likely reflecting the fact that "frontline" and "leadership" positions may not be as sharply defined within these kinds of experiential organizations.
- **Innovation/Social Justice/Communal Organizations**: Over the last 15 years, alternative sites for Jewish education and engagement have proliferated, especially for those age 18 and older. These include service-learning frameworks, millennial engagement platforms, media and technology businesses, Israel experience providers, alternative minyanim and prayer groups, and programs that make available intensive Jewish learning for niche communities. While our survey did not collect data about the roles of those within these organizations who consider themselves Jewish educators (who make up much smaller populations than those in the above groups), our qualitative findings offer some insight. A number of professionals in the "Innovation and Social Justice" sector work for community-based or national Jewish organizations and might define their work as "engagement" or "social entrepreneurship" rather than "education." Yet the core goals of their work—such as building Jewish community and meaning through creative means such as Shabbat dinners, volunteering, arts, trips to Israel, or environmental action—often overlap with those of self-defined "educational" organizations.

  Communal professionals in our sample work in Federation "Engagement" departments, Jewish Family Services agencies, or Jewish Community Relations Councils. While many, if not most, professionals in these organizations would not define themselves as educators, there are a growing number who seek to ground their work in Jewish texts, ideas, and values, and in so doing are blurring the traditional lines between Jewish "educators" and "communal professionals."

▶ *All respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years. Overall, the large majority of respondents (83%) consider themselves to be "Jewish educators;" only 3% do not (and 11% do "sometimes"). Nine in 10 respondents identify as Jewish; of those who do not, the largest percentage work in Early Childhood Education (20%), and the lowest (0%) in Supplementary Schools.*

Journeys Through Time

Entry, Becoming "Established," and Professional Advancement

Entry to the Field - Often More Accidental than Purposeful

Although the pathways by which Jewish educators enter the field will be explored in more detail in the *Preparing for Entry* strand of our study,[11] *On the Journey* participants also provided illuminating data about how they came to their current or previous positions. Survey respondents were asked to identify what had inspired them to become a Jewish educator (with the ability to select multiple options). As seen in Exhibit 1, while many pinpointed family influence, past Jewish experiences, or inspiring role models as key to their professional paths, the most frequently chosen option was "I had a job opportunity and decided to take it."

The prevalence of what one might call "accidental" entry—responding to an opportunity rather than making a purposeful choice—has lingering consequences for overall levels of commitment among Jewish educators.[12] Those who selected this option were more likely to agree with the statements "If I could get a similarly paying job outside of a Jewish setting, I would likely take it" and "If I could do it all over again, I would choose to work in a different profession" and less likely to agree that "I definitely want a career for myself in a Jewish setting," "If I had all the money I needed without working, I would probably still continue to work in a Jewish setting," and "I like this profession too much to give it up."

Exhibit 1
Inspiration to Become a Jewish Educator

I had a job opportunity and decided to take it	49%
My family	45%
An inspirational educator	33%
Participating in Jewish camps	31%
Going to religious services	26%
Participating in Jewish youth groups	26%
Attending Jewish day school	24%
Participating in an Israel experience program	21%
Attending supplementary Jewish school	13%
Participating in a campus Jewish experience	13%

11 See "Preparing for Entry: Concepts That Support a Study of What It Takes to Launch a Career in Jewish Education."

12 Overall, the 18% of the survey respondents who had very intensive Jewish backgrounds and early Jewish work experiences—a group we termed "Born and Bred" to be Jewish educators—have higher scores for the key outcomes of satisfaction, self-efficacy, and commitment as compared to "Joiners" (those with very limited Jewish backgrounds and work experiences), who made up 5% of respondents. Further comparisons between these groups are explored in the *Preparing for Entry* report.

"Falling Into" One's First Job

Many interviewees' descriptions of how they came to their first jobs as Jewish educators echoed the sense of an unintended or accidental path rather than a deliberate choice. One informal educator related that she *"kind of fell into Jewish education, when I got really involved in the school my kids were attending, as a volunteer."* A day school educator used similar language of "falling" to describe how she ended up teaching in a Jewish setting: *"When I went back to school for teaching, I wasn't planning to teach in Jewish education, though I was observant. But I sort of fell into the Jewish part and I enjoyed it and was comfortable in it, and it was great to have holidays off."* Some day school educators first looked for work in public schools, but shifted after finding no available jobs in that sector: *"I went all over and tried to get a job and couldn't get one anywhere in public schools. And at that time [an Orthodox day school] said we want you; we'll pay you a nice salary, and I had the feeling it could be an interesting experience."*

"Recruited" Entry

Others who did not originally intend to become a Jewish educator were guided in by a peer or acquaintance, rather than randomly "falling" into the role. An early childhood and a day school educator each shared stories of this kind of "recruited" entry. In each case, the recruiter's motivation seems to have been a mix of genuinely seeing the person's potential as an educator and an eagerness (even desperation) to fill an empty position. However, as the second quote below demonstrates, even a less-than-inspiring entry can lead to a career of purpose and passion.

> *It happened by accident. I was subbing in the school district and a friend of mine who worked at the JCC called me and said, "We need a teacher, one just quit, and school starts in three weeks." I said, "I haven't been with preschoolers in all these years. I love them, but I don't know how the curriculum has changed or what they're doing now." I didn't feel prepared. She's like, "No, you don't understand. You have to just come. It'll be fine." So I took the job and that's what got my foot back in the door.*

> *I was a substitute teacher, and the teacher I was subbing for quit before Thanksgiving, and they didn't have anyone and asked me to stay. They encouraged me even though I didn't have a credential, so I stayed. As soon as I had my own class in fourth grade, that was it. For me it was a joy, not a job. I got my certification, went on to my master's degree. I'm the greatest advocate for someone who says, "I don't know if I could do this."*

We also heard from some educators who experienced more "deliberate entries" to the field. One day school educator had a high school internship in a Jewish elementary school *"that really opened my eyes to, 'this is a lot of fun, I could do this as a career.'"* An informal educator sought out work in the Jewish community to feel more connected to her own Jewish identity. After finding her first job in a Federation unsatisfying, she *"reached out to the regional youth director of the youth group I was in as a kid. I was still close with this woman, and I called her and asked her if I should look for a chapter to be an advisor for. I wanted something to fulfill me more."* Eventually these proactive steps led her to a position as a regional youth group director. Nevertheless, the number of both survey respondents and interviewees who described "taking a job" (sometimes with questionable qualifications) rather than seeking out and planning a career was striking. This trend suggests a challenge and gap that merits further exploration.

Becoming "Established" - Gaining Confidence, Skills, and Satisfaction

While our data come only from individuals who have worked in Jewish education for more than five years, survey data reveal meaningful differences in educators' lived experience in their roles related to how far along they are in their careers. Two-thirds of respondents self-defined as being "well established in my field," about one-quarter are "getting settled and no longer a beginner," and the rest are "getting started" or "still exploring." Compared to those in earlier stages, established educators:

- View their workplaces more positively.
- Are more satisfied with the level of teamwork they experience, their compensation, and their workload.
- Are more aware of the availability of professional development opportunities and networks.
- Have higher self-efficacy, autonomy, and empowerment.
- Are more committed to their organization and the field.

In the absence of longitudinal data, we don't know if these findings indicate that educators develop greater satisfaction and stronger outcomes over time, or if they result from the early exit of less satisfied, efficacious, and committed educators. Our interview data suggest the answer is "both"—established interviewees described some of the elements that helped them grow over the course of their careers, and many of the "leavers" we spoke with related how frustrations pushed them out before they could fully settle and develop as educators (as will be explored in a later section).

Numerous factors and conditions help educators develop in their careers (many of which are explored in depth in our other *On the Journey* briefs). When interviewees reflected on how they had grown into their roles, they highlighted three factors in particular: the confidence that comes with time; learning from mentors and supervisors; and having opportunities for substantive professional development such as fellowships, certificate programs, and graduate degrees.

Gaining Confidence

A number of interviewees described self-confidence as something that comes with time and experience. An early childhood educator shared, *"I think the experience and having done this for so many years makes me the teacher that I am today. The older you get, you're just not afraid. That's how I am in my role today. I'm not afraid if we have to talk to the parents or whatever. I'm much more confident."* A day school educator noted that the confidence she has gained with experience has in turn led to positive benefits for her students:

> *I think all of my exposures have given me confidence to push myself in order to make the school atmosphere what my students need…I started a program to help contribute to the school beyond my specific work. I don't think earlier I would have had the confidence to make changes in a bigger way beyond my classroom.*

An informal educator offers an example from the other end of the spectrum, illustrating how difficult it can be for some early career educators to overcome their fear of being seen as inadequate and unqualified:

> *When I first started this job doing youth programming, I had so much self-doubt and was so scared I'd be seen as someone not Jewish enough, without enough authority. I'm starting to realize that we're*

all doing this together. I'm interested and passionate about the core aspects of the work and try to remember that when I feel scared. I have a long way to go.

Learning from Mentors

While time and experience can be valuable in and of themselves, an extensive body of research shows that educators' skills and confidence are significantly enhanced through opportunities for mentoring and formal professional development.[13] Several interviewees, when asked to identify factors that helped them feel particularly engaged and thriving in their professions, cited either mentoring or professional development as stand-out experiences. A well-established day school educator reflected on an influential early mentor in her career, *"I had only been teaching for four years, and I had this wonderful Assistant Principal who helped to build me as a teacher, as a professional, and offered me guidance in developing my career in a certain path. I would come home saying, she's the most amazing person I'd ever met."* An informal educator explained that even as an experienced educator she continues to *"seek mentors and support, and it's hard to ask, but once you have the experience of having a mentor…[it's] one of the most important opportunities."* Mentoring also has reverberating benefits as many who experience excellent mentoring are inspired to serve as mentors themselves. As this educator shared, *"How do I pay that forward and who am I mentoring in this process? That's something that's been incredibly important to me."*

Professional Development

As to the impact of professional development, an educator in the Innovation sector described taking part in an 18-month Fellowship with her community's Jewish education central agency as *"literally the best thing that's ever happened to me. It was an amazing way to get connected to other Jewish educators who were doing the same kind of work, but also to have these connections to faculty members who taught me to take professionalism to the next level."* An informal educator who works with teens received a certificate in adolescent development from Hebrew Union College, which she described as *"an incredible, rigorous, academic program."* She draws a direct connection between this development opportunity, her ability to innovate in her work, and her longevity in the field: *"I did that my second year as a youth director, and attribute that program and opportunity with what I was able to create with the teens in [this community]. That was probably the reason I stayed so long."* However, the reality is that such intensive Jewish professional development opportunities are as rare as they are impactful. Although just over half of survey respondents have a graduate degree or certificate, less than a quarter of these degrees are specifically in Jewish education or communal service. While the 42% with a graduate degree in general education undoubtedly obtained skills and knowledge that have been valuable in their careers, there are unique benefits to being connected with other Jewish educators and immersed in content that is specific and relevant to Jewish education settings.

▶ *When interviewees reflected on how they had grown into their roles, they highlighted three factors: confidence that comes with time; learning from mentors and supervisors; and having opportunities for substantive professional development such as fellowships, certificate programs, and graduate degrees.*

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13 See Background sections of the "Professional Development" and "Workplace Conditions" briefs.

Career Advancement – Paths are Often Limited and/or Unclear

By design, our study focused on educators in frontline positions rather than administrators, though about 30% of survey respondents said they had "both frontline and supervision/management" positions.[14] Therefore, rather than learning about how their careers have already advanced, our survey and interview data focused more on the roles and paths respondents could envision for themselves. The large majority of educators seem to feel that their options to move up within their settings are limited, as only 25% agreed with the statement, "I have opportunities for advancement at my organization."[15]

Some interviewees did share stories of moving up within a school or organization from one frontline role to another; often this involved starting as a substitute teacher and gaining a staff position, or expanding a part-time role to full-time. In some cases, employees were in the "right place at the right time" when a position opened up or a clear staffing need arose. An early childhood educator who started as a "floater" described such an upward journey in her school:

> *An administrator came to me and said, "I think you should be an Assistant instead of a floater," so then I was an Assistant for three years. Then, I was told by my new supervisor to come to her if I was thinking of quitting because there was a new teacher who was a real mess. So that's how I became a teacher in the pre-K room.*

Other educators deploy more initiative in their advancement, essentially "creating their own luck" as they envision opportunities and gain buy-in from their organizations. One congregational educator described how she successfully turned a mélange of roles into a higher-level, more stable position:

> *I was teaching Sunday school and religious school and ran the Madrichim program, so it was kind of a shiluv, as they say, a mixture of different roles, which was the only way they could justify a full-time salary and benefits. Eventually I said, "It seems like you might need an Assistant Director," so after a number of conversations that position was made for me.*

Another congregational educator also described expanding roles and responsibilities over the years, though without the details to reveal whether these jumps were instigated by her own initiative or that of the administration:

> *I started out as assistant teacher in a class and tutoring, and that has evolved to teaching two classes and coordinating the whole B'nai Mitzvah program. So my role has grown as I've gained more experience and become more senior.*

While we did hear positive advancement stories such as these, quite a few interviewees instead emphasized their uncertainty or discouragement about their future career options. This was particularly true for those outside of formal Jewish education, or those within formal education who don't see administration in their future. One informal educator bluntly stated, *"There are really only two opportunities for advancement for me. Either I go to HUC and become clergy, or I go to HUC and become a religious school director. That's the path for an experiential Jewish educator. So even if I want to run a camp or something, I have to go to HUC."* Another informal educator noted that unclear professional paths can also be a deterrent to entering the field in the first place:

> *It's so convoluted for any of us to get where we are now; it's hard to find a*

14 This number is lowest for day school educators (15%) and highest for those in the innovation/social justice sector (73%), likely because the latter are mostly in small organizations with limited staff who fill multiple roles.

15 By sector: 25% of day school educators, 19% of supplementary school educations; 24% of early childhood educators, and 30% of informal/experiential educators.

clear path. And I don't know I meet anyone younger who says, "one day I want to work for the JCC Youth and Teen department." Or, "I want to work for the JCC in some capacity; how do I get there?" People say, "I like Judaism and Jewish studies. What can I do after that?" But I don't think that's anyone's clear career goal.

Finally, a day school educator articulated the frequently heard lament that for classroom teachers to advance, they generally need to leave the classroom, even if that is where their talents and passion lie. Mentoring, coaching, and knowledge sharing—a collection of roles sometimes defined as "master teaching"—could be an alternate pathway for educators' professional growth:

There needs to be a better career pathway. I have worked with teachers who have been in class for 35 years. They only love the children. But for those that want more, there has to more of a pathway into mentorship or knowledge sharing and coaching, a system where experienced teachers work with novice teachers. There are teachers who are always going to be happy in the classroom, but there needs to be ways to advance and grow as a professional. Growth as a professional and treatment as a professional— that is going to be one of the things that would ensure that people stay in Jewish education and that Jewish education continues to grow and uplift itself.

Given the challenges of identifying opportunities for advancement, it is notable that the majority of respondents still expressed commitment to their career path. Nearly half of respondents said they planned to continue working in the Jewish educational or professional sector "until retirement," and another 18% that they planned to continue "more than five years." However, commitment to one's specific organization was not quite as strong. Only 29% said they planned to stay at their organization until retirement, and 21% for more than five years. These numbers may reflect the recognition by some that moving up in the field could require moving on from their current workplaces.

▶ *Quite a few interviewees instead emphasized their uncertainty or discouragement about their future career options. This was particularly true for those outside of formal Jewish education, or those within formal education who don't see administration in their future.*

Journeys In and Out
"Switchers" and "Leavers"

"Switchers" Have Higher Satisfaction and Outcomes, Potentially Due to Their Motivations and the Skills They Bring

While the journeys described in the above section—from entry to early career to becoming established to senior positions (for some)—might be envisioned as a smooth journey from embarkation to destination, many Jewish educators experience discontinuous journeys with "on-ramps" and "off-ramps" in and out of the field. Fully 60% of survey respondents had previously held a primary job in a non-Jewish organization—a group we have labeled "switchers." Of this group, just over half had worked in a secular educational institution, half in a different field altogether, and about 5% in an educational organization of a religion other than Judaism (respondents could select multiple options).

Switchers responded more positively on a variety of metrics than did those who had only worked in Jewish settings. Specifically, they:

- Are more positive about multiple workplace conditions, including benefits, teamwork/relatedness, empowerment, and professional support;
- Are more motivated and express greater self-efficacy; and
- Are more satisfied with and committed to their careers.

Finding a Career with Purpose

Our data point to some potential explanations for these intriguing findings. Switchers may assess their careers more positively in part because of their motives for joining the field. While more than half of those who have only worked for Jewish organizations said their entry to the field was inspired in part because "I had a job opportunity and took it," only 40% of switchers say the same. There's an even greater difference in those who cite "an inspirational educator"—42% for switchers compared to 27% for non-switchers. Although they enter the field after having tried something else first, this population may be more committed to and more inspired by the purposes of Jewish education upon entry. This seems to help bolster their levels of satisfaction, commitment, self-efficacy, and ongoing motivation.

This theme is reflected in the interviews as well. Some who had entered the field after a foray in other jobs or careers cited as a primary motivation their desire to find more meaning and purpose in their work. One supplementary school educator who previously worked in public education shared that her need to switch careers grew from "seeds" of Jewish meaning that had been planted early in life: *"I think I first became involved in Jewish education because something was missing, and I wasn't feeling completely fulfilled just working in public schools. There was this piece, seeds that had been planted as a child, as a teen, that there was something important about Judaism that hadn't been fulfilled."* An interviewee who had made an even larger professional jump from audio engineering to early childhood education reflected that even though he had enjoyed his former job, teaching offered an opportunity to "bring something to the world" of unique value: *"I realized, I think*

there's a quote—you shouldn't just do what makes you happy, but do something that you can bring to the world that others can't. I love audio stuff, it's super fun, but I don't have talent in that that others don't. I do think I have talent here that others don't." While these kinds of purpose-driven motivations are shared widely among Jewish educators (as will be explored in a later section), it may be that those whose "north star" diverts them from a previous path into education find even greater satisfaction in their work because they can compare it to what they left behind.

Entering with Expertise

Another factor that may account for higher satisfaction and outcomes among switchers is the level of skills, knowledge, and confidence they bring with them as more experienced professionals. Interviewees cited jobs in secular private education, journalism, nonprofit organizations, and business consulting as all providing relevant and valuable skills for careers in Jewish education. A day school educator noted that her previous, private school experience was critical for her professional growth, allowing her to cope with the fact that her day school doesn't provide the same level of resources and development opportunities: *"In that prep school, I grew a lot, I learned a lot, I picked the brains of people there…I'm in a much better place career-wise, so now I can be in a place where they don't have much and still be okay."* An informal educator explained that working in journalism helped her develop and express her "curiosity," a stance that now informs her current work: *"I am a questioner—why are we doing that, what's the purpose of that? It's a naturally Jewish thing to do, so this is actually a good place to be, where I can wrestle with those I work with and not accept everything at face value."* Another informal educator reflected on how working as a marketing consultant provided valuable language and models with which to enhance the Jewish education field's approach to innovation and goal setting:

> *I gained a lot from experiencing the business world. It was an important milestone because I could bring a lot of what I learned into the world of Jewish education.…I learned we should adapt some of the models from the business world when it comes to innovation, decision making, being more goal oriented, and measuring our goals.… Sometimes I use some of the language of the business world today in my work, which makes it more defined, more clear for people.*

Leavers are Pushed Out by Toxic Workplaces, Low Pay, and Lack of Growth Opportunities

Traveling in the opposite direction are those who choose to leave Jewish education, either for other professional pursuits or to step away from working life altogether (not including those retiring at the end of their careers). While our survey was fielded only to current Jewish educators, we did explore the motivations of those who said they were considering leaving the field, as seen in Exhibit 2.

We also spoke with 20 professionals who either had left the field or were contemplating doing so in order to further delve into the reasons underlying their decisions and deliberations. The interviews surfaced similar—though not identical—themes as the survey data, as explored below.

Toxic Workplace Environments

The issue most frequently cited by the leavers we interviewed was navigating an unsupportive or otherwise toxic workplace environment. Interviewees described

Exhibit 2 Motivations of Educators Considering Leaving the Field	
Better financial opportunities elsewhere	50%
Unable to satisfactorily balance work and personal life	35%
Better benefits elsewhere	29%
More interesting work in a different sector	21%
Insufficient opportunities for career development in this sector	18%

workloads that left them feeling overwhelmed or exploited. They depicted overly politicized or hierarchical environments, and organizational leadership that played favorites and failed to listen to or support teachers. In these settings, parents' needs and desires were prioritized over educators' well-being. As one former day school educator bluntly stated, *"The reason I left wasn't because I wanted to leave Jewish education, but because I had two Heads of School who thought tuition was more important than my integrity as an educator."* Another day school educator who is considering leaving described how some colleagues were driven out by a lack of support that she too experiences: *"I know people my age who weren't ready to retire but left because of the behavior of kids. There are lovely families, but there is enough of a percentage of kids who are just fresh, rude, and there is not support from administration in dealing with that."* An early childhood educator also complained of the lack of support from school leadership: *"They have expectations but not support to get us there. They have people designated for support, but it just doesn't happen."* A former informal educator in a synagogue described a hierarchal system in which clergy used their position to exploit others: *"I was in a place where there was clergy and everyone else. Clergy stole my ideas, took credit for it in public and media, and I was frustrated. [I felt] I'm not staying here and taking this. If my ideas are better than yours and you're treating me badly, do it yourself."* Finally, an innovation sector professional sees the lack of respect for Jewish educators as an issue that pervades the entire Jewish community, a reality that she believes should discourage others from entering the field:

> *There are ways to honor and respect people that I don't know if there's thought being put into. It's not even being talked about or thought about, how we support Jewish community educators, what would make them feel honored and valued and respected. Everybody's just like, yeah, yeah, of course. But it doesn't feel like there's a lot of traction on that, or that the community had a concrete and unified message around that. I would never encourage anyone in my life to work in this field, unless they're incredibly passionate and feel it's their calling.*

Inadequate Compensation and/or Benefits

The survey data show that one of the strongest motivations for leaving Jewish education is the lack of adequate pay and

benefits. While not emphasized quite as much in the interviews, financial needs were cited as a factor by just under half of leavers. Most who did reference poor pay also said that they otherwise enjoyed their positions and careers; they just couldn't make ends meet or live the (not-so-lavish) lifestyle they desired. One former innovation sector professional detailed the middle-class life she could not achieve on an educator's salary:

> *I wasn't going to get enough compensation to do the basics, put a roof over my head, give my daughter a Jewish education and save for her college education, and to save for my retirement to not be a burden to her. I have modest goals, except that I would like two bedrooms. But I'm not going to get that stuff from Jewish education. This is a very nice field, if you don't need to rely on it for financial sustenance. It's a nice thing to do, but as a single mom I need more than a nice thing to do.*

Educators across other sectors similarly reflected that while they enjoyed—even "loved"—their work, the financial realities made a long-term career in the field seem untenable. An informal educator said that were it not for the low pay, *"I would stay in Jewish education for the rest of my life. Jewish education can be a full-time career for sure, but I don't think the industry is ready for that full-time career. It's not competitive enough in pay…the pay hasn't caught up with the demand it takes from a person."* A former early childhood educator reflected, *"I love the kids, I love the hours. I feel if the pay was better, and we had gotten more paid time off, then I would have been perfectly happy with where I was."* And a former day school educator in a high-cost-of-living city described how she found herself living further and further from her school in order to afford housing on her low salary: *"We wanted to buy a house, but what I was making was nowhere near what I needed. We were already strapped trying to rent an apartment that was okay and relatively close, so my commute was getting longer. So it started with practical pieces, money and distance. Those were the driving forces."*

Lack of Professional Growth and Advancement Opportunities

Earlier, we described the frustrations many Jewish educators feel regarding unclear or limited paths for professional growth and advancement. For some, this frustration is severe enough to push them out of the field. An educator in an innovation sector organization bemoaned the lack of a leadership pipeline for younger professionals. Instead, the reshuffling of executives among organizations leads to a "game of musical chairs" in which all but a few are shut out, to the detriment of the whole field:

> *The professional pipeline is really small, [and] in these Jewish nonprofits there's this effect of musical chairs. For instance, our current ED has been the ED of five other nonprofits in the past 10 years—that's how often people are moving around. Before that, we had the same ED for a long time, but there's no way to get all the way up there because there are so few positions, and people are just exchanging them. There's no true mentoring for young folks to be on top.… It has frozen Jewish education in time.*

Although there may be more leadership positions in formal education sectors, some who had left day schools noted that (as mentioned before) these paths generally involve becoming administrators, something that doesn't appeal to everyone. Additionally, a former day school educator felt that professional development opportunities were only available for Jewish studies teachers, but not those like her who wished to expand their general education knowledge and skills:

One of the reasons I left was wanting more professional development and growth. I wasn't getting that. There was a lot of emphasis on the Jewish stuff, which makes sense, but what if I want to be a more responsive and sensitive teacher in social studies? There was nothing for me there. I think there was a lot more emphasis and PD for Judaics than for general studies, so I had to seek it out on my own time, and usually with my own money.

Additional Factors – Work/ Life Balance and Seeking Other Purpose

Finally, two factors cited by a fair number of survey respondents—lack of work/life balance and more interesting opportunities in other sectors—were less prevalent in interviews, but still mentioned by a few. Both of the educators who cited difficulty balancing work and life had jobs that required working evenings and weekends—one in a supplemental school, another as youth group advisor—a schedule that eventually took a toll. The first shared that *"Working Sundays, especially when coupled with Friday night obligations, was challenging. I worked so much and never had a full weekend with family except summers and vacation."* The second recounted how the demanding hours overcame her love of the job: *"I was very tired of the hours demanded of a youth professional. I found a lot of meaning and joy in being with students, but it took away from my personal life, and I was expected to make my job my whole life, and that was still a tension for me."*

Finally, we heard from three "leavers" who realized that they were seeking a different mission and focus for their careers that led them beyond the Jewish community. All still wanted to "do good" in the world, but felt that they could make a larger contribution working with more underserved populations. For each, this was a difficult decision, as they felt torn between the community of their roots and others who they felt needed them more. A former day school educator reflected on the "guilt" she felt leaving Jewish education, though ultimately other priorities won out:

I felt guilty leaving the Jewish community because it had done so much for me, and because this community had supported me. But there was another part of me, spiritually and professionally, that was not doing enough. I felt I wanted to give more to the community not that I grew up in, but to all communities. I was teaching students that almost all looked the same, with a tiny bit of economic difference, but not stark economic difference.

An informal educator considering leaving also spoke of feeling professional "guilt," although for her this guilt came from continuing to work with youth on the higher end of the economic spectrum: *"My other friends are working in communities that really need them and are really underserved, and the Jewish community here is overserved. We're overprogramming those kids and giving them so many options, so I'm seeing other communities with only one option, and I feel guilt about that."* Finally, a former Jewish professional from the innovation sector described the "heartbreaking" decision to move into a different social service area when she couldn't ignore the intense need she saw there:

The other job I was looking at was pulling at me hard. It was reproductive health, post-abortion support, working on a national level to like do culture change, and destigmatize people's abortion experiences, and give them a platform for storytelling. It was very important for me, and having the two [options] side by side helped me with the realization

that it really was time for me to leave the community. It was really heartbreaking for me, I won't lie.

Now in a role that involves consulting to Jewish organizations on social issues, this professional feels that she's reached a satisfying middle ground of contributing to the Jewish community, but not being "entrenched" in it, *"Now I work with Jewish organizations again, and get to support them but not work in them, and my funding isn't reliant on the Jewish community. I like to be able to support the community but not be entrenched in it anymore."*

▶ *Financial needs were cited as a factor by just under half of leavers. Most who did reference poor pay also said that they otherwise enjoyed their positions and careers; they just couldn't make ends meet or live the (not-so-lavish) lifestyle they desired.*

The Inner Journey

Motivation, Meaning, and Purpose

Jewish Educators Seek to Impact, Inspire, and Contribute

While, as we've seen, many Jewish educators enter the field for largely practical or circumstantial reasons, our data suggest that whatever their initial motivations may be, nearly all come to see their work as a source of deeper meaning and purpose. Our survey asked respondents to rate the extent to which various factors motivate their work as a Jewish educator (from "not at all" to "a lot"). The top three overall, based on the percentage who said they were motivated "a lot" by the factor, were "impacting people's life paths" (82%), "expressing my commitment to educating others" (78%), and "contributing to the Jewish community" (72%). By comparison, the motivations that received lower scores were more self-focused and practical. Fewer than half of the respondents said that they were motivated "a lot" by "giving myself an opportunity to strengthen my own religious identity;" "having work that is compatible with living a Jewish life (e.g., having Jewish holidays off);" and "making a living." Exhibit 3 presents the top five motivations among educators in the largest sectors (with motivations across settings shaded in the same color):

Exhibit 3
Educators' Top Five Motivations

	Day School	Supplementary School	ECE	Informal/ Experiential
1	Impacting people's life paths	Contributing to the Jewish community	Expressing my commitment to educating others	Impacting people's life paths
2	Expressing my commitment to educating others	Impacting people's life paths	Impacting people's life paths	Contributing to the Jewish community
3	Expressing my love for the particular subject matter	Expressing my commitment to educating others	Contributing to the Jewish community	Expressing my commitment to educating others
4	Contributing to the Jewish community	Expressing my love for the particular subject matter	Working in a place in which I have much in common with many of the staff members	Expressing my love for the particular subject matter
5	Working in a place in which I have much in common with many of the staff members	Expressing my commitment to the Jewish people	Expressing my love for the particular subject matter	Expressing my commitment to the Jewish people

Motivations across settings are shaded in the same color

As noted in the previous section, those who previously worked in non-Jewish settings have higher motivation scores overall than those who have not (except for "making a living," which had the same score in both groups). Switchers are more likely to say they are motivated "a lot" in their work by the above factors than non-switchers, with the widest gaps for specifically Jewish motivations: 16% higher for "having work that is compatible with a Jewish life," 13% higher for "expressing my commitment to the Jewish people," and 9% higher for "contributing to the Jewish community." This supports the supposition that switchers' higher satisfaction and outcome scores may reflect a newfound sense of passion and purpose in their work as compared to previous careers in non-Jewish sectors.

Overall, the motivations revealed through both survey and interview data fall into two categories encapsulated in the very term "Jewish educator." These professionals are both dedicated to the broad mission of shaping lives and cultivating minds through education, and they specifically seek to inspire love of Judaism and create rich Jewish identities for those with whom they work.

Shaping Lives and Minds

The two strongest motivations cited by survey respondents—impacting life paths and commitment to educating others—are at the core of the mission of education. Interviewees shared moving descriptions of how "rewarding" and "inspiring" it is to see children learn and grow and the "gratification" and "joy" of being part of that process. One early childhood educator reflected on the meaning that comes from being able to work with young children at one of the most transformative times in their lives: *"I see the impact that I can and do have on the kids, shaping them through this time. It's the most vital time in their life and shapes them for the future. Things that people can say to them now can stay with them for their whole life, so I want to have a positive impact."* An informal educator similarly focused on the joy of helping children's *"maturation and development and growth. You see them down the road, and it's an exciting thing to have been part of their growth."* A day school educator succinctly summed up a core inspiration and motivation for many educators—the desire to share her knowledge and experience with others: *"I felt I have things to share, things I want to teach, things in my life that can connect…not just teaching from a textbook but also from experience. In this field in particular, when you're the one who makes a difference to someone else, you got to do it because you love it, not for any other reason."* Finally, another day school educator who has experienced significant challenges in her school (difficult parents and unsupportive leadership) reflected that when her job was at its best, it was because of her students' engagement with learning which in turn inspired her to grow as a teacher:

> *I loved being with the kids. They love their teachers, they're enthusiastic and emotional. I also loved the intellectual part—trying to figure out a problem and how to fix it. That's how I kept engaged as a teacher. You can go on autopilot. I would do research and try different things. I found that extremely engaging. It was fun and creative. I liked when the kids would just figure something out, and you could share in that moment when they realized something. It's amazing, and it's wonderful to be a part of it.*

Putting the "Jewish" in Jewish Educator

Although survey respondents placed a bit more focus on the "educator" aspect of

being a Jewish educator, most interviewees emphasized Jewish inspirations and motivations when discussing their career paths. Many said that their own positive Jewish experiences and connections led them to want to create these for others, as one supplementary school educator reflected:

> *I was very lucky to have always felt my Judaism strongly and felt at home in Judaism, and that's informed my teaching because that's my goal for my students more than academic achievement. I want them to feel Jewish and when they walk in a synagogue to feel comfortable and at home. My father's parents were Holocaust survivors, so Jewish continuity was important to us. So I find a lot of meaning in bringing up the next generation of Jews.*

A day school educator similarly explained that helping her kindergarten students create Jewish meaning and connections was more inspiring for her than teaching "academic" subject matter:

> *When I decided to be a teacher, the thing that brought me most joy and made me most excited was not teaching phonics or math, but sharing stories about Torah and Jewish holidays, having fun speaking Hebrew, and stories that connected me to my heritage but could also help other children feel that love and connection as well. That's what gave me passion and fire, and why I ended up teaching in day school.*

Another day school educator noted that while she could have been a special education teacher in a public school, she felt compelled to work in a Jewish setting in order to fully express her values and identity:

> *I grew up with the Jewish tradition and really thinking about it…I had to find answers and meaning that connected to me. When I went into special education I could have gone into public schools, but I felt like I wanted to give over the pride that I have in being Jewish and the values.*

Finally, an informal educator vividly described the unique connections and emotions she experienced in Jewish overnight camps, and how meaningful she finds it to be able to create these for others:

> *When you go to sleepaway camp, and everyone is singing the songs, and everyone comes together, and you feel camaraderie, and you know it's because everyone is relating to Judaism, that's always been such a draw. I crave those moments. Now that I get to create and be a leader of those moments, to pass on what I feel in my heart about why it's so special to be Jewish, that is really special.*

The Power and Pitfalls of Jewish Education as a "Calling"

The passion that comes through in all of the quotes above—the love of shaping minds and lives and passing on Jewish connections and traditions—is emblematic of professionals who see their work not merely as a job or even a career, but as a calling. In this typology, "people with Callings find that their work is inseparable from their life. A person with a Calling works not for financial gain or career advancement, but instead for the fulfillment that doing the work brings to the individual."[16] Although most interviewees did not use the term "calling," the way they defined their work strongly echoes this notion. A number said explicitly that they were not doing their jobs for financial benefit, as an informal educator explained: *"It's so important. What I keep telling people is that the dollars might*

16 Wrzesniewski et al., 1997, 22.

not be there, but what we do is so much more than money. When you're in your early twenties it's hard to see the value of that, but as you get older, money becomes less important and fulfilling your soul becomes much more important." A day school educator described how being connected to a values-based mission through her work is what "propels [her] professionally," more so than if she were an educator in another setting:

> *Being part of something special helps propel you professionally, and people should understand that. That the work is rooted in basic values, that's really different than being part of a large educational system. And when people see that, that's when they tell their friends to come work at the school. When the mission works and is fulfilled and the education is connected to the values, that's a whole different ballgame.*

While these thoughts—and the many others above regarding the meaning and purpose of Jewish education— are genuinely inspiring, a few interviewees identified a darker side to the assumption that Jewish education is inherently a "calling." The intrinsic rewards of fulfilling, values-based work can be used to justify skimping on the extrinsic rewards that are equally necessary: good pay and benefits, reasonable work hours, and even professional respect. As one early childhood educator noted, Jewish institutions have come to expect that their staff will go "above and beyond" because they are so dedicated to their work and the Jewish community: *"I think, as is probably true for most Jewish professionals, that my role and investment and sense of belonging and identity being wrapped up in this community mean that I am constantly going above and beyond my employment role and that Jewish institutions depend on that."* It is notable that the few interviewees who did use the term "calling" regarding Jewish education did so to highlight challenges they have faced, as in these observations from an Innovation sector educator and an informal educator:

> *Salary has long been an issue in day school education tiers, in nonprofit work, and in some Jewish innovation startups. We do this work because it is our calling, our life's work, and we are committed to it —not because we think it can pay the bills.*

> *At various points in my career, I have felt disenchanted and defeated. Usually these feelings come from a frustration with Temple leadership. A feeling as though they do not know what we are trying to do, or why we are trying to do it. My job is my calling, and I put 110% of myself into this work.*

The passion, dedication, and joy with which many of the Jewish educators spoke about their work is a hopeful sign for the strength and future of the field, given that its survival relies on those for whom being a Jewish educator is a "labor of love." However, Jewish institutions and communal leaders should keep in mind that the "labor" is just as real as the "love," and without adequate material, emotional, and professional support, the latter can be all-too-easily extinguished.

▶ *Jewish institutions and communal leaders should keep in mind that the "labor" is just as real as the "love," and without adequate material, emotional, and professional support, the latter can be all-too-easily extinguished.*

Implications for the Field

Unpacking the three types of journeys that Jewish educators traverse during their careers reveals areas of both encouragement and concern for the field. On the positive side, the large majority of Jewish educators view their work as a "calling" that provides a sense of meaning and purpose—centered on their identities as both "Jewish" and "educator"—that few other careers can match. As a result, even those who "fall into" their first roles often develop strong connections to the profession, while those who make a deliberate choice to enter—particularly those who find on-ramps from other fields—may have an even deeper commitment to and positive assessment of their careers. Our data also suggest that as educators grow into their roles, they become more confident, satisfied, committed, and efficacious—all the more so if their journey is supported through mentoring and meaningful professional development opportunities.

However, the journey for Jewish educators can also be quite bumpy, and the destination not as enticing as they had hoped. Many who leave the profession—or who consider leaving—have encountered serious roadblocks to their personal and professional well-being: toxic workplaces, lack of support, overwhelming workloads, inadequate pay and benefits, and the assumption by leaders that one's passion for the job will make all of these irrelevant. Even educators who face none of these challenges and feel mostly joy in their jobs can find themselves hitting a wall when they seek paths to advance their careers, either because those paths are unclear (as many informal educators feel) or are severely limited (as in day schools where a talented teacher can only advance to administration). These challenges are not new or unknown to educational leaders, but their prevalence in the field—after decades of research and documentation—is nonetheless disheartening. We hope our series of *On the Journey* briefs, which showcase the voices and perspectives of Jewish educators across sectors, organizations, and communities, can provide a roadmap for communal reflection and action to support Jewish educators as they seek to most effectively transmit their knowledge, passion, and inspiration to the next generation.

Questions for Educational Leaders and Policymakers

The findings in this brief—some of which echo challenges the field has been navigating for decades—raise a number of important questions for educational leaders and policymakers to consider as the community seeks to create rewarding and purposeful professional journeys for Jewish educators:

1. Given the findings about the "accidental entry" of many Jewish educators to the field, how can pathways into the field be made more purposeful and intentional? What additional supports might be needed for those who "fall into" their first jobs in Jewish education?
2. The lack of clear career paths is a perennial challenge for the field, one that has been observed and discussed for decades. What ideas for addressing the challenge have been overlooked or resisted until now, and what is needed to finally bring about change?
3. Switchers appear to be a promising pool of potential educators, given their higher satisfaction, commitment, and motivation.

What opportunities are there to bring more "switchers" into the field of Jewish education? Are there promising practices already in existence in Jewish education or in general education?

4. The data show that even talented and committed educators can find themselves feeling that they need to leave the field for the reasons detailed in this brief. Do institutional leaders see any ways to resist the forces that push people and, instead, keep quality educators from exiting their institutions or the field overall?

5. As we've noted, feeling one is fulfilling a professional "calling" has great benefits, but also potential risks for individuals. How can Jewish educational institutions avoid exploiting people's deep commitment to this work? What broader communal supports might be necessary to change this culture, which extends beyond any individual institution or sector?

▶ *The findings in this brief—some of which echo challenges the field has been navigating for decades—raise a number of important questions for educational leaders and policymakers to consider as the community seeks to create rewarding and purposeful professional journeys for Jewish educators*

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Educator Portraits

Balancing Meaningful Work and Financial Realities in Early Childhood Education – *Josh's Journey*

Josh, who calls himself a *"cultural but not religious Jew,"* grew up with a strong connection to Jewish life and institutions, particularly his local JCC, where he immersed himself in gymnastics. *"I was in Hebrew school all the time, was at the JCC constantly because the gym was there, and I did other JCC programs. All my strongest memories growing up are Jewish related. My favorite place growing up as a kid was camp."* Now a co-lead pre-K teacher in a JCC early childhood program, Josh first started working at a JCC in his 20s as a gymnastics coach. The job came through a personal connection, a path that he calls *"a very Jewish community story, I got my foot in because of that."* He soon realized how much he loved working with young children, and doing so specifically in a Jewish context: *"Everything, every major thing I did as a kid and every job I've had since has been Jewish children related…[I love] being able to teach kids about the world, doing it in the vocabulary of Tikkun Olam, instead of just global warming is bad. My Judaism is the lens I look through for everything."*

After a few years, Josh became a "floater" in the preschool in addition to continuing as a physical education coach in order to get full-time pay. He was then tapped to advance when *"the administration came to me and said, I think you should be an assistant instead of a floater, you have ideas"* and soon after encouraged to become a teacher. He also pursued and achieved the position of Assistant Camp Director during the summers. After about five years of increasing responsibility in the preschool, he took a temporary break from Jewish education to work as an audio engineer, a decision driven as much by financial needs as vocational interests: *"What prompted me leaving education, I'd been doing audio stuff part-time since high school. I was engaged at the time and wanted to be able to support us better, bring in more to the partnership."* Eventually, however, he realized that work outside of education didn't bring the same fulfillment, and after a move to another city he found a new position in a Jewish preschool: *"It took me several years to realize that preschool teaching was something I was good at, something I liked, and something that was okay to do…I do think I have talent here that others don't, and especially because I'm a male, I feel like I should come back."*

Today, Josh loves his work in the classroom, appreciates his supportive Director and colleagues, and can see himself moving into an administrative leadership role in the future. At the same time, the financial challenges of working in early childhood education—and the sense of therefore being undervalued by the community—weigh on him. As a result, his ultimate long-term future in the field is still uncertain:

> *I don't ever want preschool teaching to be a career that people choose for pay, because it's so obvious when people don't love it. But it would be easier to justify…I don't care about money a ton, I don't need to drive a Mercedes, but if me and my potential wife make the same amount of money, we couldn't afford to send our kid to the school I work at. I'd love to get paid closer to the amount of a typical Jewish nonprofit worker. I think I should make the same as someone sitting at a desk at a Federation. The only reservation I have about the career I chose is money.*

Finding One's Passion and Seizing Opportunities in Experiential Education – *Tamar's Journey*

Tamar holds the position of "Teen Director" at the central communal Jewish institution (a merged Federation, JCC, and Board of Jewish Education) in her community. She grew up in a *"very, very, very Jewish"* home with strong Jewish institutional connections: *"I did Hebrew school, I helped lead kids' services, we went to shul [synagogue] every Saturday. I obviously went to Jewish summer camp. So I was always around Judaism."* After training to be a high school math teacher post-college, she realized that her heart was neither in classroom teaching nor mathematics: *"By the time I graduated [from my master's program], I knew that teaching in a classroom was not going to be my profession. It was a means to get me to be able to work with kids and teens."* Having just moved to a new community, she took a job as a camp counselor in the institution where she still works: *"As soon as I started working there, I thought, this is where I need to be and this is where my career needs to be, in the Jewish world. I was severely overqualified, but I wanted to work there so bad that I knew I could work my way up and grab the opportunities that come."* Her career in experiential Jewish education progressed from there. The next summer she became the camp's Assistant Director, then was hired in a year-round position as Youth Coordinator. Three years ago, she was promoted to her current position in which she directs the summer camp and oversees the afterschool program, school break camps, and the teen program.

The promotion to Teen Director turned out to be a defining moment in Tamar's career. Upon learning that the current Director was leaving, Tamar successfully advocated for herself to be given the position, overcoming the initial hesitancy of the organization's leadership. In Tamar's mind, at that moment it was up or out: *"I wasn't going to stay in my position; if I didn't get that promotion I wouldn't have stayed at [the organization]."* However, it wasn't clear that it would be possible to find another Jewish education position she wanted in the community, meaning that leaving the organization would likely mean leaving the field entirely:

> *If I didn't get that job, I didn't know what I was going to do next. I knew I wanted to work in the Jewish sector, and in [my community] there's only one place, because I didn't want to work in a synagogue. So if it's not here, there's no other Jewish institution I could go. I was looking at nonprofit work, because I do like serving the community, but nothing really stood out to me. Maybe if I had found something, my life would have taken a different direction. But instead, I worked really hard to get this job.*

Tamar's experience leads her to reflect on the general challenge of creating satisfying career paths in Jewish education, particularly outside of synagogues and schools: *"It's so convoluted for any of us to get where we are now; it's hard to find a clear path. I don't know that I've met anyone who's young who says, 'One day I want to work for the JCC Youth and Teen department,' or 'I want to work for the JCC in some capacity, how do I get there?'"* Despite this, Tamar is delighted with her own career journey and passionate about the Jewish education sector that she's chosen: *"Judaism now is more than going to synagogue and praying. And to show teens that it's more than just that, that really is sacred work."*

A Disappointing End to a Rewarding Career in Day School Education – *Deborah's Journey*

Deborah has had a decades-long career as a day school educator, mostly teaching first through third grade. She grew up with a strong interest in Judaism—nurtured by immersing herself in books on Jewish subjects— but disappointing experiences with formal Jewish learning: *"I went to a terrible Hebrew school and hated it. I tried again in high school, but the teacher was so terrible that I dropped out."* As an adult, she became observant and identified as Orthodox, though she eventually became disconnected from Orthodox institutions and now feels that *"I'm not observant, but I pray a lot. It's much more internal."*

Deborah also made a significant career switch, getting a master's degree in education while winding down a 17-year law practice. Her desire to teach came from seeking a career that was *"more enjoyable, more intuitive, and more human connection focused."* She first sought to teach in public schools, primarily because of better pay and benefits, but found herself on a different path: *"When I went back to school for teaching, I wasn't planning to teach in Jewish education. But I sort of fell into the Jewish part. I got the job at [the day school] though a friend. After six weeks, I loved it and ended up staying there."* Working in a day school allows her to express her Jewish identity and connection, even while teaching general studies: *"What I liked about Jewish school was the Torah stories and rabbinic stories, weaving them into teaching, even if I'm not a Judaic Studies teacher."*

For quite a long time, Deborah thrived due to the school's supportive and inspiring leadership: *"When I started, I had an incredibly supportive principal, and it made a huge difference to me. She was so positive about my teaching, so supportive of what I wanted to try. I was new, and creative, and enthusiastic."* Although she was aware that she was forgoing the higher salary and better benefits of public schools, she felt that the positives of the school made up for it: *"It was very informal, not bureaucratic. The administration made an effort to protect teachers from situations with parents that were potentially destructive. Their attitude was, we know we don't pay you as well or give you the same benefits as public schools, but we want this to be a positive place to work."* Unfortunately, the 2008 recession led to cascading challenges that significantly changed the environment. Enrollment fell as parents chose public schools due to financial need. Budget shortfalls led the school to both accept students who required more learning and emotional support, and cut staff who could provide it. Teachers were expected to do even more, with diminished support: *"Marketing is such a huge issue for non-Orthodox schools. It's shifted the balance of power very much against teachers, and much more to parents. That doesn't make it an easy place to work."*

Though still at the school, Deborah has decreased both her hours and her internal attachment to her work: *"I emotionally stepped back and just see it as just work and not my life. At the beginning it was always a career, and I hoped it would be that way, and then as it got harder it's shifted to a job."* While she still appreciates the best parts of being a teacher, her most positive feelings are now expressed in the past tense: *"Overall, when I think about my career in education, I'm feeling sad because of the change in how much I loved it. That contrast makes me sad. I loved being with the kids. I loved the intellectual part. It was fun and creative. I liked when the kids would figure something out, and you could share in that moment. It was amazing and wonderful to be a part of that."*

Seeking to Expand and Diversify Jewish Education in the Innovation Sector – *Abby's Journey*

For close to a decade, Abby has been an educator in a Jewish environmental organization that is part of the growing "Jewish innovation sector." After growing up in a "very secular" home, Abby sought out Jewish experiences for herself as a young adult: *"I always valued Jewish education for myself, but never found a way to enjoy it until college, when I went to Hillel. I worked at Camp Ramah, went to Israel for a year. Really took it upon myself to get a Jewish education."* Through these experiences, Abby came to realize that her desire to effect positive change in the world could be achieved by directing her professional energies to her own community:

> *I always have been really sensitive to issues around culture, community, and power. I always saw myself working to advocate for indigenous culture, and in my 20s, I was like, wait, "What about my tribe? What am I doing to shape and further what my culture looks like?" And I did a 180 and started on focusing on what it means to be a Jew and to be an educational leader as a Jew. I wanted to have a stake in what the next generation of Jewish youth learn.*

After launching a successful, Jewish, environmental, children's program, Abby left the institution *"because I had five part time jobs and no insurance, and I couldn't afford it."* She then joined her current organization, advancing over time into positions of greater responsibility and leadership: *"I started out as an educator, working with groups and leading programs. Then I became Director of Youth and Family Programs, designed all kinds of new programs, camps, weekend programs, etc. Then I became Director of Education, which involves more high-level thinking, program evaluation, documentation, staff training, etc."* Abby has thrived at the organization, but after recently returning from maternity leave, she learned that the new leadership wanted to reorganize, putting her position at risk. This has been particularly upsetting, because up until now, she benefited from meaningful mentoring and support: *"I've generally had a good experience feeling appreciated and trusted and relied on to create good programming. This stuff about my job being gutted is really recent, and has been a big shock to me. I was being mentored to take on more leadership, and that's why it was a shock."*

Abby sees her own situation reflecting broader challenges within the Jewish community. Many Jewish organizations don't value the role of Jewish learning, in part because few in leadership roles have backgrounds or training in education: *"There's a lack of investment in educators, and the leadership isn't really trained in education, they're trained in nonprofit management. So there's not the kind of professional development necessary to develop the field, and not enough investment in mentoring leaders who are teachers so that those who are informed by best practices are making the educational decisions."* Additionally, as a Jew of Color, Abby is keenly aware of the "white normativity" of most Jewish settings. Beyond causing her personal distress, this lack of diversity imperils the Jewish community's future in an increasingly multicultural world: *"The Jewish community is a multiracial community, and our institutions do not reflect that. Jewish institutions have not faced how very difficult it is for a person who is not a white Jewish American to work there."* Ultimately, both these issues require finding and investing in more diverse and representative leadership: *"We need new voices and voices that are mirroring broader sources of inequity, and that needs to be addressed from the top down. Women, queer Jewish folks, people who aren't being invested in. We can't really push Jewish education forward if we don't have leadership that integrates all of our needs, whether nature-based learning, inclusive environments, or multicultural learning."*

Finding a Professional Home in Synagogue Family Education – *Miriam's Journey*

Miriam is a synagogue-based family and early childhood educator, a second career launched after four decades as a professional singer. Miriam grew up with a strong Jewish identity, but little formal Jewish education or institutional connections: *"My parents were very assimilated. I didn't have a Bat Mitzvah. I did go to a JCC day camp, mostly because it was close to my house, but we didn't go to synagogue on High Holidays; we didn't celebrate Shabbat."* Marriage and parenthood led her to become more Jewishly involved: *"We joined a synagogue. We celebrated Shabbat. We sent our son to a Jewish middle school, and that really helped fuel my Jewish connection."* Professionally, Miriam had steady work as a musician specializing in children's music, though she also usually had *"a day job that supported me pursuing this music career of touring and gigging and all that."*

As the life of a performer began to feel more draining than satisfying, Miriam's musical talents opened up an alternate path: *"I had been doing drop-in music time at the library, people would dance and sing, it was fun. And a rabbi asked me to do it at the synagogue. I said, I'm not Jewish enough to do that, but she said, 'Oh, just do what you do.'"* Soon the first synagogue program "snowballed" to additional engagements at local JCCs and preschools, and Miriam discovered her passion for using music to create Jewish meaning and connections: *"I realized that doing music in service of something bigger felt really good to me, and connecting directly with people, and being able to incorporate traditional songs and traditions and the calendar, all those things felt right to me…I talked to the rabbi and told her I didn't want to push at being a famous musician anymore, I just want to do this."* After a few years, the synagogue approached Miriam about creating a new position in family engagement. She was both intimidated and excited to stretch herself in this new role:

> *When I first started, I had so much self-doubt and was scared I'd be seen as someone not Jewish enough, without enough authority. But I'm interested and passionate about the core aspects of the work, and try to remember that when I feel scared…I've learned so much about educating families, helping young families find their path. My ideal is creating an immersive environment for families to experience Jewish traditions in a way that's fun and easy. Because growing up, we went to shul [synagogue], everything was in Hebrew, I had no idea what was going on. So when I do a Tot Shabbat on Saturday, it is FUN.*

Miriam's self-confidence as a Jewish educator took a leap forward when she was recommended for, and then received, a fellowship for a Jewish education graduate program. *"I was looking for professional development for Jewish early childhood programs, and that's when I was recommended to this Master's program. At first, it was really intimidating and seemed way out of my league. But I did an interview for the fellowship, and they offered it to me. It's opened up my world completely."* Although Miriam occasionally still wrestles with her "road not taken" in music, she feels fortunate to be able to use her talents for a "greater good" and hopes her winding and unpredictable personal and professional journey can be an inspiration for others:

> *It's been an incredible journey for me. I love talking about it because I want people to know that it's never too late to change your path, and especially with Judaism. It's never too late to come back to it and find it for yourself, and in a way that's comfortable and workable for you. And if you find it and want to share it, Jewish education is the perfect place to do that. That's my mission, that's where the work in Jewish education is really needed, helping families move forward in their own way.*

The Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) is an evolving community of researchers, practitioners, and philanthropic leaders dedicated to improving the quality of knowledge that can be used to guide the work of Jewish education. The Collaborative supports research shaped by the wisdom of practice, practice guided by research, and philanthropy informed by a sound base of evidence.

George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) advances knowledge through meaningful research that improves the policy and practice of education. Together, more than 1,600 faculty, researchers and graduate students make up the GSEHD community of scholars. Founded in 1909, GSEHD continues to take on the challenges of the 21st century, guided by the belief that education is the single greatest contributor to economic success and social progress.

Rosov Consulting helps foundations, philanthropists, federations, and grantee organizations in the Jewish communal sector make well informed decisions that enhance their impact. Working at the nexus of the funder and grantee relationship, our expertise includes evaluation, applied research, impact assessment, and the design and implementation of data collection efforts to inform strategy development and planning. Founded in 2008, we utilize our range of life experiences and knowledge to best serve our clients.

The William Davidson Foundation is a private family foundation that honors its founder and continues his life-long commitment to philanthropy, advancing for future generations the economic, cultural and civic vitality of Southeast Michigan, the State of Israel, and the Jewish community. For more information, visit williamdavidson.org.

The Jim Joseph Foundation seeks to foster compelling, effective Jewish learning experiences for young Jews in the United States. Established in 2006, the Jim Joseph Foundation has awarded more than $600 million in grants with the aspiration that all Jews, their families, and their friends will be inspired by Jewish learning experiences to lead connected, meaningful, and purpose-filled lives and make positive contributions to their communities and the world.

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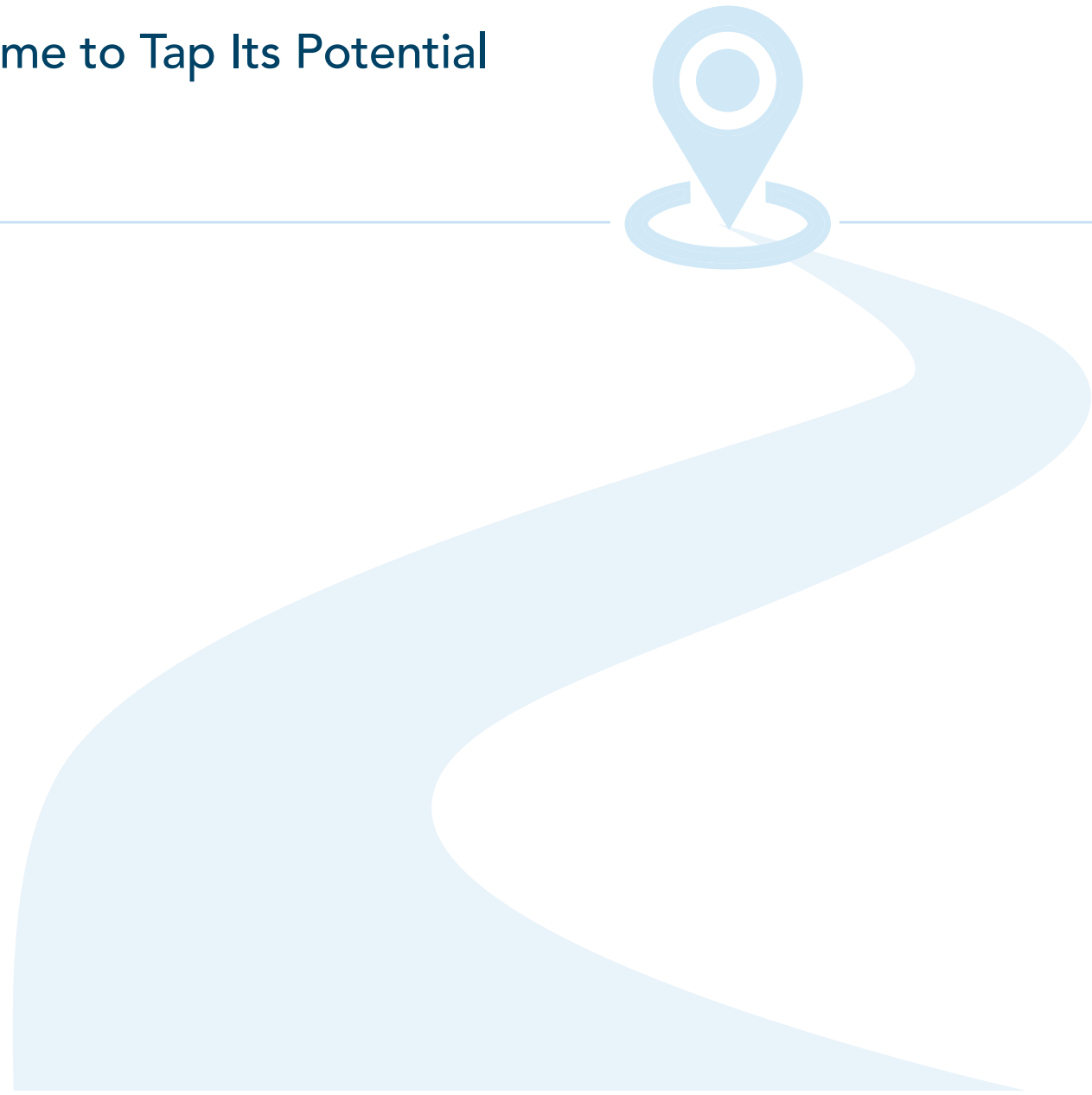
Research Brief | #2

Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators in the United States

Professional Development for Jewish Educators

Time to Tap Its Potential



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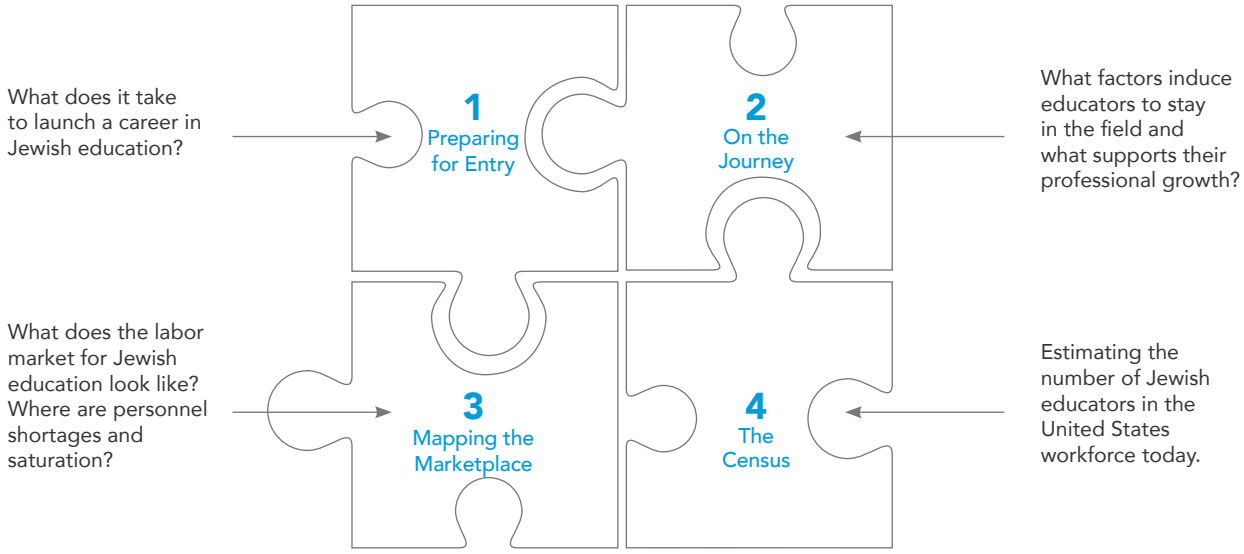
About this Report

The Collaborative 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).

This brief is second of a series of four that shares findings from *On the Journey*, one of four research strands of the CASJE Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. The larger CASJE study seeks to understand the recruitment, retention and development of Jewish educators in the United States. You can read more about this study at www.casje.org

The Career Trajectories Study is organized around four central research questions:



On the Journey is designed to elucidate the career pathways of Jewish educators, including their professional growth, compensation, workplace conditions and lived experiences. In 2019 CASJE published the white paper *On the Journey: Concepts That Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators*, which lays out the framework and key questions that underlie this inquiry and serves as a companion to these research briefs.

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Summary

An accumulating body of research indicates that well-designed professional development is associated with positive changes in educators' ways of working *and* with improvements in students' learning outcomes.[1] Professional development is also associated with social-emotional benefits for educators, such as higher levels of satisfaction with one's work and deepened identification with a community of fellow practitioners.[2] This brief, drawn from data collected from almost 1,300 North American Jewish educators as part of the "On the Journey" strand of CASJE's Career Trajectories study, explores (1) the access practitioners in the various sectors of Jewish education have to professional development; (2) the kinds of professional development in which they engage; and (3) the consequences for those who experience quality professional development.

- A substantial body of literature establishes that professional development matters. It can contribute to expanding educators' professional selves and their practices.
- In the field of education, professional development is widely deemed to be critical. It has greatest value as a means toward continued improvement in a dynamic and challenging field. *Quality* professional development has consistently been found to contribute to educator growth *and* positive learner outcomes.
- CASJE's data show that experiences of professional development, and of professional nurturing through coaching or mentoring, are empirically related to a series of specific, desirable educator outcomes: educators' feelings of self-efficacy, their commitment to their organizations and the Jewish education profession more generally, and their overall job satisfaction.
- Most Jewish educators experience some form of professional development, and they're moderately satisfied with what is available. Yet, access to high quality opportunities for PD frequently depends on the initiative and resources of individual educators; they often have to pay for it themselves, a situation that has prevailed for years.
- Despite decades of critique of the one-shot-workshop, the format still reigns supreme as the most common type of professional development in all sectors of Jewish education, even while other modalities are widely employed. Much of the professional development that educators do experience is not very intensive.
- Educators most value professional development that both develops their knowledge and skills and widens their horizons. These opportunities provide personal attention and at the same time connect educators with colleagues and peers within their institutions and beyond.
- A renewed commitment to professional development in Jewish education should focus on the task of increasing access to already existing high-quality experiences. This task is less about the need to overhaul a poorly prepared workforce. Rather, it is about enabling greater numbers of educators to experience continued professional improvement and benefit from the collateral outcomes associated with those experiences.

1 Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) and her colleagues reviewed 35 studies over the last three decades of "professional learning that has proven effective in changing teachers' practices and improving student outcomes" that featured a careful experimental or comparison group design, or analyzed student outcomes with statistical controls for context variables and student characteristics.

2 Borko, H. (2004). Coldwell, M. (2017); Renbarger, R., & Davis, B. K. (2019).

Data and Methods

This brief reports data gathered as part of CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators." Quantitative data come specifically from the *On the Journey* survey fielded over January and February 2020 to Jewish educators, defined as professionals "involved in designing and delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning." Qualitative data come from follow-up interviews and focus groups with a subsample of 52 survey respondents and an additional 20 people who had left the field.

Specifically, study participants were employed in five occupational sectors: (1) formal Jewish education (day schools, early childhood, supplemental schools); (2) informal/experiential settings including both immersive (e.g., camp) and non-immersive (e.g., youth organizations, JCCs); (3) those involved in engagement, social justice, and innovation (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable); (4) communal organizations that may employ someone in a related role (e.g., scholars in residence at Federations or Jewish educators at Jewish Family Services); and (5) non-organizational networks and online learning (e.g., independent B'nai Mitzvah or Hebrew tutors).

The survey was fielded in eight communities selected to represent a range of sizes of Jewish populations and include diverse geographic regions of the United States. The communities were: Austin, TX, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Detroit, MI, Las Vegas, NV, Miami-Dade, FL, Nassau and Westchester Counties, NY, and San Francisco Bay Area, CA. (For more information about the communities' Jewish educational ecosystems, please see "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments**.")

The total number of survey respondents was 1,278, of which approximately 40% are day school educators, 20% supplemental school educators, 20% early childhood educators, 10% informal/experiential educators, and the remainder in innovation/social justice organizations, federated institutions, or working as independent educators. All respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years.

The *On the Journey* survey was designed to explore the relationships between "background" characteristics of individual educators and their work settings, the interventions and workplace conditions that educators may experience in their careers, and the desired outcomes for educators (self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and career commitment) that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. Interviews and focus groups were designed to bring both additional richness and nuance to the findings from the survey data.

More information about the sample, methods, and instrumentation can be found in "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments.**"

Background

Why Professional Development Matters

In the broader field of education, professional development is widely deemed to be essential. It is, as educator and poet Charity Becker puts it, a means by which we grow into our selves.[3] Or, in the more prosaic terms employed by sociologist of education Judith Warren Little, it is "any activity that is intended partly or primarily to prepare paid staff members for improved performance in present or future roles."[4] **Professional development—whether embedded through ongoing learning opportunities in the workplace or accessed periodically offsite—strives toward an expansion in educators' professional selves and practices.**

As Guskey and Huberman clarify in a classic introduction to the topic, promoting the importance of professional development does not imply that practitioners today are doing an inadequate job.[5] More profoundly, it signals that education is a dynamic, professional field. As the professional knowledge base expands, so must educators keep abreast of emerging knowledge and be prepared to use this knowledge to refine their conceptual and craft skills. In dynamic fields, even the best prepared practitioners cannot be expected to fulfill the missions with which they're charged without continued exposure to new ideas and to new ways of doing things. That's why fields as diverse as medicine, engineering, and accountancy mandate practitioners to engage in continuous professional development.[6]

The work of education is challenging and complex; it takes many years to master.[7] The purpose of pre-service preparation is to develop well-started novices not finished products. Pre-service preparation only begins to prepare educators to be effective in the role—and many Jewish educators do not even receive pre-service education. Much of the learning necessarily happens on the job, over the span of many years, and high-quality professional development supports that trajectory. Ongoing professional learning needs to be part of the work of Jewish educators.

An extensive educational literature makes clear what constitutes sound practice in professional development.[8] Synthesizing that work with an eye to establishing best practices for Jewish education, Dorph enumerates **six qualities that contribute to "effective professional development,"** experiences capable of changing thinking and practices:

1. Takes place within educators' regular workday or work week;
2. Continues over time with sessions building on each other;
3. Models active learning;
4. Fosters a collegial, collaborative environment;
5. Focuses on building educators' pedagogical content knowledge;
6. Includes learning in and from practice.[9]

As Dorph clarifies, the first two principles speak to the structural characteristics of professional development; the next two involve the norms, social contexts, and processes of learning; and the last two relate to the elements of the curriculum or the content of what is being taught.

3 Becker, C. (2018).
4 Little, J. W. (1987). p. 491.
5 Guskey, T. R., & Huberman, M. (1995).
6 Johnson, W. W. (2014); Grant, J. (2017); Behar-Horenstein, L. S., Prikhidko, A., & Kolb, H. R. (2018); Murphy, B. (2017).
7 Feiman Nemser, S. (2001).
8 Hawley, W. D., & Valli, L. (1999); Johnson, S. M. (2012); Hill, H. C., Beisiegel, M., & Jacob, R. (2013).
9 Dorph, G. Z. (2011). Dorph acknowledges that her list is similar to a number of other lists that capture an emerging "consensus." For a more recent example, see Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

An accumulating body of research indicates that, when the practices enumerated above are employed, **professional development is associated with positive changes in educators' ways of working *and* improvements in student learning outcomes** as evidenced, through randomized control trials and quasi-experimental studies, in student achievement levels on standardized achievement tests, math scores, and language proficiency tests.[10] Moreover, besides being associated with the sustained and improved efficacy of the practitioner, **professional development is also associated with social-emotional benefits for educators,** such as higher levels of satisfaction with one's work and deepened identification with a community of fellow practitioners.[11] In sectors characterized by high levels of burnout, low professional status, and poor compensation, these collateral benefits make a significant difference to maintaining the commitment of practitioners to difficult work.[12]

A Slow Train Coming?

At the close of the last century, drawing on data from the 1996 Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) survey of Jewish educators in five American communities, a group of eminent scholars urged policy planners and institutional leaders "to rethink (or think for the first time!) about the importance of professional development for teachers."[13] The CIJE study had found a workforce made up of highly motivated individuals who took their work seriously but who were not well prepared for their jobs, both in their formal Judaic backgrounds and in their educational training. What the field needed, these scholars argued, was not an influx of new, knowledgeable, and well-prepared faculty—something that was unlikely to happen—but rather "professional development of a *serious and intensive sort*" for those already in the field (emphasis in the original).

Ten years later, the Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS) found a somewhat improved situation. Almost all of the respondents to the EJSS survey indicated they experienced some form of professional development. More than half of day school respondents and more than one-quarter of supplementary school respondents reported participating in professional development activities that lasted more than one day. Half of all responding teachers and two-thirds of full-timers received compensation for the time they spent in professional development. Altogether this looked like progress, and yet summing up what they found, the report's authors concluded, "professional development for Jewish educators is…not yet normative, supported fully, nor utilized effectively."[14]

What is the situation today? Have Jewish educational organizations finally internalized the value of professional development? In one interesting indication, Leading Edge has not included data about access to or participation in professional development in any of its annual reports on Jewish organizational culture. This omission seems to suggest that PD is still not perceived as an important element in making an organization "a great place to work."[15] Is this a case of a slow train coming?

CASJE's study of the career trajectory of Jewish educators provides an opportunity to explore (1) the opportunities practitioners in the various sectors of Jewish education have to access professional development; (2) the kinds of professional development they engage in; and (3) the consequences for those who do experience quality professional development. This is an opportunity to assess the extent to which the field of Jewish education has moved forward since the forceful articulation of the imperative for professional development for Jewish education in North America more than twenty years ago.

10 See note 1.
11 Borko, H. (2004). Coldwell, M. (2017); Renbarger, R., & Davis, B. K. (2019).
12 Chen, T. Y., Chang, P. L., & Yeh, C. W. (2004); Krogstad, U., Hofoss, D., Veenstra, M., & Hjortdahl, P. (2006).
13 Holtz, B. W., Gamoran, A., Dorph, G. Z., Goldring, E., & Robinson, B. (1999).
14 Kress, J., & Ben Avi, S. (2007) p. 41.
15 See, for example, Leading Edge (2019).

Professional Development for Jewish Educators

Most respondents in CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators" experience some form of professional development and are moderately satisfied with what's available. Yet, access to these opportunities frequently depends on the initiative of individual educators; and, if it takes the form of an off-site course, they often have to pay for it themselves, a situation that has prevailed for years.

Available but Often Unattainable

Across the various sectors of Jewish education, about three-quarters (76%) of survey respondents report having opportunities for professional development. Surprisingly, perhaps, these responses do not vary significantly in relation to size of community where respondents are located. Sixty-one percent (61%) say that they're satisfied with their opportunities for professional growth. The highest proportion of those who are satisfied (72%) work in federated institutions, and the lowest proportion (54%) work in supplementary schools or in innovation and social justice institutions. Overall, only 55% strongly agree or agree that "my organization provides me sufficient opportunities for professional development" and that "I have opportunities to develop new skills at my organization." In these last two respects, there is little variation across sectors. It seems, in fact, that **a number of respondents must look outside of their organizations for these opportunities,** and with almost two-thirds (64%) of full-timers and 84% of part-timers not receiving any form of professional development stipend, **they must invariably do so at their own expense.**

At my previous position, I was left to find and pay for my own professional development. I already obtained my bachelor's degree prior to my

Exhibit 1
Key Professional Development–Related Statistics from Survey

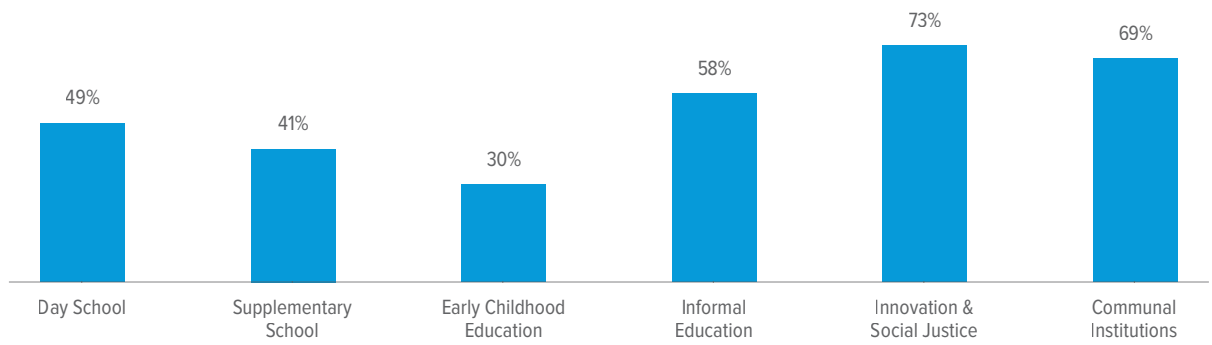
employment. And yearly professional development required by EEC was up to us, the employees, to opt in and pay for ourselves. I found partial grants through the state to help pay for my master's degree, however I still needed to pay for a majority of it on my own. [Early Childhood educator]

Generally, the proportion of Jewish educators participating in professional development and receiving financial support has slipped since the EJSS ten years ago. EJSS reported that 92% of respondents (day school, supplementary school, and early childhood educators) participated in some form of PD, with 51% receiving compensation for time spent in this professional activity. The relatively lower numbers reported by respondents to our survey who report receiving some form of PD stipend—27% in the venues directly comparable to those investigated by EJSS—lend support to a widely expressed complaint that when budgets tighten, professional development is one of the first budget lines to be cut.

Looking beyond their own organizations, nearly two-thirds of respondents say that they have professional networks/organizations to turn to for resources and support; 41% often make use of Jewish professional networks, and 36% look to networks outside of the Jewish field. In general, supplemental schools lag behind other venues in providing professional development and networking opportunities, and newer educators across all sectors are less likely to be aware of opportunities than educators who are more established.

In terms of the duration of educator's professional development, respondents most commonly report participating in experiences that lasted less than four hours, with about three quarters doing so at least once during an average year. **Just over half of full-time respondents attended at least one professional development experience of a full day or longer during an average year; the proportion is much lower among part-timers.** These patterns are similar to those reported in research on professional development in American public schools that most teachers receive PD of short duration (less than eight hours on a topic, usually in afterschool workshops) and that, during the No Child Left Behind Era, there was an increase in this short-term approach and a decline in access to more sustained

Exhibit 2
Proportion of Educators (Full- and Part-Time) Experiencing 8 Hours or More of PD During an Average Year



professional learning approaches.[16] The sectors of Jewish education differ in the frequency with which respondents participate in these more intensive forms of professional development: fewer than a third of full-timers and part-timers in early childhood education report doing so during an average year, while about three-quarters of those in the innovation and social justice sector do.

With so many Jewish educators lacking opportunities to experience intensive professional development, it is not surprising that some interviewees mentioned "exceptional"—effectively outlier—supervisors who called their attention and/or opened doors to PD opportunities, or they expressed envy of their peers outside the Jewish space where they perceive professional development to be more readily available. Here's how a former day school teacher described it:

> *I think this is a problem in Jewish education. I did a program at Brandeis a few years ago to get a certificate in teacher leadership. That's pretty much the furthest [you can go]… well, not true… you could be an interventionist… When you see everything laid out in the public school system, and all this free PD, and some of it is online so you can do it whenever, and they encourage you to do it. It's unbelievable!* [Former Day School teacher]

The Continuing Reign of the One-Shot Workshop Despite Worthwhile Alternatives

Despite decades of critique, the one-shot-workshop still reigns supreme as the most common form of professional development in Jewish education even while other modalities are quite widely employed. Specifically, the types of PD experiences that educators participated in most frequently during the past three years were: content-oriented workshops or lectures (79% participated), professional conferences (68%), collaborative learning projects with colleagues (55%), coaching/observation from a mentor/supervisor (49%) and reading and discussing professional literature (47%). These patterns are remarkably consistent across the various sectors and venues, with a couple of exceptions: supplementary school and early childhood educators are less likely to have experienced coaching or observation from a mentor/supervisor than those in other sectors; they're also less likely (as are day-school teachers) to have attended a professional conference. The dominant mode of professional development in these three venues especially, as in other sectors, is undoubtedly the content-oriented workshop or lecture.

While this situation prevails, interviewees across all sectors and venues make clear what forms of professional development frontline educators most value. They highlighted how mentorship—professional development in its most personalized form—can serve as a uniquely valuable professional growth opportunity, particularly, and often primarily, for those newer to the field. In some instances, mentors served as aides to reflection and inquiry.[17]

> *I was able to have a mentor teacher to talk with and have ideas to bounce off of, and that was a safe port I could go to if I had questions.* [Day School teacher]

In other instances, the mentor's role seems to have been more like that of in-house advocate or champion:

> *When I first came into this role, my boss was the director of leadership development, and that was the most incredible position to come into with her in place, because she automatically took on a mentor role with me. She brought*

16 See, Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, F. (2010).
17 These are features of "effective professional development" recommended by Campbell & Malkus (2011).

me into conversations I wouldn't have been in that gave me a broader view of the organization. She built [an] onramp in many ways to the work I'm doing now. [Campus professional]

Interviewees call out other experiences some of which are consistent with features highlighted by the literature on "effective professional development" and some of which are not. They point to cohort experiences that fostered a sense of collegiality and collaboration, learning alongside and from fellow professionals in their sector.[18]

The most meaningful PD opportunities have been thoughtfully-designed retreats or conferences. The most impactful ones have been those which have been smaller, more intimate, customized and afforded opportunities for networking and personal connection between participants. [Social Justice/Innovation educator]

They highlight those opportunities to experiment with different pedagogic methodologies within scaffolded frameworks that allowed them "to learn in and from practice," as Dorph puts it,[19] and as a congregational school interviewee described it, "to step back and reflect on the experience to better understand what participants were going through…Through professional development and coaching, I was empowered to make the best decisions for my students to accomplish the goals set forth in the curriculum."

Focus group participants who work as early childhood educators emphasized valuing experiences that model active learning and that they can reproduce with their own learners:[20] "I have come to learn that PD that is hands on and gives you actual tools to work with is the best." They value experiences that enable them to extend their pedagogic repertoires: "Meaningful good PD to me, would be out of the box activities. Things that are fresh."

Other interviewees indicate that they also gained a lot from experiences that took them out of their workplaces and delivered distilled, ready-packed wisdom they could take back to work with them. This, as we have seen, is not a format generally recommended by the literature on sound practice in professional development.

I have found part day conferences to be particularly effective, where we had didactic opportunities, hearing from speakers within these groups/populations and facilitated smaller group discussions. Also, somewhat shorter professional development trainings that focus on hands-on lesson planning and curriculum planning have been very useful. [Social Justice/Innovation professional]

In terms of topics and formats, many Jewish educators seek training in areas that aren't specifically Jewish, such as pedagogy, experiential and project-based learning, social–emotional development in childhood and adolescence, and inclusion of special needs and marginalized populations. Educators value development opportunities that provide practical tools and techniques that they can readily use in the classroom. This doesn't imply that these "take-aways" are elementary or unsophisticated—a number of interviewees recounted discovering creative new curricula, lessons, or projects through professional development opportunities that they then successfully implemented with eager leaners. Finally, educators appreciate being able to develop their knowledge and skills while connecting with colleagues and peers, suggesting that combining professional development with networking opportunities can offer a "multiplier effect" in terms of positive outcomes.

In their own words, Jewish educators express these preferences as follows:

18 These are features of "effective professional development" underscored by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).
19 Dorph, G. Z. (2011).
20 These are additional features of "effective professional development" underscored by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

[Give] people the opportunities for connection and support. Even if monetarily, you won't make what you'll make elsewhere, but if you're given support, whether it's a mentor, or a chance to collaborate with other teachers in your school, or your setting, and chances for PD to be able to connect with educators of that same age group in other places, [those are] resources that should not be discounted. [Day School teacher]

Going to a variety of different types of PD has really allowed me to figure out what works best for me. I have come to learn that PD that is hands on and gives you actual tools to work with is the best. I like to learn new and creative ways to work with children that may need "extra." By extra I mean... extra movement, extra space, extra understanding. I find that many of my colleagues... myself included need a refresher on child development and new strategies for the classroom. [Early Childhood educator]

The Positive Outcomes of Professional Development, for Educators

As noted above, effective professional development has been associated with positive changes in educator practices *and* improvements in student learning outcomes. Our dataset does not include "student" data and therefore does not provide an opportunity to connect educators' experience of professional development with outcomes exhibited by learners. **As shown below, our data do however reveal the extent to which experiences of professional development and professional support through coaching or mentoring are related to specific, desired educator outcomes: educators' feelings of self-efficacy, their commitment to their organizations, their dedication to the Jewish education profession, and their overall job satisfaction.** These educator outcomes have, in turn, been associated with positive outcomes among students and young people in general.[21]

Self-Efficacy

Alongside specific background characteristics (more Jewish experiences growing up and being more established in one's career) and other workplace conditions (especially greater feelings of autonomy and empowerment), **higher levels of professional self-efficacy—as expressed by survey respondents—are weakly associated with having more professional development experiences and more extensive professional networks (*r*s = .1).** The construct "self-efficacy" includes the following survey items: feeling that one is good at one's job, feeling that one's work makes a difference, being able to solve problems on the job, feeling prepared for the job, being able to set and meet professional goals, and having the requisite Jewish and general knowledge needed to succeed.

Interviewees described in their own words how such relationships function—how, that is, experiences of professional development and individualized personal support enhanced their sense of being able to fulfill their calling or simply do their work more effectively:

I feel really lucky that I was at as synagogue and in a community that had resources to give me PD and education to be the best youth professional to help me understand what a youth director and a youth engagement professional, a mentor, an educator means. I don't feel a lot of youth professionals have these kinds of opportunities, and I'm grateful for the privilege I had working. [Informal educator]

The professional development/coaching allowed for us to…take a step back

21 Klassen, R. M., & Tze, V. M. (2014); Atteberry, A., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2017); Arens, A. K., & Morin, A. J. (2016).

and reflect on the experience to better understand what our participants would be going through. We were also shown different ways to have students engage with the material…Through professional development and coaching, I was empowered to make the best decisions for my students to accomplish the goals set forth in the curriculum. [Supplementary School educator]

Commitment to One's Organization and to the Field

Older respondents, those more established in their careers, and those with greater motivation are more loyal to their employers and committed to their organizational goals, as well as to the broader profession of Jewish education. Additionally, **commitments of these kinds are strongest among educators who have greater autonomy (*r* = .4), more professional networks and support (*r*s = .25), and have participated in more professional development experiences (*r* = .2),** as well as positive overall workplace conditions. Professional development is again positively associated with this desired outcome.

Educators' narratives nuance survey data regarding factors that increase professional commitment, emphasizing the importance of PD experiences that allow them to keep learning and growing, engage in collaborative and positive relationships with colleagues, gain support and mentoring from supervisors and others, and feeling they are valued and invested in by their organization. Interviewees recount these dimensions of professional development in the following ways:

I really feel like when you invest in people, not just financially, though that's also important, you make that educator feel like they're part of the community, so you have they're buy in that they're contribution is not just an 8-3 or 9-5 from September to June. You let them know what they add to the community, and why you think they're important. These are the things we see in you and we want to strengthen those things and help you work on whatever you want to work on and improve your practice. [Day School teacher]

In my school we do quite a bit of professional development. Our director provides almost 24 hours over the course of the year. The larger Jewish community in my area offers several opportunities for professional development through class and community-wide conferences that happen once or twice a year. All of these opportunities refresh my thinking and give me new exciting ideas for the classroom. [Early Childhood educator]

Satisfaction

Finally, professional development is positively related to job satisfaction. In our survey analysis, job satisfaction was measured in terms of satisfaction with a mix of dimensions, including compensation, benefits, level of teamwork among colleagues, workload, physical workspace, opportunities for professional growth, and opportunities for promotion. Educators who work full time, those who were strongly motivated to enter the field, and those who are more established in their careers reported greater satisfaction scores. In addition, with respect to workplace conditions, **overall job satisfaction was most highly correlated with autonomy and teamwork (*r*s = .5), moderately correlated with professional support (*r* = .4), and weakly correlated with the number of professional development opportunities experienced (*r* = .1).**

Interview data indicate that the intrinsic rewards associated with work as an educator—the joy in seeing children and people of all ages learn and grow—are

of most help in compensating for low salaries, lack of benefits, and/or ceilings on professional advancement. Nevertheless, being given meaningful opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and participate in quality professional development, as well as being supported by supervisors and school leadership, also contributes to being happy with one's work. When so many others don't receive such support, knowing that resources are being invested in you can make a great difference to your state of mind at work.

> *Professional development helps. I am all into trying to be better and better as a teacher and a person. When the school brings that in…it helps you keep growing and be happy. You feel more supported when you are given the tools to move on.* [Day School teacher]

> *Being seen as a whole person, being asked questions about things I'm interested in, and not just a job description that you need to be able to step into… something that that really allowed me to thrive was actually being on a team finally, a team that felt like we're all in it together… It made me step up and grow and jump in even more than I already did… And they invested in me and my professional growth. That was so different [from my last job], where I'd had to fight for professional growth… My mental health was worse in that first job. I used to call my grandmother crying about how hard the job was. But this job was so different. Now, even in the challenging parts of this job, I'm still growing and can still thrive.* [Campus professional]

▶ *Our data reveal the extent to which experiences of professional development and professional support through coaching or mentoring are related to specific, desired educator outcomes: educators' feelings of self-efficacy, their commitment to their organizations, their dedication to the Jewish education profession, and their overall job satisfaction.*

Implications for Practice

Making the Available Attainable

Professional development consistently contributes to positive educator outcomes, and specifically, as we have seen, to higher levels of educator self-efficacy, career commitment, and job satisfaction. **And yet, not even half of survey respondents seem to have recently experienced professional development in its most intensive forms.**

Unlike when CIJE data were reported more than twenty years ago, it is no longer the case that there are insufficient opportunities for Jewish educators to experience high quality professional development.[22] The *Mapping the Market* strand of CASJE's "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators" study details 31 organizations offering 79 different nationally accessible professional development opportunities across the sectors of Jewish education. Case studies of strong instances of such programs have also been produced as part of the Jim Joseph Foundation's Professional Development Initiative.[23] Those studies make clear how high quality professional development does not conform to just one template: it can be constituted as a one-week bootcamp comprised of participants from diverse sectors of Jewish education; it can be embedded on-site at practitioners' own workplaces as part of a job-alike learning-cohort; and it can take the form of an extended, degree-granting program of learning. While the literature on "effective professional development" generally privileges one format over all others—that of sustained, workplace-integrated professional learning in the company of colleagues—this is not the primary framework for professional development readily available to Jewish educators.

CIJE's work prompted the launch of programs modeled on "consensus" principles of what constitutes effective professional development.[24] Indeed, it is surely no coincidence that when some of the educators we interviewed described professional development experiences that had made a profound difference to their career trajectories, they called out features in their programs that meet such standards. As we have indicated, they pointed to scaffolded opportunities at their workplaces that enabled them to learn in and from practice, experiences that built their learning over time, and those that made possible collegial and collaborative learning with job-alike peers.

The challenge today is not that such programs don't exist; as the *Mapping the Market* strand of the "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators" study shows, a plethora of programs are available to support the professional learning and growth of Jewish educators, a point forcefully made by Yares in a recent review of the field.[25] Those programs may not be equally effective, and they may not all meet "consensus" standards for high-quality professional development, but more than a minority of them describe their offerings and their learning principles in ways that echo those standards (see Appendix H in *Mapping the Market*). The challenge, rather, is that most educators are still not enabled

22 See, also, Dorph (2011) for vignettes of a small sample of programs.
23 Cases produced by Rosov Consulting can be found here: Sheva Center Leadership Institute; Building a Field by Bringing Theory to Practice: M²'s "The Architecture of Immersive Experiences; Forged by Jewish Historical Experience: The Study of Jewish History as a Crucible for Jewish Professional Learning.
24 Dorph, G. Z. (2011).
25 Yares, L. (2019).

or encouraged to access these experiences. In fact, educators today seem to have less opportunity to do so than even 10 years ago, compared with findings from EJSS.

The case for professional development need not be rooted in arguments about remediation or the need to overhaul a poorly prepared workforce; our data shows that Jewish educators lack access to high quality professional learning and the collateral benefits associated with these experiences. And today this case is no longer of importance only to schools (day schools, supplementary schools and early childhood centers), it relates to all of the sectors and settings in which Jewish education takes place.

We believe there are grounds for optimism. The last efflorescence of attention to professional development in Jewish education gave birth to new practices and programs. Renewed attention to this field can result in a further positive shift. The need today is not to create more programs or to develop new paradigms; it is to enable greater numbers of Jewish educators to participate in experiences that will enable them to grow, that will encourage them to commit their futures to their field, and ultimately benefit those they educate. There is evidence now of how experiences of quality professional development in Jewish education are associated with highly desirable outcomes among Jewish educators.

Questions for Discussion or Further Exploration

For Practitioners

- What professional development experiences made the greatest difference to your job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and career commitment? What features of these programs contributed to those outcomes?
- What actions can you take to increase your access to more, and more intense forms, of professional development?

For Institutional Leaders

- What positive outcomes associated with professional development are of most interest to you? What programs that you're aware of provide opportunities to realize these outcomes?
- What are the most cost-effective ways of increasing opportunities for your staff to experience intense forms of high-quality professional development? What trade-offs would be needed to increase the availability of such opportunities?
- How can you better articulate the benefits of professional development to attract funding for these purposes?

For Policy Makers and Funders

- What steps can you take to enable more practitioners to access intense forms of high-quality professional development?

For Researchers

- A great deal of research has already established the contribution of high-quality professional development to educators' efficacy and commitment. As we have indicated, this research is confirmed in large part by our study of the career trajectories of Jewish educators. What now might research, specifically focusing on professional development in Jewish settings and with Jewish educators, contribute?
- While concerned primarily with the career trajectories of Jewish educators, this study has documented the professional development experiences of Jewish educators who work in a wide variety of sectors besides those that are school based. What more can be learned through concentrated attention on professional development in these other sectors for Jewish education?

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Research Brief | #3

Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators in the United States

Workplace Environments

The Importance of Empowerment, Collegiality, Supervision, and Recognition

Prepared by
Rosov Consulting

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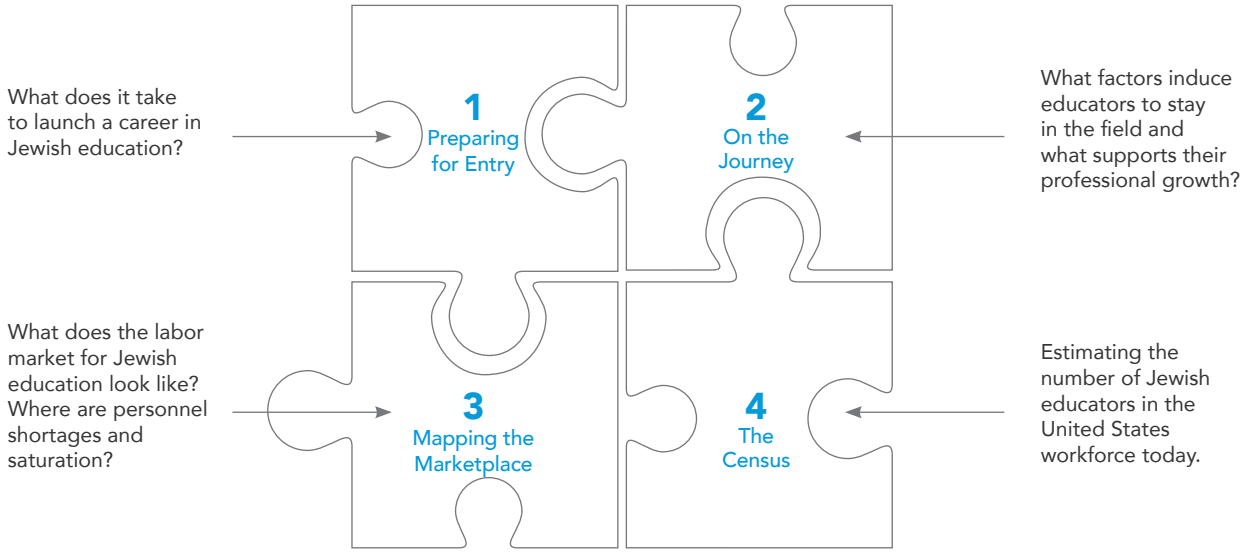
About this Report

The Collaborative 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).

This brief is third of a series of four that shares findings from *On the Journey*, one of four research strands of the CASJE Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. The larger CASJE study seeks to understand the recruitment, retention and development of Jewish educators in the United States. You can read more about this study at www.casje.org

The Career Trajectories Study is organized around four central research questions:



On the Journey is designed to elucidate the career pathways of Jewish educators, including their professional growth, compensation, workplace conditions and lived experiences. In 2019 CASJE published the white paper *On the Journey: Concepts That Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators*, which lays out the framework and key questions that underlie this inquiry and serves as a companion to these research briefs.

Acknowledgments

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Summary

Decades of research have demonstrated that the environments educators work within have meaningful effects on educator satisfaction, self-efficacy, as well as on their desire to remain in their jobs and develop careers in Jewish education. This brief, drawn from data collected from almost 1,300 North American Jewish educators as part of the CASJE *On the Journey* study, explores four categories of educator workplace environments: (1) factors that support or hinder professional autonomy and empowerment; (2) relationships with and opportunities for collaboration with colleagues; (3) effective and productive supervision; (4) and respect and recognition for one's work. We examine the extent to which educators experience these conditions and how the presence or absence of them affects how educators perceive and talk about their work. Our key findings are:

- Our survey data confirms statistically significant correlations between positive dimensions of workplace environment and key educator outcomes. In addition, elements of positive workplace environments are highly correlated with one another.
- Most Jewish educators feel they have the autonomy and knowledge to do their jobs effectively. However, fewer feel they have the full resources they need, suggesting that some are lacking the tools and/or support to put their autonomy and knowledge into practice. Further, fewer than half of the respondents say they are well-informed about or have input into organizational decisions that directly impact their work.
- The majority of Jewish educators have positive and collaborative relationships with colleagues, whom they value as talented professionals. Despite this collegial environment, however, many still find it challenging to voice disagreements and dissenting opinions within their organizations.
- Compared to the average across sectors, early childhood educators report more cooperation and sharing of ideas; informal/experiential educators are more likely to see their colleagues as "highly talented professionals;" and more experienced educators report greater satisfaction with the levels of teamwork in their organizations.
- Fewer supplemental school educators than the average see their colleagues as highly talented or feel that they can get help and support from colleagues when they need it. Similarly, somewhat fewer supplemental school educators said that they felt validated or recognized by colleagues.
- While most respondents reported positive and warm relationships with supervisors, it also seems that the supervision experience is not as constructive as it could be for a fair number of educators. Only about half say that their supervisor knows their professional development needs, and less than half reported that their supervisor "serves as an instructional mentor."
- Jewish educators generally feel valued and respected, though this appreciation more often comes from colleagues than organizations overall.

Data and Methods

This brief reports data gathered as part of CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators." Quantitative data come specifically from the *On the Journey* survey fielded over January and February 2020 to Jewish educators, defined as professionals "involved in designing and delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning." Qualitative data come from follow-up interviews and focus groups with a subsample of 52 survey respondents and an additional 20 people who had left the field.

Specifically, study participants were employed in five occupational sectors: (1) formal Jewish education (day schools, early childhood, supplemental schools); (2) informal/experiential settings including both immersive (e.g., camp) and non-immersive (e.g., youth organizations, JCCs); (3) those involved in engagement, social justice, and innovation (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable); (4) communal organizations that may employ someone in a related role (e.g., scholars in residence at Federations or Jewish educators at Jewish Family Services); and (5) non-organizational networks and online learning (e.g., independent B'nai Mitzvah or Hebrew tutors).

The survey was fielded in eight communities selected to represent a range of sizes of Jewish populations and include diverse geographic regions of the United States. The communities were: Austin, TX, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Detroit, MI, Las Vegas, NV, Miami-Dade, FL, Nassau and Westchester Counties, NY, and San Francisco Bay Area, CA. (For more information about the communities' Jewish educational ecosystems, please see "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments**.")

The total number of survey respondents was 1,278, of which approximately 40% are day school educators, 20% supplemental school educators, 20% early childhood educators, 10% informal/experiential educators, and the remainder in innovation/social justice organizations, federated institutions, or working as independent educators. All respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years.

The *On the Journey* survey was designed to explore the relationships between "background" characteristics of individual educators and their work settings, the interventions and workplace conditions that educators may experience in their careers, and the desired outcomes for educators (self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and career commitment) that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. Interviews and focus groups were designed to bring both additional richness and nuance to the findings from the survey data.

More information about the sample, methods, and instrumentation can be found in "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments.**"

Background

Why Workplace Environments Matter

Decades of research on educators in Jewish settings, independent schools and public schools demonstrate the importance of the workplace environment for educator satisfaction, self-efficacy and retention. The Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS) found "congruence between educators' job satisfaction ratings and whether or not they felt their efforts were validated and/or recognized by administrators, colleagues, parents, and students."[1] In addition, "recognition and/or validation from school administrators and other key audiences"[2] was one of the most frequently cited factors in day and supplementary school educators' decisions about whether to remain in the field.[3]

Tamir's study of beginning teachers in urban public, urban Catholic, and Jewish day schools found that the "professional culture" of a school is a significant factor in retention and satisfaction levels among novice teachers.[4] Using frameworks developed by Kardos and her colleagues, he determined that schools with "integrated professional cultures" had the greatest positive impacts for new educators. Such schools have "structures in place to support [teachers'] professional growth through extensive mentoring, collaboration, observations, and feedback from peers and leaders, and by allowing new teachers space to experiment and fail." In other words, the school cultures that are most likely to lead to positive outcomes are those that emphasize the same elements of workplace environments investigated in this study.

The autonomy inherent in being allowed to "experiment and fail" has been documented as both key to teacher satisfaction, and increasingly lacking in the public education sector. A publication of the National Center for Education Statistics, drawn from a decade of data from the annual Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), stated that "research finds that teacher autonomy is positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction and teacher retention…Teachers who perceive that they have less autonomy are more likely to leave their positions, either by moving from one school to another or leaving the profession altogether."[5] Unfortunately, the authors found, SASS data show that public secondary school teachers' perception of autonomy in their classrooms decreased significantly between 2003 and 2012.[6] As our data will show, the situation is not so grim for today's Jewish educators, most of whom feel they enjoy a fair amount of autonomy.

The desire to exercise autonomy does not mean educators always prefer to work independently. On the contrary, collaboration and teamwork with colleagues is another workplace element that has been shown to create positive environments and outcomes. Goddard, Goddard, and Tschannen-Moran, in their study of the impacts of teacher collaboration on student achievement in public elementary schools, begin by citing studies that find collaboration among teachers leads to improved efficacy and more positive attitudes towards teaching.[7] They set out to determine whether such positive impacts on teachers also resulted in benefits for students,

1 Kress, J., and Ben Avi, S. (2007) 19.
2 Kress, J., and Ben Avi. S. (2007) 29.
3 The other most frequently cited factors were work/life balance and "how the school responds to students who are not thriving and the support educators receive for these students," which, though primarily focused on students, also encompasses the critical element of support for educators.
4 Tamir, E. (2013). 27.
5 Sparks, D. and Malkus, N. (2015) 2.
6 Sparks, D. and Malkus, N. (2015). 4.
7 Goddard, Y, Goddard, R. and Tschannen-Moran, M. (2007); Shachar & Shmuelevitz (1997); Brownell et al. (1997). 878.

and found that "teacher collaboration for school improvement was positively related to differences among schools in both mathematics and reading achievement."[8] While their data didn't directly prove causality, they posited that collaboration improves educators' problem solving abilities, thus increasing their effectiveness in the classroom: "When teachers collaborate, they share experiences and knowledge that can promote learning for instructional improvement. From the perspective of organizational theory, collaboration is a form of lateral coordination that can improve organizational performance…Such learning can help teachers solve educational problems, which in turn has the potential to benefit students academically."[9]

Johnson, Kraft, and Papay reported similar findings regarding the importance and impact of workplace environments, specifically in high-need schools, for teacher satisfaction and student achievement. As they found, "Teachers are more satisfied and plan to stay longer in schools that have a positive work context, independent of the school's student demographic characteristics."[10] Further, the elements of work context that matter most to teachers are not the "clean and well-maintained facilities or access to modern instructional technology" that are more common in well-funded schools, but "the social conditions—the school's culture, the principal's leadership, and relationships among colleagues."[11] If teachers feel strong "relational trust" with their supervisors, administrators, and co-workers, both they and their students benefit. Therefore, the researchers conclude, "policy makers who want to retain effective teachers and improve student performance…should pay close attention to the school context as teachers experience it."[12]

Finally, two articles focus on the positive impacts of support and mentoring for new teachers in particular (as well as their students). Although our research only included educators in the field for at least five years, insights about the role of early-career mentoring are still instructive, as many of the findings regarding the impact of mentorship are relevant for more established educators as well. Ingersoll and Strong examined fifteen studies conducted over three decades on the effects of "support, guidance, and orientation programs" for beginning teachers. They conclude, "Most of the studies reviewed provide empirical support for the claim that support and assistance for beginning teachers have a positive impact on three sets of outcomes: teacher job satisfaction, commitment, and retention; teacher classroom instructional practices; and student achievement."[13] Darling-Hammond similarly reported that "A number of studies have found that well-designed mentoring programs improve retention rates for new teachers along with their attitudes, feelings of efficacy, and their instructional skills."[14] She goes on to make the valuable argument that mentoring has meaningful benefits for mentors as well as mentees: "The additional benefit of these programs is the new lease on life for many veteran teachers as well. Expert veterans need ongoing challenges to remain stimulated and excited about staying in the profession. Many say that mentoring and coaching other teachers creates an incentive for them to remain in teaching as they gain from both learning from and sharing with other colleagues."[15]

8 Goddard, Goddard and Tschannen-Moran. 891.
9 Goddard, Goddard and Tschannen-Moran. 892.
10 Johnson, S., Kraft, M. and Papay, J. (2012). 4.
11 Johnson, Kraft, and Papay. 5.
12 Johnson, Kraft, and Papay. 5.
13 Ingersoll, R. and Strong, M. (2011). 1.
14 Darling-Hammond, L. (2003). 9.
15 Darling-Hammond. 10.

The Workplace Environments of Jewish Educators

Our study confirms the relationships between positive workplace environments and key educator outcomes as found in the literature summarized above. In our analysis of the survey data, we calculated composite scores for each respondent according to four dimensions of the workplace environment, that is, factors that encourage: (1) feelings of empowerment, (2) collegiality and teamwork, (3) recognition and feeling valued, and (4) relationships with supervisors. We tracked the relationship between those dimensions and educator outcomes, noting corresponding levels of satisfaction, self-efficacy, and commitment to the Jewish education profession. As shown in Exhibit 1 below, **educators who reported feeling more positive about these four dimensions of their workplaces had higher outcomes scores, experiencing greater job satisfaction, feelings of self-efficacy, and commitment to their workplaces and the field.**

Exhibit 1
Positive Relationship Between Workplace Conditions and Educator Outcomes

	Satisfaction	Self-Efficacy	Commitment to Profession
Empowerment	.535**	.395**	.384**
Teamwork/Collaboration	.508**	.246**	.378**
Recognition/Feeling Valued	.532**	.274**	.369**
Relationship with Supervisor	.475**	.251**	.240**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In addition, all of these dimensions are highly correlated across categories, which is reflected in our interviewees' reflections on how these positive aspects of the workplace environment support and reinforce one another.

Below are detailed findings from our research regarding these four dimensions of the workplace environment, including which specific variables are more or less prevalent in the field, and to what extent and in what ways Jewish educators' experiences differ by sector and setting. In each section, we first present survey data, followed by insights from our interviews that provide depth and nuance to the quantitative findings, highlight educators' descriptions of their lived experiences in their own words, and surface issues that merit further exploration by field leaders and practitioners.

Empowering Factors

Our survey analysis showed that feeling empowered within one's workplace – a combination of such factors as having autonomy, knowledge, resources, and support; feeling informed about and included in organizational decision-making; and feeling that one can share opinions freely – is positively correlated[16] with the three key educator outcomes of satisfaction, self-efficacy, and commitment to the profession. Looking at the individual variables in this category, the large majority of Jewish educators feel that they have the knowledge and autonomy they need to be successful in their jobs. Eight in ten survey respondents agreed[17] that they "know what I need to be successful in my role" and "have enough autonomy to perform my job effectively." However, only 60% agreed that they "have the resources I need to do my job effectively," a gap that suggests some educators are lacking the tools and/or support to put their knowledge and autonomy fully into practice. Similarly only 62% said that they "know that leaders will provide support when I encounter challenges at work."

In addition, having autonomy within one's own classroom or learning environment does not always mean that educators feel empowered to express themselves or influence decisions within their broader organizations. About half are "comfortable sharing potentially unpopular opinions at my organization" and feel that they are "included in decisions that affect my work;" only 40% agree that "at my organization, I am informed well in advance about important decisions, changes, or future plans." Overall, older and more established educators[18] score higher on empowerment measures than younger and less experienced educators.[19] This may reflect a tendency of organizational leaders to give greater weight to the contributions of experienced professionals and to trust them more to make sound decisions about their work.

Insights from Interviews

Interviewees' reflections about empowerment and autonomy suggest that these are not merely a "feel-good" element of educational settings, but critical for helping educators commit to their practice, engage in creative expression (e.g., by developing curricula and lesson plans), explore new ideas, and continue to grow professionally. This was expressed by a day school educator who was both surprised and delighted when given the freedom to creatively adjust her curriculum to meet the needs of her students:

> *They said, you're the teacher, do what you need to. I didn't expect that, but I ran with it. I found new topics, changed the structure, and the students loved it and ended the year beyond my wildest dreams of what I thought they could accomplish. I wasn't expecting that much autonomy. Knowing I have the freedom to do it how I wanted was so freeing, that I could use my creativity and own input.*

An important caveat is that being given too much autonomy as a novice educator can actually become negative and stressful, as it is experienced as a lack of guidance and support rather than a welcome freedom. As an early childhood educator shared, having "hands-off" leadership can *"be both great and frustrating at the same time. The fact that you were able to develop the curriculum and lessons that [were] true to who you are was wonderful. [But] the lack of support from administration really took a toll on me as a teacher."* This difference in priorities may also contribute to the divergence in scores between well-established and newer educators, reflecting not only how educators

16 All correlations reported are .350 and above, and are statistically significant at the .01 level, meaning there is a less than 1% probability that these correlations are a result of random chance.

17 "Agreed" refers to the combined percentages of the top two categories in the 7-point scale used in the survey: "agreed" and "strongly agreed."

18 A combined category of respondents who defined themselves as "well-established in my field" (56% of respondents) and "have been well established in my field and am winding down" (9%).

19 A combined category of respondents who defined themselves as "getting settled in my field and no longer a beginner" (23% of respondents) and those who have "made a start in a professional field" (5%).

Exhibit 2
Dimensions of Empowering Factors Experienced by Jewish Educators
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)

	Day School Educators	Supplemental School Educators	Early Childhood Educators	Informal/ Experiential Educators	Total[20]
I have enough autonomy to perform my job effectively	80%	82%	85%	77%	81%
I know what I need to be successful in my role	81%	80%	87%	79%	81%
I know that leaders will provide support when I encounter challenges at work	62%	62%	64%	62%	62%
I have the resources to do my job effectively	60%	59%	66%	54%	60%
I am included in decisions that affect my work	48%	46%	49%	49%	49%
I'm comfortable sharing potentially unpopular opinions at my organization	45%	50%	44%	54%	48%
At my organization, I am informed well in advance about important decisions, changes, or future plans	37%	41%	34%	38%	40%

are regarded by others but also their own preferences for autonomy vs. support.

The extent to which educators feel empowered in their roles can be driven by the actions and attitudes of an organization's leaders, specifically whether and how they convey trust in their staff to create positive environments and outcomes for learners without being micromanaged. This trust helps educators feel valued as professionals; they know that they have the freedom to experiment and innovate without being afraid of the repercussions if they fail. A camp educator described how the CEO, as part of strengthening the camp's engagement and outreach work, *"gave me and my supervisors more freedom to do what I'm good at, what I do best…It starts with the leadership."* A social justice/innovation sector educator also appreciated being *"given freedom to dream big and the chance to follow my ideas," made possible by a "culture of leadership that inspires you to dream big and also gives you the opportunity to follow your dream without limitation."*

20 Total percentages include respondents in the innovation/social justice and federated institution sectors. However, because the number of respondents in these sectors is quite small (42 and 29 respectively), their scores are not presented separately.

Colleagues and Teamwork

Positive relationships with colleagues and feeling part of a productive team are positively correlated with the outcomes of satisfaction and commitment to one's profession. Most of our survey respondents report high levels of collegiality in their workplaces: 8 in 10 are "pleased with the people I work with," and three-quarters feel that they are "able to get help and support from my colleagues when I need it" and that "cooperation and sharing of ideas and resources across my organization are encouraged." In addition, among various workplace elements "the level of teamwork among my colleagues" scored highest for satisfaction levels, with 80% saying they were very or somewhat satisfied. Established educators expressed the greatest satisfaction; 83% said they were very/somewhat satisfied with teamwork among colleagues, as compared to 76% of less experienced professionals. Almost three-quarters of all respondents view their co-workers as "highly talented professionals." However, even highly collegial environments do not always have fully open channels of communication, as less than half agreed that "disagreements in my organization are voiced openly and discussed."

Exhibit 3
Dimensions of Collegiality and Collaboration Experienced by Jewish Educators
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)

	Day School Educators	Supplemental School Educators	Early Childhood Educators	Informal/ Experiential Educators	Total
I am pleased with the people I work with	82%	77%	80%	83%	81%
I am able to get help and support from my colleagues when I need it	78%	69%	77%	79%	76%
Cooperation and sharing of ideas and resources across my organization are encouraged	76%	71%	81%	77%	76%
My colleagues are highly talented professionals	73%	66%	71%	77%	72%
Disagreements in my organization are voiced openly and discussed	43%	43%	50%	43%	45%

Early childhood educators seem to enjoy somewhat more collegial working environments, as 81% agreed that "cooperation and sharing of ideas and resources across my organization are encouraged," and 84% are satisfied with the level of teamwork among colleagues, each of these about 4-5% higher than the overall average across sectors. More informal/experiential educators agree that "my colleagues are highly talented professionals" (79% vs. 72% overall). Conversely, supplemental school educators are less likely to feel they can "get help and support from my colleagues when I need it" (69% agree vs. 76% overall), to see their colleagues as highly talented professionals (66% vs. 72%), and to feel satisfied with levels of teamwork among colleagues (77% vs. 80%). This may reflect the fact that the majority of supplemental school educators are part-time and thus have fewer opportunities to interact and collaborate with their colleagues.

Insights from Interviews

A number of interviewees described how in the face of challenges, such as poor educational leadership or frustration over low compensation, colleagues can be a key source of encouragement and happiness in one's work. Conversely, tension with colleagues was occasionally referenced as a source of workplace dissatisfaction and stress. This issue can be particularly acute for early childhood educators (and some day school educators), who often work in pairs or teams, as one described: *"The more difficult years were usually when I was paired with a partner that I didn't work well with. If I'm working with someone who's critical, I can't enjoy engaging and teaching with the class as much."*

Some interviewees saw collaborative environments—which included "vertical" collaboration (with supervisors and leaders) as well as "horizontal" (with peers)—as strongly linked to the mission and values of the organization. The feeling that "we're all in this together" working to achieve shared goals was a powerful encouragement and motivator for these educators. A day school educator, who described his school as *"the most collaborative experience professionally I've ever seen"* marveled that there is *"so little ego"* among his colleagues: *"the only ego is, can we teach kids Torah better? The school is totally focused on the betterment of the children."* An early childhood educator relished being in a congregation in which all staff and leadership *"collaborate and co-construct to create an amazing program that we're really proud of…We're working really hard to bring a cohesive vision and programming for the whole congregation."* For this educator, the collaborative and mission-driven environment is a major factor in wanting to stay in this work setting: *"Do I want to leave that? No."* A campus educator recounted that a pervasive culture of "everyone step[ping] up" throughout the organization made her want to "jump in even more:"

> *Something that really allowed me to thrive was being on a team that felt like we're all in it together. I saw everyone really step up—our Executive Director would help us clean the closet—and I wanted to be a part of the team. It made me step up and grow and jump in even more than I already did. That disseminated into the entire organization, the students, even our donors!*

Importantly, this educator highlights that the organization's collegiality includes not only her peers, but the Executive Director as well, who demonstrates this by "stepping up" alongside team members when work needs to be done. Collegiality is more likely to be embedded in an organization's culture if it is valued and modeled by top leadership, and not just left to employees to create and maintain.

Relationships with Supervisors

Feeling supported is a critical component of a positive work environment for most Jewish educators. Supervisors often provide much of that support, at least when the relationship is functioning as it should. Having a positive relationship with one's supervisor is positively correlated with the outcome of job satisfaction in our survey data. Nearly all respondents (92%) report having a direct supervisor, and for the large majority, that relationship does indeed appear to be supportive and encouraging. Nearly eight in ten agreed that their supervisor "genuinely cares about my well-being," three-quarters that they "value my ideas," and 70% that they "[try] to be aware of my concerns."

However, it also seems that the supervision experience, while positive, is not as constructive as it could be for a fair number of educators. About two-thirds of respondents said that their supervisor "knows how well I'm performing in my work." While this number is large, given how central this particular task is to supervision, one would expect it to be even greater. Further, only 54% agreed that their supervisor "knows my needs for professional development," and about half said that they "provide useful feedback on how well I am performing." Mentoring is another area in which organizations may not be meeting educators' needs, as only 44% strongly agreed/agreed that their supervisor is "an instructional mentor to me." Early childhood educators score 4%–10% higher than the overall average for most of the above statements, suggesting that their supervision experiences, though still not ideal, are more productive than those of many educators in other sectors.[21]

Insights from Interviews

Interviewees highlighted various ways that supervisors and mentors[22] provided support, many of which illustrate how positive workplace conditions cluster together. Effective supervisors help educators exercise their autonomy and creativity, work to foster a collegial environment, and make supervisees feel appreciated and valued. A synagogue experiential educator identified times she felt particularly appreciated *"when a supervisor has told board members or clergy (in an email that I am copied on) about something I have been working on,"* and noted that because of her supervisor's support she *"rarely ha[s] to fight for my ideas."* An educator in the innovation/social justice sector described being able to successfully ideate and launch a new project due to *"a strong leader who served as mentor and muse…There wasn't a script to follow, but a way for me to apply my ideas broadly, and I was not micro-managed."* A Federation professional reflected on the significant impact of having a supervisor who was deeply invested in expanding her opportunities for professional growth and development.

> *The most thriving and commitment came when I had a supervisor who was holistically invested in me as an overall professional. [She] didn't just see me as a person here to fit a role and a box, but put me forward for opportunities that might seem outside my purview, and made sure I grew and was around tables I wouldn't otherwise have been at.*

As is well-known, supervision, mentoring and support are particularly important for new and early career educators.[23] Although our interviewees were beyond this early stage, looking back, they reflected on how

21 Further information about the mentoring dimensions of these relationships is provided in "Professional Development" brief.
22 As there was no common definition of "supervisor" or "mentor" across interviews, each quote should be understood in its own context regarding the roles and types of support being described.
23 Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001).

Exhibit 4
Supervision Experiences of Jewish Educators
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)

	Day School Educators	Supplemental School Educators	Early Childhood Educators	Informal/ Experiential Educators	Total
My supervisor genuinely cares about my well-being	81%	78%	76%	76%	79%
My supervisor values my ideas	76%	71%	71%	74%	74%
My supervisor tries to be aware of my concerns	72%	67%	71%	62%	70%
My supervisor knows how well I'm performing my work	64%	70%	72%	66%	68%
My supervisor takes time to praise me	55%	58%	66%	56%	59%
My supervisor knows my needs for professional development	51%	54%	64%	53%	54%
My supervisor provides useful feedback on how well I am performing	49%	50%	61%	46%	52%
My supervisor is an instructional mentor to me	43%	39%	52%	46%	44%

challenging the first several years as an educator can be. Those who had benefited from regular supervision or mentoring felt this was critical to their initial success and growth as educators. Conversely, those that did not receive such support often cited the early years as the most difficult in their career, with a number wishing they had been given mentorship opportunities during that stage.

At the opposite end of the career arc, some veteran educators noted that they were not getting as much out of being supervised within their institutions as they had earlier in their career and wished for more opportunities for outside mentorship, as one experiential educator vividly expressed:

> *I feel often like I've hit a ceiling with my supervisors and managers; they generally think I have good ideas and don't need much "supervision," but that doesn't mean I don't crave an investment in my career, professional counsel, advice that*

challenges and pushes me to be better. An outside mentor (or a mentor within my organization who is not my supervisor) would be a big deal.

This is an important reminder that while new teachers are certainly in most need of mentoring and support as they learn the ropes, if the goal is for educators to keep growing and developing throughout their careers, providing ongoing opportunities for mentorship is a valuable investment. Furthermore, it is one that will likely pay extra dividends as these educators learn how to be effective mentors themselves.

Recognition and Feeling Valued

Being valued and appreciated for one's work is positively correlated with the outcomes of satisfaction and commitment to one's profession. The educators in our study generally do feel valued and respected. Overall, nearly eight in ten educators said that they are "treated with respect on a day-to-day basis," a statement that could encompass respect from leadership, colleagues, students, parents and/or community members. Other data, however, suggest that this appreciation comes more often from their colleagues than their organizations as a whole. Eight in ten of respondents agreed that they "feel valued as a professional by my colleagues," and nearly three-quarters that "my efforts are validated and/or recognized by my colleagues." On the other hand, only 63% of all educators—and 59% of early childhood educators—agree or strongly agree that "my opinion is valued at my organization, and only 55% overall that they "receive appropriate recognition for good work at my organization." Interestingly, supplemental school educators score slightly higher than average on these measures, but slightly lower when it comes to recognition and validation by colleagues, perhaps reflecting the generally weaker ties among colleagues in this sector (as mentioned above).

Insights from Interviews

For the most part, interviewees did not emphasize public "recognition" per se as central to their work lives. Because many educators are highly motivated by their intrinsic love of teaching and learning, the kinds of public acknowledgment that are often associated with being "recognized" for one's achievements may be less salient for them than for some other professionals. They instead focused on times when they felt particularly proud of their work and/or "valued and supported" by colleagues, supervisors, and leadership. As one supplemental school educator shared, *"I know the education staff really appreciate me. The Director tells me all the time. I feel that from them."*

An educator working in the innovation/social justice sector identified a number of ways that organizations can make employees feel *"seen, heard, respected, and valued"* including *"fostering work cultures that include and integrate every educator in ways that make them feel valuable, and developing systems for feedback, self-reflection, mentorship, and growth opportunities."* This educator went on to emphasize that developing a culture of recognition and respect starts with the actions of leadership: *"In many cases, the culture begins at the top, so cultivating leaders at the institutional level who want to—and know how to—build on these values is very important."*

Although recognition from colleagues and organizational leaders is highly valued, appreciation from students and families is especially prized by some educators as the true "reward" for their efforts. A day school educator joyfully reflected, *"I don't know of any other career where I can be made to feel like a rock star just by passing by the*

Exhibit 5
Dimensions of Respect and Recognition Experienced by Jewish Educators
(% Agree/Strongly Agree)

	Day School Educators	Supplemental School Educators	Early Childhood Educators	Informal/ Experiential Educators	Total
I am treated with respect on a day-to-day basis	77%	79%	82%	79%	79%
I feel valued as a professional by my colleagues	79%	78%	80%	79%	79%
My efforts are validated and/or recognized by my colleagues	73%	69%	74%	76%	73%
My opinion is valued at my organization	62%	66%	59%	63%	63%
I receive appropriate recognition for good work at my organization	52%	59%	54%	55%	55%

first-grade classroom and all the kids start waving and yelling to me. That gives me a lot of fulfillment." An informal educator recalled that her synagogue used to have a staff appreciation dinner, and noted that such events *"go a long way to making people feel you see them, and telling people that you see what they're doing and that it's good work."* And a camp educator described how "amazing" it feels to receive positive emails from long-time campers and families that provide a valuable boost to morale:

> *You sometimes run through your cycles, get bogged in the work, but to see how much people appreciate it is wonderful.*

Implications for the Field

The educators we surveyed and interviewed highly value being empowered and supported to succeed in their roles, feeling part of collegial and encouraging teams, and receiving respect and appreciation from co-workers, leaders, students, and families. To the extent that these conditions become the norm in more Jewish educational settings, this will have significant benefits for educators, students, and the Jewish community. Our findings suggest a number of areas that call for further reflection and exploration. For example, we know that educators at different stages of their careers prioritize different workplaces features. When starting out, they usually require more intensive support, but once they've found their feet, they seek more autonomy. But we also heard that educators at all stages, no matter how seasoned they are, value guidance from mentors. Schools and organizations, therefore, should work to determine the right balance of autonomy and support for educators at various stages in their careers and to develop strategies to ensure they are providing this balance to educators across the career span.

We also found a potentially concerning discrepancy between the strong sense of collegiality and teamwork felt by most Jewish educators, and the fact that many nevertheless feel discomfort voicing disagreement or sharing unpopular ideas within their organizations. We need to better understand what accounts for this contradiction, and how Jewish educational institutions can change their cultures to address it.

Questions for Educational Leaders and Policymakers

Below are a number of questions that will be important for organizational leaders and policymakers to consider in order to improve workplace conditions for Jewish educators across all sectors:

1. What opportunities and scaffolding need to be developed for educators to both exercise creativity and autonomy within their classrooms and learning spaces, and also feel they have input into broader decision-making in their institutions?
2. What resources do educators feel they are lacking in order to "do their job effectively," and how can these resources be provided to them?
3. Given that supplemental school educators score lower on several key measures of teamwork and collegiality than other sectors, how can these elements be strengthened particularly for these educators? What might be learned from early childhood education programs that often share the same synagogue settings?
4. How can schools assess their workplace culture/school culture regarding open communication? How do schools enable educators to feel comfortable broaching difficult conversations among themselves and with leadership? How do schools foster a culture of critical colleagueship?

5. What does effective supervision of educators look like, and what are the components of effective mentorship of novice educators? How are experiences within Jewish educational settings similar to or different from other private and public educational settings in this regard?
6. How can supervision for educators be made more constructive so that more educators feel they are receiving valuable guidance and mentoring from their supervisors? What kind of training, if any, do professionals in supervisory roles receive, and what additional kinds of professional development would be most valuable?
7. What strengths exist among early childhood supervisors that lead to higher scores in that sector, and how might those be emulated in other sectors? Similarly, how are more informal/experiential educators able to find mentors than educators in other sectors, and what lessons might this hold for the field?
8. In addition to continuing and increasing mentoring and induction programs for new teachers, what programs could be developed to help mid-career and veteran teachers find mentors outside of their organizations, or serve as mentors for others? How might greater comfort among educators with online communication (as a result of the pandemic) be leveraged to create more opportunities to connect educators with mentors beyond their local communities?
9. How can schools and organizations create more opportunities for educators to be recognized and appreciated for their work by leadership, students and families? What can leaders learn from practices in other educational settings and analog fields?

▶ *Schools and organizations should work to determine the right balance of autonomy and support for educators at various stages in their careers and to develop strategies to ensure they are providing this balance to educators across the career span.*

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The Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) is an evolving community of researchers, practitioners, and philanthropic leaders dedicated to improving the quality of knowledge that can be used to guide the work of Jewish education. The Collaborative supports research shaped by the wisdom of practice, practice guided by research, and philanthropy informed by a sound base of evidence.

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Rosov Consulting helps foundations, philanthropists, federations, and grantee organizations in the Jewish communal sector make well informed decisions that enhance their impact. Working at the nexus of the funder and grantee relationship, our expertise includes evaluation, applied research, impact assessment, and the design and implementation of data collection efforts to inform strategy development and planning. Founded in 2008, we utilize our range of life experiences and knowledge to best serve our clients.

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Research Brief | #4

Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators in the United States

Compensation: The Salaries and Benefits of Jewish Educators

Prepared by
Rosov Consulting

August 2021

Graduate School
of Education
& Human Development
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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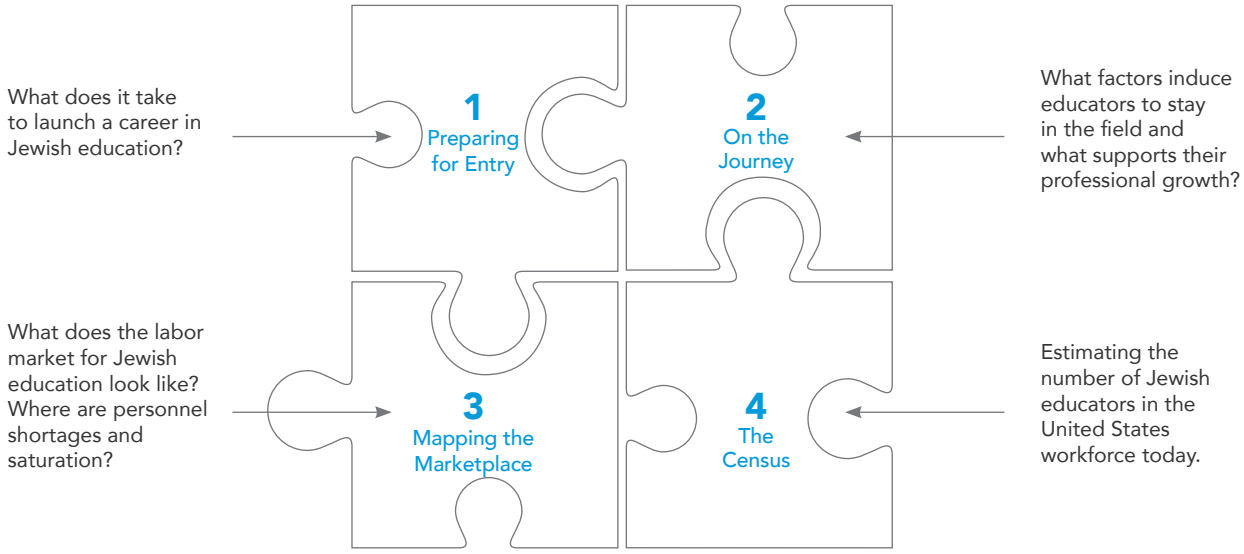
About this Report

The Collaborative 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).

This brief is fourth of a series of four that shares findings from *On the Journey*, one of four research strands of the CASJE Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. The larger CASJE study seeks to understand the recruitment, retention and development of Jewish educators in the United States. You can read more about this study at www.casje.org

The Career Trajectories Study is organized around four central research questions:



On the Journey is designed to elucidate the career pathways of Jewish educators, including their professional growth, compensation, workplace conditions and lived experiences. In 2019 CASJE published the white paper *On the Journey: Concepts That Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators*, which lays out the framework and key questions that underlie this inquiry and serves as a companion to these research briefs.

Acknowledgments

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Summary

Decades of research have demonstrated that compensation is an important factor in discussions about recruiting and retaining educators. This brief, based on data collected from almost 1,300 North American Jewish educators as part of CASJE's *On the Journey* study, explores educator salary and benefits and how these relate to educators' commitments to the field.

Key findings from this sample of Jewish educators include:

- While the mean salary for all full-time respondents is around $63,000, there are significant patterns of variation among subgroups. For example, the mean salary of full-time supplemental school educators is more than $70,000 while that of full-time early childhood educators is $40,000.
- On average, female respondents continue to be paid less than their male peers.
- Early childhood education continues to lag in salary and benefits.
- Respondents with higher salaries have positions that add administrative work to their teaching.
- While a majority of full-time respondents report receiving paid vacation and medical insurance benefits, there are still many others (approximately one-third of these respondents) who report that they do not receive these benefits.
- While overall, compensation does not have a strong relationship with career commitment, those who have left the field or are strongly considering doing so cite salary and benefits as major factors in their decision.

Central Research Questions

The primary questions animating this brief are:

- What financial and other benefits do educators receive?
- To what extent are they satisfied/ dissatisfied with their compensation?
- How do they believe their compensation compares to others in their field and in similar fields?
- How do compensation, benefits, and other financial concerns drive job and career choices and perceived options within the field?

Data and Methods

This brief reports data gathered as part of CASJE's investigation of "Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators." Quantitative data come specifically from the *On the Journey* survey fielded over January and February 2020 to Jewish educators, defined as professionals "involved in designing and delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning." Qualitative data come from follow-up interviews and focus groups with a subsample of fifty-two survey respondents and an additional twenty people who had left the field.

Specifically, study participants were employed in five occupational sectors: (1) formal Jewish education (day schools, early childhood, supplemental schools); (2) informal/experiential settings including both immersive (e.g., camp) and non-immersive (e.g., youth organizations, JCCs); (3) organizations involved in engagement, social justice, and innovation (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable); (4) communal institutions that may employ someone in an educational role (e.g., scholars in residence at Federations or Jewish educators at Jewish Family Services); and (5) non-organizational networks and online learning (e.g., independent B'nai Mitzvah or Hebrew tutors).

The survey was fielded in eight communities selected to represent a range of sizes of Jewish populations and include diverse geographic regions of the United States. The communities were: Austin, TX, Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, Detroit, MI, Las Vegas, NV, Miami-Dade, FL, Nassau and Westchester Counties, NY, and the San Francisco Bay Area, CA. (For more information about the communities' Jewish educational ecosystems, please see "**On the Journey: Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments**.")

The total number of survey respondents was 1,278, of which approximately 40% are day school educators, 20% supplemental school educators, 20% early childhood educators, 10% informal educators, and 10% in innovation/social justice organizations, federated institutions, or working as independent educators. All respondents had been in the field between six and thirty years.

For the analyses in this brief, we include the 725 respondents working full time, as defined by working thirty-five hours or more per week in a Jewish educational setting (unless otherwise indicated), and the 367 working part time (fewer than thirty-five hours per week).[1] The distribution of respondents by sector and venue groups is shown in Exhibit 1, which also indicates the number of full-time and part-time respondents as a percentage of the total number of respondents in that sector/venue. Not surprisingly, a lower rate of full-time educators was found in the supplemental school sample, early childhood education sample, and among independent educators who responded to the survey.

The survey was designed to explore the relationships between "background" characteristics of individual educators and their work settings, the interventions and workplace conditions that educators may experience in their careers, and the desired outcomes for educators (self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and career commitment) that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. Interviews and focus groups were designed to bring both additional richness and nuance to the findings from the survey data.

More information about the sample, methods, response rates, and instrumentation can be found in "**On the Journey: Study**

1 186 respondents did not provide information about the number of hours they work per week.

Exhibit 1
Number of Respondents for Sector and Venue Groups, Full-Time and Part-Time Respondents

	Number of Full-Time Respondents	Percent of All Respondents in Sector/Venue Who Are Full Time	Number of Part-Time Respondents	Percent of All Respondents in Sector/Venue Who Are Part Time
Sector 1: Day School Venue	319	77%	96	23%
Sector 1: Supplemental School Venue	125	53%	112	47%
Sector 1: Early Childhood Education Venue	89	48%	97	52%
Sector 2: Informal/Experiential Education	95	82%	21	18%
Sector 3: Innovation and Social Justice	37	86%	6	14%
Sector 4: Communal Educators	25	86%	4	14%
Sector 5: Independent Educators	25	48%	27	52%
Other/Missing	10		4	
Total	725		367	

Methodology and Data Collection Instruments." We note that the results reported come from a limited sample of self-reported data. We cannot be sure of the extent to which the data reported here are representative of their communities or Jewish educators in other communities. Therefore, our results are meant to be suggestive of trends but not generalizable.

▶ *Not surprisingly, a lower rate of full-time educators was found in the supplemental school sample, early childhood education sample, and among independent educators who responded to the survey.*

Background

Why and How Compensation Matter

Educator pay and compensation are variables that loom large both in decisions about whether to stay in an educational position or career over time and in perspectives on overall job satisfaction. The general education literature reports consistent findings on the relationship between salary and attrition spanning at least back to the early 1980s.[2] However, the literature says relatively little about the role of financial compensation in the professional trajectory of Jewish educators. Not surprisingly, the little data that exist on Jewish educators (e.g., Educators in Jewish Schools Study) are consistent with their peers in general education in emphasizing the important role that compensation plays in career decisions.

Of course, questions of whether to enter or leave a field are unlikely to hinge on a single variable. When entering a field, an educator may be willing to accept relatively poor compensation in exchange for the intrinsic rewards that teaching offers.[3] In fields such as religious education, a sense of mission can provide a counterbalance to the negative effects of low compensation,[4] providing such schools with the ability to retain qualified teachers even with low rates of compensation. The sense of mission experienced by religious educators may counteract the negative impact of lower salaries.[5] Nevertheless, the centrality of compensation cannot be ignored. Results such as these have the potential to justify salary inadequacies for Jewish educators.

> ▶ *When entering a field, an educator may be willing to accept relatively poor compensation in exchange for the intrinsic rewards that teaching offers*

2 Borman et al., 2008; Hughes, 2012; Pham et al., 2020; Spring & Taylor, 2021.
3 See Johnson & Birkeland, 2004.
4 See Kress & Ben Avi, 2006; O'Keefe, 2003; Pomson, 2005; Przygocki, 2004.
5 Kress & Ben Avi, 2006; Przygocki, 2004.

The Salaries and Benefits of Jewish Educators

The following sections report on the salaries and benefits received by Jewish educators working in all five sectors (formal education, informal/experiential education, innovation and social justice, communal institutions, and independent/online learning).

Overall Salary Findings

Exhibits 2 and 3 present the frequency of salary ranges for full-time employees in the formal education sector (i.e., sector 1, which includes day school, supplemental school, and early childhood education venues) as well as the other sectors.

Exhibit 2
Salaries for Full-Time Educators, Sector 1 (Formal Education)

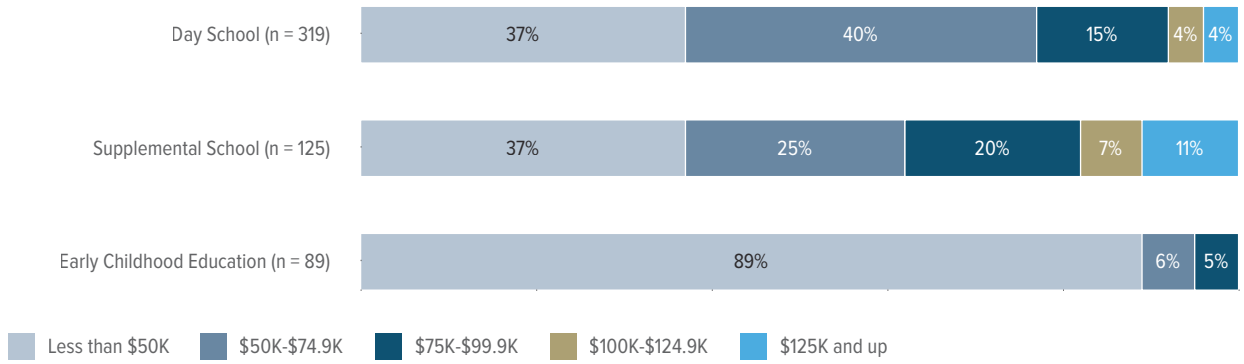
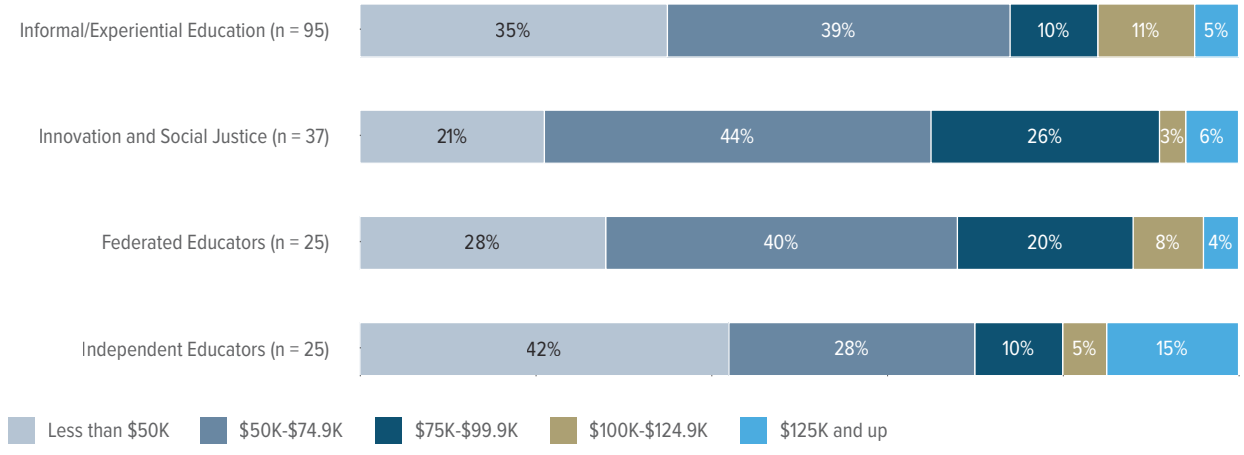


Exhibit 3
Salaries for Full-Time Educators, Sectors 2–5



Exhibits 4 and 5 present the frequency of salary ranges for part-time employees in the formal education sector (sector 1, includes day school, supplemental school, and early childhood education) as well as the other sectors.

Mean and median salary estimates for both full-time and part-time educators were obtained using the midpoints of the ranges shown in Exhibits 2 through 5. Mean and median estimates are shown in Exhibit 6.

While the median salary of all full-time Jewish educators surveyed is $63,000, and for all part-time Jewish educators is $25,500, there is a range across sectors/venues that we will discuss below.

Exhibit 4
Salaries for Part-Time Educators, Sector 1 (Formal Education)

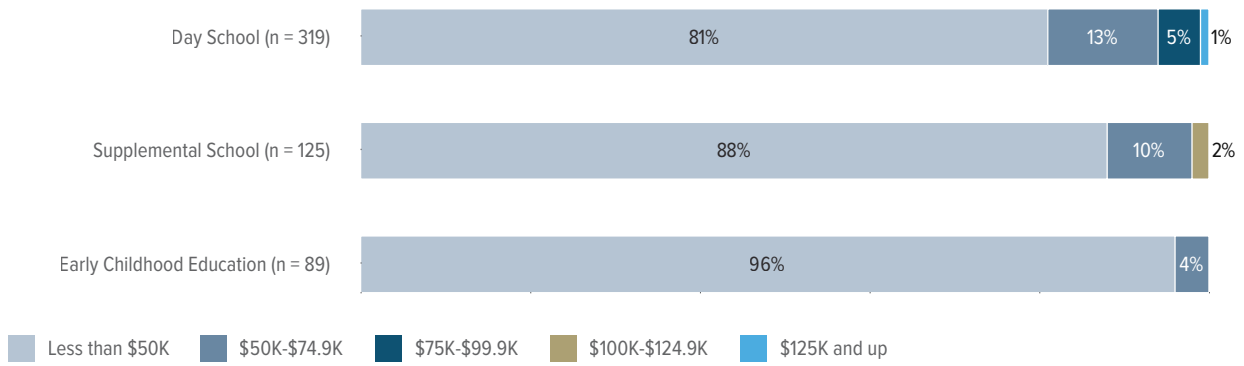


Exhibit 5
Salaries for Part-Time Educators, Sectors 2–5

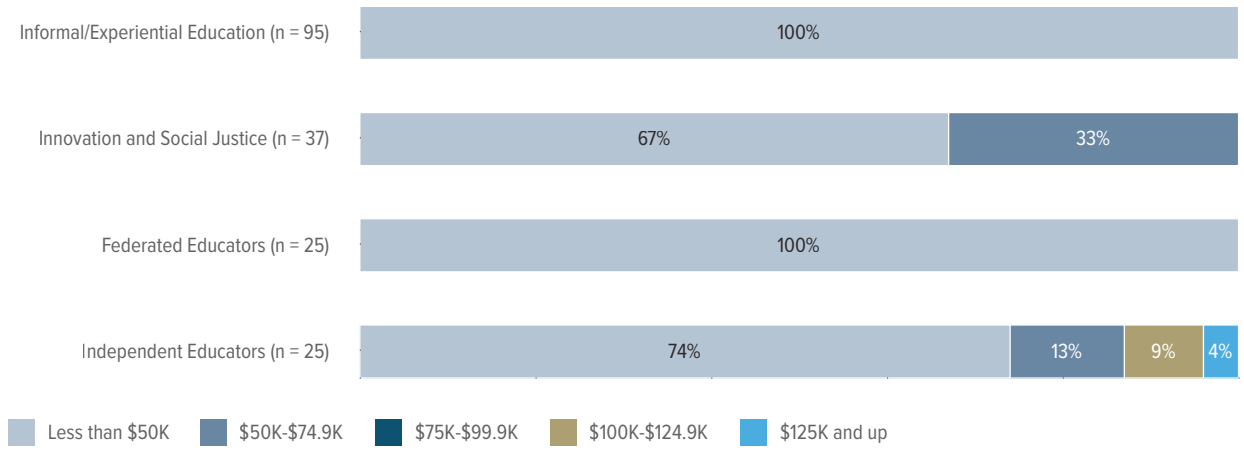


Exhibit 6
Educator Salaries by Sector

	Mean for All Educators	Median for All Educators	Mean for Full-Time Educators	Median for Full-Time Educators	Mean for Part-Time Educators	Median for Part-Time Educators
Day School	$55,000	$63,000	$62,500	$58,500	$41,000	$36,000
Supplemental School	$52,000	$37,500	$72,500	$63,500	$34,000	$15,000
Early Childhood Education	$34,000	$37,500	$40,000	$37,000	$30,000	$12,000
Informal Education	$53,000	$37,500	$66,000	$59,500	$32,000	$28,000
Innovation and Social Justice	$61,000	$63,000	$70,000	$66,500	$40,000	$25,000
Communal Institutions	$60,000	$63,000	$67,500	$70,000	$37,500	$37,500
Independent Educators	$57,000	$38,000	$71,000	$54,000	$47,000	$34,500
All Sectors/Venues	$51,000	$38,000	$63,000	$56,000	$36,000	$25,500

Overall Benefits Findings

Turning to benefits received by Jewish educators in Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5, which represents independent educators, does not apply here), the most common benefits received by full-time educators in our sample are paid vacation (65%), medical insurance (62%), retirement plans (48%), and dental insurance (47%). Few part-time respondents receive benefits; the most common is paid vacation, received by 31%. Nine percent (9%) of full-time and 40% of part-time educators report not receiving any financial benefits at all. See Exhibit 7 for full-time benefits received and Exhibit 8 for part-time benefits received.

Exhibit 7
Benefits Received by Full-Time Educators, Sectors 1–4

	All Full-Time Educators	Sector 1			Sector 2	Sector 3	Sector 4
		Day School	Supplemental School	Early Childhood	Informal/ Experiential	Innovation/ Social Justice	Communal Institutions
Paid vacation	65%	59%	53%	65%	86%	84%	100%
Medical insurance/ health care	62%	65%	39%	52%	77%	76%	92%
Dental insurance	47%	53%	23%	33%	60%	65%	84%
Retirement plan [401(k), 403(b)]	48%	56%	29%	28%	55%	49%	88%
Vision insurance	36%	38%	16%	26%	43%	54%	88%
Professional development stipend	38%	31%	46%	24%	51%	43%	72%
Life insurance	28%	28%	13%	24%	33%	38%	68%
Reduced/free tuition for children at school	32%	41%	25%	19%	35%	11%	24%
Short- or long-term disability	27%	29%	19%	12%	36%	24%	52%
Ability to work from home	22%	4%	43%	0%	43%	76%	68%
Paid family leave	18%	13%	21%	11%	25%	35%	56%
Reduced/free congregational membership	16%	5%	36%	20%	22%	8%	4%
Reduced/free program fees	16%	6%	32%	11%	35%	11%	16%
Flex time	15%	6%	20%	3%	27%	43%	44%
None of the above	9%	5%	27%	10%	1%	3%	0%

Exhibit 8
Benefits Received by Part-Time Educators, Sectors 1–2[6]

		Sector 1			Sector 2
	All Part-Time Educators	Day School	Supplemental School	Early Childhood	Informal/ Experiential
Paid vacation	31%	53%	14%	30%	19%
Medical insurance/ health care	15%	27%	3%	14%	29%
Dental insurance	10%	18%	2%	7%	29%
Retirement plan [401(k), 403(b)]	12%	22%	4%	10%	29%
Vision insurance	9%	17%	1%	6%	19%
Professional development stipend	18%	22%	15%	17%	24%
Life insurance	9%	18%	4%	6%	19%
Reduced/free tuition for children at school	18%	31%	15%	11%	24%
Short- or long-term disability	6%	15%	1%	2%	10%
Ability to work from home	7%	4%	8%	0%	14%
Paid family leave	4%	7%	3%	3%	5%
Reduced/free congregational membership	10%	3%	15%	10%	24%
Reduced/free program fees	8%	7%	8%	7%	19%
Flex time	7%	7%	7%	2%	10%
None of the above	40%	15%	66%	39%	33%

6 As per Exhibit 1, there were too few part-time respondents in Sectors 3 and 4 to include here.

Day School and Early Childhood Compensation are Essentially Stagnant

Placing the current findings in context, it is instructive to look at comparative data, both historical and contemporary. The 1998 Teachers Report of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) focused on day school and supplemental school teachers, including both full-time and part-time educators.[7] For day school teachers, the mean salary in Torah U'Mesorah (Orthodox) and Solomon Schechter (Conservative) schools was approximately $19,000, or $30,000 in today's dollars.[8] In the Educators in Jewish School Study (EJSS), which reported data collected in 2006, 22% of full-time day school educators reported salaries in the $40,000–$49,000 range, with 47% in higher ranges and 32% in lower ranges. Using these salary ranges, the mean full-time day school educator salary for EJSS respondents can be estimated to be approximately $49,000. Adjusting for the Consumer Price Index, the EJSS day school educators would be making approximately $63,000 in today's dollars.

The 2019 Leading Edge Employee Experience Survey indicates that the most frequent range of salaries for day school educators is $50,000–$59,999, with a mean of approximately $54,900.[9] However, this sample included a substantial number of part-time employees and those with purely administrative positions (the latter are not included in the On the Journey sample).

Looking beyond the Jewish context, the National Center for Educational Statistics reports that the average base salary for full-time independent school teachers in 2011–2012 was $40,200, though this includes only those with "frontline" (teaching-only) jobs.[10]

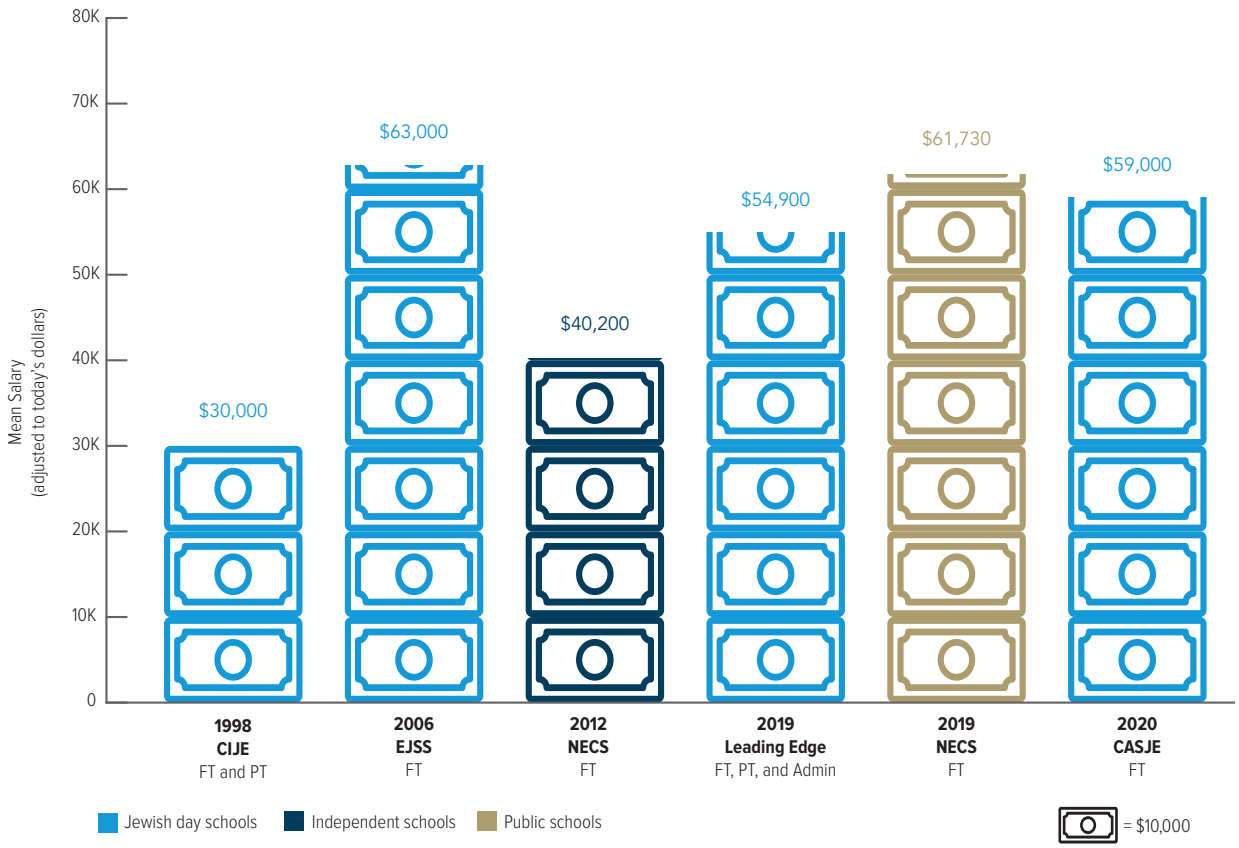
Within our sample, those with teaching-only positions make approximately $59,000, suggesting that Jewish day school teachers are paid at a higher scale than independent school teachers overall. The National Center for Educational Statistics reports that public school teachers were paid an average of $61,730 (in 2018–2019), on par with Jewish educators. Adjusting for the value of the dollar, the wages of public school educators are also stagnant (and even a bit lower) compared to those of the past two decades.[11] Looking at our sample, these comparisons suggest that, adjusting for inflation, day school educator salaries have not increased over the past fifteen years.

Comparisons with other data sources must be accompanied by several caveats. Our sample excludes educators in the earliest and latest career stages (assumedly making the bottom and top salaries). The comparative data sources do not make this distinction, and it cannot be assumed that the lack of both extremes in our sample would provide adequate balance. In addition, some of the comparative data include both part-time and full-time employees. In these cases, we provide information for comparison from full- and part-time educators in our sample. Comparisons of benefits is particularly tricky, as there are often nuances within categories (for example, we may know that health insurance is offered but not know what, if any, is the employer's contribution).

Comparisons to educators in other sectors are more difficult to come by. The EJSS data for supplemental school educators is not reported in a way that allows for comparison. The Leading Edge survey allows comparisons for early childhood educators and informal educators. For early childhood, the most frequent salary range was less than $20,000, with a mean of approximately $32,000. For informal educators, the most frequent salary range was $40,000–$49,000, with a mean of

7 Gamoran et al., 1998.
8 The salary of teachers in "Other Jewish" day schools was approximately $16,000.
9 Leading Edge, 2019.
10 National Center for Education Statistics, 2012, 2016.
11 National Center for Education Statistics, 2019.

Exhibit 9
Compensation Over Time — Comparisons of Salaries Across Educational Contexts



approximately $40,000. In the Leading Edge survey, however, early childhood and informal educator numbers include large numbers of part-time educators.

In terms of benefits, some comparative data are available for full-time educators. Full-time respondents to the CIJE survey (representing the day school, supplemental school, and early childhood venues) indicate that 48% received health benefits and 45% received a pension. For full-time EJSS respondents (day school and supplemental school combined), 48% received health benefits and 49% received retirement benefits. While venue-by-venue comparisons are not possible (due to the overwhelming number of part-time educators in the CIJE and EJSS samples), there are indications that benefits for supplemental school and early childhood educators remain low.

Outside of the Jewish context, additional information is available for early childhood educators. McClean, Whitebook, and Roh reported that for 2017 the full-time equivalent early childhood educator mean salary was approximately $22,000, though this includes extrapolations from part-time educators.[12] The US Department of Education found the 2015 mean salary to be approximately $29,000, though this too included part-time educators. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a 2020 median salary in 2020 of approximately $32,000, but it is unclear if their sample included only full-time educators.[13] For comparison's sake, when both part- and full-time educators are included in the analyses,

12 McClean, Whitebook, and Roh, 2019.
13 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021.

the mean salary for early childhood educators in our sample is $34,000. Again, caution is needed in making comparisons, because the relative proportion of full- to part-time employees in the comparative samples is not accounted.[14]

Comparisons for the informal education category are further complicated by the diversity of venues that fall under this heading. The Leading Edge (2019) survey found the median salary to be $48,000. The JCC Association of North America reports that those with the title "Jewish Educator" earn an average of $55,500, while Youth Directors make between $41,4000 and $47,400, depending on the age of the youth with whom they work. JCC Early Childhood Lead Teachers' average salary is $32,700. The American Camp Association reports that camp directors (who would have been screened out of our sample if they do not perform frontline duties), receive a median salary of $60,000; salaries for directors of "religious" camps are $51,000.[15] For associate/assistant directors, the median salary is $48,000. For all camps, nearly all directors and associate/assistant directors received paid vacation, while close to 90% received health insurance.[16] In 2019, "Youth Ministers" earned an average of $34,200, though the sample includes part-time employees, and salaries vary widely by denomination; 49% received health benefits.[17]

Jewish Educators are Generally Dissatisfied with Salary and Benefits

Salary and benefits rank toward the bottom of respondents' reported levels of satisfaction with various job components. As shown in Exhibits 10 and 11, only 11% are "very satisfied" with their salary, and 33% are

Exhibit 10
Satisfaction with Salary, Sectors 1–2 (n = 928)

	Overall	Day School	Supplemental School	Early Childhood	Informal/ Experiential
Somewhat satisfied	33%	30%	33%	26%	38%
Very satisfied	11%	12%	13%	10%	11%

Exhibit 11
Satisfaction with Benefits, Sectors 1–2 (n = 742)

	Overall	Day School	Supplemental School	Early Childhood	Informal/ Experiential
Somewhat satisfied	20%	31%	12%	18%	30%
Very satisfied	25%	20%	19%	19%	22%

14 Vogelstein and Kaplan (2002) put ECE "full-time teacher" salaries at $19,400, or roughly $28,300 in 2020 dollars. One might conclude that gains were made; however Vogelstein and Kaplan's numbers are for "10 month contracts," and our data included salaries in year-round (12 months) settings. More importantly, our sample includes around 20% of "mixed role" individuals (with both administrative and teaching responsibilities, while Vogelstein and Kaplan's include about 2%, which likely accounts for the salary differential. As such, our data suggest that ECE salaries have remained essentially stagnant over time.

15 The inclusion of private, for-profit camps brought up the overall average.

16 JCC Association of North America, 2018.

17 Lawrence, 2019.

"somewhat satisfied;"[18] for benefits, these numbers are 25% and 20%, respectively.[19]

Those full-time respondents who are the primary breadwinners[20] in their household report higher compensation and greater satisfaction with their compensation at statistically significant levels.[21] No statistically significant differences were found in the number of, or satisfaction with, the number of benefits received by those who are primary breadwinners and those who are not.

Supplemental school educators are statistically significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with their benefits than either day school or informal educators. Informal educators, in contrast, receive statistically significantly more benefits than any other group. Statistically significantly higher salaries were reported by those working in the field for a longer time, though the time spent and one's current organization was not statistically significantly related (possibly because people will enter organizations at different pay levels and points in their careers). Satisfaction with one's pay was not statistically related to the length of time working in the field.

For Full-Time Educators, Salary Lags for those with Teaching-Only Responsibilities, Women, and those in Early Childhood

Teaching-Only vs. Mixed Role Differences

Not surprisingly, those with roles that include administrative/supervisory work in addition to teaching report statistically significantly higher salaries than those without an administrative/supervisory component to their work.[22] These differences can be quite pronounced (see Exhibit 12).

In supplemental school and informal education, the mixed-role group receives a statistically significantly higher number of benefits than did those with teaching-only jobs. Exhibit 13 provides a more detailed breakdown of the four most common benefits for each role by sector/venue. Again, stark differences are apparent, particularly for

Exhibit 12
Mean Difference in Compensation for Those with Mixed Roles and Those with Teaching-Only Roles, By Venue

Day School	+ $21,800
Supplemental School	+ $17,000
Early Childhood Education	+ $12,700
Informal/Experiential Education	+ $34,700

18 These findings are consistent with those of the Leading Edge (2019) survey, which reported that only 40% of respondents feel that they are "fairly compensated for the work I do." For day school educators responding to the EJSS (2006) study, only approximately 25% of respondents reported that "There are opportunities for me to develop an economically rewarding professional career." However, differences between our sample and EJSS samples make comparisons less meaningful, as noted previously.

19 Numbers of respondents in Sectors 3 and 4 were too small to include in Exhibits 7 and 8.

20 Note that breadwinners are disproportionately male but are represented equally across sectors and have been in the Jewish workforce for a comparable number of years as non-breadwinners.

21 Here and throughout the document, all statistical differences reported are at the $p < .05$ level or lower.

22 The proportion of respondents in each role varied by sector/venue. Those with teaching-only roles accounted for 83% of day school respondents, 50% of supplemental school, 81% of early childhood educators, and 39% of informal/experiential educators. Sectors 3–5 are omitted due to small numbers of respondents.

Exhibit 13
Benefits for Teaching-Only and Mixed-Roles by Sector/Venue

	Day School		Supplemental School		Early Childhood Education		Informal/ Experiential		Overall	
	Teaching	Mixed	Teaching	Mixed	Teaching	Mixed	Teaching	Mixed	Teaching	Mixed
Paid vacation	57%	68%	21%	84%	60%	81%	81%	90%	56%	83%
Medical insurance/ health care	65%	64%	15%	62%	53%	50%	70%	81%	57%	70%
Dental insurance	54%	49%	10%	35%	39%	13%	57%	63%	46%	50%
Retirement plan [401(k), 403(b)]	56%	56%	8%	49%	29%	31%	49%	60%	45%	54%
No benefits	5%	6%	49%	5%	11%	6%	0	2%	11%	4%

supplemental school educators. No statistically significant differences were found in satisfaction with salary or benefits based on the nature of the respondent's role.

Gender Differences

We examined gender differences and found that, overall, men in our sample are more highly paid than women at statistically significant levels (see Exhibit 14). This is consistent with findings from the Leading Edge survey. In our sample, the statistically significant gender difference was present for day school, supplemental school, and informal education (in early childhood, only one male respondent was included, so no analyses were run for gender), and for both teacher-only and mixed roles. In supplemental school only, male respondents were statistically significantly more satisfied with their compensation than were female respondents. No gender statistically significant differences were found for the number of benefits or the reported satisfaction with benefits.

We also looked at the intersection of role and gender. For day school respondents, statistically significant gender differences in compensation level were found only for teachers. No statistically significant salary differences were found for gender

Exhibit 14
Mean and Median Salary, Full-Time Employees, by Gender, Overall Sample

	Mean	Median
Male	$82,900	$76,000
Female	$57,800	$51,500

for those in day schools with mixed roles. For supplemental school and informal/ experiential educators, men were paid higher than women regardless of the nature of their work (teaching or mixed roles) at statistically significant levels. (Again, early childhood education was excluded due to small numbers of men.)

Early Childhood Differences

Although no statistically significant differences were found between the number of benefits received by educators at supplemental schools and day schools, early childhood educators received statistically significantly fewer benefits than either of those. While satisfaction with one's salary did not statistically vary among sectors, within formal education, early childhood educators were significantly less satisfied than either day school or supplemental school teachers.

Early childhood salaries were statistically significantly lower than those in all other groups. In addition, supplemental school salaries were found to be statistically significantly higher than those of day school educators. Informal educators were compensated at a rate between that of, but not statistically different from, supplemental school and day school educators. The relatively high levels of compensation for full-time supplemental school and informal educators can be explained by the fact that large proportions of the full-time educators in these setting have jobs that include some administrative work.[23]

Community Size

There are no statistically significant differences in our sample for salary and benefits based on community size. Educators in large communities are more satisfied with their benefits than those in extra-large communities and are more satisfied with their benefits that those in either extra-large or medium communities, all at statistically significant levels. Community-by-community information is reported in Exhibit 15. Since the response rates vary widely among communities, however, inferences that can be drawn from these judgments are limited. San Francisco has the highest mean salary, followed by Nassau-Westchester and Boston. Austin, Las Vegas, and Miami-Dade have the lowest mean salary. When cost of living adjustments are taken into account, the salaries cluster more tightly, as shown in Exhibit 15.

A Complicated Relationship Between Compensation and Retention

Satisfaction with one's salary and benefits (but not actual salary and number of benefits) was positively related (at statistically significant levels) to one's commitment to remain in Jewish education. When taken together with other variables as part of regression analyses, neither salary nor the number of benefits are statistically related to satisfaction, career commitment, and sense of self-efficacy.

Among the small number of respondents (21) who said they were considering leaving the field, compensation was by far the most frequent reason given for wanting

Exhibit 15
Mean Salary by Community, Adjusted for Cost of Living

	Mean	Adjusted
Austin	$57,000	$89,500
Boston	$72,500	$81,500
Chicago	$64,000	$78,500
Detroit	$56,500	$81,500
Miami-Dade	$53,000	$68,000
Nassau-Westchester	$72,500	$72,500 [23]
San Francisco	$79,000	$85,500
Las Vegas	$52,500	$76,000

23 Half of full-time informal respondents have jobs that include both frontline and administrative work, as do 42% of supplemental school respondents. In contrast, in both the day school and ECE categories, only 14% of full-time respondents have administrative duties.

24 Note that the adjustment was calculated using a cost of living indexed to New York City. Because the New York sites in the sample were from outside of the five boroughs, it is likely that the standardized number, which was calculated using a figure that included the five boroughs, would be considerably higher if cost of living information were available for the New York City region outside of the five boroughs.

to do so (52% selected this as the main reason). Compensation was also the most common reason for wanting to leave one's organization, selected by 39% of the thirty-nine respondents who were considering this.

In interviews, educators provided illuminating details about how salary and benefits contribute to their overall job satisfaction and feelings of professional self-worth. As a number explained, they have no illusions about compensation in the field and certainly didn't choose to become Jewish educators for material gain. Consistent with findings in both general[25] and Jewish education,[26] concerns about compensation may be counterbalanced by a sense of mission or favorable workplace conditions.

However, the pay levels not only leave some struggling financially (especially part-time employees, many of whom limit their hours by necessity and not by choice), they also send a message to educators that they are not respected by their organizations and communities. Jewish educators are aware that their peers in other fields and in public education are better compensated. Some mentioned that they believe compensation in other private schools may be lower, but that other private schools often offer better working conditions or other benefits that make up for this, including more time off, more flexible schedules, and/or more quality professional development. These perceptions are compounded by the lack of transparency in many organizations regarding salary decisions, which can leave educators feeling even more dissatisfied as they wonder why they aren't prioritized as highly as their colleagues (or a new school auditorium).

While many Jewish educators are willing to accept low compensation in exchange for passion-inspired work, decisions about remaining in a specific job or in field more generally are also influenced by factors such as the cost of living in their region, the extent to which they are the sole or main breadwinner of their families, and the lack of adequate benefits in their organizations. Several interviewees said that they would be more likely to remain if they had professional development and/or benefits equal to those of public school teachers, particularly healthcare and childcare, two of the expenses that burden Jewish educators the most. Male educators may be less willing to accept low pay in their organizations or the field in general. Overall, it seems that low compensation in itself is not usually the sole deciding factor for remaining or leaving, but when other factors interfere with the intrinsic rewards of the work—such as a toxic boss or a general feeling of exploitation in a position—the pay becomes less tolerable (for more on this, see "Workplace Environments" brief). Finally, younger educators who do not yet have families express both a desire to stay in the field and some serious doubts about whether it is possible to do so and also get married and have children. When faced with the inadequacy of one's salary to cover the high cost of day care or Jewish schooling, having a child can become a "breaking point" when those whose commitments are wavering decide to leave the field for good.

Three representative excerpts from interviews are included here:

> *Full time in Jewish education is not a bad living, but not great. What I get is flexibility. We offer vacation, but not benefits because it's not full time … [and they are] expecting you have a spouse offering that. But the flexibility is there. So if you can't pay the money, offer the other incentives.* [Innovation/Social Justice educator]

> *I'm incredibly dedicated to Jewish ed, if I wasn't, I'd be out of here. I just got this promotion, an increased responsibility, and I got my contract, and it is exactly the same as last year. I thought it was a mistake, but they said they just didn't have the funds. And of course, I said, ok,*

25 See Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Liu et al., 2004.
26 Kress & Ben Avi, 2006.

I'll accept that. But it's a blow to hear from other people. [Day School teacher]

The only reason I hadn't considered [Jewish education] as a career is because I didn't think I could live a comfortable life. I need to be able to pay my kids yeshivah tuitions, give them bar mitzvahs. You don't need to be crazy rich to live in the community, but what you is need is not a small number. There are so many people who would love [to work in Jewish education] but wonder how they would pay the mortgage. [Informal educator]

▶ *Consistent with findings in both general and Jewish education, concerns about compensation may be counterbalanced by a sense of mission or favorable workplace conditions.*

Implications for the Field

Many of these findings reinforce the adage that "the more things change, the more they stay the same." The broadest implication of these findings is that despite decades of concern about compensation in Jewish education, little has changed. This is particularly true in early childhood education, where the mean salary for full-time educators remains at just $40,000. In all venues, taking on administrative duties opens the door to somewhat higher salaries and improved benefits. However, this means that those educators with the most experience will have strong incentive to reduce their direct contact with learners.

In our sample, day school educator salaries continue to stagnate. In terms of "actual" (adjusted) dollars, these educators are making approximately the same as they did a decade ago. These educators, however, do seem to be better compensated than independent school teachers in general.[27] Early childhood educators' compensation continues to lag behind that in other sectors. Likewise, though the gender gap in compensation has been previously documented, and has gotten even more attention in recent years, women still are paid less on average than men.

Stagnant wages are of particular concern given the current economic context. Issues such as student debt and tuition costs for colleges and private schools have become part of a national debate. The trend toward increasing wealth over the course of generations has ended; millennial Jews are, in general, less wealthy than their parents. Jewish educators can be hit from both sides, paying off the debts accrued in achieving the degree of education needed for their work and at the same time providing a rich—and expensive—Jewish life and education for their own families.

This brief is being written over a year into the onset of seismic societal shifts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there are data still emerging about the impact of the pandemic on staffing patterns of Jewish educational settings, early trends suggest that, with the possible exclusion of day schools, trends will move toward leaner programs, with the overall number of staff reduced.[28] At the same time, the demand for both physical and mental healthcare is rising as a result of the pandemic, adding urgency to the issue of health benefits. The persistence of the gender gap in wages is another problematic instance of a perennial and pervasive problem. The past several years have brought renewed attention to this issue, with studies continuing to document the gender-based wage gap.[29] In an effort to promote salary transparency, hundreds of Jewish communal professionals (anonymously) shared their compensation information on a public spreadsheet.[30] Our results confirm the continued urgency of addressing this issue.

At the same time, there are some areas of strength suggested by these findings. The past decade has seen efforts to professionalize work in supplemental and informal education. This has included the development of positions that allow for full-time employment in venues generally characterized by large numbers of part-time educators. Our findings suggest that a full-time job in these areas is as financially plausible as it is in the day school venue (though we admit this sets a low bar). We can speculate that the relatively strong positions of supplemental school and informal educators are related to communal/systemic interventions that have taken place over the past decade or so. In supplemental schools, efforts have been made to increase the number of full-time positions. Informal

27 National Center for Education Statistics, 2012.
28 Rosov Consulting, 2020; Wertheimer & Pomson, 2021.
29 See Epstein & Jacobs, 2019.
30 Klebe et al., 2020.

education has been the target of funding initiatives and both in-service and pre-service training. Our data suggest that career pathways in these areas are at least as strong (in terms of compensation) as those in other arenas of Jewish education. However, when it comes to benefits, supplemental school educators lag.

The association of salary and retention remains ambiguous. When taken in conjunction with other variables, the role of compensation in decisions about whether or not to remain in the field may loom large psychologically (as is apparent in the narratives provided in interviews) but not statistically. This discrepancy may be explained, in part, by the nature of the sample. This sample includes those who have been in the field for at least five years. It is possible that these respondents have come to terms with the low salary within the context of other, more positive, aspects of their work. Also, it is possible that those most dissatisfied with their compensation already left the field and, therefore, would appear in our interview sample and not our survey sample.

For those who are generally committed to the field, dissatisfaction with compensation appears to be counterbalanced by workplace conditions (as reported in the "Workplace Environments" brief) and a sense of mission (as reported in the "Professional Development" brief). Compensation looms large, however, to those most considering leaving their workplace or the field, and to those who have already left the field. Poor compensation appears to "hurt" educators directly, in terms of concerns over not being able to make ends meet, and indirectly as a proxy for lack of respect for their work. That Jewish educators do not seem to be worse off than their peers in secular education offers little consolation.

Questions for Discussion or Further Exploration

For Educational Leaders and Policy Makers

- How can levels of compensation for educators match the value that the Jewish community espouses for Jewish education?
- How might the field of Jewish early childhood education benefit from the same efforts at structural professionalization—particularly the creation of full-time positions—that seem to have benefited supplemental and informal educators?
- What career paths can be developed to maintain qualified educators in frontline positions, rather than incentivizing shifts to administration?

For Future Study

- As noted, the post-COVID Jewish educational landscape is uncertain. What, if any, elements of online instruction will become part of the "new normal?" Will pandemic-related economic hardships result in reduced capacity on the part of some organizations, or decreased ability for those in the community to pay for education at those organizations? The ramifications for staffing and compensation are an open question that will need to be explored as the pandemic's aftermath becomes clearer.
- Questions of race have become more salient in the Jewish communal conversation. Further study can be done to explore possible differences in compensation due to race.

- This study looked at individuals within communities; specific organizations were not identified. Comparing the compensation patterns within organizations (and perhaps comparing organizations with better/worse track records of teacher retention) can add an additional layer of understanding to the exploration of the connections between compensation and retention.
- Relatively small response rates from the innovation and social justice, federation/communal educator, and independent educator sectors limited our ability to comment on these areas. Further research should be done to deepen our understanding of the dynamics of compensation within these sectors.

▶ *The broadest implication of these findings is that despite decades of concern about compensation in Jewish education, little has changed.*

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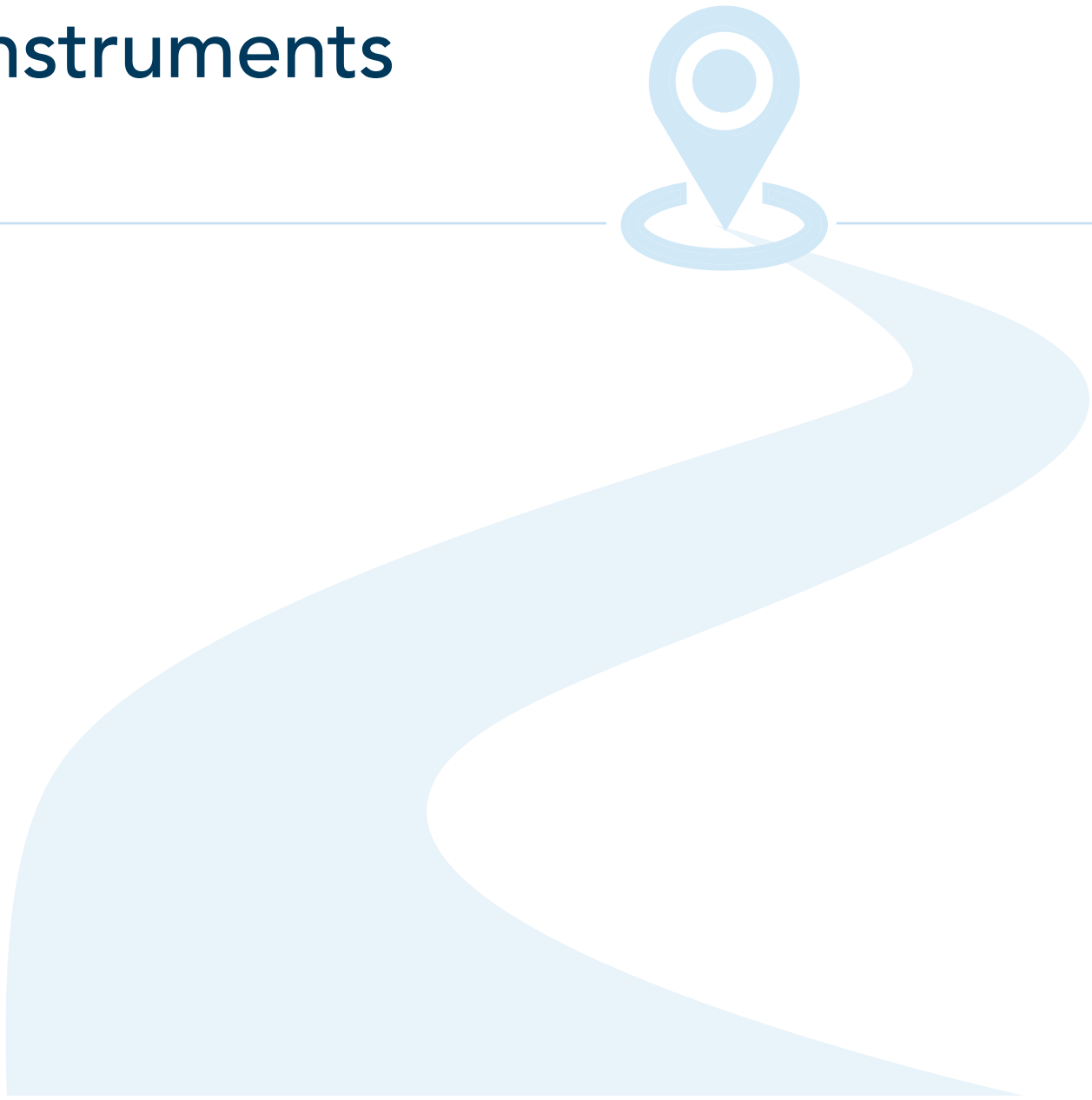
Appendix

Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators in the United States

Study Methodology and Data Collection Instruments



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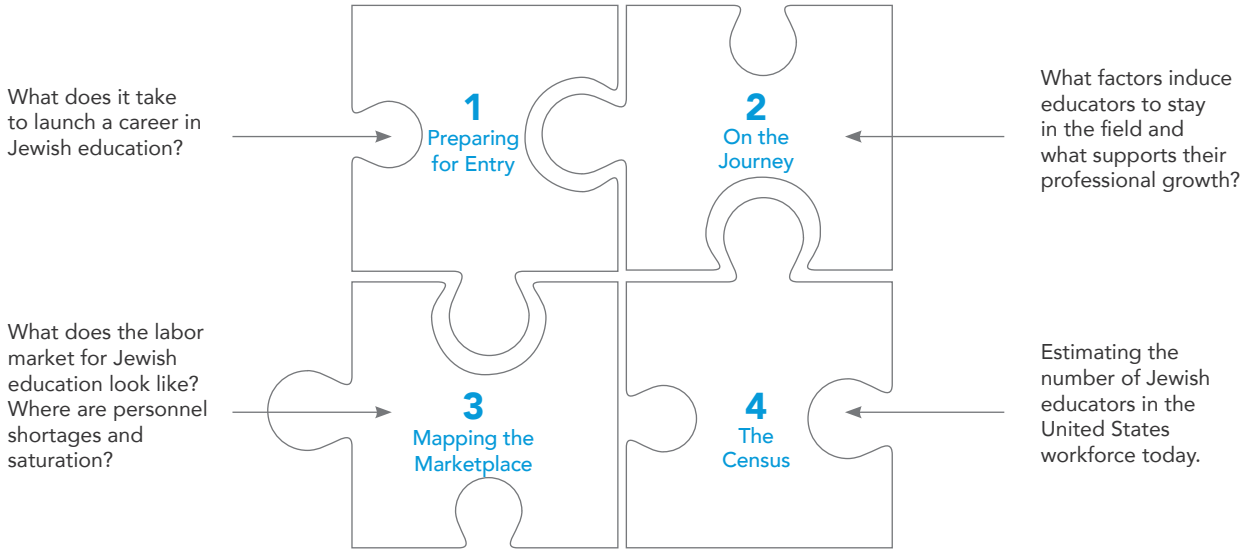
About this Report

The Collaborative 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).

This document accompanies the four briefs that share findings from *On the Journey*, one of four research strands of the CASJE Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. The larger CASJE study seeks to understand the recruitment, retention and development of Jewish educators in the United States. You can read more about this study at www.casje.org

The Career Trajectories Study is organized around four central research questions:



On the Journey is designed to elucidate the career pathways of Jewish educators, including their professional growth, compensation, workplace conditions and lived experiences. In 2019 CASJE published the white paper *On the Journey: Concepts That Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators*, which lays out the framework and key questions that underlie this inquiry and serves as a companion to these research briefs.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

On the Journey (OTJ) is one of four strands of a larger project sponsored by The Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) to investigate critical questions regarding the experiences and career trajectories of Jewish educators in the United States. OTJ investigates (1) who these educators are, (2) in what settings and sectors they are working, (3) what kinds of professional development and other supports are available to them (and whether they have taken advantage of these opportunities), and (4) how these interventions contribute to key outcomes associated with "quality" educators: job retention (length of tenure and career commitment), job satisfaction, and a sense of professional self-efficacy.

To build upon and expand prior studies of Jewish education professionals, OTJ takes a broad and inclusive approach to defining who is a "Jewish educator" and where Jewish education takes place. The target population for OTJ reaches beyond those working in formal "school" settings (day schools, early childhood (ECE), and supplemental education) to include a diverse spectrum of professionals involved in designing and delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning. This definition is informed by insights gathered from a comprehensive literature review, interviews with 13 key informants in the field, and focus groups with 33 practitioners who work in settings geared to Jewish education, engagement, and/or activism.[1]

Based on this understanding, OTJ studied paid professionals who work directly with people of any age who identify as Jews, in settings—whether virtual, brick-and-mortar, or outdoor—that aim to help participants find special meaning in Jewish texts, experiences, and associations (even if some who are engaged in these efforts may themselves use terms like "Jewish engagement" or "Jewish meaning making" to describe their work).

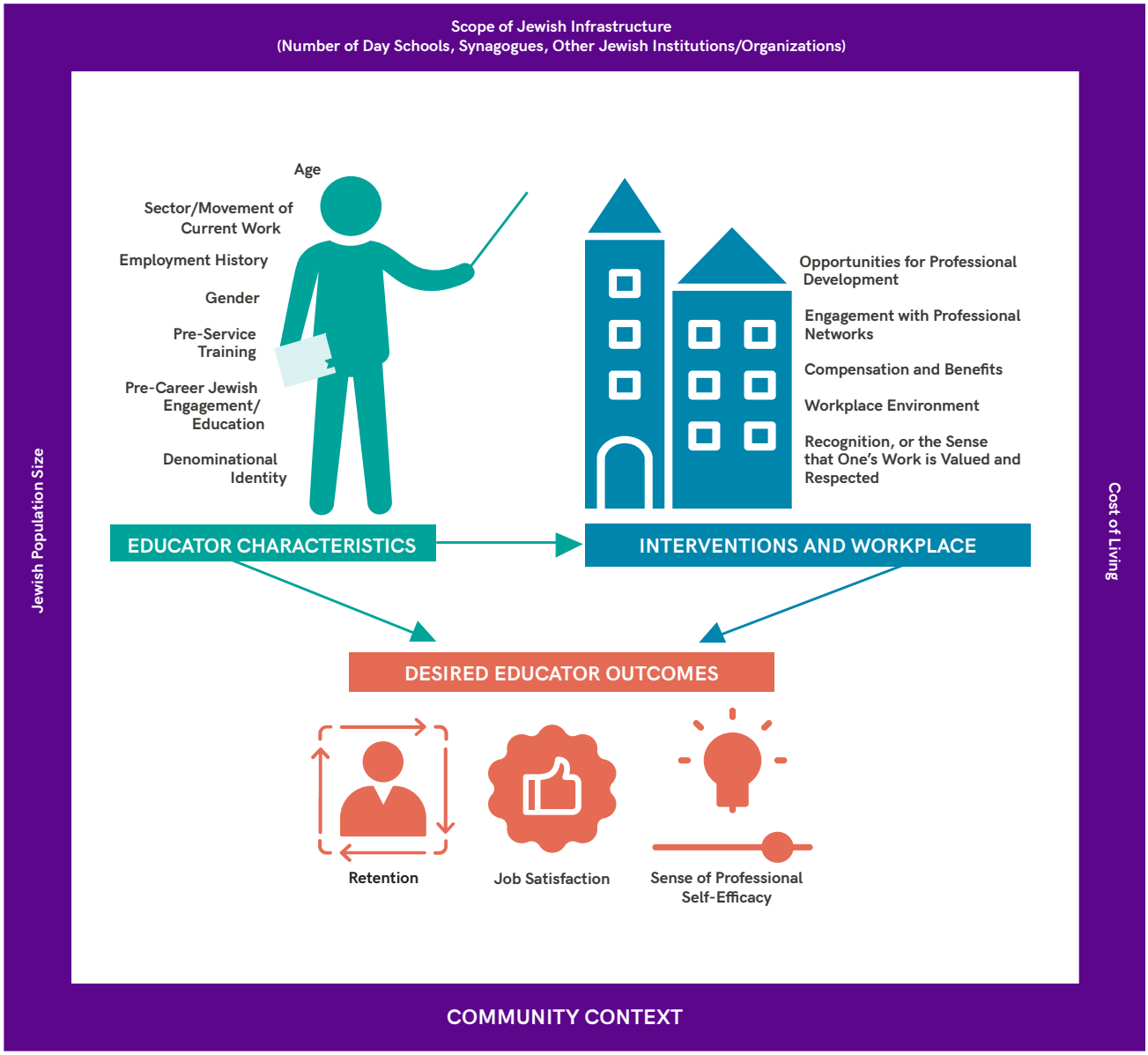
We identified five primary sectors within which these professionals work: **(1) formal Jewish education** (day schools, ECE, supplemental schools); **(2) informal/experiential settings** including both immersive (e.g., camp) and non-immersive (e.g., youth organizations, JCCs); **(3)** those involved in **engagement, social justice, and innovation** (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable); **(4) communal organizations** that may employ someone in a related role (e.g., scholars-in-residence at Federations or Jewish educators at Jewish Family Services); and **(5) non-organizational networks and online learning** (e.g., independent B'nai Mitzvah or Hebrew tutors).

Importantly, there are categories of professionals who did not fit our definition. Thus, while ordained rabbis who serve exclusively in pulpit positions may well view themselves as Jewish educators, they fall outside of the population most likely to be targeted for the programs and interventions that OTJ is meant to inform and inspire. This is also, and even more clearly, true of university professors of Jewish studies who are not tasked with shaping the personal commitments of their students, as well as full-time administrators and coordinators employed in Jewish educational settings who do not have direct contact with students or program participants. As well, given that the focus of the OTJ strand of the study is on the career trajectories and pathways of Jewish educators, we excluded from the study those who serve as volunteers (and whose professional commitments lie elsewhere).

1 For an in-depth discussion of our definition of Jewish educators, see pp. 2–5 of "On the Journey: Concepts that Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators."

Conceptual Framework and Design

At its core, On the Journey sought to understand the relationship between three conceptual categories: the "background" **characteristics** of individual educators and their work settings; the **interventions and workplace conditions** that educators may experience in their careers, and which can be influenced by external forces; and the **desired outcomes** for educators that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. All these are situated within a surrounding frame of the larger **organizational and community contexts** that influence the lives and experiences of any given individual. An overview of this model is shown below.



OTJ explored the relationships between and among each of these three conceptual "boxes." A variety of **interventions and workplace conditions** are thought to be directly related to **desired educator outcomes.** These **interventions and workplace conditions** may themselves differ, and may exhibit differential relationships to **desired educator outcomes,** based on several **educator characteristics.** These **educator characteristics** may also be directly related to **desired educator outcomes. Educator characteristics** might be indirectly related to **desired educator outcomes** through their direct relations to **interventions and workplace conditions.** Finally, all of this plays out within **individual communities.**

The key outcomes are **retention,** which encompasses both **length of time in the field of Jewish education,** and **career commitment (the stated intent and desire to remain a Jewish educator),** which is particularly relevant for younger professionals who by definition cannot have had a long tenure in the field; **job satisfaction;** and sense of **professional self-efficacy.**

We selected these outcomes for the following reasons: (1) They can be easily quantified for research purposes; (2) Given the diversity of sectors and contexts in which our target participants work, our outcomes must be relevant across the full range of Jewish education contexts that are part of the study; (3) These outcomes encompass positive qualities of educators that we hypothesize relate to purposeful interventions or workplace conditions in meaningful ways; and (4) Research has demonstrated relationships between these educator outcomes and positive learner experiences and outcomes.[2]

2 See pp. 5-9 of "On the Journey: Concepts that Support a Study of the Professional Trajectories of Jewish Educators" for more information.

Research Questions

Based on this model, OTJ explored three categories of research questions: **(1) descriptive questions** about educator characteristics, interventions and workplace conditions, the nature of the desired educator outcomes, and communal contexts; **(2) comparative questions** about interventions and workplace conditions as they play out with different educator characteristics; and **(3) questions about the relationships** between interventions and workplace conditions and desired educator outcomes and about the direct and indirect relationship between educator characteristics and these outcomes.

Descriptive Questions

Educator Characteristics

OTJ probed those characteristics indicated in the conceptual framework, above.

Interventions and Workplace Conditions

1. Opportunities for professional development
    a. What is the nature (e.g., duration, frequency) of the in-service training and ongoing professional development in which respondents participate?
    b. To what degree are respondents satisfied with the availability of these opportunities?
2. Engagement with professional networks
    a. To what degree do respondents feel connected to professional networks?
    b. Where do respondents turn to seek networks?
    c. What purpose do these networks serve?
    d. How satisfied are respondents with the availability of these networks?
3. Compensation and benefits
    a. What financial and other benefits do educators receive?
    b. To what extent are they satisfied with their compensation?
    c. What benefits do educators receive?
    d. How do compensation/benefits and other financial concerns drive job and career choices and perceived options within the field?
4. Workplace environment and conditions
    a. To what extent do respondents perceive themselves to be part of a team/community in their workplace?
    b. To what extent do they feel they have autonomy over their own work?
    c. What level of input do respondents have into organizational decision making?
5. Recognition
    a. To what extent do respondents see their work as valued by a variety of constituents (learners, parents, communal leaders, Jewish community at large)?
    b. In what ways—formal and informal—have respondents been recognized for their work by their organizations, communities, and the field as a whole?
6. Supervision and support
    a. What supervision, if any, do participants receive?
    b. How satisfied are respondents with their supervision?

Desired Educator Outcomes

1. What is the overall level of job satisfaction among respondents?
2. To what degree have respondents demonstrated length of tenure and/or stated commitment to remaining in the field?
3. What degree of professional self-efficacy is reported?
4. How do these outcomes relate to one another?

Comparative Questions

1. To what extent, if any, do interventions and workplace conditions vary by categorical educator characteristics such as age, gender, and current workplace sector or venue?
2. To what extent, if any, do the desired educator outcomes vary by such categorical educator characteristics?

Questions About Relationships Between Variables

1. To what extent are each of the interventions and workplace conditions related to desired educator outcomes?
2. To what extent are each of the educator characteristics related to desired educator outcomes?

Due to the small number of communities in OTJ, we were not able to treat community context as a variable.

Methodology

As explained above, *On the Journey* used a broad and inclusive definition of "Jewish educator." Based on this definition, OTJ included those:

- Working, either part time or full time, in an institutional setting geared to Jewish educational outcomes, defined as designing and/or delivering experiences for the purpose of facilitating Jewish learning, engagement, connection, and meaning
- Engaged in work that involves direct contact with participants
- Being paid for the work[3]
- Entered the field between 2000–2013 (i.e., in the field between 6 and 30 years)[4]
- Post college-age.

Recruitment and Sampling

As directed by CASJE personnel, OTJ solicited participants from eight communities representing as much variability as is possible across several dimensions. These communities represented a range of sizes of Jewish populations, geography, and the nature of the Jewish educational infrastructure.[5] Using data from the Steinhardt Social Research Institute's American Jewish Population Project, we selected five large communities of more than 100,000 Jews (Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Miami-Dade, FL; Nassau and Westchester Counties, NY; San Francisco Bay Area, CA); two medium-size communities with populations around 70,000 (Detroit, MI; Las Vegas, NV); and one small community, with a population just under 25,000 (Austin, TX). Our sample represents communities from diverse geographic regions throughout the United States. More information about these communities can be found in the "Brief Overview of OTJ Communities" (Appendix A).

For each community, we identified lead Federation or central agency–based educators in each of the eight communities and met with them for an orientation meeting (approximately 90 minutes each). Each of the eight communities we approached agreed to participate and signed a letter of agreement with CASJE. These lead educators provided contact lists of the educational settings in the five sectors in their communities and estimated the number of educators in their catchment (except Nassau-Westchester). The degree to which the central agencies maintained up-to-date information about the settings and educators in their catchment varied among communities.

The survey was fielded in one of the following ways, depending on the community:

1. The research team received a list of educators to whom we sent invitations to participate in the survey.
2. The leaders of the educational organizations received a link from the research team to forward to their educators.

3 We included those who are currently enrolled in "executive-style" degree programs (in which participants remain at their jobs while obtaining their degree), as long as they meet other inclusion criteria; though they are "in school," they are also actively engaged in their employment as Jewish educators.

4 We chose to focus on those who entered the field between 2000 and 2013, based on the understanding that many professionals leave the field within the first five years, and therefore those with a shorter tenure cannot be said to have yet committed to a career pathway in Jewish education. We include only those who are post-college for similar reasons. We set an upper cutoff for longevity in the field with the understanding that more distant experiences would (a) be recalled less reliably and (b) have taken place within a social-political-economic milieu that is far different, and therefore difficult to generalize, from that of recent years.

5 For a brief description of the eight communities that participated in this study, please see Appendix A.

3. Community connectors received a link from the research team to send to the leaders of the educational organizations with the request to forward the link to their educators.

Various incentive structures were used for recruitment purposes.

Instrumentation and Analytic Approach

Educator Survey

The Educator Survey was designed to explore the relationships between "background" characteristics of individual educators and their work settings, the interventions and workplace conditions that educators may encounter in their careers, and the desired outcomes for educators (self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and career commitment) that are of particular interest to stakeholders of this research. Where possible, items were drawn from previously used surveys, including the Jim Joseph Foundation Professional Development Initiative Audit Survey,[6] HR Employee Benefits Sample Survey Questionnaire and Template,[7] Leading Edge Employee Experience Survey,[8] Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative Cross-Community Youth Professional Survey,[9] School Culture Survey,[10] Educators in Jewish Schools Survey,[11] Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ),[12] Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE),[13] Career Commitment Survey,[14] Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (Short Version),[15] and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire/Job Descriptive Index.[16] We conducted a "crosswalk" among these instruments to better understand similar questions that appear, albeit with different wording, in various surveys. We also included questions that allow us to identify types of Jewish educators. A draft of the survey instrument was reviewed by CASJE personnel and other outside reviewers, as well as educational leaders from the range of sectors, with subsequent revisions made by the research team. Cognitive Testing was conducted before the survey was finalized. The survey can be found in Appendix B, and the Cognitive Testing Guidelines can be found in Appendix C.

The total number of survey respondents was 1,278, of which approximately 40% are day school educators, 20% supplemental school educators, 20% early childhood educators, 10% informal educators. The remainder work in innovation/social justice organizations, in federated institutions, or as independent educators. By design, all respondents had been in the field between 6 and 30 years. The breakdown of respondents and the response rate for each sector (based on estimates of the number of educators in each sector in each community) is indicated in Table 1.

A variety of statistical tools and techniques were used in analyzing the data. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means,

6 Rosov Consulting. (2019). *Jim Joseph Foundation Professional Development Initiative – Participant Audit Instrument (PDI Audit).* (For more information on the JJF PDI, please see Novicoff, D.B. and Stacie Cherner, S. (2018). "Professional Development for Professional Development Providers." https://jimjosephfoundation.org/press-releases/jim-joseph-foundation-invests-23-7-million-jewish-educator-professional-development-leadership-development-jewish-education/ and Jim Joseph Foundation. (2017). *Jim Joseph Foundation Invests more than $23.7 million in Jewish Educator Professional Development and in Leadership Development in Jewish Education.* https://jimjosephfoundation.org/news-blogs/professional-development-providers-reconvene-one-year-later/).

7 HR Employee Benefits Sample Survey Questionnaire and Template. https://www.sogosurvey.com/survey-templates/employee/employee-benefits-survey/

8 Leading Edge. (2019). *Leading Edge Employee Experience Survey.*

9 Rosov Consulting. (2018). *Cross-Community Evaluation Youth Professionals Survey (CCE YP Survey).* Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative. (For more information on the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative please see https://teenfundercollaborative.com/).

10 Gruenert, S., & Whitaker, T. (2015). "The School Culture Survey." *School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It.* ASCD.

11 Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA). (2006). *Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS).*

12 Kristensen, T. S., Hannerz, H., Høgh, A., & Borg, V. (2005). "The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire – a tool for the assessment and improvement of the psychosocial work environment." *Scandinavian Journal of Work Environment and Health 31*(6), 438–449.

13 National Opinion Research Center (NORC). (2012). *Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE).* University of Chicago.

14 Blau, G. J. (1985). "The Measurement and Prediction of Career Commitment." *Journal of Occupational Psychology 58*(4), 277–288.

15 Rigotti, T., Schyns, B., & Mohr, G. (2008). "A Short Version of the Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale." *Journal of Career Assessment 16*(2), 238-255.

16 Porter, L. W., Steers, R. M., Mowday, R.T., & Boulian, P. V. (1974). "Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Among Psychiatric Technicians." *Journal of Applied Psychology 59*(5), 603-609.

Table 1
Educator Survey Response Rates

	Screened Out	OTJ Sample	Total Respondents	Educator Population	Response Rate
Sector 1: Formal Jewish Education	820	1,006	1,826	8,103	23%
Sector 2: Informal/Experiential	176	131	307	791	39%
Sector 3: Engagement, Social Justice, and Innovation	36	48	84	187	45%
Sector 4: Communal Organizations	19	32	51	84	61%
Sector 5: Non-Organizational Networks and Online Learning	36	61	97	303	32%
Not Defined	181	0	181	—	—
Total	1,269	1,278	2,547	9,468	27%

and standard deviations) provided a basic overview of the data. Factor analyses were used to group cohesive items together and refine the Workplace Characteristics variables. Relationships among variables were analyzed in several ways. Group differences were explored using crosstabs (with chi-square tests of independence and z-tests for differences in proportions) and ANOVAs, depending on the nature of the data in question. Correlation analyses were conducted among variables of interest, including multilevel regression analyses (with the first step including Educator Characteristics and the second adding Interventions and Workplace Conditions). Finally, cluster analysis was used to classify respondents into groups based on the similarity of their responses across outcome variables (i.e., to identify those respondents who scored high across all four outcome variables and those who scored low).

Key characteristics of the survey sample are reported below in Table 2.

Table 2
Educator Survey Sample Demographics

Gender	
Female	820
Male	176
Prefer Not to Answer	36
Gender Fluid	1%
Generation	
Boomers	18%
Gen X	35%
Millennials	47%
Highest Degree	
High School Diploma	7%
Associate Degree	6%
Bachelor's Degree	35%
Master's Degree	48%
Doctoral Degree	5%
Graduate Degree in Jewish Education (Of those with advanced degrees)	
Jewish education	18%
Jewish communal service	5%
Jewish studies	13%
General education	42%
Other	46%
Certificate/Fellowship in Jewish education/Communal work	
Yes	24%
No	76%
Denominational Identity	
Reform	26%
Conservative	23%
Orthodox/Modern Orthodox	22%
Just Jewish/post-denominational	16%
Other (Reconstructionist, secular, humanist, etc.)	13%

Interviews and Focus Groups

In order to bring both additional richness and nuance to the findings from the survey data, we engaged in two strands of qualitative data gathering. In total, we conducted 45 individual interviews and six focus groups.

First, we interviewed 20 individuals, who either worked as Jewish educators for at least five years before leaving the field or were actively considering leaving the field at the time of the survey. We drew from "leavers" within the sample communities and again used local networks to identify potential participants. Because of the potential sensitivity of the information shared, we conducted these interviews individually, rather than in groups. The "Leavers Interview Protocol" can be found in Appendix D. Interviews were conducted over Zoom, recorded, and transcribed.

We also used focus groups and individual interviews to explore questions that arose through the emergent analysis of the survey data with those currently working in the field as Jewish educators. The focus group protocol was a streamlined version of the one used for individual interviews. The protocols used with focus groups can be found in Appendix E and F. We developed and refined both focus group and interview protocols through tests with pilot groups and individuals before recruiting a total of 52 participants for focus groups (27 participants in six separate focus groups) and interviews (25 participants). Our focus groups and interviews targeted populations that were underrepresented in the survey sample (i.e., those in sectors 3, 4, and 5, primarily).

Both during data collection and upon completion, the research team met to debrief and highlight emerging themes related to the study's research questions. An initial deductive coding tree was developed based on the study's research questions.

Thematic categories (each with their own subthemes/codes) included background influences on educator; life transitions that shaped educator's journey; contributing factors to job satisfaction; deterrents; and sector-specific statements. Transcripts were also coded by relevant classification variables such as gender, generation, career sector, and career longevity to allow for data mining by relevant variable.

Using NVivo software, a team of three researchers tested the application of the coding scheme on a subsection of the dataset to look for consistency in the application of the codes. Once the team felt satisfied that there was sufficient agreement in the use of each code, the remainder of the transcripts were coded by two members of the team, and additional iterative codes were added as needed to capture emerging themes that were not reflected in the initial coding scheme.

The broader research team analyzed the initial coded data and developed "Journeys" typologies. At that point, the coding was reviewed again and augmented to flesh out each of the three "Journeys" categories. In addition, five individual transcripts were selected to develop the anonymized educator portraits. Finally, as quantitative themes emerged for reporting, qualitative data were mined for relevant examples and quotes.

Appendix A
Brief Overview of OTJ Communities

Austin
Austin has a Jewish population of approximately 22,300, the smallest community in the *On the Journey* study. It is host to 20 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 2 day schools, 5 supplemental schools, 3 early childhood education centers, and 1 adult education venue. For Sector 2, this includes 1 camp, 4 youth groups, and 1 alternative teen program. There are 3 settings in Sector 3, and none in Sector 4. Shalom Austin is the central agency. There are several centralized, professional development initiatives running in Austin, including a mentoring program for new professionals and community-wide trainings for the staffs of synagogue schools and youth groups.

Boston
Boston has a Jewish population of approximately 248,000. It is host to 120 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 14 day schools, 25 supplemental schools, 36 early childhood education centers, and 2 adult education venues. For Sector 2, this includes 15 camps, 6 youth groups, and 2 venues categorized as "other." There are 14 settings in Sector 3, and 6 in Sector 4. Jewish educational settings are served by the Jewish Education and Learning division of Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) of Greater Boston.

Chicago
Chicago has a Jewish population of approximately 331,600. It is host to 170 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 15 day schools, 45 supplemental schools, 38 early childhood education centers, and 1 adult education venue. For Sector 2, this includes 13 camps and 31 youth groups. There are 23 settings in Sector 3, and 4 in Sector 4. The Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago is the primary organization in the area. The Board of Jewish Education (BJE) of Metropolitan Chicago is also involved, particularly with professional development.

Detroit
Detroit has a Jewish population of approximately 63,700. It is host to 47 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 3 day schools, 12 supplemental schools, 7 early childhood education centers, and 1 adult education setting. For Sector 2, this includes 3 camps, 12 youth groups, and 1 adult experiential program. There are 6 settings in Sector 3, and 2 in Sector 4. Several years ago, the central agency for Jewish education transferred from the Federation to the Jewish Community Center. The JCC provides professional development programs for day school, congregational, and early childhood educators, as well as additional support through its special needs department. There is a high per capita investment in Jewish education on the part of the community.

Las Vegas

Las Vegas has a Jewish population of approximately 74,800. It is host to 69 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 5 day schools, 9 supplemental schools, 9 early childhood education centers, and 10 adult education venues. For Sector 2, this includes 7 camps, 13 youth groups, and 4 adult experiential settings. There are 4 settings in Sector 3, and 3 in Sector 4. The central agency is Jewish Nevada, which serves the entire state.

Miami-Dade

Miami-Dade has a Jewish population of approximately 141,600. It is host to 92 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 9 day schools, 18 supplemental schools, and 25 early childhood education centers. For Sector 2, this includes 4 camps, 18 youth groups, and 4 adult experiential venues. There are 14 settings in Sector 3, and none in Sector 4. Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE) is the central educational agency and has dedicated directors and staff overseeing all Sector 1 areas and some Sector 2 areas (i.e., teen education and engagement), excluding camps. All camps, including day and overnight camps, are overseen by the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. CAJE also has a staff person directly in charge of adult learning. The community prioritizes funding for day schools, though some funding is available for professional development in other venues.

Nassau-Westchester

The Nassau-Westchester region of the New York City area has a Jewish population of approximately 304,900. It is host to 239 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 42 day schools, 61 supplemental schools, 60 early childhood education centers, and 1 adult education venue. For Sector 2, this includes 6 camps, 60 youth groups, 2 adult experiential venues, and 2 settings characterized as "other." There are 2 settings in Sector 3, and 3 in Sector 4. This area falls under the purview of The Jewish Education Project (formerly the Board of Jewish Education of NY), which provides oversight, in part, by county. The sheer size of The Jewish Education Project makes it one of the most bureaucratically regimented and complex of the central agencies we worked with, and it is both the administrative and professional development central agency overseeing education.

San Francisco

The San Francisco Bay Area has a Jewish population of approximately 250,000. It is host to 146 Jewish educational settings among Sectors 1–4 (Sector 5 numbers are not reported on a per-community basis). For Sector 1, this includes 10 day schools, 34 supplemental schools, 30 early childhood education centers, and 2 adult education settings. For Sector 2, this includes 17 camps, 26 youth groups, 3 adult experiential settings, and 11 alternative teen programs. There are 5 settings in Sector 3, and 8 in Sector 4. The central educational agency in San Francisco is Jewish LearningWorks (JLW). JLW provides professional development, primarily for educational leaders, as do settings such as the Contemporary Jewish Museum, the Jewish Studio Project, and others. There is also a focus on creating professional networks among educators.

Appendix B
Educator Survey

Please take note of the following conventions:

1. Block titles introducing each section as well as other headings will **not** be visible to respondents and are used for organizational and analytical purposes only.
2. All italicized information within brackets is for the online survey programmer and will also **not** be visible to respondents.

Educator Survey

The Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) seeks to investigate critical questions regarding the recruitment, retention, and development of Jewish educators. [*Please note that in this survey, we use the term Jewish education broadly to include Jewish engagement, Jewish outreach, and other similar activities. While "Jewish educator" or "Jewish education" may not be terms that resonate with you, we use them in order to make the wording of the questions more manageable.*]

CASJE has hired Rosov Consulting to conduct this flagship study to better understand the career trajectories of Jewish educators in the context of their workplaces and communities, and to identify the professional experiences and resources that maximize Jewish educator satisfaction and efficacy. Please respond to the following 20-30-minute survey. We thank you in advance for your open and honest feedback. As a token of our appreciation, once you complete the survey you will be *[Insert community specific incentives]*.

By participating in this study, you will help the Jewish community learn about the recruitment, retention, and development of educators in multiple sectors of the Jewish education ecosystem in North America. The risks associated with participating in the study are minimal and are not greater than anything you may encounter in your daily life.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. Information will be collected for research purposes only and all data are confidential.

This survey is administered by Rosov Consulting, a third-party service provider. All public reporting on this information will be done in the aggregate. Nothing you share here will be attributable to you. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact Annie Jollymore, Project Associate, at ajollymore@rosovconsulting.com.

I have read the information above and I give my consent to participate in this study: *[Required]*

- ○ I give my consent *[If chosen, continue to Block I]*
- ○ I don't give my consent *[if chosen, end survey]*

Career Information

Block I: Information about current workplace

The following set of questions focuses on the work you do in Jewish education. Please note that **we consider only paid work** when we refer to 'workplace' or 'job.'

1. In which of the following settings are you employed? (Please include your current work and seasonal work from Summer 2019, if applicable.) (Select all that apply.) *[Required]*

a. Jewish day school
b. Jewish supplementary school (e.g., Hebrew school, Sunday school, after-school program)
c. Jewish preschool or early childhood care
d. Jewish summer camp (including summer 2019)
e. Jewish youth group/movement
f. College campus Jewish organization (e.g., Hillel, Chabad)
g. Israel education/advocacy organization
h. Jewish Federation/foundation
i. JCC
j. A department in a university/college
k. Other synagogue educational program not already listed
l. Engagement, social justice, service learning or innovation organization (e.g., Moishe House, OneTable, Repair the World)
m. Self-employed/independent contractor/ "gig" worker *[mutually exclusive]*
n. Other. Please describe:_____

[If in Q1 only selected 'A department in a university/college' end survey; otherwise continue]

2. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self Employed']* **For how many Jewish organizations do you work for pay? (Include your work in the Summer of 2019.)**

a. 1
b. 2
c. 3
d. 4 or more

3. *[Display If in Q2> 1]* **In which of these settings is your primary Jewish professional work?** *[Carry over selections from Q1]*

Block I, Part 2: Information about workplace

4. Which of the following best describes your role in your primary Jewish professional work?

a. "Front-line work" – I work directly with our target population/learners/community members
b. Supervision/Management – I supervise, manage, and/ or provide professional development for professionals who work directly with our target population/learners/community members
c. Both "front-line work" and supervision/management
d. Other. Please describe: _____

[If in Q4 only selected 'Supervision/Management' end survey; otherwise continue]

4.1 *[Display if Q2 >1]* **As you go through the survey, when you are asked to think about your primary work in Jewish education, please think about your work at the following:** *[Pipe in Choice from Q3]*

5. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self Employed']* **In addition to working in Jewish organizations, do you also work for pay in an organization outside of the Jewish sector?**

a. Yes – as my main source of income
b. Yes – as a secondary source of income
c. No

5.1 [*If Q1 = 'Self Employed']* **In addition to being self-employed, do you also work in an organization outside of the Jewish sector?**

a. Yes – as my main source of income
b. Yes – as a secondary source of income
c. No

5.2 *[If Q5 OR Q5.1 = 'Yes' (a or b)]* **What do you do? Please describe:** _____

6. **Do you consider yourself to be a Jewish educator?**

a. No
b. Yes
c. Sometimes

6.1 *[If Q6 = 'No' or 'Sometimes']* Please note that in this survey, we use the term Jewish education broadly to include Jewish engagement, Jewish outreach, and other similar activities. While "Jewish educator" or "Jewish education" may not be terms that resonate with you, we use them in order to make the wording of the questions more manageable. As you complete the survey, **when you see the terms Jewish education or Jewish educator, you can keep in mind whatever term you use to describe your work** and use that term as the basis of your response.

7. **Not counting work prior to age 21, in what year did you begin paid work in Jewish organizations?** *[drop down menu of years]*

[If in Q7 picked earlier than 1990 end survey]

8. *[If selected only 'Jewish day school' in Q1 OR if Q3 = 'Jewish day school']* **What is your role at your school? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Jewish studies teacher
b. Hebrew language teacher
c. General studies teacher
d. Experiential educator (e.g., Student Activities coordinator, director of student life)
e. Teaching assistant
f. Special needs support/para-educator
g. Principal/Head of school
h. Division head
i. Administrative assistant
j. Other. Please describe:_____

[If in Q8 'Jewish studies teacher,' 'Hebrew language teacher,' 'Special needs para-educator' 'General studies teacher' 'Experiential educator' or 'Teaching assistant' are not selected end survey; otherwise skip to Block II]

9. *[If selected only 'Jewish supplementary school' or 'Jewish preschool' in Q1 OR if Q3 = 'Jewish supplementary school' or 'Jewish preschool']* **What is your role at your organization? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Teacher
b. Teaching assistant
c. B'nai Mitzvah tutor
d. Hebrew language tutor
e. Junior congregation leader
f. Experiential educator
g. Special needs support/para-educator
h. Specialist (teaching music, nutrition, fitness, etc.)
i. Director/Assistant Director
j. Administrative assistant
k. Other. Please describe:_____

[If in Q9 only 'Administrative assistant' or only 'Other' are selected end survey; If selected any of the other options, skip to Block II]

10. *[If Q1= 'Jewish summer camp,' or 'Jewish youth group', 'JCC' or 'College campus Jewish organization' only OR Q3 = 'Jewish summer camp,' 'Jewish youth group', 'JCC,' or 'College campus Jewish organization']* **What is your role at your organization? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Youth group advisor
b. Counselor
c. Fellow
d. Experiential educator
e. Engagement professional
f. Song leader
g. Trip leader
h. Program manager
i. Shaliach
j. Director/Assistant Director
k. Division head
l. Administrative assistant
m. Other. Please describe:_____

[If in Q10 only 'Director,' 'Administrative assistant,' 'Division head' or 'Other' are selected end survey; If selected any of the other options, skip to Block II]

11. *[If selected only 'Synagogue' in Q1 OR Q3 = 'Synagogue']* **What is your primary role at the synagogue? (Select one)**

a. Tot Shabbat leader
b. Junior congregation leader
c. Adult, Family, or Lifelong learning provider/Director
d. Pulpit rabbi
e. Cantor
f. Youth leader
g. Other. Please describe:_____

[If in Q11 'Pulpit Rabbi' or 'Cantor' are selected end survey; If selected any of the other options, skip to Block II]

Block II: Employment History

12. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **Thinking about your primary job in a Jewish organization, how many years have you been working at this organization? ___ (Please round to the nearest year. If less than a year, enter 0; if the work is summer/seasonal, count each summer/season as 1 year)** *[Number Validation, required]*

13. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **Thinking about your primary job in a Jewish organization, how many years have you been in your particular position at this organization? ___(Please round to the nearest year. If less than a year, enter 0; if the work is summer/seasonal, count each summer/season as 1 year.)** *[Number Validation]*

14. *[If Q1 = 'Self-employed']* **How many years have you been self-employed in the Jewish education sector?** ___ *[Number Validation]*

Next, we'd like to know more about your employment history. For the following questions, please consider **paying** jobs, **part time or full time**, that you've held **since college (or, if you did not go to college, since age 21)**.

15. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **How many years total have you been employed in Jewish organizations/settings? (Please round to the nearest year. If less than a year, enter 0.)** *[Number Validation, required]*

16. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **How many years total have you been employed in any setting (Jewish and otherwise)? (Please round to the nearest year. If less than a year, enter 0.)** *[Number Validation]*

17. **In how many different Jewish organizations have you worked?** ___ *[Number Validation]*

18. *[If Q1 = 'Self-employed']* **How many years total, if any, were you employed in Jewish organizations/settings? (Please round to the nearest year. If you have never been employed in a Jewish organization/setting, enter 0.)** *[Number Validation]*

19. **What was your first paid job in a Jewish context (may include a job you had in high school or college/up to age 21)? (Select one.)**

    a. Summer camp counselor
    b. Youth group advisor
    c. Administrative assistant
    d. Hebrew/Jewish text tutor
    e. Teacher or teaching assistant at a Jewish day school
    f. Teacher or teaching assistant at a Jewish supplementary school (e.g., Hebrew school, Sunday school, after-school program)
    g. Teacher or teaching assistant at a Jewish preschool
    h. Campus fellowship program (for Hillel, Birthright etc.)
    i. Trip leader (e.g., domestic heritage trip, Israel experience program)
    j. Song leader
    k. Other. Please describe: _____

20. **While in high school, did you do any paid work in a Jewish organization?**

    a. Yes
    b. No

21. **While in college (or, if you did not go to college, ages 18-21) did you do paid work in a Jewish organization?**

    a. Yes
    b. No

22. **Since your first paid job (including paid jobs you had in high school or college), in what other Jewish organizations/settings have you worked for pay? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Jewish day school
b. Jewish supplementary school (e.g., Hebrew school, Sunday school, after-school program)
c. Jewish preschool or early care
d. Jewish summer camp
e. Jewish youth group/movement
f. College campus Jewish organization (e.g., Hillel, Chabad)
g. Israel education/advocacy organization
h. Jewish federation/foundation
i. JCC
j. A department in a university/college
k. Other synagogue educational program not already listed
l. Engagement, social justice/service learning, and innovation organization (e.g., Jewish Studio Project, Moishe House, OneTable)
m. Other. Please describe: _____

23. **At any point since age 21, did you hold a primary job in any of the following? (Select all that apply.)**

a. A secular educational organization
b. An educational organization of a religion other than Judaism
c. A different field altogether. Please describe:_____
d. none of these *[mutually exclusive]*

24. **Which of the following, if any, inspired you to work as a Jewish educator? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Participating in Jewish youth groups
b. Participating in Jewish camps
c. Attending Jewish day school
d. Attending supplementary Jewish school
e. Going to religious services
f. Participating in a campus Jewish experience
g. Participating in an Israel experience program
h. My family
i. An inspirational educator
j. I had a job opportunity and decided to take it
k. Other. Please describe: _____

25. **To what extent do each of the following motivate you in your work as a Jewish educator?** *[Matrix: Not at all, a little, somewhat, a lot] [Randomize items]*

a. Contributing to the Jewish community
b. Working in a place in which I have much in common with many of the staff members
c. Giving myself an opportunity to strengthen my own religious identity
d. Impacting people's life paths
e. Having work that is compatible with living a Jewish life (e.g., have Jewish holidays off)
f. Expressing my commitment to the Jewish people
g. Expressing my commitment to educating others
h. Expressing my love for the particular subject matter
i. Making a living
j. Other. Please specify: _____

26. Which of the following statements best describes where you see yourself currently in your career?

a. I'm still exploring what professional field to enter.
b. I've made a start in a professional field.
c. I'm getting settled in my field and am no longer a beginner.
d. I am well established in my field.
e. I have been well established in my field and am winding down.
f. Other. Please explain:_____

Interventions and Workplace

Block III: Compensation and Benefits

In this section we ask you to provide information about your work compensation and benefits.

27. *[If Q2 = '1' or If Q1 = 'Self Employed']* **Approximately how many hours on average do you work for pay per week?**___*[Number validation]*

28. *[If Q2 = '2' and Q5 = 'No']* **Approximately how many hours on average do you work for pay per week at…?**

a. your primary job in Jewish education ___*[Number validation]*
b. your other Jewish professional position ___*[Number validation]*

29. *[If Q2 > '2' and Q5 = 'No']* **Approximately how many hours on average do you work for pay per week at…?**

a. your primary job in Jewish education ___*[Number validation]*
b. your other Jewish professional positions (total)___*[Number validation]*

30. *[If Q5 = 'Yes - as my primary job']* **Approximately how many hours on average do you work for pay per week at…?**

a. your primary job **outside of the Jewish sector** ___*[Number validation]*
b. your Jewish professional position(s)_____*[Number validation]*

31. *[If Q5 = 'Yes - as my secondary job']* **Approximately how many hours on average do you work for pay per week at…?**

a. your primary job at a Jewish organization____[Number validation]
b. your job(s) **outside of the Jewish sector**____[Number validation]

32. *[If Q2 = '1' or If Q1 = 'Self Employed']* **What were your total combined annual earnings in 2019 before tax, not including benefits?**

a. Less than $25,000
b. $25,000-$49,999
c. $50,000-$74,999
d. $75,000-$99,999
e. $100,000-$124,999
f. $125,000-$149,999
g. $150,000-$174,999
h. $175,000- $199,999
i. $200,000 or more
j. I prefer not to say

33. *[If Q2 > '1']* **What were your total combined annual earnings in 2019 before tax, not including benefits, from your current jobs in Jewish organizations?**

a. Less than $25,000
b. $25,000-$49,999
c. $50,000-$74,999
d. $75,000-$99,999
e. $100,000-$124,999
f. $125,000-$149,999
g. $150,000-$174,999
h. $175,000- $199,999
i. $200,000 or more
j. I prefer not to say

34. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self Employed']* **Which of the following employee benefits do you receive (from your work in Jewish organizations)? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Paid vacation
b. Medical insurance/Health care
c. Dental insurance
d. Vision insurance
e. Professional development stipend
f. Reduced/free tuition for children at school
g. Reduced/free congregational membership
h. Reduced/free program fees
i. Life insurance
j. Retirement plan (401(k), 403(b), etc.)
k. Short- or long-term disability
l. Paid family leave
m. Flex time
n. Ability to work from home
o. None of the above [*mutually exclusive*]
p. Other. Please describe:_____

35. Are you the primary breadwinner in your household?

a. I am the sole breadwinner in my household.
b. I am the primary breadwinner in my household.
c. I am not the primary breadwinner in my household.
d. Other. Please explain: _____

Block IV: Opportunities for Professional Growth

The next set of questions is about the availability of professional growth opportunities in your primary job in Jewish education.

36. Regarding the professional support available to you, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

a. I have a relationship with a mentor who helps me do my work better.
b. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I have opportunities for advancement at my organization.
c. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I have opportunities to develop new skills at my organization.
d. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* My organization provides me sufficient opportunities for professional development — e.g. training, conferences, community of practice, etc.

37. Are there any professional networks/organizations you can turn to if you need them?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not sure

38. *[If Q37 = 'yes']* **Regarding professional networks, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements**: *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

a. I utilize Jewish professional networks to obtain information and resources for my day-to-day work
b. I utilize professional networks outside of the Jewish world to obtain information and resources for my day-to-day work

39. Are there available professional development opportunities that you can access?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not Sure

40. In an average year, in approximately how many professional development experiences of each of the following durations do you participate? (Please enter 0 if you haven't participated.)

a. Experiences that last a total of 4 hours or less ___*[Number validation]*
b. Experiences that last a total of 4 to 8 hours ____*[Number validation]*
c. Experiences that last a total of more than 8 hours ___*[Number validation]*
d. Other____ *[Number validation]*

40.1. Please describe your other professional development experiences. *[Text entry]*

41. In which of the following professional development opportunities have you participated in the past 3 years? (Select all that apply.)

a. Coaching and/or observation from mentor or supervisor
b. Coaching and/or observation from peer
c. Coaching and/or observation from outside consultant
d. Content-oriented workshop or lecture
e. Reading and discussing professional literature
f. Attending a professional conference
g. Collaborative learning projects with colleagues
h. Other. Please describe _____

Block V: Workplace Environment

The following questions focus on your job environment. If you work in more than one organization, please focus on your **primary job** in Jewish education.

Supervision

42. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **Do you have a direct supervisor?**

a. No

b. Yes

43. *[If Q42 = 'Yes']* **Regarding your relationship with your supervisor, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements**: *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

a. My supervisor is an instructional mentor to me.

b. My supervisor knows my needs for professional development.

c. My supervisor knows how well I'm performing my work.

d. My supervisor tries to be aware of my concerns.

e. My supervisor takes time to praise me.

f. My supervisor values my ideas.

g. My supervisor provides useful feedback on how well I am performing.

h. My supervisor genuinely cares about my wellbeing.

Autonomy/Empowerment

44. **Thinking about your primary job in Jewish education, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:** *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

a. I feel the work I do is important.

b. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I enjoy telling others about my organization.

c. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* At my organization, I am informed well in advance about important decisions, changes, or future plans.

d. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I am treated with respect on a day-to-day basis.

e. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I know that leaders will provide support when I encounter challenges at work.

f. I am included in decisions that affect my work.

g. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I would recommend my organization as a great place to work.

h. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* My organization's values are aligned with Jewish values as I understand them.

i. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I'm comfortable sharing potentially unpopular opinions at my organization.

j. I have enough autonomy to perform my job effectively.

k. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* I receive appropriate recognition for good work at my organization.

l. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* My opinion is valued at my organization.

m. I have the resources I need to do my job effectively.

n. I know what I need to do to be successful in my role.

o. I enjoy my work.

Teamwork/Relatedness

45. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **Regarding your relationship with your co-workers in your primary job in Jewish education, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements**: *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

a. I am able to get help and support from my colleagues when I need it.
b. I am pleased with the people I work with.
c. My colleagues are highly talented professionals.
d. My efforts are validated and/or recognized by my colleagues.
e. Disagreements in my organization are voiced openly and discussed.
f. I feel valued as a professional by my colleagues.
g. I feel comfortable speaking up if my values are being compromised.
h. Cooperation and sharing of ideas and resources across my organization are encouraged.

Job Satisfaction

46. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following elements of your primary job as a Jewish educator? *[Matrix: Very dissatisfied; Somewhat dissatisfied; Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Very Satisfied] [Randomize items]*

a. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* The level of teamwork among your colleagues
b. Your monetary compensation
c. Your workload
d. Your physical workspace
e. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed' and in Q34 'None of the above' is not selected]* The benefits you receive (medical, dental, retirement, etc.)
f. The opportunities available for professional growth
g. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* The opportunities for promotions within your organization

Outcomes

Block VI: Retention – Commitment and longevity/Turnover intention

The following questions are about your attitudes toward your profession, your organization and the likelihood you'd stay in your primary job in Jewish education.

47. **Thinking about the work you do in Jewish education, to what extent do you agree/disagree with the following items?** *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

    a. If I could get a similarly paying job **outside** of a Jewish setting, I would likely take it.
    b. I definitely want a career for myself in a Jewish setting.
    c. If I could do it all over again, I would choose to work in a different profession.
    d. If I had all the money I needed without working, I would probably still continue to work in a Jewish setting.
    e. I like this profession too much to give it up.
    f. This is the ideal profession for me.
    g. I am disappointed that I ever entered this profession.
    h. I spend a significant amount of personal time reading online resources, journals or books related to my profession.
    i. I am proud to tell people that I do the work that I do.
    j. I would like to advance to a more senior role within the Jewish educational sector.

48. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **Thinking about your primary job in Jewish education, to what extent do you agree/disagree with the following items?** *[Matrix: Strongly disagree; Disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly agree] [Randomize items]*

    a. I am loyal to my organization
    b. I am willing to exert a great deal of effort to achieve my organization's goals
    c. If I could get a similar job in a different Jewish organization paying the same amount, I would probably take it

49. **How long do you intend to continue working for your Jewish organization?**

    a. Less than 1 year
    b. 1-2 years
    c. 3-5 years
    d. More than 5 years
    e. Until retirement
    f. Unsure

50. **How long do you plan to continue working in the Jewish educational or professional sector?**

    a. Less than 1 year
    b. 1-2 years
    c. 3-5 years
    d. More than 5 years
    e. Until retirement
    f. Unsure

51. *[For respondents who want to leave their current organization and staying in the field: If (Q49 = ' Less than 1 year' or '1-2 years') and (Q50 = '3-5 years' or 'More than 5 years' or 'Until retirement')]* **Please select the top 3 items most likely to make you consider leaving your organization**

a. The balance between my work life and my home life
b. More interesting work elsewhere
c. Dissatisfaction with supervisor or senior leadership
d. Better financial opportunities elsewhere
e. Better benefits elsewhere
f. Insufficient opportunities for career development
g. Lack of fit with coworkers
h. Lack of resources and support to get the job done
i. Insufficient recognition
j. Commute time is too long
k. Desire for greater job security
l. Lack of role model, mentor, or coaching
m. The proportion of time I spend on fulfilling administrative requirements and other paperwork
n. Heavy workload
o. I am going back to school full time.
p. Society's view of my profession
q. The status of my profession in the Jewish community
r. Other. Please describe _____

52. *[For respondents who want to leave the Jewish education field: If Q50 = 'Less than 1 year' or '1-2 years']* **Select the top 3 items most likely to make you consider leaving the field of Jewish education**

a. Need or desire to relocate and no jobs available in this sector in new locale.
b. Workload more manageable in a different sector.
c. More interesting work in a different sector
d. Dissatisfaction with my primary organization turned me off to this sector.
e. Better financial opportunities elsewhere
f. Better benefits elsewhere
g. Insufficient opportunities for career development in this sector.
h. Unable to satisfactorily balance work and personal life.
i. Lack of resources and support to get the job done.
j. Greater job security in a different sector.
k. Society's view of my profession.
l. The status of my profession in the Jewish community.
m. Lack of role models, mentors, or coaches in my current sector.
n. Other. Please describe _____

Block VII: Sense of Professional Self-Efficacy

53. Thinking about your primary job in Jewish education, to what extent the following statements are true? *[Sliding scale form 1= 'Not True at all' to 6 = 'Completely True']. [Randomize items]*

a. I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.
b. When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions.
c. Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.
d. My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.
e. I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.
f. I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job.
g. I have the requisite Jewish knowledge needed for my job.
h. I have the requisite general knowledge needed for my job.
i. I feel useful.
j. I am good at what I do.
k. The work I do makes a positive difference.

Educator Characteristics

Block VIII: General Demographics

In this final section we ask more general demographic question, so we can describe the sample of survey takers we reached. As a reminder, the information you provide is confidential, and results are only going to be presented in the aggregate.

54. Which of the following degrees have you attained ? (Select all that apply.)

a. High school diploma/GED
b. Associate's degree
c. Bachelor's degree
d. Master's degree
e. Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD)
f. Rabbinic/Cantorial Ordination
g. Other. Please describe: _____

55. Have you participated in an intensive certificate or fellowship program in Jewish education or communal work (e.g., Wexner, iCenter, etc.)?

a. Yes
b. No

56. *[If in Q54 'Master's degree' or 'Doctorate' is selected]* **In which of the following is your graduate degree? (Select all that apply.)**

a. Jewish education
b. Jewish communal service
c. Jewish studies
d. General education
e. Other. Please describe _____

57. Regarding ethnicity/race: I identify as… (Select all that apply.)

a. African American
b. Asian
c. Black/African
d. Latinx/Hispanic
e. Middle Eastern/North African
f. Mixed-Race/Multiracial
g. Native American/Alaska Native
h. Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
i. White
j. Prefer not to answer *[mutually exclusive]*_____
k. Other. Please describe_____

58. Regarding gender: I identify as…

a. Male
b. Female
c. Gender fluid/Non-binary
d. Something else. Please describe _____
e. Prefer not to answer

59. What is your birth year? *[Drop down menu of years]*

60. What is the zip code for your primary residence?_____ *[Zip Code validation]*

61. *[If Q1 ≠ 'Self-employed']* **What is the zip code for your primary workplace?**_____ *[Zip Code validation]*

61.2 What is the name of the organization in which you do your primary Jewish professional work? *[Please note that this information will remain completely confidential and will never be used to identify any individuals or organizations in analysis or reporting.]*

62. Until age 18, where were you mostly raised?

a. United States or Canada
b. Israel
c. Former Soviet Union
d. Eastern Europe
e. Western Europe
f. South America
g. Another country. Please specify_____

Block IX: Jewish Background

63. Which of the following best describes you?

a. I'm not Jewish.
b. I'm Jewish.
c. I'm Jewish culturally, but not religiously.
d. I'm Jewish both culturally and religiously.
e. I'm Jewish and something else (Please explain what "else":_____)
f. It's complicated. (Please explain:_____)

64. *[if in Q63 'I'm not Jewish' is not selected]* **Regarding denomination, I consider myself to be:**

a. Chabad
b. Conservative
c. Haredi
d. Humanist
e. Just Jewish
f. Modern Orthodox
g. Orthodox
h. Post-denominational
i. Reconstructionist
j. Reform
k. Secular
l. Other. Please specify:_____

65. *[if in Q63 'I'm not Jewish' is not selected]* **Growing up, which of the following Jewish experiences have you attended/participated in? (Select all that apply.)**

a. An overnight camp that had Shabbat services and/or a Jewish education program
b. A Jewish day camp
c. A Jewish day elementary school
d. A Jewish day middle school
e. A Jewish day high school
f. A supplementary Jewish school program (e.g., Hebrew/Sunday school/Jewish afterschool), age 13 or younger
g. A supplementary Jewish school program (e.g., Hebrew/Sunday school/Jewish afterschool), after age 13
h. A Jewish youth group/movement
i. Organized group trip to Israel
j. Other. Please specify: _____

66. Are you married or partnered?

a. Yes
b. No

67. *[if in Q66 = 'Yes']* **How does your partner identify?**

a. They are not Jewish
b. They are Jewish
c. They are Jewish culturally, but not religiously
d. They are Jewish both culturally and religiously
e. They are Jewish and something else (What "else"? Please explain:_____)
f. It's complicated (Please explain:_____)

68. Please add anything else you would like to share about your experience as a Jewish educator that we did not ask or that you would like to elaborate on

_____

Block X: Requesting Emails

69. [*Required*] **Thank you for completing this survey. Are you willing to be contacted in the future to provide additional data, if needed?**

a. Yes

b. No

Your personal information is confidential and will not be shared with others. Your responses to the survey will be analyzed separately and will not include your personal information or organizational affiliation.

70. *[If in Q69= 'Yes']* **Please provide the following information. It will only be used to contact you for participation in additional research and to send you a gift card should you win any drawings:**

a. **Your first name** _____.

b. **Your email address** _____.

71. *[If in Q69= 'No']* **In order to send you the gift card, should you win the survey drawing, please provide the following information.**

a. **Your first name** _____.

b. **Your email address** _____.

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Appendix C
Cognitive Testing Guidelines - OTJ Educator Survey

Cognitive Testing Guidelines – OTJ Educator Survey

Introduction

Thank you for being willing to help us in testing this survey. The purpose of this conversation is to make sure that all the survey questions are understandable, are not offensive in any way, and that the response options provided allow for an appropriate response.

This survey was designed to understand better understand the career trajectories of Jewish educators in the context of their workplaces and communities, and to identify the professional experiences and resources that maximize Jewish educator satisfaction and efficacy. This is part of a larger research project that is being implemented by Rosov Consulting on behalf of CASJE, the Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education, to understand the recruitment, retention, and development of ***Jewish educators****, a term which we define broadly for this research (more on that when we get to the survey).*

During this conversation, we would like you to review the introductory text and each survey question and the response options provided. We then would like you to "think aloud" as you process the question and decide how you would respond to the question. We recognize that this may feel a little strange to "think aloud" with us, but this will enable us to understand how other respondents may interpret and understand the questions. You do not have to give us your answer, but simply share your thoughts on the question and the response options.
Do you have any questions before we begin?

Ongoing points to look for throughout the conversation

- Was there any difficulty in interpreting the question?
- Did the respondent feel they could select one of the response answers?
- Were there any response answers that they felt were missing? Did they feel there were too many or too few response options?
- (If there are any scales) How did the respondent feel about the format? Were the scale points appropriate?

General questions to ask at the end

- What are their thoughts regarding the length of the survey? (was it the right length, too long, way too long?)
- Were any of the question offensive or awkward?
- Were any of the questions hard to interpret? Were there any words that seemed too technical or too personal?
- Did anything seem repetitive?
- How did they feel about the look and format of the survey?
- If giving an incentive, tell the respondent the possible incentive. Would this be a good incentive?

Appendix D
Interview Protocol - "Leavers"

Interview Protocol – "Leavers"

Introduction: *Thank you again for making time for this conversation today. Just as a reminder, this interview is part of a major research study of the experiences and career arc of those who are working or have worked in Jewish educational settings in North America. The project is being overseen by the Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education and funded by the William Davidson Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation. As part of this research we are interviewing people who are no longer working in the field, or who are considering leaving. Your insights will help us better understand the decisions that those working in Jewish education make about their career path.*

The interview should take about 45 minutes. I will be taking notes and, with your permission, also recording the interview. All of this will remain confidential. We'll be using summaries and will remove all identifying information from any quotes or examples we use.

Please note that in this interview, we use the term Jewish education broadly to include Jewish engagement, Jewish outreach, and other similar activities. Does the term "Jewish educator" or "Jewish education" resonate with you? If not, what term best describes your works?

1. Tell me about yourself and your life now (location? Married? Kids? Job?)
    a. Tell me about your engagement with and connection to Judaism, Jewish life and Jewish education when you were growing up.
2. Can you take a few minutes to describe your employment history and pathway since you took your first paid, full-time job? (*including work in and outside of Jewish education – prompt for info about length of tenure and positions held*)
3. Now I'd like to focus specifically on your decisions about working in Jewish education – can you tell me about how you originally came to be working in Jewish education?
    a. Were you considering paths outside of Jewish education at that time? Which ones? Why did you ultimately choose Jewish education?
    b. [*for those who have switched jobs within Jewish education*]: You mentioned you switched from [OLDER JOB] to [NEWER JOB] – what led to that transition?
    c. Had you worked in part time jobs in Jewish education, such as at Jewish summer camps?
    d. Please describe any training, education, or preparatory experiences you've had.
4. Please tell me how you came to transition out of work in Jewish education.

a. When did you start thinking about leaving your last job and what were your feelings about leaving it?

b. What were the pros and cons of leaving?

c. What opportunities did you see outside of Jewish education?

d. We're you making an intention effort to leave Jewish education?

e. Did you have unfulfilled expectations about work in Jewish education?

f. What surprised you most about working in Jewish education?

4b. What factors led you to choose your current job?

a. Would you have taken a similar job in Jewish education if available?

b. Is there anything you miss about Jewish education?

4c. At any point before leaving that last job, had you considered leaving the field? Tell me more about that, the factors you considered, and why you ultimately stayed?

5. What might have led you to remain within the field of Jewish education?

a. Workplace changes?

b. Changes to the nature of the work?

c. Changes to your preparation for the work that might have led you to remain?

6. Was work-life balance ever an issue? In what way? What do you think can be done to encourage more people to stay in Jewish education?

a. What can be done to encourage more people to enter?

Appendix E
Interview Protocol - "Groups of Interest"

Interview Protocol – Groups of Interest

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: REMEMBER TO HIGHLIGHT THE SUBGROUP OF INTEREST PRIOR TO CONDUCTING INTERVIEW

***Introduction**: Thank you again for making time for this conversation today. Just as a reminder, this interview is part of a major research study of the experiences and career arc of those who are working or have worked in Jewish educational settings in the U.S. The project is being overseen by the Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education and funded by the William Davidson Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation.*

The interview should take about 45 minutes. I will be taking notes and, with your permission, also recording the interview. All of this will remain confidential. We'll be using summaries and will remove all identifying information from any quotes or examples we use.

Please note that in this interview, we use the term Jewish education broadly to include Jewish engagement, Jewish outreach, and other similar activities. Does the term "Jewish educator" or "Jewish education" resonate with you? If not, what term best describes your works?

1. Tell me about yourself and your life now (location? Married? Kids? Job?)

    a. Tell me about your engagement with and connection to Judaism, Jewish life and Jewish education when you were growing up (*probe also for current engagement*).

2. Tell me about your employment history and the pathway you took to where you are now. (*focus on and prompt for thinking about transitions)*

    a. When and why did you get involved in Jewish education?

    b. Did you work or consider working outside the Jewish sector? [*probe especially for switchers*]

    c. Say more about changes between jobs and/or sectors.

    d. What kind of formal preparation as a Jewish educator have you had? [*formal degrees, certificate/fellowship programs, etc*]

e. Thinking about people around the same age as you are, how does your career path to this point compare to theirs? What are the similarities and differences?

f. [if switcher] Probe if not already clear: Can you please describe your thinking specifically regarding moving into Jewish education from a different field?

3. So reflecting back on that whole journey, how do you think those specific experiences shaped how you feel and think about your current work? (*probe for early and work experiences)*
   a. Have your experiences provided you with perspectives or skills that have enhanced/detracted how you feel about your work? In what ways?

   b. [*Switchers, Movers, Sector-Switchers:*] How do you think [*other relevant work experiences/transitions*] may have shaped how you think about your work?

4. We're interested in how those working in Jewish education can best be supported so they can thrive and stay motivated and committed to their work. Thinking about the times in the course of your work in Jewish education in which you felt that you thrived and felt most engaged with, successful in, or committed to your work, can you describe what that was like and what you think accounted for those experiences? [*prompt for what organizational and leadership practices/policies contributed to this, and what external supports (professional networks, mentors, relationships, learning experiences) contributed.]*

   a. Now think about the opposite, times in Jewish education you felt it was challenging to stay engaged, successful or committed – what do you feel contributed to those experiences? [*including org/leadership practices/policies, and external contributors*]
      i. *How did you get through that time? [probe for resources, etc. drawn on]*

5. [*Millenials and Getting Started:*] Clearly, you have a *job* in Jewish education – would you also say that you have a *career* in Jewish education? Tell me about your thinking on this.

6. [*If preferred a different term that Jewish education and didn't explain previously*]: You indicated at the very beginning that you preferred the term [PREFERRED TERM] to the term "Jewish educator." Can you tell me a bit more about how you think about that distinction?

7. The results of this study are going to be used by funders, policy makers, and others to guide their efforts in strengthening the field of Jewish education. From your perspective, what are the most important things that can be done to encourage more people to enter the field, and to thrive once they have entered?

    a. Is there anything you might add or emphasize particularly for attracting and supporting people in [YOUR SECTOR]?

    b. Is there anything you might add or emphasize particularly for attracting and supporting [YOUR DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP/S]?

8. Is there anything else you'd like to add, or that I should have asked you about but didn't?

Appendix F
Focus Group Guide

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL – On the Journey

***Introduction**: Thank you again for making time for this conversation today – we are especially grateful given current realities of the world we're living in. This focus group is part of a major research study of the experiences and career arc of those who are working or have worked in Jewish educational settings in the U.S. The project is being overseen by the Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education and is funded by the William Davidson Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation.*

*I'll be posing questions to the group to spur conversation about your experiences, but I encourage you to respond to and ask additional questions of each other as the conversation unfolds. The conversation should last approximately 75 minutes, and your responses are entirely confidential, meaning we will not attach your responses to your name when we report our findings. While we cannot guarantee that all participants will maintain the same standards of confidentiality that we do, we additionally request that **what is said in this space stays in this space** to allow for candid and fruitful conversation.*

Additionally, do you mind if we record this session to ensure that we are taking accurate notes? Please respond with a verbal "yes."

Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. You've all been invited to this particular group because you work in [SECTOR]. Let's start with a quick go-around. What is your position and your responsibilities at your work? There's no need for you to share the name of the place in which you work.

Thanks! Now let's get to the main focus areas. We're particularly interested in workplace environment and conditions and how these play out in the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction one has for their work. Looking over the course of their work in any field, many people can point to periods of time that they were particularly motivated and committed to the work they do, and periods of time when they felt that it was challenging to stay motivated or committed.

2. Let's start by thinking about times in the course of your work in Jewish education in which you felt that you thrived and felt most engaged with, or committed to your work. What was it that led to these feelings? What was it about your work and workplace that allowed you to get to that point of feeling so engaged with your work?

    a. *Depending on the response, the interviewer can use the following **Prompts***
    [Either "X came up a few times and I want to see if you can say a bit more about it"; OR "The topic of X really didn't come up at all, or at least not much, and I'm wondering about your thoughts about it and why it didn't come up"
        - *The role of leadership and supervision*

- *Relationships with co-workers*
- *The nature of the work itself*
- *The power to make decisions about your own work.*
- *Opportunities for professional growth and learning*
- *The learners (and their families, if applicable)*

b. To facilitate conversation: Just as a reminder, you should feel free to comment on one another's responses and to ask one another questions. Let me pause for that. [If need more prompting: Did you hear anything that either you relate with or that surprised you?]

3. Now let's shift gears and consider those times in the course of your work in Jewish education that you felt it was challenging to stay engaged, successful or committed. What was it that led to these feelings? What about your work allowed brought you to that point of feeling so frustrated or disengaged with your work?

*a. Depending on the response, the interviewer can use the following **Prompts**. [Either "X came up a few times and I want to see if you can say a bit more about it"; OR "The topic of X really didn't come up at all, or at least not much, and I'm wondering about your thoughts about it and why it didn't come up"*

a. The role of leadership and supervision
b. Relationships with co-workers
c. The nature of the work itself
d. The power to make decisions about your own work.
e. The learners (and their families, if applicable)

b. To facilitate conversation: Just as a reminder, you should feel free to comment on one another's responses and to ask one another questions. Let me pause for that. [If need more prompting: Did you hear anything that either you relate with or that surprised you?]

4. I'd like to focus for a moment on salary and benefits.
   a. In what ways, if any, do you see your salary as related to the degree of commitment to and engagement with the work that you do?
   b. How about benefits?
   c. Are there any benefits that you consider to be highest priorities, whether you get these or not?

5. The results of this study are going to be used by funders, policy makers, and others to guide their efforts in strengthening the field of Jewish education. From your perspective, what are the most important things that can be done to encourage more people to enter the field, and to thrive once they have entered?

The Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE) is an evolving community of researchers, practitioners, and philanthropic leaders dedicated to improving the quality of knowledge that can be used to guide the work of Jewish education. The Collaborative supports research shaped by the wisdom of practice, practice guided by research, and philanthropy informed by a sound base of evidence.

George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) advances knowledge through meaningful research that improves the policy and practice of education. Together, more than 1,600 faculty, researchers and graduate students make up the GSEHD community of scholars. Founded in 1909, GSEHD continues to take on the challenges of the 21st century, guided by the belief that education is the single greatest contributor to economic success and social progress.

Rosov Consulting helps foundations, philanthropists, federations, and grantee organizations in the Jewish communal sector make well informed decisions that enhance their impact. Working at the nexus of the funder and grantee relationship, our expertise includes evaluation, applied research, impact assessment, and the design and implementation of data collection efforts to inform strategy development and planning. Founded in 2008, we utilize our range of life experiences and knowledge to best serve our clients.

The William Davidson Foundation is a private family foundation that honors its founder and continues his life-long commitment to philanthropy, advancing for future generations the economic, cultural and civic vitality of Southeast Michigan, the State of Israel, and the Jewish community. For more information, visit williamdavidson.org.

The Jim Joseph Foundation seeks to foster compelling, effective Jewish learning experiences for young Jews in the United States. Established in 2006, the Jim Joseph Foundation has awarded more than $600 million in grants with the aspiration that all Jews, their families, and their friends will be inspired by Jewish learning experiences to lead connected, meaningful, and purpose-filled lives and make positive contributions to their communities and the world.

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