

CAREER TRAJECTORIES OF JEWISH EDUCATORS IN THE UNITED STATES

Facing the Future:
Mapping the Marketplace of
Jewish Education During COVID-19

FUNDED BY

WILLIAM DAVIDSON FOUNDATION (GRANT #1709-01132)

JIM JOSEPH FOUNDATION (GRANT #18-55, 19-S03)

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: DR. MICHAEL J. FEUER

PREPARED BY

ROSOV CONSULTING

Graduate School
of Education
& Human Development

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



MAPPING THE MARKET

The “Mapping the Market” (MTM) strand of CASJE’s Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study was conceived with the goal of shedding light on the Jewish education marketplace. MTM planned to document what job opportunities exist in Jewish education, what skills and aptitudes employers across various sectors seek in the Jewish educators they hire, and the ways in which individuals who function as Jewish educators are prepared for and nurtured to work effectively in the field.

The early stages of work on MTM have provided an opportunity to learn how certain sectors of Jewish education have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hiring practices serve as a barometer of institutional health, and this is certainly true at the present moment: they shed light on what employers seek to achieve at a given point in time, what demand they anticipate for their services and products, and what help they expect their staff will need in order to succeed.

During July and August 2020, our team conducted focus groups with 75 individuals responsible for hiring Jewish educators in those sectors whose primary function is to provide either formal Jewish education or informal/experiential Jewish education (what we refer to in the larger study as Sectors 1 and 2); our sample included heads of day schools, early childhood directors, educational directors at congregations, directors of overnight and day camps, JCC directors, directors of youth-serving organizations, and Hillel directors.¹ We also spoke with three informants well placed to observe the labor market in some of these sectors. During the course of these focus groups and interviews, we explored the extent to which and the ways in which hiring needs and hiring practices had been impacted by COVID-19. Exploring the marketplace for Jewish educators, we opened a window on the current state of the broader landscape of Jewish education. This memo shares what we learned.

A HUMAN CAPITAL LENS

Since the pandemic first disrupted life and work in North America in March 2020, a steady stream of reports from the field, frequently posted in *eJewish Philanthropy*, have provided regular updates about “What’s going on in Jewish Education” and how specific sectors have been coping. Recently, the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University released a report, *Building Resilient Communities*, about the experiences of 10 Jewish communities during the first three months of the pandemic. These accounts help construct a

¹ Almost all of the interviewees work within the eight communities who have been participating in CASJE’s Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators study. The only exceptions are individuals who work for Foundation for Jewish Camp, youth-serving organizations, or Hillel in ways that serve local communities from a national hub.

picture of the communal institutions hardest hit by the pandemic and how demand for their services has been impacted.

This report takes a different tack. It uncovers what is happening in various sectors through the lens of human capital. This lens reveals who is being hired, what the employers of Jewish educators are looking for from those they hire and why. Inevitably, this lens discloses what employers anticipate being demand for their services and the general needs of the field. This lens reveals a picture that is both familiar and fresh. It makes vivid just how inconsistent the impact of COVID-19 has been on the different sectors of Jewish education and how diverse the patterns of response have been to widely shared challenges.

STATE OF THE FIELD

Congregational Education: On the Cusp Between Implosion and Reinvention

The strength and weakness of congregational education at this time is that it is supplemental. If children are spending the day on Zoom, and are participating in a full day of remote schooling, parents (and the children themselves) have little appetite to spend even more hours on-screen for Jewish education, especially if they were already ambivalent about its value. If public schools have little to offer during the day, then Hebrew school provides welcome relief; finally, children have something to do with their time. And in places where afterschool programs can now be offered in-person, the same calculation applies. If children are actually going to school, why risk exposing them to yet another vector of risk after school? Where regular schools are still closed, the chance for children to be in a structured environment with other children a few hours a week is truly a godsend. No one imagined that Hebrew school could be so welcome!

While the enrollment picture is mixed, the financial situation is uniformly bleak. Typically structured in a model that requires parents to pay both synagogue fees and afterschool fees, parents query the point of paying at all if the synagogue is closed or they can attend services anywhere in the world, remotely. With so many congregations taking a financial hit with the loss of in-person High Holidays services, fiscal support from congregations for schools has been severely cut in many places, requiring programs to cut staff. And, finally, the schools that are operating in person are finding that their cost burden is increasing due to the need to lower educator-student ratios. The combination of higher costs and lower income increasingly looks unsustainable.

With some directors expressing doubt that families will ever come back, there is a real chance of institutional implosion across the sector. And yet in some places, the current moment has created opportunities; there are possibilities for reinvention and renewal. Some programs are investing in remote learning platforms—such as Google Classroom—for the first time. The

small-group programming they've offered online has been very well received and might actually be more effective than in-person programming with larger numbers of children. This is certainly the case when younger "madrichim" are used to ensure the technology is working or to organize breakout rooms while the educators focus on what they do best. These online offerings have been especially welcomed by parents when they're not limited to specific hours of the week and, of course, don't require sitting in afterschool traffic.

With programming options now spread across more hours of the week, directors can offer more time to their star teachers and let go of weaker personnel. They're also no longer tied to the vagaries of the local labor market; they can keep on, for example, beloved staff who had moved out of town. The key is to find people who, in the words of one director, are high tech and high touch: "they can look through that screen and connect with their students even though it's through a screen."

When schools can fully reopen, these alternative modes of delivery have every chance of remaining viable and appealing; they are much more in sync with families' lives. Congregational education could look quite different. There might be far fewer providers, operating with leaner, higher-quality teams, offering a more diverse array of programs much of which will no longer be tied to bricks and mortar. Today, it is not at all clear which way the field will tip.

Early Childhood Education: Reestablishing and Remodeling

Parents need care for their young children. Unlike afterschool congregational education, this is a service whose value has not been called into question by COVID-19. The challenge is to be ready with in-person offerings that meet health regulations and that are sustainable in business terms. Remote programming for the very young is hardly viable as other than an occasional option.

This is a marketplace truly in flux. Programs reopened as soon as was legally possible, but planning is very hard, with parents—apparently—changing their plans, signing up, withdrawing, and changing their schedules almost daily. Currently, two broad patterns are evident. First, there is less demand than before the pandemic. It's not fully clear why; perhaps because parents are more anxious about returning to a "center" than joining, where possible, small family-initiated pods. Perhaps, while they're working from home, parents are finding ways to care for their own children during the day. At the same time, even with less demand, directors are having to hire up: health regulations mean that the same staff member can't work with one group of children in the morning and another in the afternoon; providers have to reduce their staffing ratios; and they're finding that staff are just not willing to return—it's not worth the health risk in a sector that was so poorly paid in the first place and where many were part-timers who didn't anyway have to work. Finally, it is likely that some staff can make

better money leading a pod of their own. As one director reported: “we can’t be that choosy with hiring ... if they are warm, loving, committed to children, and feel comfortable teaching in person, we will support them in other ways.” And yet, it is becoming increasingly evident how urgent it is to find staff who are sensitive to children’s (and parents’) social and emotional needs after they’ve experienced so much disruption at home.

Some new norms are emerging. Some centers are turning parents away because with new restrictions they don’t have as much room as they once they did. And to reduce uncertainty, they have created a registration process rather than operating on a first-come, first-served basis. There are cases where families have to pay up front, and they’re selected on the basis of a points system that reflects parent engagement. To make the finances work, some centers are cutting back on the hours they offer; they find that parents are grateful for whatever they can get.

If the general contours of the sector have not been fundamentally changed by the pandemic, it seems as if new business models are emerging with more compact teams serving fewer families at any one time. The experience might be more nurturing of parent community for those who can afford this option. It also might mean fewer young families turning to a significant portal for lifelong Jewish engagement.

Day School Education: The Best of Times Amidst the Worst of Times

Since the onset of the pandemic, day schools have exceeded all expectations. As one Head of School said, they’ve earned “big love” from their parents. Resources they’ve built up over recent decades—integrating technology into their programs, investing in meeting the social and emotional needs of children, and nurturing parent community—have become priceless assets at this moment. Ironically, the resources that added to the forbidding price tag of day school education are now more readily appreciated by families who previously didn’t think day schools were worth the cost. This seems to be why we’re hearing that many, although not all, schools are seeing stable or increased enrollment.

This hasn’t come easy. Schools had to invest intensively in professional development and in technology, and then in reconfiguring their spaces to enable the return of students or to be ready for scenarios where some children will be in school and others will participate in the same classes from home. Heads express pride in being ready to switch from one delivery mode to another from one day to the next: “We’ve got good at this!”

Two strong patterns are evident when it comes to the labor market in schools. First, when it comes to hiring new staff, technological competence is assumed; so much so, it’s almost a non-issue. More important is how well teachers can address the mental health needs of students. This is their most pressing need. As one head expressed it: “I’m looking for resilience and a sense of positivity and optimism and just willingness to be flexible ...

people who can be resilient and who can project that resilience to our kids.” Or, perhaps even more strikingly, as another said: “I’m not hiring for COVID. I’m hiring for beyond. So, if I have found someone who is a whiz on Zoom but couldn’t connect with people, I would not hire that person.” These are perspectives that indicate attention to the horizon beyond the current moment. They express a degree of confidence in the future of this field that has not been heard for some time.

Second, to maintain their flexibility, whether in person or online, schools are building up their bench strength in potentially significant ways. Some are finding that it pays to double down on teaching assistants; they’re cheaper and often more flexible than regular appointments. Assistants help keep ratios down in the classroom or in breakout rooms on Zoom. In this vein, some schools are tapping a new source of personnel: college students who are going to be home this year. They’re providing an internship-like experience for these young people that builds their own capacity and might also end up creating a point of entry to the field for this population. Other schools are opting for a more expensive alternative: they’re hiring permanent substitutes who they don’t have to share with other schools; these are “plug and play” folks who can ensure that schools aren’t caught short if a staff member has to be quarantined, and, again, they help reduce class size. With many schools making clear they can’t accommodate teachers who can’t be at school in person because they’re immune compromised or have childcare challenges, there is a good deal of faculty turnover.

This is a moment of great opportunity for day schools, especially in jurisdictions where public schools are barely functioning. If they can demonstrate continued relevance to newly enrolled families, the pandemic might be a tipping point in establishing the case for day schools. Furthermore, the demands of the present moment are shaking up staffing rolls in ways that might yet bring new blood and new energy into schools that could have lasting value.

Overnight Camp: Hibernating in the Hope the Worst Will Pass

The energy coursing through the day school sector contrasts sharply with what seems to have happened in much of the camp sector. Of course, overnight camps were more acutely challenged by the pandemic than perhaps any other sector. Their special value proposition—intense, in-person relationships cultivated in special places far from home—was completely upended by the need to shelter in place. The loss of an entire summer has been devastating.

In many respects, it seems that the response of camps has been to hibernate and wait until this horrible reality passes. For sure, there have been noteworthy exceptions across the continent (Camp Stone’s Indoor World, Camp Newman’s Zoomin with Newman, and others), but among the camp directors we interviewed, there was a sense that there is only one way to

make camp work. As one director expressed it: “Our model isn’t able to be flexible.” And thanks to extensive financial support, camps have been able to write off the last summer and plan for the next. Critics argue that when compared to the creative ferment in other sectors, this feels like an opportunity missed, especially when many in the camp world have long aspired to make camp relevant to children while they’re at home, albeit between camp seasons.

However camp happens next summer, there will be challenges in staffing terms. As one director explained, “we’re looking at a missed generation of first-year counselors.” When second-year staff returnees are often a critical element in their staffing structure, the camps are about to find out how disruptive it will be to run a program with an almost entirely unexperienced staff. They’re also expecting they won’t be able to hire international staff, including staff from Israel, even while they might have a surplus of local talent who will want a camp experience as staff.

While overnight camps seem to have survived to fight another day, it is unlikely to be business as usual, at least next summer. Directors expect to work with a less predictable staffing pool, and they expect less demand from campers, whether because families will no longer be able to afford the experience or because they’re still wary on the health front. One way or another, it won’t be easy to quickly bounce back. If the past summer was a stress test of their financial model, the coming summer will provide no less severe a test of their educational and staffing models.

Day Camps: Getting Back on the Water

Overall, day camps were less severely impacted than their overnight camp colleagues. Tens of camps were able to offer in-person programming this past summer, albeit scaled back in terms of their range of offerings. Many others found it worthwhile to offer remote options, sometimes in partnership with other providers, a move that allowed them to pool their most talented staff. For those that weighed whether to reopen, there were tough decisions to make about how close they wanted to get to the edge of what states permitted. Most decided it wasn’t worth the risk.

Like other sectors that have been providing in-person programming, the staffing challenge was to find enough staff to operate with smaller ratios than usual and to find people who would have the versatility to cover multiple responsibilities (Jewish and general). When members of a team had to be quarantined, the scramble for staff was even more acute—often impossible. Because of the need to deliver programming in pods, they couldn’t rely on a single specialist Jewish educator to run programs for everyone. As elsewhere, these staffing pressures have overturned what was previously a very successful business model and also a

money-maker for host institutions. More time was needed for training, and more individuals needed to be added to the payroll.

Looking to the next summer, it seems that providers are hoping to bounce back, but they anticipate needing to deal with the emotional fallout of the pandemic among teenage staff and campers. They don't expect it to be plain sailing. In the meantime, quite a few day camp teams are being employed by JCCs to deliver year-round programming as part of their expanded afterschool offerings, something discussed below. Camps have long wanted to break out of the straightjacket of the summer season, and they now have a chance to do so.

Hillels: Doubling Down on Preexisting Strengths

On campus, everything is different, and everything is the same. The majority of campuses have shifted to the remote delivery of their educational programs and their extracurricular offerings, and yet it seems that Hillels are nevertheless planning to offer a full year of programming, virtually if needed. This means that most are planning to proceed with a full complement of staff.

Fundamentally, hiring continues to be about finding a good match between the candidate and the unique culture and community of a local Hillel. In respect to what they are looking for in new hires at this time, pastoral and interpersonal skills loom large, as has always been the case at the campus level. As one interviewee put it, "I don't think we'd look for a different skill set. We're already focused on finding creative, flexible, emotionally intelligent staff, and those skills are key for virtual programming—community building. And since we're all still learning this on the fly, I'm not concerned with finding people who can't do that kind of work; they'll learn on the fly."

The hiring process this past year was slightly delayed but not fundamentally changed. Five Senior Jewish Educators were placed this year. Only two job postings were taken down this hiring season due to concerns about a local Hillel's ability to sustain funding for these positions over the course of the grant period and beyond. The Senior Jewish Educator grants programs are funded from different sources and are each structured slightly differently in each case depending on the matching model. Since the inception of the Senior Jewish Educator model, these positions have seen high levels of retention over the years.

While Hillel International has had to make staffing cutbacks, on the ground, local Hillels are staffed up more or less as they have been in recent years. Like many others, they expect to find a population in greater need of emotional support than ever before, but providing such support is at the core of their mission. Additionally, when engagement and educator staff are cut, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors need to take on that work which reduces their capacity to do operations and development work.

In response to concerns about local Hillels' ability to sustain these critical positions, Hillel International has directed Senior Jewish Educator grant funds toward stimulus rather than to staffing new positions on campuses during the pandemic. This means that the Senior Jewish Educator grants are providing relief to prevent furloughs or lay-offs. Thus far, they have been able to sustain or re-hire thirteen education positions. Hillel International anticipates that more requests for support will be coming since some local Hillels have relied on loans or endowments this year to cover costs during the pandemic and these sources may be exhausted soon. It is too early to tell what will happen post pandemic.

JCCs: Gingerly Rebuilding After the Tsunami

Institutionally, Jewish Community Centers have probably been harder hit than any other sector delivering Jewish education. As has been widely noted, the dependence of JCCs on a fee-for-service model (usually a desirable thing) has been devastating when they could not offer most of their services. JCCs have laid off or furloughed a higher proportion of their staff than institutions in any other sector.

Now that many have been able to reopen, their options are severely limited by health protocols. Overall, they need to make sure the wide array of part-timers they employ won't themselves be a health risk to their clients. They have had to conduct a lot of staff training online to that end, something that seems to have been challenging. And there are also protocols that govern the rehiring of furloughed staff which limit their maneuverability. Finally, given their desire to serve as broad a public as possible, simply managing entry and exit in and out of their facilities comes with a whole set of regulations.

When it comes to particular programs, there have been any number of challenges. Early childhood sections can only accommodate severely reduced numbers of children because of social distancing requirements. Afterschool options also face similar constraints, although the hours when these programs are offered are being expanded in communities where public schools are not fully functioning, a rare bright spot. As previously noted, JCCs are turning to their day camp teams to help fill this gap. Sports programming is completely shuttered, a disaster in business terms as well as for the health needs of members. At least they've been able to transfer all of their offerings for adults and seniors fully online, although they've needed to invest heavily in ensuring that facilitators and educators, not to mention participants, are comfortable with the technology.

With their institutions offering such a wide variety of services, each of which comes with its own logistical and business challenges at this time of rebuilding, the work of reconstruction is especially complex. In the short term, at least, it seems unlikely to be

financially beneficial, even while all agree on the symbolic importance of demonstrating that they're back in business after the tsunami of the last six months.

Youth-Serving Organizations: The National is the New Local

This has been a time of opportunity for youth-serving organizations (YSOs), albeit mixed with many difficulties. Young people have been hungry for connection and community, the special promise of these organizations. Yet with teens having been required to spend so many hours on Zoom by their schools, asking them to spend still more time doing so is neither attractive nor educationally wise. One solution has been to double down on one-on-one or one-on-two programming to make things more personal than in a Zoom room. A second path has been to seek out advisors and educators who have especially strong communication skills—"people who can make connections with kids quickly, because they won't have the opportunity to have the side conversation after the program."

Typically, youth programming has a strong local component. It requires finding appropriate and, ideally, able advisors who are geographically proximate to the audience. At the present time, geography is no longer a limitation. It has meant that YSOs have been able, first, to ask themselves optimally what they want to accomplish rather than what it is possible to accomplish given locally available talent. They can then identify the best-qualified people—outside experts if needed—to help achieve their goals—location no limit. In fact, because online they don't need to worry about staff-teen ratios in a supervisory sense, they have additional flexibility. As one director put it, "we don't have to hire new staff, we can go back to known performers." Or as another said, "we can take some of the special sauce that exists in in-person immersive experiences and make it come alive in different and similar ways—on a screen." The national has in effect become the new local.

While these circumstances have created a moment of great opportunity for youth-serving organizations, some have had to wrestle with a series of accompanying challenges. In normal times, there were well-established norms around what quality programming costs to create and access. Directors report that there is a widespread misconception that virtual experiences should cost less, when in fact it is much harder to maintain quality online. If they don't have strong backing from a parent organization to help lower fees, they're finding it hard to operate at an attractive price point to their users.

Local-level youth programming has been hard hit by the financial challenges of the present moment. Youth professionals were among the first staff to be let go or furloughed by congregations and by other local providers. And now, with communities reopening and seeking to reestablish personal connections among teens and between teens and near peers, there is evidence that some organizations are seeing internships rather than rehires as

a more attractive locally-based option when it comes to staffing. There is a danger that a sector that gradually professionalized in recent years will be degraded by financial pressures.

The current moment poses a dilemma for these organizations. Traditionally, one of their greatest strengths was their ground-game, their ability to form relationships with young people and create opportunities for them to spend time with one another and shape their own experiences. These assets have been badly battered and might be hard to rebuild. At the same time, with so much programming now flowing from central sources, the quality of these offerings is much more consistent and may even be higher. Some of it is said to be exceptional. The pandemic has changed the rules of the youth-serving game, and it is not clear what is the best way to make it to the end zone.

CONCLUSION: LOOKING BEYOND UPHEAVAL WITH HOPE

The data reported here largely derive from the eight communities that participated in the On the Journey strand of CASJE's Career Trajectories of Jewish Educators Study. These data come from focus groups and interviews with a subset of institutional leaders in these communities. We believe they are representative of more widely occurring phenomena; but until we survey all providers in these communities in the next phase of our work, we won't know for sure. Even with these limitations, we feel confident offering the following conclusions, first in terms of the context:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated preexisting features of the Jewish education marketplace. That marketplace was already localized, with the supply of and demand for Jewish educators strongly colored by local circumstances. The pandemic's uneven impact across the United States has aggravated those features. In regions where public schools have offered little to families, various sectors of Jewish education have seen an uptick in demand. Having more leeway to offer in-person services than public institutions, they have filled a vacuum: this has been a boost for afterschool programs, congregations, and day schools, and it has resulted in organizations hiring up in order to keep pace. In other parts of the country, providers in these same sectors are in some cases cutting back their staff in order to make ends meet due to uneven or declining demand. The widely differing experiences of day camps in various parts of the country, depending on whether they were able to open in person this past summer, brings these inconsistencies very much into view.
2. These differences have been further accentuated by another phenomenon. Those sectors that provide services that parents can't do without—childcare and day school education—seem to be emerging from the present moment in much better shape. They have responded to the moment vigorously, although exactly what business models will prove sustainable for the early childhood sector is uncertain. Those sectors whose services are

perceived to be a luxury or whose value is not fully appreciated—congregational schools and local-level youth work stand out in this respect—have been severely challenged and have seen significant cuts in staff. The landscape in respect to these sectors will likely look quite different once the pandemic is over.

Even with so much local and sectoral variation, a few general patterns have become clear in terms of the hiring practices and hiring needs of Jewish educational institutions:

3. Whether providers are staffing up or staffing down, they are now more likely to look for full-time than part-time staff. When in-person programming can be offered, health regulations have made it riskier for employers to hire part-time staff and have also made the work less appealing to the part-timers. When program delivery is largely remote, organizations are finding they can add to the hours of their best performers, wherever they're located, and offer a product of consistently higher quality. This shift from part-time to full-time staffing is of more than technical significance. It has long been argued that it will be hard to professionalize the field of Jewish education while so many of its sectors are staffed by part-timers. The exigencies of the current moment have created a chance to take a significant step forward in this respect.
4. Whatever the state of demand for their services, there is also tremendous consistency in terms of what employers are looking for among those they hire. Technological know-how and the ability to educate remotely go without saying today. No one knows if or when they may have to switch back from in-person to remote programming, or how long they will have to continue in remote mode. They want to make sure their staff can deliver whatever the circumstances require. No less important, and in some sectors even more important, employers are looking for staff who are responsive to the social and emotional—mental health—needs of participants. There is a widely shared assumption that children, young adults, and parents have been traumatized by their experiences of the last six months, and educators need to be sensitive to these circumstances. Today, this is their first order of business whichever population they seek to engage.

This last point signals why ultimately there is cause for optimism in this time of upheaval. Jewish education has potential to provide many Americans with the kinds of relationships, resources, and wisdom they especially need at a time of dislocation, confusion, and pain. Fundamentally, Jewish education is a practice grounded in a vision of the good life. There is evidence that appetite for such succor is driving demand in some sectors and some regions. The systems and structures able to satisfy this appetite are by no means fully in place at this time; and there will be further disruption in getting to a point where they can be. If Jewish educators have always been members of a hopeful profession, committing to this work in the belief that they can improve the lives of those they engage, now more than ever there is reason to look to the future with hope.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The patterns described here are completely contingent on local circumstances. For this reason, it doesn't feel entirely appropriate to draw out recommendations from these findings; what makes good sense in one part of the country or in one sector will be unwise to attempt elsewhere. Nevertheless, having commenced with this caution, our portrait of the field does prompt the following suggestions:

For funders: A new landscape is emerging, and the nimblest institutions—even in the most uncertain sectors—are responding to this landscape and sometimes even shaping it. They are planning for what will come next. They're developing resources and building teams with which to respond to the present moment, and that will probably serve them well whatever comes next. If earlier in the pandemic it made sense for funders to sit tight and wait for the upheaval to pass, or until a clearer picture emerged of what will come next, that no longer looks like a wise option. The pathfinders we've encountered need help and encouragement. They have a strong sense of their next steps.

For institutional leaders: This is an exceptionally difficult time to be leading a Jewish educational institution. It probably hasn't been this difficult for at least half a century. It is instructive and even inspiring, then, to learn how some leaders are finding creative ways to overcome this moment. There is always more than one way forward. And, despite the localized nature of the challenges, it is striking how extensively educational leaders have been turning to their peers across the country for input and inspiration. This is a theme in every sector. The intensity of their interaction suggests a continued, even heightened, role for national platform providers—such as the Foundation for Jewish Camp, Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools, and the JCC Association of North America—to continue creating opportunities for peers to learn from one another. Whatever the specificity of their challenges, it is worth local institutional leaders making use of these platforms.

APPENDIX: QUALITATIVE DATA GATHERING SAMPLING OVERVIEW

Using the On The Journey Community Liaison contact lists provided as part of the On The Journey Educator count, we reached out to everyone on those lists and asked them to participate in an online synchronous or asynchronous focus group or group interview. Each potential participant was asked to self-identify their organization's type. As an incentive, participants were offered to be entered into a drawing to win a cash prize for their organization (1 × \$1,000 and 4 × \$500 prizes). Data collection took place in July and August 2020. In addition, we spoke with three professionals at national organizations (Hillel International and Foundation for Jewish Camp) to enhance our understanding of their landscapes.

The following tables outline the number of focus group participants by organization type and community.

Organization Type	Number of Participants
Day School Heads of School (3 groups)	12
Congregational/Hebrew School Directors (5 groups)	27
Early Childhood Education Directors (4 groups)	14
Overnight Camp Directors (1 group)	5
Day Camp Directors (1 group)	3
Youth-Serving Organization Directors (3 groups)	10
Campus (Hillel) Directors (1 group)	2
JCC Leadership (1 group)	2

Community	Number of Participants
Austin	5
Boston	7
Chicago	13
Detroit	7
Las Vegas	3
Miami	2
Nassau-Westchester	22
San Francisco Bay Area	16

ABOUT THIS REPORT

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

This interim report shares preliminary findings from Mapping the Market, 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. Mapping the Market is designed to offer a systematic description of the labor market for Jewish educators across key sectors, from both supply side and demand side perspectives. The full Mapping the Market report is anticipated in Fall 2021. This interim report is intended to provide a rapid-response snapshot of the labor market for Jewish Educators during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing primarily on the formal and informal sectors of Jewish education in the United States.

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

- 1) *Preparing for Entry*: What does it take to launch a career in Jewish education?
- 2) *On the Journey*: What factors induce educators stay in this field and what supports their professional growth
- 3) *Mapping the Marketplace*: What does the labor market for Jewish education look like? Where are personnel shortages and saturation?
- 4) *The Census*: Estimating the number of Jewish educators in the United States workforce today.

CASJE would like to thank all the Jewish educational leaders from eight participating metropolitan areas across the United States, as well as national leaders, who participated in this study. Additionally we are especially grateful to Dr. Rena Dorph, Director of the Lawrence Hall of Science, Bob Sherman, former CEO of the Jewish Education Project, and Dr. Dan Goldhaber, Director of the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research at the American Institutes for Research and the Director of the Center for Education Data & Research at the University of Washington, for their guidance.

Project Leadership

Principal Investigator:	Michael J. Feuer, PhD, Dean of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University
Research Directors:	Wendy Rosov, PhD and Alex Pomson, PhD, Rosov Consulting Ariela Greenberg, PhD, The Greenberg Team
CASJE Managing Director:	Arielle Levites, PhD, George Washington University
Technical Advisory Committee:	Rabbi Rafi Cashman, PhD - Netivot HaTorah Day School Dan Goldhaber, PhD - University of Washington Miriam Heller Stern, PhD - Hebrew Union College Susan Moore Johnson, PhD - Harvard University Susanna Loeb, PhD - Brown University Richard Murnane, PhD - Harvard University Rona Novick, PhD - Yeshiva University Miriam Raider-Roth, PhD - University of Cincinnati

The **Consortium 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 Consortium supports research shaped by the wisdom of practice, practice guided by research, and philanthropy informed by a sound base of evidence.

The **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.

The **William Davidson Foundation** is a private family foundation that honors its founder and continues his lifelong commitment to philanthropy, advancing for future generations the economic, cultural and civic vitality of Southeast Michigan, the State of Israel, and the Jewish community.

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 \$500 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.

This report was prepared by **Rosov Consulting**. Founded in 2008, Rosov Consulting is a professional services firm helping foundations, philanthropists, and nonprofits in the Jewish communal sector meet their goals, assess progress, and make well-informed decisions to enhance impact. Working at the nexus of the funder and grantee relationship, our expertise includes evaluation and applied research, strategy development, launching new philanthropic initiatives, and systems coaching. We utilize our range of life experiences and knowledge to best serve our clients.



williamdavidson.org



jimjosephfoundation.org



www.casje.org



gsehd.gwu.edu