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## **New Virtual High School Consortium to Expand Educational Opportunities for Jewish Day Schools Nationwide**

MAYNARD, MA-- (Marketwired – March 23, 2015) - The Virtual High School (VHS) (<http://www.theVirtualHighSchool.org>), a non-profit empowering schools with the industry's best online learning programs, today announced that Jewish day schools nationwide will now have access to high-quality online Judaic Studies courses through *The Online Judaic Studies Consortium* (OJSC). VHS, with funding from the New York-based AVI CHAI Foundation, an organization committed to the perpetuation of the Jewish people, Judaism, and the centrality of the State of Israel to the Jewish people, will work with member schools to design and develop a series of Judaic studies courses to be delivered online. These courses will deliver engaging, rigorous content on a variety of Judaic studies topics, and will provide students and teachers with vital digital literacy, global communication and 21st century skills.

*The Online Judaic Studies Consortium* will enable schools to develop and utilize innovative Judaic studies courses in a flexible online format. Teachers at each participating school will receive professional development in online course delivery using VHS' exclusive *Online Teaching Methodologies* course before teaching student courses online. Educators will also have the opportunity to become subject-matter-experts and advise VHS in the development of content for each course. A dedicated staff member at each member school will act as an on-site student mentor and facilitator and manage the program at each location. Students at each school will take the courses online during their school day.

On March 8 - 10, 2015 The Virtual High School will attend the 2015 North American Jewish Day School Conference in Philadelphia, where representatives will introduce the OJSC program and begin to accept schools into the Consortium for the 2015-16 academic year. Schools will have the opportunity to offer online Judaic studies courses to their students starting as early as next fall.

According to new research conducted by the Foundation and Dr. Marvin Schick, Jewish day school enrollment has grown 37% in just eight years, an increase of 70,000 students over the last 15 years. However, many of these schools are small and do not have the resources to develop or deliver flexible online courses on their own.

"This grant will allow VHS to offer high quality courses to Jewish day schools. We are excited to be able to inspire and empower students and educators alike, while supporting their growth," said Jeffrey A. Elliott, President & CEO of The Virtual High School. "It is a one-of-a-kind offering that will collectively benefit all Jewish day schools nationwide."

For more information, administrators and teachers can visit The Virtual High School at the National Jewish Day Schools Conference from March 8 - 10, 2015 at the Philadelphia Convention Center or visit [www.TheVirtualHighSchool.org/OJSC](http://www.TheVirtualHighSchool.org/OJSC).

### **About The Virtual High School**

The Virtual High School is an online learning pioneer. Since 1995, the nonprofit organization has been setting the standard for quality online education. VHS provides courses taught in global online classrooms for secondary school students and online professional development in 21st century teaching for educators. The organization also meets the unique educational needs of schools through custom course development, individualized course offerings, and support for blended learning initiatives.

VHS' design and delivery standards was the model used by the National Education Association in their recommended standards for online learning. The organization has won numerous awards, including the Stockholm Challenge Award for Global Excellence in Information Technology and is a three-time winner of the United States Distance Learning Association's (USDLA) award for Excellence in Programming and Excellence in Best Practices.

#### **For more information:**

[www.TheVirtualHighSchool.org](http://www.TheVirtualHighSchool.org)

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