

# **New CASJE Project to Study the Career Development of Educators in Jewish Institutions of Teaching and Learning**

**Jeducation World – October 15, 2018**

*William Davidson Foundation and Jim Joseph Foundation Award \$1.5 million to Support Large-Scale and Timely Research Program*

Washington, DC – [CASJE](#) (The Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education) today announced the launch of a major project supported by the William Davidson Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation for comprehensive research on the pipeline and “career arc” of educators working in Jewish education. The two-year project is supported by generous grants totaling \$1.5 million from both foundations, and will yield findings to be shared broadly with the field of Jewish education and engagement.

“We are embarking on a timely project that promises to yield new key findings and data on critical issues that affect the work of educators in Jewish institutions and the needs of the field,” says Michael Feuer, CASJE co-chair and Dean of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at The George Washington University, home of CASJE.

Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, CASJE co-chair and Head of the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, adds that “The support of the William Davidson Foundation and Jim Joseph Foundation enables CASJE to conduct this project on a national scale and to gather and analyze data about educators, where they work, and the professional preparation they receive. This data will be of significant value to the places at which these educators work. Moreover, we hope to help the field understand the needs of educators to recruit and retain the most talented people.”

Earlier this year, the William Davidson Foundation supported a CASJE-facilitated “Problem Formulation Convening” (PFC) with a group of educators and researchers, which generated high-priority research questions. The group identified challenges relating to the professional culture in many segments of the Jewish education sector, opportunities for advancement, and the condition of educator compensation. The PFC helped identify the three questions central to CASJE’s new project: 1) Entry: What does it take to launch a career in Jewish education? 2) On the Journey: Why do educators stay in this field and how do they grow? And 3) Mapping the Marketplace: Where are personnel shortages and saturation?

“Our founder, William Davidson, understood the lifelong impact Jewish education can have on an individual and a community,” says Menachem “Manny” Menchel, program officer for Jewish Education at the William Davidson Foundation. “Mr. Davidson supported various causes for many decades, including those that benefited individual Jewish day schools and communities, as well as larger opportunities to professionalize the field of Jewish education. This grant – to understand how to attract and retain the best educators – positions us to expand upon his vision.”

The research will be overseen by CASJE and will be conducted initially by Rosov Consulting in three linked studies. First, researchers will study the career plans of people currently in the settings from which Jewish educators have tended to come, such as summer camps, longer-term programs in Israel, and college fellowships. The second study will involve a comprehensive mapping of those who work in the field of Jewish education today to understand why they stay in the field and how they grow. The third component will focus on problems faced by employers and training providers coping with personnel shortages and/or saturation.

“CASJE’s unique approach combines planning strategies and research programs that reveal insights through systematic and applied research,” says Stacie Cherner, Senior Program Officer at the Jim Joseph Foundation. “Moreover, with organizations such as Leading Edge and JPRO already doing important work in many of these research areas, CASJE is positioned to deliver much-needed comprehensive quantitative and qualitative findings. Together, stakeholders in the field can then review this work to make sense of people’s experiences and choices at different stages of their careers.”

CASJE is a community of researchers, practitioners, and philanthropic leaders committed to sharing knowledge to improve Jewish education. In addition to the William Davidson Foundation and Jim Joseph Foundation, CASJE receives support from The AVI CHAI Foundation and The Crown Family, among others. The George Washington University serves as the administrative home for CASJE, enabling the specific goals of CASJE to be enriched by the academic and intellectual resources of a global, comprehensive, research university. Along with this new project, CASJE’s areas of inquiry include Jewish educational leadership, Jewish early childhood education, Hebrew language education, and Israel education.

CASJE’s Board of Directors includes co-chairs Dr. Michael Feuer and Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, and members Dr. Charles “Chip” Edelsberg, Dr. Rena Dorph (UC Berkeley), Dr. Sharon Feiman-Nemser (Brandeis University), Dr. Ellen Goldring (Vanderbilt University), Dr. Paul Goren (Superintendent of Evanston/Skokie School District 65), Ilana Horwitz (Stanford University), Dr. Benjamin Jacobs (The George Washington University), Dr. Jon Levisohn (Brandeis University), Robert Sherman (The Jewish Education Project), and Dr. Lee Shulman (Stanford University).

###

CASJE (Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education) 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. Our aim is to stimulate and support the work of researchers, practitioners, and funders who believe that evidence should drive decision-making in Jewish education. To this end, CASJE helps to develop applied research programs focused on high-priority issues facing Jewish education.

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. For more information, visit [williamdavidson.org](http://williamdavidson.org).

By investing in promising Jewish education grant initiatives, 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 aspires that all Jews, their families, and their friends lead connected, meaningful, purpose-filled lives and make positive contributions to their communities and the world.