



THE DEEP CONSORTIUM IS A COLLABORATIVE OF INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATIONS committed to providing high-quality professional development for educators in Jewish day schools. (Full membership list below.) We seek to leverage our combined expertise, experience, and influence to elevate both the capacity of teachers and school leaders to furnish the next generation of Jews with the highest-quality education and our own capabilities as organizations to achieve this larger mission.

WHY FOCUS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Just as both research and experience tell us that teachers hold enormous influence in advancing the learning of each student, we also know that any educator's capacity to teach effectively depends on consistent participation in professional development opportunities.¹ Likewise, ensuring that school leaders and administrators continually focus on how to optimize conditions for robust teaching and learning rests on their own professional growth. Put simply, the best educators are as dedicated to learning for themselves as for their students.

Further, we also know that when faculty engage in relevant and focused professional learning they are more likely to develop feelings of self-efficacy and job satisfaction, two factors key in encouraging retention.² In short, enabling educators at all levels to participate in high-quality professional development is key to our efforts to positively transform Jewish education.

WHAT IS HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

When we talk of professional development (PD) or professional learning (PL) we refer not just to its traditional renderings—workshops or one-off conferences and trainings—but to the wide range of activities and programs that prompt educators to: (a) strengthen classroom and school practice, (b) develop skills and strategies to reach each student and (c) commit to their own continuous growth. In addition to direct training, these learning opportunities include: curriculum design, one-on-one coaching (by an external coach or by an administrator or in-house coach), structured teacher collaboration (both within and across schools), peer observations, study groups and more.

Moreover, we align our diverse interventions to what research has confirmed as essential characteristics of effective professional development. Namely, for PD to have the kind of “sticking power” we strive for, it should be collaborative, active, focused on instructional content, extended over time, involve some forms of regular feedback and reflection, and explicitly focus on educators' relationships with students.³

WHY DEEP?

The DEEP Consortium formed in 2019 under the auspices of the [Jewish Education Innovation Challenge](#) to help address the well-documented need among day schools to do more to promote the professional growth of teachers and school leaders—both to advance educational excellence and to stabilize the workforce. With our unified voice, we hope to impress upon day school leaders, faculty, donors and families that implementing effective professional learning opportunities is essential to achieving our shared goal of strengthening not just individual Jewish day schools, but the entire field.

Our work takes shape in two broad areas:

- ❖ **Advocacy** – We partner with local and national organizations (schools, funders, higher education institutions, etc.) to encourage increased investments of time, money and energy in ongoing, meaningful professional learning for educators across the day school field.
- ❖ **Quality Improvement** – By producing resources and documenting effective practices, we support DEEP members and their partner schools and educators to optimize professional learning opportunities to develop embedded expertise, such that they bring about sustained impact on teaching and learning.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You, too, can play a vital role in supporting this ambitious, but achievable project of making Jewish day school education the best it can be. If you are interested in joining the movement, visit our webpage for more information (www.jewishchallenge.org/deep) or contact Dr. David Farbman, Project Director (da.farbman@gmail.com).

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- BetterLesson
- Facing History and Ourselves
- Gateways: Access to Jewish Education
- Hebrew at the Center
- Hidden Sparks
- Institute for Jewish Spirituality
- The Jewish New Teacher Project
- Jewish Standards & Benchmarks
- Lifnai V'Lifnim
- The Lookstein Center
- M²/Institute for Experiential Jewish Education
- Pedagogy of Partnership
- Prizmah
- The Shefa School
- Sulam

NOTES

¹ Outside of individual student ability, the strongest predictor of student performance are factors that revolve around teacher capacity. For more information, see Hattie, J. (2003). [Teachers Make a Difference. What Is the Research Evidence?](#) (pp. 1-17) On the value of professional development for improving teacher practice and, in turn, learner outcomes, see [Raising Student Achievement Through Professional Development](#) (2021) and Ingvarson, L., et al (2005). [Factors affecting the impact of professional development programs on teachers' knowledge, practice, student outcomes & efficacy.](#)

² Rosov Consulting (2021). [Professional Development for Jewish Educators: Time to Tap Its Potential](#) (Collaborative for Applied Studies in Jewish Education).

³ For more information, see: L. Darling-Hammond, et al (2017). [Effective Teacher Professional Development, Research Brief](#); and H. Hill and J. Papay (2022). [Building Better PL: How to Strengthen Teacher Learning.](#)