INFORMING CHANGE

Enhancing Jewish Learning & Engagement in Preschool Life

Documenting the JRS Model

Prepared for: Jim Joseph Foundation and the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties

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Executive Summary

ADDRESSING A NEED IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS

The Jewish Resource Specialist (JRS) Initiative, designed in 2008 by the Early Childhood Education Initiative (ECEI) of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties (the Federation), in partnership with the Jim Joseph Foundation, positions the early childhood years as a gateway into Jewish life for children and their families. It is a response to several catalyzing factors. First, preschool is a critical time for young families. Children are eager to learn and are developing socially, emotionally, cognitively and spiritually. For parents, at no other moment will they be so involved in their children's schooling. They are also choosing how they spend their time and with whom they spend it. The JRS Initiative came about to leverage this unique time for families.

Second, the JRS Initiative also addresses the dearth of leaders working to build the field of Jewish early childhood education (ECE). Those who want to focus on Jewish ECE and build communities of engaged Jewish families with preschool-aged children are challenged to find the support, mentors and professional development opportunities they need to craft a career path. The JRS Initiative seeks to meet these field-wide demands by developing the skills and Jewish knowledge of the JRS educators who then bring ideas and guidance to their schools.

THE GOALS & APPROACH OF THE JRS MODEL

The JRS Initiative is led by the Federation's Early Childhood Education Initiative (ECEI). It includes a cohort of Jewish ECE programs, each of which hires a teacher or staff member to be their JRS educator. Each JRS educator works on the Initiative for ten hours per week within their school. Collectively, the JRS educators form the JRS educator cohort, and receive ongoing coaching, mentoring and resource support from the JRS faculty.

The JRS educators work to further the Initiative's two goals:

- **Deepen Jewish learning:** Strengthen the opportunities available in the school curriculum for children to engage in Jewish learning experiences.
- **Engage families in Jewish life:** Connect families to Jewish opportunities at the preschool, within the preschool's host institution, as well as in the broader Jewish community.

To achieve these goals, the JRS Initiative focuses on building the school's capacity—among educators, school directors and in the school infrastructure itself. JRS educators use curriculum, professional learning and ongoing coaching with their colleagues to build Jewish knowledge and to enhance the ability to create rich classroom and community experiences. Through these strategies, JRS educators expand the school's capacity to lead relevant and meaningful Jewish learning.

The Initiative frames its pursuit of Jewish learning with a constructivist philosophy of education—an approach to education that emphasizes experience; reflection; student-driven learning; and the active conversation that can happen when content, teacher and learner meet. With this framing, the JRS Initiative, and the educators and directors involved in it, focus students and parents on a select number of subjects in deep, intimate and personal ways—rather than attempting to teach in broad strokes about Jewish life.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE JRS MODEL

JRS Faculty Supports to JRS Educators

To accomplish the Initiative's goals using constructivist approaches to change Jewish preschools, the JRS faculty offer several critical supports to JRS educators:

- **Coaching:** In coaching sessions, JRS educators and the JRS faculty work together to brainstorm strategies and organize them into annual, monthly and weekly work plans. Coaching sessions integrate systems for reflection, based on the Initiative's broader goals and tailored to each JRS educator's school-specific goals.
- **Community of practice:** These monthly meetings bring together the JRS educators to create a network of colleagues who support one another, offering a space to learn and strategize as a group.
- **Classes, days of learning and retreats:** Throughout the year, JRS faculty organize learning opportunities for JRS educators to improve management skills or to examine specific educational topics, among other professional development experiences.
- **Conferences and seminars:** ECEI sponsors subject matter experts to create various webinars and seminars for JRS educators and their school site colleagues.
- **Israel seminar:** The Israel seminar, offered in the second year of the JRS Initiative, is intended to strengthen the JRS educators' identities and capacities as Jewish early childhood educators by deepening their personal connection to Israel and empowering them to facilitate a personal connection between their learners and Israel.

JRS Educators Work within their Schools

The JRS Initiative seeks to inform and empower all Jewish ECE teachers to be confident, knowledgeable leaders of Jewish content through their work with their schools' JRS educators. To do this, JRS educators start from a place of trust, respect and camaraderie with their co-teachers. In contrast to an external advisor, JRS educators have the trust of the staff to instigate real growth and change from within the community. JRS educators succeed when they see themselves not as specialists transmitting ideas but as enablers of their colleagues' own creativity and potential. With tailored coaching and tools from the JRS faculty, JRS educators learn how to be the "go-to" resources for their colleagues.

Together with their school directors, JRS educators mentor their co-teachers and bring collective professional development opportunities to their schools using the following strategies:

- Identifying resources to support teachers
- Creating opportunities for staff professional development
- Framing and reframing school happenings around Jewish values
- Providing Jewish resources for the entire school
- Sparking new ideas around opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement
- Deepening Jewish learning in the curriculum
- Creating new resources for teachers

Ultimately, the JRS educators work to create change in the preschool institution through the curriculum and ongoing practices of the school—such as in the opportunities parents have for involvement. Examples of ways JRS educators and their co-teachers increase families' engagement in Jewish life include:

- Planning new and enhanced programs
- Adding Jewish content to existing family programs
- Creating opportunities for parents to learn
- Creating resources for families
- Organizing informal parent and family gatherings
- Strengthening parent communications
- Helping parents translate the Jewish curriculum from home to school
- Connecting families to Jewish communal life, especially post-preschool

FINANCIAL MODEL

The JRS faculty designed the financial model of the Initiative with great intention, recognizing that the following principles would be crucial to the Initiative's success:

- **Ample support for the JRS educators' time:** It is important that the JRS educators have dedicated time to spend on JRS work so that they do not have to squeeze the work into existing responsibilities.

- **Ample support for the professional development of JRS educators and other ECE teachers:** This support allows time for educators' participation in community of practice meetings and related retreats and seminars, as well as funds to cover professional development activities for all teachers.

- **A cascading grant structure:** The JRS Initiative initially provides full financial support to schools and then reduces the level of support each year. This gives the host institution leaders time to experience the value of the work and time to raise needed funds to continue the project after the initial three-year program.

MOVING FORWARD

As of this writing, the JRS Initiative is working with its second cohort of JRS educators. As a result of this cohort and the pilot that came before it, there is now a growing community of ECE educators in the San Francisco Bay Area who are dedicated to synergistically enhancing Jewish early childhood education. JRS is an initiative that intends to systematically change Jewish ECE programs. To this end, the Initiative puts forth this model documentation to serve as a roadmap for others to consider for replication or adaptation in their own settings, all in the spirit of supporting Jewish families in their formative years to strengthen and deepen Jewish communal life overall.

JRS Model Documentation

INTRODUCTION

Preschool is an extraordinary time of connectedness and openness for children as well as parents. At no other time will parents be so involved—so literally present—in their children's schooling. During the early childhood years, parents choose the way they spend their time, who they spend it with and their circle of trusted advisors. Children are also eager to learn and are developing socio-emotionally, cognitively and spiritually.

To leverage this time in families' lives, in 2011 the Early Childhood Education Initiative (ECEI) of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties (the Federation), with significant support from the Jim Joseph Foundation, launched the Jewish Resource Specialist (JRS) Initiative. The JRS Initiative is intended to make the early childhood years a true gateway into Jewish life for children and their families. With ongoing coaching, mentoring and supports from the JRS faculty at ECEI, a teacher or other staff member is designated to spend 10 hours a week as a preschool's JRS educator. In this role they are tasked with deepening Jewish learning at the preschool and increasing family engagement in Jewish life more generally. The JRS Initiative is designed to help early childhood education (ECE) programs realize their commitment to build a Jewish experience and environment for children and families.

The JRS Pilot

The JRS Initiative was launched as a pilot, working from 2011 to 2014 with five Jewish ECE programs in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was important that there was variety among the participating schools to help the Initiative's leaders understand if the JRS model could be more or less effective at sites with particular characteristics. After the three-year JRS pilot, the leadership of all five schools are continuing the project, although with some modifications.

Exhibit 1

JRS Pilot Cohort Schools

	Location	Total Students (2013–2014)	Host Site	Affiliation
Chai Preschool	Foster City	62	None (housed at a Congregation)	None (loose connection with Chabad)
Osher Marin Jewish Community Preschool	San Rafael	110	Jewish Community Center	Jewish Community Center Association
Oshman Family JCC Preschool (T'enna)	Palo Alto	271	Jewish Community Center	Jewish Community Center Association
Temple Emanu-el Preschool	San Francisco	105	Congregation	Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)
Temple Sinai Preschool	Oakland	85	Congregation	Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)

Building from the pilot experience, ECEI continued the JRS Initiative in 2014, selecting a second cohort of ten ECE programs as JRS schools. The Initiative now concentrates on this second cohort but also offers alumni activities for the first cohort, including regular meetings as a community of practice and collaborative consulting between the JRS faculty, JRS educators and school site directors. Some of the Initiative's programs are also open to educators from both cohorts. With two cohorts, there is now a growing community of ECE educators in the San Francisco Bay Area who are dedicated to synergistically enhancing Jewish education and early childhood education.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE JRS PILOT EVALUATION

An independent evaluation of the JRS pilot found that the JRS Initiative is linked to:

- More explicit integration of family programming and classroom learning
- Jewish content integrated into typically secular family programs
- More Jewish classroom content that is more meaningful and relevant
- Holiday programs that draw more deeply from Jewish tradition
- High parent satisfaction with opportunities to explore Jewish life
- New opportunities for teachers to explore Jewish ECE and to enrich their focus on Jewish education in their curriculum
- Teachers' increased confidence in bringing Jewish content into the classroom
- Families participating in additional Jewish events around their community
- Parents choosing a Jewish educational framework for their preschool graduates

Exhibit 2

JRS Schools: Cohorts 1 & 2

1	Chai Preschool
2	Congregation Beth El Nursery School, Berkeley
3	Congregation Beth Sholom Family Preschool
4	Congregation Sherith Israel
5	Gan Ilan Preschool
6	Gan Israel Preschool
7	Gan Mah Tov
8	Helen Diller Family Preschool
9	JCC Preschool Tiburon
10	OFJCC at Beth Am Preschool
11	Osher Marin Jewish Community Preschool
12	Oshman Family JCC Preschool (T'enna)
13	Peninsula Temple Sholom Preschool
14	Temple Emanu-el Preschool
15	Temple Sinai Preschool

WHY JRS? THE CONTEXTUAL FACTORS THAT SHAPED THE JRS INITIATIVE

Jewish ECE: A Field in Need of Cultivation

The JRS Initiative grew out of the extensive Jewish ECE experience of its founders—particularly from the vision of ECEI Director, Janet Harris. A leader for her entire career in Jewish ECE, Harris became the founding Director of ECEI in 2007, after almost a decade of experience as the Director of a community-based, multi-site ECE program. With classroom experience and a Master's degree in ECE, throughout her career Harris found that she often played the role of a resident Jewish education specialist. She has the orientation, experience and skills of both a Jewish educator and an early childhood educator—a combination that she sees as too uncommon.

Harris witnessed a similar dearth of leaders working to build the field of Jewish ECE, likely influenced by the field's high staff turnover and a teacher base that overall has limited Jewish knowledge (teachers are not necessarily Jewish themselves). The field of Jewish ECE is evolving, and there have been valuable national programs supporting leadership development. Still, they do not have the significant reach that they need. Those who want to focus their career on Jewish ECE and build communities of engaged Jewish families with preschool-aged children are challenged to find the support, mentors and professional development opportunities they need to craft a career path.

In light of these phenomena, Harris observed that overall, Jewish preschools offer inconsistent Jewish educational experiences. Parent engagement opportunities are not always of high quality and are often an afterthought, if they are included at all during the year. There is an equally meager classroom Jewish experience for students. The "Jewish" in Jewish ECE can too often be symbolic. There is challah on Fridays and a shofar during Rosh Hashanah, but an extensive, relevant, minds-on and engaging Jewish experience is often absent.

Ripe with Potential: The Early Childhood Years as a Time of Family and Child Openness

Early childhood is too important a time to suffer from these deficiencies. Preschool is a turning point for families. Families shape their intentions for their Jewish lives and their children's Jewish education before children are five or even three.[1] Parents are hungry for parenting advice, so teachers and their peers can be a tremendous influence at this time. Teachers are in a position to leverage their day-to-day relationships with parents and help deepen families' Jewish commitments. Children themselves are ripe for tremendous learning, primed for significant cognitive growth, brain development and moral development. Spiritual development makes a difference in how children understand the world around them, both in the moment and as the foundation of their lifelong value and belief systems. By helping children develop spiritually, ethically and morally through exploring Jewish tradition and by giving families and parents opportunities to explore Judaism and build community and Jewish memories, Jewish preschool can become a key gateway into Jewish life for children and families.

Strengthening Jewish Education from Within

While there is significant need and opportunity for Jewish education at the ECE level, Harris knew that Jewish resources could not be parachuted into an ECE program by an outside expert. An external advisor who lacks the school leaders' trust would not be able to instigate real growth and change.

Secular education's "teacher leader" model informed the JRS Initiative design. Teacher leaders work in a space between school administrators and other teachers. They help to facilitate excellence in schools by bringing empirical research into learning conversations with teachers and by building a collaborative culture focused on ongoing school improvement. The teacher leader model provides a way to build the field of Jewish ECE in every sense: strengthening Jewish education in ECE programs, building a cadre of leaders in Jewish ECE and creating a model of leadership in Jewish ECE from which all can learn.

The Foundation-Initiative Strategic Partnership

The JRS Initiative grew from the experience of ECEI leadership, and it has flourished through the similar vision and commitment of the Jim Joseph Foundation. Foundation leaders recognized the potential to help Jewish ECE become a deeply Jewish peer experience for children and their families—a turning point in a family's formation and choices. Building on the Foundation's existing ECE investments, including support for ECEI, Foundation leaders agreed that the JRS Initiative could play an important role in a strategic series of professional opportunities for ECE educators. ECEI already offered one-time professional development opportunities and was supporting local educators' participation in a long-distance certificate program in Jewish ECE offered by Gratz College.

"The JRS model that was developed is strong because it will lead to change in the school. It's not only about adding ten hours of a teacher's time. It's the structure that will support the teachers and support the school."

– Dawne Bear Novicoff,
Assistant Director, Jim Joseph Foundation

[1] Mark Rosen, "Jewish Engagement from Birth: A Blueprint for Outreach to First-Time Parents." Waltham, Massachusetts: Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, November 2006.

The JRS Initiative occupies a different space, offering in-depth professional growth through its sustained learning opportunities as well as an applied, on-the-job chance to learn, contribute and lead. It is as intensive as a certificate program but in a format that helps educators apply their learning immediately to their work. Foundation leaders appreciated that the JRS Initiative is designed to change ECE programs' very capacity to work Jewishly. Beyond offering immediate support to ECE programs, in the longer term, ECE stakeholders within participating schools learn to approach Jewish education differently. In addition, the Initiative is structured for sustainability, employing a cascading grant with a school's financial contribution growing and the Foundation's lessening over time. This way the ECE program can adopt the JRS Initiative tenets as an internal priority over time, leading to longer-term organizational change and growth.

As the JRS Initiative emerged, ECEI and Jim Joseph Foundation leaders engaged in iterative conversations to sharpen the strategy to meet both ECEI's vision and the Foundation's philanthropic goals. Foundation professionals have continued to act as thought partners on the JRS strategy and implementation. Foundation professionals bring the larger philanthropic context to the work, while ECEI leaders bring their knowledge of the national field of Jewish ECE. Together, they collaborate on the implications of national trends for local programs and conditions.

> ***"It can't be someone coming in from the outside who comes once a week to 'do Jewish.' It has to be someone who's in situ, who's part of the fabric of the school … in order for the teachers to relate to and trust this person. I always thought the secret sauce of the program is having someone from within who holds the space for Jewish education in the school."***
>
> – Janet Harris, Director, ECEI

As is its practice, the Jim Joseph Foundation also brought an evaluator into the conversation. The evaluator facilitated the collaborative building of a program logic model at the Initiative's inception, clarifying the JRS program's goals and intended outcomes (please see the JRS Initiative logic model in the appendix). Over the course of the three year pilot, the evaluation findings and recommendations contributed to the strategic growth of the Initiative. These relationships—the primary relationship between ECEI and the Foundation and the secondary relationship between these stakeholders and the evaluator—shaped the program and gave it a safe platform from which to evolve.

JRS INITIATIVE STRATEGY

Goals

The JRS Initiative has two primary goals: to deepen Jewish learning and to engage families in Jewish life. They each represent several strategic objectives.

Deepen Jewish learning

To "deepen Jewish learning" means to strengthen the opportunities available in the school curriculum for children to engage in Jewish learning experiences. Through one-on-one coaching and other professional development opportunities, JRS educators expand their co-teachers' capacity to lead relevant and meaningful Jewish learning, building their Jewish knowledge and their ability to create rich classroom experiences for their students. This goal also encompasses creating more opportunities with deeper and more meaningful Jewish content for families to engage in Jewish life, during and outside of the school-day.

The JRS faculty leading the Initiative believe that Jewish opportunities can become deeper and more meaningful by applying a constructivist orientation to the curriculum and to programs—an approach to education that emphasizes experience; reflection; student-driven learning; and the active conversation that can happen when content, teacher and learner meet. Preschool students do not need to know all that there is to know about Jewish life, but they should know some things deeply, intimately and personally. Through exploring and emphasizing a constructivist philosophy of education, the JRS Initiative seeks to move the early childhood learning theory practiced in these schools to that of meaning-making, helping parents and children to touch and feel Judaism and to integrate their tradition into their senses of themselves through minds-on and applied learning.

> ***"It's been a tourist curriculum. That's how most preschools have approached Jewish education. We haven't done anything all year, so let's be Jewish now. Or it's symbolic—it's Rosh Hashanah, let's have apples. Let's be Jewish today…. Our idea is not to cover more material—5 year olds don't need to know everything there is to know about… any Jewish holiday. Let's learn a little gem, a little piece, deeply."***
>
> – Janet Harris, Director, ECEI

Engage families in Jewish life

The goal of "engaging families in Jewish life" is similarly multifaceted. It includes connecting families to Jewish opportunities at the preschool, within the preschool's host institution (if applicable) as well as in the broader Jewish community. It refers to supporting families in making formal and informal Jewish educational choices for their children (e.g., schools, camps, scouts) after preschool graduation. In addition, it encompasses supporting parents in exploring their own Jewish identities and developing their capacities to build Jewish life within their homes and with their children. This happens through leading family programs or opportunities targeted to parents. The JRS educators also help their fellow teachers develop their own skills in working with families. Finally, this work also encompasses developing and implementing new school practices relating to Jewish families and Jewish communal engagement. The JRS educators find ways to work in full partnership with their schools while keeping the family audience in clear focus.

Focus on Changing ECE Teachers & Schools Themselves

In order to deepen Jewish learning and engage families in Jewish life, the JRS Initiative targets parents and children. But to do so, it works *through* the schools—through educators, school directors and the school infrastructure itself—using curriculum, professional learning and ongoing coaching to build the capacities of the staff.

> ***"I am excited to work with [the JRS]. I am not Jewish, and I have been here for years now. I want to be able to do more, not just regurgitate back what I know."***
>
> – ECE Teacher

ECE teachers, the JRS educators' peers, are a primary target constituency for the JRS educators. These teachers represent the front line in Jewish ECE. While they are qualified early childhood educators, they do not necessarily have a background in Jewish concepts or values or even rudimentary knowledge of Jewish holidays and traditions. Some were not raised with Judaism and

might not be Jewish themselves. The JRS Initiative is motivated in part by the idea that every educator in a Jewish preschool should think of themselves as a Jewish educator, even if they have little to no Jewish background themselves. The Initiative seeks to inform and empower all Jewish ECE teachers to be confident, knowledgeable leaders of Jewish content for the children in their classrooms.

The JRS educators also work in partnership with their **preschool directors**. These directors might have a vision for Jewish education and engagement at their school but, due to the demands of their position, have limited capacity to implement it. Or, they might develop a vision only through working in partnership with their JRS educator. Together, the school director and the JRS educator collaborate on how to pursue the school's particular vision for Jewish education.

Ultimately, the JRS educators seek to create change in **the preschool institution** itself. The curriculum should shift, and the ongoing practices of the school—the approach the school takes to learning, such as the ways that holidays are observed or parents are involved—should change. The JRS Initiative tries to influence the school from many directions in order to deepen its commitment to and ensure its ongoing capacity to provide Jewish education and create meaningful Jewish experiences for children and families.

Professionalizing Jewish ECE Teachers

The JRS educator position offers ECE teachers working in Jewish settings an opportunity to build their skills and advance their careers by exploring new areas of work and expanding their leadership role with their peers. Participating in the Initiative has a substantial influence on JRS educators, strengthening their experiences and their dedication to their work. The JRS Initiative intentionally fills an open space in the ECE career ladder.

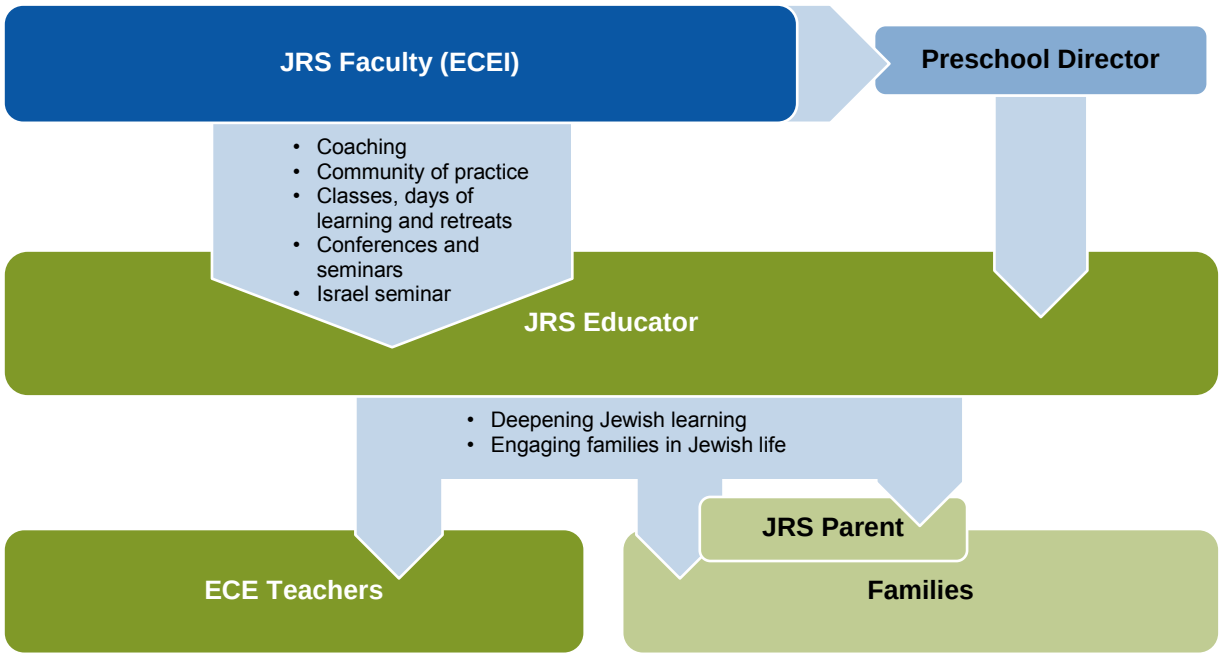
"JRS definitely influenced my career trajectory. I was a teacher before, and now I'm a leader and a resource for other teachers. I've been able to grow and push myself."

– JRS Educator

THE MAP OF THE JRS INITIATIVE

Exhibit 3

The Flow of Supports in the JRS Model



ECEI: A Natural Home for the JRS Initiative

ECEI facilitates a number of projects in the San Francisco Bay Area that, together, seek to:

- Increase the number of Jewish families with young children who connect to Jewish life;
- Develop a paradigm for recruiting, training and compensating new, highly talented professionals in the early childhood field; and
- Build standards for Jewish ECE throughout the community.

In this capacity, ECEI manages PJ Library for the Bay Area, offers professional development and advice for all ECE educators, advocates for Jewish ECE, and provides a vision for the field. The JRS Initiative is a natural pillar for helping ECEI achieve its goals by helping more families to engage in Jewish life, sharpening standards and professionalizing the field. Serving as the backbone organization for the JRS Initiative, ECEI provides organizational and content support to the JRS educators, preschool directors and host institutions (please see the appendix for a sample curriculum for the JRS Initiative). As the same time, the JRS Initiative informs the broader work of ECEI, creating a valuable synergy between the JRS Initiative and the other projects and professionals within ECEI.

"The number one strength of JRS is that, without it, it is a challenge to be accountable to the goal of raising the level of Jewish content overall. JRS gives incentive to step up. It underscores a certain seriousness around Jewish content for our school."

– Preschool Director

While Harris facilitates the larger ECEI project, Denise Moyes-Schnur, the Senior Early Childhood Educator for ECEI, directs the JRS Initiative. In this director role, Moyes-Schnur is responsible for developing the strategy, implementing the initiative day-to-day, evaluating its progress and influence, and making regular course corrections as necessary. She leads the selection of the sites and the JRS educators, and she builds relationships with the JRS educators and preschool directors. She is responsible for learning about the JRS educators' professional strengths and areas for growth and helping them develop as educational leaders. She coaches the JRS educators toward site-specific work plans, helping them to identify areas of opportunity, set goals, and then design strategies to reach those goals.

As she works with the JRS educators, Moyes-Schnur also develops an understanding of how the JRS educators as a cohort need to grow. She then designs community of practice meetings and professional development opportunities in response to those needs. To manage the scope of this program that has many stakeholders and moving pieces, Moyes-Schnur creates systems to guide the JRS Initiative toward reaching its goals.

As the Initiative has grown, a third ECEI staffer, Ellen Brosbe, has become an educator coach to specific JRS educators, expanding the capacity of ECEI to mentor all JRS educators and preschools in the program. Together, Harris, Moyes-Schnur and Brosbe compose the JRS faculty.

The JRS Educators: The Core of the Model

The most essential component of the JRS model is the JRS educator: a seasoned preschool educator with expertise in Jewish education and engagement[2]. It has been typical—but not required—for schools to select their most experienced or knowledgeable Jewish educator for this position. The Initiative then compensates them for 10 hours per week, in addition to their classroom work, to perform the role of the JRS educator.

When selecting JRS educators, JRS faculty look at a range of past experiences, characteristics and skills. While a JRS educator is not required to meet every one of the following qualifications, each are important when hiring a new JRS educator:

"If teachers need help with presenting a Jewish topic, integrating a Jewish theme into the classroom learning or developing handouts for parents, we have a special person to go and talk to. It's very helpful."

– ECE Teacher

- Some kind of specialized training in Jewish ECE, which might include a Certificate in Jewish ECE through the Gratz College program or a Bachelor of Arts or Sciences degree in ECE or a related field
- A minimum of three years of ECE teaching experience
- Experience working in some kind of leadership role (not necessarily in ECE)
- Academic background in Jewish studies beyond the high school level
- Demonstrated passion for working with parents and teachers
- Ability to work an additional 10 hours per week
- Talent in mentoring colleagues
- Excellent communication skills
- Willingness and ability to travel to a central location for monthly community of practice meetings
- Willingness to partner with the ECEI for professional development activities and to share resources with other JRS educators
- Commitment to remain in the JRS educator role for the full three-year term of the Initiative

"There is hope that [the JRS Initiative] will help stimulate some of these master teachers to stay in the field and see that there is a continuum of growth and see that there is somewhere that they can advance to."

– Dawne Bear Novicoff, Assistant Director, Jim Joseph Foundation

What JRS Educators Do: Deepen Jewish Learning

Together with their school directors, and with guidance from the JRS faculty, the JRS educators begin their work by assessing the current state of Jewish learning and family engagement in their schools. What could be done? What needs to be done? What assets exist? What are teachers' questions and needs?

Then the JRS educators begin to strengthen relationships with their co-teachers and respond to the assessment of what can be done around Jewish learning and engagement at the school. As the JRS educators share their vision for Jewish learning and become trusted advisors, their co-teachers come to them with questions, looking for guidance. The JRS educators begin to mentor their co-teachers in Jewish educational content and pedagogy.

[2] In the second cohort of the JRS Initiative, one school that did not have a classroom educator who could take on the JRS role is experimenting with having a JRS educator who was not already part of the school community but who has a connection to the rabbi educator at the school. Since this is a significant departure from the program model, it will be important to assess whether this can be an effective adaptation of the model, and if so, what characteristics of the JRS educator and the school make it successful.

There is no one outline for what the JRS Initiative looks like within each school. There is a constant give and take, where the JRS educator assesses the landscape, invents ideas, tests them with peers, learns and tries again. Universally, Jewish learning is advanced, but the means are unique to each school and to each teacher cohort's needs.

With tailored coaching and mentoring from the JRS faculty, successful JRS educators become a "go-to" resource for their colleagues. They are an accessible and enthusiastic support who answers questions about Jewish content, offer ideas for classroom activities, and frames curricular explorations with Jewish concepts and language. Specifically, JRS educators:

"The JRS model creates a seamless environment in which there is no separation between Jewish ECE and ECE."

– JRS Educator

- **Identify resources to support teachers:** "A parent came to me and said that her child was asking a lot about God, and asked if I had any books that could open a conversation. So I checked with [the JRS educator] who helped me find good book options. Similar things came up over the year, and [the JRS educator] helped me for all of them." – ECE Teacher

- **Creating opportunities for staff professional development:** JRS educators lead presentations about Jewish content in staff meetings and school-wide workshops to empower teachers to learn more about Jewish holidays, traditions and values. This helps inspire new ideas for classroom activities.

- **Frame and reframe school happenings around Jewish values:** "A teacher asked for help to take a moment and make it Jewish. Two kids were playing and they wanted the same thing. Instead of fighting over it, they had a conversation. The teacher stepped in, complimented them, and said that their cooperation and sharing was a Jewish value." – JRS Educator

- **Provide Jewish resources for the entire school:** With coaching from the JRS faculty on how to find appropriate resources, JRS educators increase the presence of Israel and build a shared Jewish vocabulary across the school with Hebrew or Yiddish phrases in the school environment through posters, games or language. JRS educators also suggest age-appropriate Jewish books for the school, develop connections to PJ Library for the school and serve as guest storytellers in other teachers' classrooms.

"The JRS holds the Jewish piece of the school."

– Denise Moyes-Schnur, Senior Early Childhood Educator, ECEI

- **Spark new ideas:** JRS educators help their peer educators understand the opportunities for Jewish learning in their classrooms and with families and then help brainstorm new ideas to make the most of those opportunities. For example, a JRS educator described working with her fellow teachers to consider new ways to integrate holiday and other ritual objects into their day-to-day work, rather than bringing these objects out only at holidays. "Now, on any given day," she says, "you can walk into a classroom and see kids pretending to do the Shabbat ceremony. There are maps of Israel and flags, things around the classroom." – JRS Educator

- **Deepen Jewish learning in the curriculum:** JRS educators connect secular learning to Jewish themes, such as creating a program where students learn about how honey is made from a beekeeper during Rosh Hashanah.

Create new resources for teachers: For example, JRS educators created "Holidays 101" pamphlets to prepare teachers who do not have much familiarity with the themes and traditions of the major Jewish holidays. Armed with the knowledge in these pamphlets, ECE teachers increased their confidence in talking with parents as well as engaging their students in Jewish themes. When teachers have worked for a number of years and do not need this introduction, the JRS educators focus more on the classroom experience and articulating their work with families.

LESSON LEARNED: JRS EDUCATORS OBSERVING PEERS

At first, it was envisioned that JRS educators would visit their peer teachers' classrooms, observe and make recommendations based on what they saw. In practice, this was challenging. JRS educators found it hard to arrange for substitutes to cover their classrooms, and there was not a clear protocol for what they were looking for or how to give feedback. Perhaps more importantly, it also emerged that the JRS educators can easily and productively give feedback and ideas without directly observing their peers' work. When JRS educators build strong relationships with the ECE teachers, their peers take initiative and come to the JRS educators with their questions and for general brainstorming about curriculum. Also, with systems in place for regular meetings with the ECE teachers, JRS educators can create reflective conversations that are more productive than classroom observations.

What JRS Educators Do: Engage Families in Jewish Life

Working with teachers to influence students in classrooms is only part of the JRS educators' responsibilities. They are also responsible for strengthening Jewish family engagement within their schools, within their larger institutions and in the community more broadly. Their focus on increasing families' involvement in Jewish life manifests in a variety of ways. They:

- **Plan new and enhanced programs:** JRS educators organize and facilitate family events at their schools, often related to holidays and other occasions, in order to further involve parents with their children's Jewish growth (see sidebar for examples). In some cases, they build out existing family holiday events, providing a more complex, interesting experience imprinted with the constructivist educational philosophy. At one school, for example, parents always attended a "model seder" during Passover. However, the children were constantly wiggling and their parents were uncomfortably quieting their children, all for what was fundamentally a non-engaging experience. So the JRS educator supported the teachers to build a multi-station sensory experience for parents and children. The stations included a table where parents and children mixed *haroset* (mortar) together, a *maror* (bitter herb) tasting station, a water table where parents and children experimented with putting colored water into Kiddush cups, and more. Parents and children could talk together about the holiday, integrate their learning experiences into their identities, create memories together and prepare for their own upcoming seders.

EXAMPLES OF JEWISH FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMING

- Sukkot family breakfast
- Havdalah family program
- Tu BiShvat seder and tree planting
- Tzedekah family program
- Challah baking classes that introduce families to Shabbat
- Mitzvah Day
- Weekend Family Camp
- Kevah adult Jewish learning group
- DIY preschool family Shabbat dinners
- Classes on Jewish food
- Preschool gallery hour at the Contemporary Jewish Museum
- Rosh Chodesh family evening
- Hike and exploration of Jewish ideas about the outdoors

- **Add Jewish content to existing family programs:** JRS educators help frame existing family programs, such as year-opening picnics and children's art shows, with Jewish ideas and values.

- **Create opportunities for parents to learn:** JRS educators create opportunities for families to explore issues related to Jewish parenting. They also initiate one-time conversations or ongoing parent learning groups facilitated by sophisticated Jewish educators in the community and focused on issues that parents cite as important to them.

- **Create resources for families:** These resources help educate and equip families—particularly interfaith families—to ask questions and participate in their children's Jewish journeys. For example, the Holidays 101 pamphlets that JRS educators created for teachers have also been used to support parents' learning, with an additional section offering suggestions for at-home holiday activities.

- **Organize informal parent and family gatherings:** JRS educators organize Shabbat dinners or Havdalah potlucks at parents' houses, creating informal opportunities to build connections and community among Jewish families.

- **Strengthen parent communications:** JRS educators communicate upcoming parent and family events in monthly newsletters and write messages about Jewish learning, often relating these to upcoming Jewish holidays. They frequently greet parents at morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up to build visibility and relationships.

> ***"I expected to have excellent Jewish content and engagement for the kids in the classroom, and my expectations have been met. What I didn't expect was the great Jewish parenting content and support outside the classroom. In this area, my expectations have been exceeded."***
>
> – Preschool Parent

- **Translating the Jewish curriculum from home to school:** In parent-teacher conferences, JRS educators discuss children's Jewish growth, adding to the discussion of children's overall development.

- **Connect families to Jewish communal life:** When parents open a conversation with JRS educators about family needs or support in navigating Jewish life, JRS educators share information about events and resources in the school's host institution and in the broader Jewish community

- **Connect families to Jewish life after preschool:** JRS educators serve in a "concierge" role, helping families to understand the Jewish educational or communal options available to them after their ECE program ends, to ensure that ongoing Jewish education or engagement are part of their consideration. The JRS educators both have these conversations directly with parents and work with their fellow teachers to do the same. It took a conscious effort for the JRS educators and teachers to take on this role; the message to families is now deliberate and consistent. To help the ideas take root, these conversations happen at least twice a year, at parent conferences and in other communications such as newsletters and blog posts.

Supporting the JRS Educators' Daily Work & Professional Growth

In addition to facilitating change in participating ECE programs, the Initiative strengthens the JRS educators to simultaneously be Jewish and early childhood educators, and helps them to become ECE leaders in the Bay Area and across North America. To achieve these goals, the JRS Initiative offers five means of professional learning for JRS educators:

1. One-on-one coaching
2. Community of practice meetings
3. Classes, days of learning and retreats
4. Conferences and seminars, sponsored by ECEI or other organizations, in the area of ECE or Jewish ECE
5. Israel seminar

Together, these professional opportunities inspire the JRS educators, expand their knowledge and capacities, and help them craft their professional identities.

Coaching

Regular one-on-one coaching is the backbone of the JRS Initiative; it supports and connects the other pieces of the Initiative. Through regular coaching sessions with the JRS faculty, the JRS educators learn to understand and navigate their roles. The personal nature of the coaching allows the JRS faculty to tailor each session to the particular needs of the JRS educator and her institution. Ultimately, this coaching fosters direction, accountability and growth.

At the beginning of each school year, a team comprised of the JRS educator, the preschool director, Moyes-Schnur as the JRS Director and Harris as the ECEI Director sit together to plan their year. They assess the school's strengths, identify opportunities for growth, and, subsequently, establish an annual JRS work plan for the school with goals and strategies to reach those goals (please see the appendix for the annual work plan template). They connect each strategy within the annual work plan to the Initiative's goals of deepening Jewish learning and engaging families in Jewish life. They also identify how each strategy will spawn various tactics, including programs, parent communications, educational products or meetings with teachers. The same team sits together at the end of each year to reflect on accomplishments and lessons learned and to prepare for the coming year.

Throughout the year, the coach and JRS educator meet monthly. The JRS educator completes weekly hours forms that outline her work and the work of her peers and identify any planning that needs to be done for the following weeks. During the first year of the program, they also create monthly work plans, which are replaced by annual work plans in years two and three (please see the appendix for the weekly work hours and monthly work plan templates). Then in their monthly meetings, the coaches ask follow-up questions about the weekly hours forms that prompt additional ideas about upcoming activities. The coaching around these different work plans—weekly, monthly and annual—gives JRS educators the opportunity to reflect on how their work connects to their own short- and long-term goals, as well as those of the Initiative. As needed, JRS educators and their coaches use an action plan to outline immediate next steps toward these goals (please see the appendix for an action plan template).

In this way, coaching keeps the JRS educators focused on the Initiative's goals and accountable for concrete activities. As experts with significant experience in coaching early childhood educators, the coaches also support the JRS educators' growth and sheer ability to get the work done. The coaches identify successful strategies and

help troubleshoot challenges that the JRS educators face, whether with their preschool directors, parents or fellow teachers.

JRS Educators' Community of Practice

The JRS educators meet together every other month as a community of practice—a trusted cohort of like educators who can learn from each other's work and support each other's growth. The meetings emphasize community-based learning, working together to find the most innovative solutions to shared challenges, and helping each other overcome individual obstacles (please see the appendix for a sample community of practice meeting agenda). Rather than having a complete outline of content for the community of practice meetings at the start of each year, the JRS Director designs each community of practice meeting to meet the current collective needs of the JRS educators.

Beyond creating a space for learning and strategizing as a group, the community of practice provides the JRS educators with a valuable network of colleagues who validate and support each other. All of the JRS educators face certain common challenges—such as balancing Jewish education and family engagement goals, navigating relationships with other teachers, being both a peer and a mentor—and they appreciate the support they receive from the JRS faculty and their fellow JRS educators through these meetings.

"I really do want to know what other JRSs are doing… I see their weekly reports, but I want to know even more, more sharing of information. … We're not given a handbook. It's easier when we're working together."

– JRS Educator

The JRS faculty also use community of practice meetings for planning and strategizing. JRS faculty set aside time in every meeting to discuss professional development conferences, new tools that the JRS educators can use, and other JRS-related information, events or deadlines. Occasionally, educators from various community organizations or synagogues join and teach the JRS educators, presenting ideas from sacred Jewish texts, Jewish education, ECE or another field that might help the educators. More specifically, the community of practice meetings have included:

- "Moments of learning," where JRS educators share incidents in which they learned something about their work, providing a two-fold opportunity for reflection and shared learning
- JRS educators sharing successes and challenges in their sites
- Discussions about the purpose of JRS systems and how they can help maximize the JRS educators' work
- Reflection sessions on six months of work, accomplishments and growth opportunities
- Discussions about how to make specific elements of the JRS Initiative successful, such as parent learning or family engagement
- Presentations from community practitioners who have resources to support the JRS educators' work
- D'var Torah, a brief Jewish text study, to frame the meeting and begin with Jewish learning—in years two and three, the JRS educators volunteer to lead D'var Torah at the meeting

The community of practice meetings have been of great importance to the JRS educators. The meetings offer JRS educators confirmation that they are on the right track with their work, trying the right kinds of experiments, creating the right kinds of opportunities, and not doing too much or too little. They spark ideas, and JRS educators receive validation when they hear others' challenges. The community of practice meetings offer the JRS educators checks and balances as they create a paradigm for their work.

Classes, Days of Learning & Retreats

Integral to the JRS Initiative is a series of professional development opportunities meant to elevate or even transform the JRS educators' capacities and skills as educators. The community of practice meetings—the anchors to that experience—are complemented by day-long or multi-day conferences and retreats and ongoing classes, each of which helps participants delve deeply into an area important to their work.
The JRS faculty deliberately craft days of learning ("Yom Iyun") for the JRS educators and convene retreats to strengthen the JRS educators' capacities to be true leaders in the field.

The JRS faculty offer two days of learning each year. One focuses on issues of management within the JRS program: how the JRS educators can build productive systems for their and their co-teachers' work to meet their annual JRS goals. The second focuses on a topic the JRS educators want to learn more about. It is meant to spark personal learning for the JRS educators and also provide knowledge that the JRS educators can then apply to their work. In one example, the JRS educators suggested that they wanted to learn more about Jewish attitudes about the outdoors. They then spent their day of learning with an exceptional outdoor Jewish educator, learning for their own benefit, but also inspiring them to launch outdoor programs at their schools. This included creating new school gardens, new outdoor activities, and in one case, planning a family program using the same hike and some of the same discussions as in the day of learning.

Beyond the days of learning, the JRS Initiative also offers classes that meet three or four times with at-home activities to complete between classes, focusing a small number of participants on a sustained topic, such as constructivist education. Each of these opportunities is open to educators beyond the JRS Initiative, creating a richer conversation and expanding the benefits of these opportunities.

Conferences & Seminars

ECEI has sponsored subject matter experts to create various webinars and seminars for the JRS Initiative, which are meant to expand JRS educators' professional knowledge. ECEI also offers these seminars to other early childhood educators in Jewish preschools throughout the Bay Area. In this way, ECEI leverages the JRS Initiative for its broader work and creates synergies within the Jewish ECE community.

"We teach who we are. To be excellent as a teacher and a leader, we have to have impactful experiences that change the ways we look at things."

– Janet Harris, Director, ECEI

The JRS Initiative also supports JRS educators to participate in conferences both within Jewish organizational life—for example, the PJ Library annual conference—and in the broader ECE community—such as a conference related to documentation in ECE. When the JRS educators participate in a general ECE professional development opportunity, the JRS faculty lead conversations to help the JRS educators apply their lessons to the Jewish setting. In addition, when JRS educators apply to use professional development funds for a general ECE opportunity, they are asked to explain how they will translate, apply and sustain what they learn to their unique setting.

One of the foundational ideas of the JRS Initiative is that JRS educators will "teach who they are," in Harris's words. The stronger their own Jewish experiences, and the more articulate their ideas about Jewish ECE, the stronger their leadership with their peer teachers and within their schools will be.

The Israel seminar, offered in the second year of the JRS Initiative, is intended to help strengthen the JRS educators' identities and capacities as Jewish early childhood educators. The experience also molds the JRS educators into a stronger community, helping them to deepen their relationships and trust. Through those relationships and the informal moments of the experience, they exchange ideas and build their work in their individual schools. The experience also inspires the JRS educators to integrate more Hebrew and content related to Israel into their JRS work, bringing new resources and fresh ideas for classroom activities back from their time in Israel. This unique Israel experience also enriches their own Jewish understanding.

"Going to Israel is important to being a Jewish leader in a Jewish preschool. It's important for their identity… Even if they've gone to Israel, they haven't seen what early childhood looks like in Israel….Going to Israel with a group of colleagues is very powerful."

– Janet Harris, Director, ECEI

During the Israel seminar, JRS educators study the many accomplishments and smart practices Israel offers in the area of ECE. They observe Israeli preschool classrooms and meet with Israeli ECE experts who are leaders internationally. They spend time with the educator who brought the Reggio Emilia philosophy to Israel, learn from Israel's educational priorities and structure for ECE (compulsory education begins there at age 3), and hear the history of ideas about ECE curriculum, in evolution since the birth of the state.

LESSON LEARNED:
ISRAEL SEMINAR AS AN INITIATIVE ENHANCEMENT

While the Israel seminar enriches the JRS educators' learning, it is also a costly and time-consuming component of the JRS Initiative. And not every JRS educator has been able to attend the Israel seminar. JRS faculty and educators reflect that the Israel seminar is a beneficial enhancement to the JRS Initiative, but also recognize that JRS educators can also be successful without this particular experience.

Connecting to a Core Constituency: The JRS parent

The JRS educators work jointly with a JRS parent—a volunteer in their school who is a ready consultant to the JRS educator. The JRS parent is engaging, friendly and outgoing. They are a "connector" who knows other parents and can easily get feedback from or spread information among other parents.

LESSON LEARNED: BENEFITING FROM THE PARENT PERSPECTIVE

The concept of a JRS parent grew out of the JRS educator-coach relationship and the observation that JRS educators needed parent input to begin their work. The JRS faculty suggested that JRS educators check in with a parent to get input about possible programs and parent interests and priorities. One JRS educator developed a strong working relationship with a parent that went beyond initial feedback into ongoing collaboration. As the JRS educators and JRS faculty discussed the overarching goal of engaging families in Jewish life, they realized that all schools might benefit from such a strong parent connection. Thus the idea of the JRS parent was born, and is now a fixture in the work at every JRS school.

The JRS parent and the JRS educator meet regularly, by phone or in person, as often as the JRS educator feels it necessary and to maintain a strong relationship. JRS parents stay in their role for a year, and sometimes longer. The JRS parent provides insight into parents' interests and needs. They act as a sounding board to the JRS educator's ideas, making suggestions related to timing, frequency and topics of events. They can also draw on other parents to support the work.

"[The JRS parent] had a voice from the parents that I wasn't dialed into. She picked parents' brains about what they wanted and came back to me and shared… It is really cool to have a parent who supports what we're doing to add to the richness of the Jewish lives of these families."

– JRS Educator

Working with her coach, the JRS educator is intentional about how she engages the JRS parent, identifying the interest and needs of the families as well as opportunities for family experiences. This volunteer role enables parents to play an active part in the JRS Initiative and gives the JRS educators much needed help in planning and delivering family programs. Through the JRS parent, JRS educators get family programming right.

Supporting Professional Growth for All ECE Teachers

The JRS educators, together with their school directors, mentor their co-teachers and facilitate collective professional development opportunities utilizing financial resources provided by the JRS Initiative. With this support, schools have brought speakers to their sites, and they have taken other teachers to conferences related to ECE, Jewish education or both.

At the beginning of each year, the JRS faculty work with JRS educators to develop a learning plan for their schools and co-teachers related to their larger goals for change in their schools. As each professional development event occurs, JRS faculty help JRS educators reflect on the opportunity's influence and how to integrate the learnings into the teachers' larger work. Together, the JRS educators and the JRS faculty plan follow-up activities to apply what is learned. They want to ensure that the teachers' capacity to lead Jewish ECE expands through these professional development opportunities.

LESSON LEARNED:
IDENTIFYING JEWISH ECE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The JRS Initiative provides participating preschools with financial support for professional development activities that preschool directors and JRS educators determine how to use each year. During the Initiative's first cohort, the preschools found it challenging to use the entirety of the funds provided. Through discussion, JRS faculty discovered that there were simply very few existing professional development opportunities geared specifically to Jewish ECE. This surfaced the need for the JRS faculty to work hard to identify appropriate existing professional development resources and then support JRS educators on how to translate the learning from these opportunities to Jewish ECE.

Preschool Director Partnerships

The JRS faculty are also responsible for cultivating relationships with participating preschool directors. These relationships help the JRS faculty learn more about what the schools need, support the preschool directors in understanding what the JRS Initiative is and can be, and build an environment in the school that is receptive to the JRS educator. The JRS faculty meet with preschool directors one-on-one, hold meetings for all preschool directors in the JRS Initiative, and occasionally invite them to Jewish ECE conferences with the JRS educators (please see a sample JRS faculty/preschool director meeting agenda included in the appendix). The more time they spend together, the more that the JRS faculty help preschool directors and the JRS educators come into a singular, rich vision of Jewish ECE for their school and develop a common language to support that work.

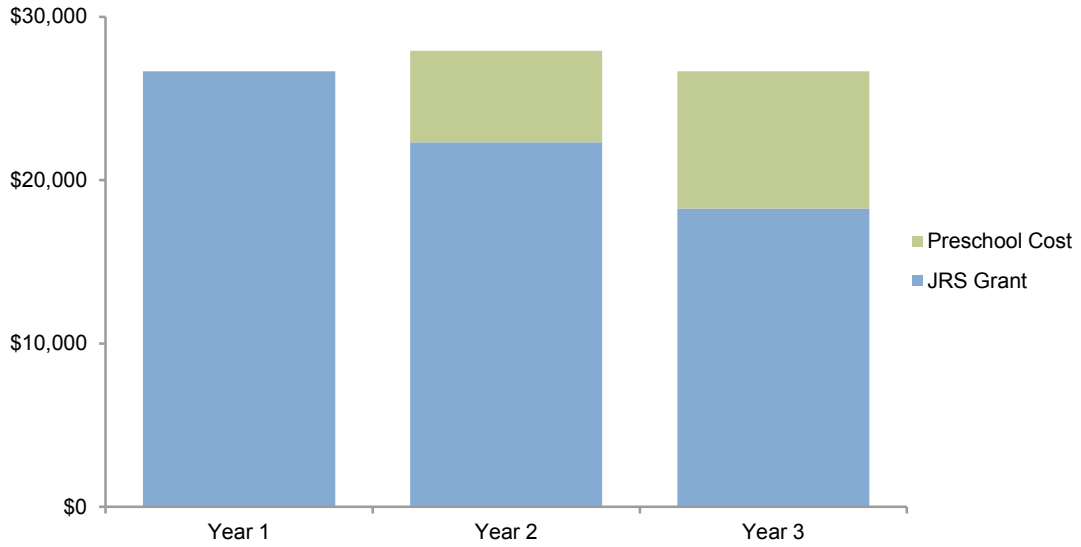
The Financial Model

The JRS faculty designed the financial model of the JRS Initiative with great intention, recognizing that the following principles would be crucial to the Initiative's success:[3]

- **Ample support for the JRS educators' time** to spend on JRS work so that they do not have to squeeze the work into existing responsibilities. Dedicated, prescribed time for the JRS Initiative would ensure that the work would happen.
- **Ample support for the professional development of JRS educators and other ECE teachers**. This support includes allowing time for the JRS educators to participate in community of practice meetings and related retreats and seminars, funds to cover professional development activities for all teachers within a participating school, as well as funds for substitute teachers to cover the JRS educators' classrooms while they are engaged in JRS learning.
- **A cascading grant structure,** in which the JRS Initiative initially provides full financial support to schools and then reduces the level of support each year (see Exhibit 4). This allows the school to take responsibility for the program over time, giving the host institution leaders time to experience the value of the work and time to raise needed funds to continue the project after the initial three years of funding.

[3] All costs provided are based on cohort 2 of the JRS Initiative.

Exhibit 4
Cascading Grant Funding to JRS Preschools



- **In-kind support from participating preschools**, including supervision of the JRS educator from the preschool director, time during staff meetings to discuss JRS activities, management of the grant, communications and marketing attention, and other resources. The JRS Initiative is beneficial to the school, but it also occupies the schools stakeholders' time and energy, which should be recognized.

LESSON LEARNED:
OPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Beyond the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the JRS Initiative benefited from the generosity of a single supporter: the Jim Joseph Foundation. It is conceivable, though, for the financial support for an Initiative of this nature to come from multiple funders or a funding collaborative. With additional funders, it would be important to clarify the relationship of the funders to the Initiative. Are they strictly providing financial support, serving as strategic thought partners to program implementers (as was the case with the Jim Joseph Foundation), or playing other roles as well?

The Initiative has three primary cost centers, beyond in-kind support provided by participating preschools:

1. **Preschool Grants:** These grants of approximately $27,000 in the first year provide a stipend for 10 hours of the JRS educators' time per week to work on the JRS Initiative, resources to hire substitute teachers to cover the JRS educators' time out of the classroom, as well as funds to cover professional development activities, family programming and parent engagement at the preschool (see Exhibit 5). As noted above, the grant cascades over time, with the preschool covering 40% of the JRS educator stipend in Year 2 and 60% of the JRS educator stipend in Year 3 (other costs are included in the grant). (See the appendix for the guidelines that JRS schools use to request funds for professional development, family programming and parent engagement.)

Exhibit 5

JRS School Grant Overview

Area of Support	Annual Cost
JRS educator stipend	$14,000
Substitute teachers	$1,250
Substitute teachers for Israel seminar (Year 2 only)	$1,250
School professional development funds[4]	$4,600–8,000
Family programming	$3,000
Parent engagement	$2,000

2. **Professional Supports:** The JRS Initiative uses these funds to cover professional development costs for the JRS educators, including community of practices meetings, days of learning, retreats, seminars, conferences, and the Israel seminar. For a cohort of 10 JRS preschools, the annual cost for professional supports is approximately $60,000 ($6,000/school), with an additional cost of $40,000 ($4,000/school) in Year 2 for the Israel seminar.[5]

3. **JRS Faculty:** The JRS Initiative would not be possible without the robust staffing provided by the JRS faculty. The annual JRS faculty cost for a cohort of 10 JRS preschools is approximately $300,000 ($30,000/school) and includes:

    - 1.0 FTE Director of the JRS Initiative (coaches eight of ten JRS schools, in addition to all Director responsibilities)
    - 0.6 FTE Director of ECEI
    - Educator Coach (coaches two JRS schools)
    - 0.75 FTE administrative support
    - Program dues and professional development fees for the JRS faculty

The five schools from the Initiative's first cohort offer a view into the program's future, after the primary grant support ends. In all five schools, the JRS educator's work is continuing, albeit with some modifications. Some institutions have shifted the focus of their JRS educators to concentrate on one or another of the JRS primary priorities (i.e., supporting teachers or family engagement). Others have expanded the JRS educator's purview beyond their preschool program, and some have kept, but reduced, pieces of the project, like professional development funds. However, in every case, the foundational aspect of the Initiative—the JRS educator as a consultant to the school—has remained intact. The schools have found the funds necessary to continue the work.

[4] The amount of professional development funds provided to each preschool ranges based on the number of teachers at the school.
[5] Note that these costs account for economies of scale with a cohort of 10 participating preschools.

Infrastructure

A number of stakeholders, structures and practices support the JRS Initiative and make it possible.

Advisory Committee

The JRS Advisory Committee is comprised of ECE experts from throughout the Bay Area, including JRS preschool directors and JRS alumni. The Committee gives necessary external feedback to the Initiative, creating a larger conversation about how to strengthen Jewish ECE through the Initiative. It also ensures that the Initiative is shaped by the Bay Area community and not only by ECEI and the Jim Joseph Foundation.

The Committee met twice during the Initiative's first year and now meets annually to discuss generative questions that the JRS faculty are grappling with to strengthen the Initiative. For example, JRS faculty have asked the Committee to brainstorm about how to support the JRS preschool directors, how to engage and support Initiative alumni, and how to strengthen the involvement of JRS parents. By focusing on relevant questions with subject matter experts who also have community experience, the Initiative benefits from diverse sources of creativity and perspectives.

MOU

The JRS Initiative represents a significant commitment for all involved parties. Schools devote deep resources—financial and in-kind—to the project; the Foundation and ECEI are doing the same. Schools and ECEI sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) affirming their partnership and confirming their respective contributions to the project (please see the appendix for a sample MOU). The MOU also names the Initiative's goals and measures of success and describes the strategies that the school and the Initiative will use to reach these goals. There is a delineation of each party's responsibilities, including a description of reporting requirements and the fund release schedule. There is agreement that the funds will go toward the specific purposes outlined in the MOU.

Finally, the MOU suggests that participating schools will ultimately have responsibility for supporting the JRS project after the three-year Initiative. This responsibility, along with the real costs of the JRS program, are outlined for schools from the outset. Conversations between the JRS faculty and preschools are transparent; information and expectations are shared readily.

Evaluation

The Jim Joseph Foundation urged ECEI to incorporate evaluation from the outset of the pilot JRS cohort to ensure collective learning about the potential impact of the program as well as the effectiveness of the design. The evaluator began by facilitating the development of a logic model with both ECEI and Foundation staff to gain clarity on the Initiative's strategies and outcomes. The evaluator then conducted an assessment for each of the first three years of the grant. Each year, the evaluation report became the subject of active conversation, with stakeholders asking what can be learned from the evaluation findings and how the project should grow. The JRS faculty also brought the conversation to the JRS educators, asking them to consider the findings and absorb them into their own practice. Through the JRS faculty's commitment to reflection, and with the benefit of a sound external evaluation, the evaluation strengthened the JRS Initiative.

Host Institutions Leaders

Few Jewish preschools are independent. While the JRS educator and preschool director are central stakeholders in the JRS Initiative, there are often additional site-dependent stakeholders as well, such as the rabbis and

education directors of host synagogues or CEOs and COOs of Jewish Community Centers. As the leaders of their organizations' visions and, often, the managers of their organizations' financial investments, they are also important stakeholders in this work. Harris cultivates relationships with key leaders at the host institutions, not convening them formally but pursuing informal relationships in which she helps them to understand the nature and goals of the JRS Initiative and what it can bring to the host institutions.

FACTORS IN THE JRS PROGRAM'S SUCCESS

The JRS program model comes to life in its success factors. These are the subtle but recognizable aspects of program implementation that make an extraordinary difference in the program's ability to reach its goals.

The JRS Teacher Leader: Reflective, Humble & Eager to Learn

JRS educators are in a unique position. They have moved from being teachers to being teachers *and* specialists in support of their peers, as well as being partners to their preschool directors. How can they begin to give direction and guidance when they were so recently peers and subordinates?

JRS educators' relationships are fundamental to their work. Because they are embedded in the school and have strong relationships with their peer teachers, they begin from a place of trust, respect, camaraderie and collaboration, which can yield mutual learning. With these relationships as a foundation, successful JRS educators humbly approach their multi-faceted role to others—as a resource, teacher and partner who offers advice—with respect and collegiality. JRS educators succeed when they see themselves not as specialists transmitting ideas but as enablers of their colleagues' own creativity and potential. Together, with their co-teachers and directors, they develop ideas. They have expertise; at the same time, they do not have all the answers, nor do they need to.

> ***"JRS [educators] succeed who see themselves as facilitators of learning, not as experts themselves, who facilitate collaborative learning and recognize the expertise in the room."***
>
> – Janet Harris, Director, ECEI

The JRS educators are hired for these qualities. The application and interview process look for characteristics that will foster JRS educators' facilitation of learning, and not their positions as experts. A JRS educator is:

- Able to take feedback
- Eager to learn from others
- Open to new ideas
- A good team player
- Able to admit that she does not know something

Certain attributes also benefit the role of JRS educators. JRS educators often have been in the school for some time, are part of the fabric of the community and therefore have the trust and respect of parents, in addition to their peers and the school director. Additionally, JRS educators need to balance their degree of collaboration with how they tap their

ADDITIONAL JRS QUALITIES

- Comfort in front of new audiences, such as the ECE program's parent body or classrooms that are not the JRS educator's own
- Flexibility and resilience, particularly when an experimental program does not attract a significant audience or otherwise faces challenges
- Creativity and the ability to brainstorm program ideas
- Availability with people, program, and time
- Comfort reaching out to strangers, such as parents or speakers at professional development seminars
- Capacity to be connectors, creating relationships between parents, linking parents to resources, or bringing great educators to the school

knowledge and expertise about Jewish tradition and Jewish ECE for their peers. Ultimately, the JRS educators inspire change in their partners though trust, respect, mutuality, reflective conversation and teamwork, knowledge, ideas, leadership and facilitation. By working alongside their partners, the JRS educators help their colleagues understand a new vision and reality for their ECE program.

JRS Faculty & JRS Educators: A Close Collaboration

JRS educators also work in full partnership with the JRS faculty through their coaching relationship. Coaches are responsible for getting to know the JRS educators, understanding their strengths and potential for growth, learning the nuances of their schools and working relationships, and using all of this information to help the JRS educators set goals. The more intimate and open a working relationship between coach and JRS educator, the more the JRS faculty can help the JRS educators set and work toward the right goals.

Also imperative to the Initiative's success is the ability of the JRS faculty to read the JRS educator. The JRS faculty member needs to use her emotional intelligence and leadership skills to understand the subtlety of the issues that the JRS educator is bringing to the coaching relationship, the role the educator plays or can play in these issues, and the contextual factors that the educator may or may not share. The JRS faculty then uses coaching skills to lead the JRS educator into ideas and strategies for her setting. This close collaboration between the JRS faculty and the JRS educator over the three years of the Initiative is a critical component to the Initiative's success.

The Preschool Director & the JRS Educator: In One Conversation

As JRS educators work toward change in their ECE programs, they do so—ideally—in full partnership with their preschool directors. For the most part, directors are responsible for setting and working toward their programs' vision. The JRS educators bring their own ideas for Jewish education and engagement, as well as ways to work toward those ideas. These two visions need to be linked, and their strategies similarly integrated. Therefore, the preschool director and JRS educator need to be in one conversation about Jewish education in their ECE program.

"Why have we been able to do so much? I have a very close connection with my Director. We plan together and brainstorm and make changes. We have open communication. For one to two hours, we sit with everything and go over everything. Having her support has been huge. I could never have done all these things without her."

– JRS Educator

Their mutual vision comes through a close working partnership. In the best cases, directors make themselves available to JRS educators. They sit together regularly, not only in supervision but in efforts to plan and design programs together and to reflect on and learn from their accomplishments. Directors support the JRS educators in thinking through program details. They are able to make the JRS program a priority for their school.

Part of making the program a priority is doing their own work to implement the JRS program. For example, they do their own research, such as looking for resources for their school or for parents. Preschool directors reach out to the JRS faculty for ideas and insight, and they make regular time to meet with the JRS faculty.

School Capacity to Learn and Grow

The JRS educator-preschool director relationship is complemented and supported by a larger school and organizational culture that allows and respects change. The schools themselves need reflective cultures, a professional practice in which the educators sit collegially and talk about their work, and a commitment to teacher growth and professional development. Schools are more likely to benefit from the JRS Initiative when they have participated in similar kinds of communal Initiatives and thus have experience paying attention to goals and guidelines and integrating new ideas and agendas into their own. School leaders also need to make dedicating time—their own and that of their staff—to the JRS work a priority. And the school needs to be able to participate in a multi-step application process that involves work on the part of the JRS educator and director, interviews with the JRS faculty and other steps.

> ***"When we have the directors' calls, I'm constantly asking questions about how things are working in the other schools because I want suggestions. I want to hear if they're doing something in a way that maybe we could do here."***
>
> – Preschool Director

The school capacity is influenced by the larger culture of the school's host institution. The rabbi or executive director of the ECE program's host institution can be a tremendous support to the JRS educator and her work, advocating for and participating in new parent engagement or other preschool programs, giving ideas to the JRS educator or director, and connecting parents to the programs. The JRS faculty look for supportive host institution leaders in the preschool selection process. The most successful JRS educators and directors connect regularly with their host institution leaders, keeping them informed about their progress, asking for their guidance, and involving them in the work.

LESSON LEARNED:
THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE JRS MODEL TO DIFFERENT SITES

Through its initial implementation in varied sites, it was found that the JRS Initiative could be effective at a variety of places, with larger and smaller schools of different denominational or organizational contexts, and with a range of resources. These structural elements of ECE programs are less important to the JRS educator's success than certain success factors related to characteristics and experiences of the school's leadership, culture and the JRS educators themselves.

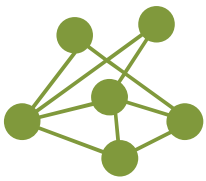
Systems for Planning & Reflection

The JRS Initiative has a lot of moving pieces. Its personnel include JRS educators, preschool directors, host institution leaders and teachers; its audiences include students, parents, students and parents together, and teachers. The Initiative happens across multiple sites, each with its own culture. The JRS faculty manage the difference and complexity of each site by building systems that help the JRS educators set their own unique goals within the context of the systems.

Examples of these systems—many of which have already been described—include:

- An annual work plan created by the JRS educators with support from their coach and school director that provides a holistic look at the JRS work that year and outlines the plan to reach the program's goals.
- Monthly coaching sessions with the JRS educators to ensure that they have enough support and guidance in their work and have an opportunity to reflect on their accomplishments and what they are learning.
- Frequent repetition of the Initiative's goals—especially on printed materials—to get the JRS educators to the point where they can easily articulate the Initiative-wide goals and connect them to their school's goals.
- Weekly hours forms, explaining how the JRS educators have met the Initiative's goals that week.
- Community of practice meetings that give JRS educators the opportunities to reflect, learn from their experiences and prepare for what comes next.

Learning in Community



While the monthly JRS educator-coach meetings are fundamental to the JRS educators' growth and accomplishments, the learning that they do with their peers is equally fundamental. The JRS educators are taking real risks with their work, consulting with their peers and bringing ideas to their preschool directors. In doing this work, they not only find validation in their conversations with their peers, but they find ideas, too. There is no roadmap for the JRS program. They need to invent what they do with their stakeholders and reflect the culture of their own program. They get support, stimulation and information from their community.

That they do so much learning together—the community of practice meetings, the regular retreats, the Israel seminar—helps the JRS educators get to know each other, build trust and create mutual relationships. Within the safety of their community they can trade ideas, share and learn from their mistakes, be inspired, and do more.

Flexibility

While systems and learning in community are foundational to the success of the program, so is the JRS faculty's flexibility in helping sites to reach their goals. There are a host of influences on the JRS program, and they differ across schools and sites. Schools are part of synagogues or Jewish Community Centers or they are independent. They are multi-site or they are located only in one site. In some places, there are more non-Jewish than Jewish teachers. In some places, parent engagement is a very new idea. Each site—each school—is unique.

In its implementation, the JRS program recognized the importance of flexibility. For example, in one case, the JRS educator changed from one year to the next when an educator was not maximally successful. In another, a JRS educator was not Jewish, but she was the best educator, trained in the Gratz College program in Jewish ECE, had been at the school for many years, and had the best peer relationships and the most potential to learn. The JRS program succeeds when it embraces and celebrates the particular culture of the school, helping each unique program to meet the Initiative goals in its own way. Flexibility allows this uniqueness.

WORKING THROUGH CHALLENGES

The JRS Initiative grew out of a theory that the JRS faculty developed during their extensive careers in the field of Jewish ECE, supported by observations of real need in Jewish preschools. Nevertheless, it was still an experiment. The JRS Initiative took time to evolve, with learnings unfolding over time. For example, because even while there is a curriculum from which the JRS educators, themselves, learn, the JRS educators do not have a program to follow in their own schools. Instead, they need to learn their audiences and develop a sense of what can succeed with parents and teachers before they can act. Communities developing a JRS Initiative in the future can learn from the Bay Area's foray into this work and should heed this important lesson: the JRS Initiative is site-driven, which means that it cannot be implemented with a recipe that delivers immediate big results. It takes time to evolve. Moments of success yield more moments of success, as stakeholders learn from what works.

Following are some key challenges that should be considered in this process.

Resiliency in the Face of Turnover

ECE is a field with great transition, with teachers and directors often moving on to new positions. Today's economy raises challenges for ECE; particularly in communities such as in the Bay Area, where the cost of living is high, educators can be enticed to leave the field for more lucrative opportunities.

Simply, the JRS cohort that began with the project was not the same cohort that concluded at the end of the grant. Rather than viewing this as a failure, turnover presented an opportunity for directors and JRS educators to take their lessons learned about Jewish education with them to their new sites, approaching parent engagement and Jewish curricular work differently than they otherwise might. Turnover is an opportunity for the program, as it seeds the JRS idea throughout the field.

At the same time, turnover raises challenges. As just noted, the JRS program takes one to two years to develop momentum. When a JRS educator leaves in the middle of the process, the school's progress in deepening its Jewish educational agenda stops, and when the school director leaves, progress is almost equally slowed. In the first two JRS cohorts, a JRS educator transition necessitated twice as many coaching sessions, from once to twice per month, as the new JRS educator learned the goals of the program and developed her approach to her work.

In addition to greater demands on JRS faculty to provide more intensive support and rapid onboarding, high turnover requires that the JRS Initiative cultivates a broad array of allies at any school. The more stakeholders who understand and own the Initiative at the school, the more likely it will live on outside of the JRS educator or director. The resiliency to sustain the program beyond key personnel changes is within reach.

Host Institution Relationship

Of ongoing attention is the relationship between the JRS program and the host institution. Because the director's support and guidance are imperative to the JRS educator's success, the relationship receives the educator's frequent attention and is a regular discussion between the educator and her coach. The JRS educator and director naturally get into a groove as part of their work; their ongoing work requires that they interact and work through any challenges to their relationship.

The JRS faculty and the host institution, though, have a different relationship. It can be easy for the educator and director to focus internally and not externally, with school events occurring without necessary mention to the broader host institution leaders. Similarly, there is general alignment between the JRS program goals and the host institution's Jewish educational or community-building goals. However, there might not be a specific connection

between the host institutions' strategies and the specific JRS goals of deepening Jewish learning and engaging families in Jewish life.

The JRS educator and director can be successful in connecting the JRS program to the larger institution, but it takes constant work and attention, active brainstorming about how to get onto the agenda of the larger institution, and regular collegial conversations. The director might bring reports of JRS programming to a host institution's board or staff meeting, invite host institution leaders to visit or present at programs, or raise the program's progress in a personal meeting (such as supervision) with leaders. The director can also raise the importance of parent engagement repeatedly at staff meetings and conversations about organizational goals to remind leaders of the importance of this work and the role that the ECE program plays. The JRS educator might take a colleague in the host institution to coffee to brainstorm about parent engagement broadly, throughout the organization. The JRS program succeeds maximally in any institution because of these ongoing efforts, but, again, it takes persistence, creativity, and acting as a true program champion to elevate the program and give it visibility.

Finding the Time

Rather than find hours in a full-time role, the JRS Initiative calls for part-time educators to add ten additional hours to their normal classroom hours. This model, therefore, limits its pool of candidates not only to those part-time educators, but to those who also have the bandwidth to devote ten discrete hours to focus only on JRS work. Different educators have different approaches for making this work: Some educators add two hours to each of their days, some take a full day to devote to this work then add additional hours elsewhere, and some follow a different model. The JRS educator and director need to carefully balance this proportion of JRS work to the educator's existing responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

As this document bears witness, the multifaceted JRS Initiative has the potential to systemically change Jewish ECE programs to deepen the Jewish learning and Jewish communal engagement for participating children and families, now and in the years to come. This carefully crafted program model relies on individualized supports together with a collaborative learning agenda, all in the context of strengthening the field of Jewish ECE. We offer this documentation of the JRS model for others to consider how they might replicate or adapt the model in their own settings, all in the spirit of supporting Jewish families' in their formative years to strengthen and deepen Jewish communal life overall.

Appendix: Sample JRS Tools & Materials

JRS Logic Model Overview **A2**

Sample JRS Initiative Curriculum **A3**

JRS Yearly Work Plan Form Template **A10**

JRS Weekly Hours Form Template **A12**

JRS Monthly Work Plan Form Template **A14**

JRS Action Plan Template **A15**

Sample Community of Practice Meeting Agenda from January 22, 2015 ..... **A18**

Sample JRS Participating Schools Directors Meeting Agenda from January 22, 2015 ..... **A19**

Funding Guidelines Form for JRS Schools **A20**

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for JRS Schools **A26**

Jewish Resource Specialist Program Logic Model Overview

PURPOSE: To deepen the overall Jewish experience in the participating JRS schools for the staff, families and students.

PROBLEMS/ISSUES ADDRESSED

- Jewish families are not inspired by Jewish life and learning and lack information about Jewish educational opportunities
- There is a need for enhanced Jewish education for Jewish preschool children
- Preschool institutions and educators need support to integrate enhanced Jewish frameworks into their classrooms, family programming and relationships with families
- Public perception of ECJE teachers and directors is poor
- ECJE standards of excellence are not yet widely applied
- There is high turnover among ECJE teachers and directors and challenges filling director positions

TARGET CONSTITUENCIES

- 5 JRS school sites
- ECJE teachers and directors
- JRS preschool parents and their children
- Bay Area ECJE community

RESOURCES/INPUTS

- 5 JRS educators
- 5 school partnerships
- ECEI Department
- Consultants supporting the JRS Community of Practice
- Funding from JJF; funding and long-term institutional support from JCFSF; annually increasing funding from five JRS schools
- JRS Advisory Committee
- JRS curricular resources
- School supports to JRS educators (e.g., JRS parent)
- Jewish Adult Learning Opportunities

ACTIVITIES

- Jewish family engagement
- Jewish learning for parents
- Mentoring and coaching for teachers in Jewish education and pedagogic content
- Jewish professional development for 5 JRS educators *and* for 5 JRS schools
- Awareness raising in ECJE community

OUTPUTS

JRS Educators

- 10 hours/week supporting teachers, engaging families and deepening Jewish curricula
- Number and nature of new programs and outreach methods
- Number and nature of coaching and mentoring supports to teachers

Families

- Parents attend programs at JRS schools

JRS Schools

- Continued JRS partnership

School Educators & Directors

- Support received from JRS educators
- Meetings with JRS educators & school directors
- New or improved resources in schools

Bay Area ECJE community

- Meetings with host institution leadership
- Meetings highlighting JRS

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

The JRS School

- Increased capacity to connect families with Jewish community resources and post-preschool educational opportunities
- Deepened Jewish knowledge and Jewish pedagogic knowledge among teachers
- Improved integration of Jewish learning into classrooms
- JRS is sustained in 5 sites

Families

- Increasingly meaningful family participation in school events
- Increased proportion of families informed about Jewish life/learning opportunities *and* whose Jewish engagement is informed by JRS

Partnerships & Community Awareness

- Increased school interest in learning about the JRS model

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Increased prominence and prioritization of family engagement at JRS schools
- Increased integration of Jewish frameworks into school-wide activities
- The JRS position is institutionalized in 5 sites *and* expands to 5+ additional schools
- Continued contribution of JRS educators to the ECJE community
- The Bay Area is an ECJE leader

ULTIMATE IMPACT: Bay Area families are engaged in and inspired by Jewish education and Jewish life in their community.

Jewish Resource Specialist Curriculum 7/7/11

REVISED

Year One

Working with site and staff:

I. Construction of the Logic model
   a. In consultation with the Director of the Early Childhood Education Initiative, the Program Coordinator, the JRS Site Specialist and center Director work together to co create logic model for their site
   b. Each site will revisit their own mission and vision for the program (if these documents do not exist, they will be created)
   c. The Logic Model will serve as the guide for the three year project

II. Deepening curriculum at the site
   a. Look at Environment
      i. Before and after pictures are taken at the beginning and end of each school year
      ii. Insure that the philosophy is reflected in our environment
      iii. Goals are established for the classroom environment to reflect high quality Jewish early childhood education
      iv. The environment outside the classrooms is examined. Goals for indicating the school is a high quality Jewish environment are examined
      v. The Focus on Excellence Tool is used by the school to indicate growth
   b. Understanding a Jewish, constructivist approach to curriculum
      i. Determine the current approach to curriculum at the site and the teacher's familiarity with it
      ii. Using "Developing Constructivist Early Childhood Curriculum" define constructivism with JRS/ Preschool Director
      iii. Using "Jewish Everyday" as a resource for building capacity for teachers, segue into the JEWISH constructivist approach. Work with director to see how this approach aligns with current curriculum approach
   c. Recognizing the roadblocks that some teachers may experience and helping them to understand a constructivist approach to ECE curriculum
      i. Be aware of change. Validate the things going well. Offer a plan of education and support for change. JRS becomes a resource for teachers
   d. The difference between "activities" and a deeper approach to curriculum
      i. Activities are short term experiences that do not offer a chance for expansion of children's experience, knowledge etc.
      ii. A constructivist approach offers opportunities for children to continue their inquiry, to work in smaller, interest based groups, and scaffold their learning

e. Understanding and using (or beginning) the process of showcasing children's work, *(Documentation*)
    i. Determine the current use of documentation.
    ii. Give teachers opportunities to look at and begin to use documentation, (Reggio Inspired Practice, Carter and Curtis, etc.)
f. Defining "high quality" Jewish early childhood education at the site
    i. Investigate what this means at the site
    ii. Determine the goals to achieve high quality ECE
g. Discovering goals in moving to high quality Jewish early childhood education at the site
    i. Short term, medium and long term goals for the site will be co constructed by JRS Program Director, JRS Site Specialist and center Director
    ii. Set action plan for achieving these goals
h. Deepening Jewish curriculum
    i. Building capacity for teachers in basic knowledge of Judaism, beginning with accessible resources, ("Jewish Everyday"); other resources will be identified and used based on knowledge of teacher
    ii. Incorporating Israel into the curriculum and at the site. Identify resources that are appropriate for age group and site

III. The Role of the Jewish Resource Specialist
a. How does the JRS understand their role?
    i. The "job description" for the JRS is examined
    ii. Introduction and interaction with the staff is examined
    iii. Establishing a working relationship with ECE director
    iv. Documenting the work of the JRS specialist at the site
b. Building the capacity of the JRS: continuing education and role modeling
    i. The mechanics of inspiring teachers to become great Jewish early childhood educators
    ii. Understanding how adults learn
    iii. The role of a mentor and the role of a coach in working with teachers
    iv. Becoming a resource for teachers: how to access available resources
    v. Identifying professional development opportunities for the teachers

IV. JRS and ECE Director working together
    i. Understanding the ECE Director's vision for a Jewish school
    ii. Working with Director to make change together
    iii. Making clear the JRS role with teachers and parents: roles and responsibilities
    iv. Understanding fundraising at the site: current models and opportunities
    v. Working with the host institution
    vi. Working with parents in a way that focuses on their assets rather than their deficits, (*asset based approach)*

V. Understanding change in organizations
a. Understanding organizational change

i. Using what works in and organization, *(appreciative inquiry),* to build change
ii. Measuring the change process: what are our expectations for the first year

VI. Building a shared vocabulary
   a. Identify the basic Jewish values that the center exemplifies, and wishes to incorporate into practice
      i. Begin the "shared vocabulary" of Hebrew terms for the site
      ii. Make the terms accessible for teachers at the site
      iii. Coach teachers at the site in using the correct Hebrew term for Jewish values
      iv. Coach teachers in using terms with parents and children at the site

<u>Working with Parents</u>:

I. Engaging Parents in Jewish Life and Community
   a. A needs assessment will be conducted to understand the needs and interests of the parents
      i. From the assessment the JRS will begin to identify the different areas for potential Jewish involvement (study, family education, informal activities)
      ii. Jewish programs for parents and families will be developed based on needs assessment and parent involvement
      iii. Create opportunities for parents to connect in a Jewish environment: to each other, to the host institution, to the larger Jewish community

II. Building a shared vocabulary
   a. Identify the basic Jewish values that the center exemplifies, and wishes to incorporate into practice
      i. Begin the "shared vocabulary" of Hebrew terms for the site
      ii. Make the terms accessible for parents at the site
      iii. Create opportunities for parents at the site in using the correct Hebrew term for Jewish values

III. Resources available for parents
   a. Create a variety of opportunities for parents including, but not limited to the following:
      i. To become knowledgeable about Jewish educational choices for themselves
      ii. To become knowledgeable about continuing their child's Jewish education after preschool
      iii. To become knowledgeable about the Jewish community

IV. Increase Parent Involvement in program
   a. A variety of opportunities to become involved in the ECE program will be available to parents
      i. Parents will be engaged to discover the things that they are interested in in order to engage them in the school
      ii. Parents will be engaged in the understanding of best practice in ECE
      iii. Parents will be encouraged to advocate for the ECE program

Year Two:

Working with Site and Staff:

I. Deepening Curriculum
   a. Deepening Jewish curriculum continues through:
      i. Empowering teachers to take ownership to continue to deepen curriculum, with the Jewish and secular curriculum intertwined in a seamless way
      ii. Identify obstacles that prohibit or impact deepening the curriculum
      iii. Empowering teachers to push past obstacles
      iv. Understanding teachers changing role in a Jewish constructivist environment
      v. Helping teachers articulate their work
      vi. Showcasing children's work, (*documentation)* continues
      vii. Understanding and incorporating Israel into the curriculum occurs in a seamless way

II. Role of the JRS
   a. Identifying growth in the role of the JRS
      i. Noticing change in the mentor/coach role
      ii. Helping teachers see themselves as Jewish professionals
      iii. Identifying teachers successes and challenges and working with them
      iv. Supporting teachers in success and in challenges
      v. Continuing to identify resources
      vi. Working (in conjunction with ECE director) on professional development plans for staff
      vii. Identifying future leaders
      viii. Acclimating new staff

III. JRS and ECE Director working together
   a. Reflecting on the previous year: what worked well and what can be changed to better meet the needs of the school
   b. Understanding the meaning of deepening Jewish curriculum at the site
   c. Supporting the director and feeling supported by the director
   d. Research shared leadership together: identifying opportunities for growth
   e. Continue fundraising opportunities

IV. Understanding change
   a. Ascertaining the change process in the second year
      i. Evaluating progress
      ii. Make necessary adjustments to continue the change process

iii. Using change to realize the goals for the site

V. Building a Shared vocabulary
   a. Evaluation: Are we achieving the goals for a shared vocabulary?
      i. Updating and continuing the shared vocabulary
      ii. Making the shared vocabulary accessible to our staff and parents
      iii. Making the shared vocabulary visible at our site

<u>Working with Parents</u>:

I. Engaging Parents in Jewish Life and Community
   a. A short needs assessment will be administered to see if the site is reflecting the needs and interests of the parents
      i. Existing Jewish programs will be refined to suit parents needs and interests
      ii. New opportunities for Jewish programming will be created for parents and families reflecting their interests
      iii. Parents will be invited to co-create some of the programs for adults and families at the center
      iv. Parents will experience the Jewish community with other parents through study, education, and informal activities

II. Building a Shared vocabulary
   a. Achieving the goals for a shared vocabulary
      i. Adding to the current vocabulary
      ii. Making the shared vocabulary more accessible to our families
      iii. Making our shared vocabulary visible at the site

III. Resources available for Parents
   a. Evaluate the opportunities that were presented to parents to become knowledgeable about Jewish resources
      i. Successful opportunities from the previous year will be available, and will reflect the needs of the new parent group
      ii. New opportunities will be created to reflect the parent group
      iii. New parents will be introduced to Jewish resources

IV. Increase Parent Involvement
   a. Evaluate the previous year: did parents become involved
      i. Identify successful parent programs: why it worked and how to build on success
      ii. Provide opportunities for continued parental involvement
      iii. Offer opportunities for new parents to be invited into parent involvement
      iv. Provide opportunities for parents to become leaders in the program

Year three

Working with Staff and Site:

I. Deepening curriculum
   a. Deepening Jewish curriculum continues: capacity of teachers has grown to reflect this
      i. Continue to build capacity for teachers in their own learning
      ii. Continue professional development plans for staff
      iii. Work with new staff to understand approach to curriculum
      iv. Create mentor program so that teachers who are successful can mentor other teachers
      v. Identify problems for staff who are not successful, work with director to define the roles of these staff
      vi. Showcasing children's work, (documentation), reflects the teachers, children and families
      vii. Teachers are comfortable exploring Israel with the children and families in their care
   b. Staying current in the field of Early Childhood Education
      i. What is new in ECE and
      ii. How does the current information in ECE intersect with the curriculum approach at the site
      iii. How to disseminate information to teachers
II. Role Of JRS
   a. Evaluating change in the JRS role over the last two years
      i. Identifying change in the JRS role for the future
      ii. Identifying future leaders
      iii. Creating mentoring and coaching relationships amongst the staff
      iv. Incorporating new staff
      v. Update resources and develop method to keep current in the practice of Jewish Early Childhood Education
III. JRS and ECE Director working together
   a. Reflecting on the previous year: what worked well and what can be changed to better meet the needs of the school
      i. Examining the working relationship of the JRS and Director
      ii. Considering shared leadership
      iii. Continue fundraising opportunities
IV. Understanding change
   a. Evaluating the change process at the site
      i. Evaluating the previous year's work
      ii. Continuing the change process? Are all the "voices" at the table? (parents, host institution, teachers, etc.)
   b. Planning for the future
      i. Getting closer to our goals

ii. Creating an action plan, (the process of doing something to achieve a purpose),to attain those goals

V. Building a shared vocabulary
   a. The shared vocabulary is evident everyday
      i. Teachers feel comfortable and confident in using shared vocabulary
      ii. New terms that are meaningful to the center are incorporated

<u>Working with Parents</u>:

I. Engaging Parents in Jewish Life and Community
   a. A short needs assessment will be administered to see if the site is reflecting the needs and interests of the parents
      i. Existing Jewish programs will continue to be refined to suit parents needs and interests
      ii. New opportunities for Jewish programming will be created for parents and families reflecting their interests
      iii. Parents co create some of the Jewish programs for adults and families at the center
      iv. Parents continue to experience the Jewish community with other parents through programs, study, and informal activities
II. Building a Shared vocabulary
   a. The shared vocabulary is used at the site
      i. Parents have increasing confidence and comfort using the shared vocabulary
      ii. New terms are added to the shared vocabulary that reflect the center
III. Resources Available for Parents
   a. Evaluate the opportunities that were presented to parents to find Jewish resources
      i. Successful opportunities will be available and will reflect the new parent group
      ii. New opportunities will be changed to reflect the parent group
      iii. New parents will be introduced to Jewish resources
IV. Increase Parent Involvement
   a. Evaluate the previous year: did parents become involved?
      i. Identifying successful programs
      ii. Continuing opportunities for parental involvement
   b. Using parents as a resource to create and plan parent programs
      i. Parents become leaders in the program

Jewish Resource Specialist Program

YEARLY Work Plan Form

Memorandum of Understanding

Infusion and integration of high quality Jewish curriculum that inspires children, teachers and parents to further learning and engagement with Judaism and the Jewish community

Assisting teachers in deepening Jewish curriculum and activities

Serving as a concierge to families to increase their involvement with the Jewish community

Name _____

School Year_____

Monthly Goals for 2015-2016 School Year Work Plan:

August:

Monthly:

For Families:

For Teachers:

Shared Vocabulary:

JIM JOSEPH FOUNDATION
Shimon ben Joseph

JCF JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION & ENDOWMENT FUND

The Jewish Resource Specialist Program is made possible through the Jim Joseph Foundation and the Jewish Community Federation & Endowment Fund

August: (this is specifically for the month- see examples below)

JRS Retreat

Take Role in Staff Orientation (be specific: what did you do? How will you sustain the learning throughout the year?)

Take role in Parent orientation/ back to school night etc. (be specific: what did you do? Are there ways that you can extend what you did with the parents?)

Monthly: (these are things that your work plan timeline has ON A REGULAR BASIS for each month examples below)

Meet with JRS Coordinator

Meet with the ECE Director

For Families:

Newsletter article (How often? Please attach article to JRS work Hour form)

Attend Kabbalat Shabbat for another class (which class? What will you do? Read a story? Sing?)

Greet parents with Director (at least once per month)

Creating Resources (What was the impetus for creating this? How did you do this? How did you make it available to parents?)

For Teachers:

Meet with teachers individually and in teams (please specify which teachers, which teams, WHAT you discussed, HOW you are deepening Jewish Curriculum)

Shared Vocabulary: (What words are you and the teachers sharing with parents? How are you building on this vocabulary? How are you getting the words out to teachers and parents?)

Jewish Resource Specialist Weekly Hours

(Hours should total 40 for the month)

Name_____

School_____

Memorandum Of Understanding:

Infusion and integration of high quality Jewish curriculum and experiences that inspires children, teachers and parents to further learning and engagement with Judaism and the Jewish community

Assisting teachers in deepening Jewish curriculum and activities

Serving as concierge to families to increase their involvement with the Jewish community

JRS Work Plan Week of_____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BELOW:

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF MY WORK IN ENGAGE FAMILIES?

(Formal and Informal, programs, other?)

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF MY WORK IN DEEPING JEWISH LEARNING?

Creating SHARED VOCABULARY?

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF MY WORK IN COACHING AND MENTORING?

(Meeting with Classroom Teachers: Which Class? Topics for discussing, coaching, mentoring, reflective conversations)

Other:

TOTAL WEEKLY HOURS_____

JRS Work Plan for the month of_____

Please list work plan for the current month and what you did to achieve these goals:

JRS MONTHLY Work Plan Form TEMPLATE

_____ _____

Month Date

Please write in what you are planning to do this month in the following areas:

Engaging Families in Jewish Life (Programming, conversations, written material etc):

Israel (Study, engagement, curriculum etc):

JRS Parent:

Shared Vocabulary:

Deepening Jewish Learning- Teachers:

Deepening Jewish Learning- Parents:

Meeting with Director:

Meeting with JRS Coach/ Educator:

Action Plan Template

Goal For Families: For Teachers:
Impact For Families: For Teachers:

Improvement Strategies

For Families:

For Teachers:

Implication for Professional Development and deepening Jewish Learning:

Implication for engaging families in Jewish Life:

Evidence of Success (How will you know you are making progress? What are your benchmarks?)

Evidence of Process (How will you determine that your goal has been reached? What are your measures?)

Developed by West Ed

Jewish Resource Specialist

Community of Practice Meeting Agenda

1/22/15

1:30-3:30 pm

1. Welcome
2. PJ Library Information
3. D'var torah
4. Quotes on Stumbling blocks:
    a. Read and choose
    b. Find people who chose the same one that you did
    c. Why did you choose that particular quote?
5. Winter Reflections:
    a. What did you learn from the process? (Share in groups of three)
        i. What did you learn about your work in the area of Deepening Jewish Learning?
        ii. About Engaging Families in Jewish life?
    b. What are your "stumbling blocks"?
    c. What stumbling blocks do Parents have? Teachers? Host Institution?
    d. Share out with group- The steps you are going to take to move forward
6. New Business
    a. Focus On Excellence (F.O.E.) in the JRS program
        i. How will you use it?
        ii. Which section might you choose?
        iii. What tools do you need to do this?
        iv. Who can help you achieve this goal?
        v. What is the timeline for this to be done?
    b. Conference in LA
    c. Israel Trip - Fundraising
    d. Super Sunday February 8
7. Next Meeting: Thursday February 19th 1:30-3:30 pm at Federation

JRS Participating Schools Directors Meeting

Thursday January 22, 2015

10:30-11:30

San Francisco Jewish Community Center Room 206

1. Welcome, Introductions
2. D'var Torah
3. Goals and purpose of the Directors meetings
    a. To Share the success and challenges of the JRS program
        i. How does the JRS program work at other sites?
        ii. Specific questions about the JRS program
    b. Parent Engagement
        i. Kevah
    c. Professional development:
        i. Funding Guideline Reminders
            1. Sustainability
            2. Integrating secular professional development
        ii. How does Professional development work at your site?
        iii. What Professional Development opportunities are you using this year?
        iv. Sharing resources
            1. Pedagogical Institute of Los Angeles Conference
            2. Paradigm Conference
        v. Current ECEI Professional Development series
        vi. Conference idea for next year
    d. How would you like to use the time together?
    e. Should we meet together in person or on the phone?
    f. Scheduling the remaining JRS directors meetings.
4. Ideas for upcoming meetings
5. Reflection: How did this format work today?

JRS OBJECTIVES: *Deepen Jewish Learning & Engage Families in Jewish Life*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) GUIDELINES FORM:

- All professional development funds MUST be approved IN ADVANCE by JRS Faculty.
- All professional development must be in Early Childhood Education and have a Jewish component.

GRANT PARAMETERS - PD FUNDS CAN BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Travel to and from event/ hotel cost etc.
- Books: Can be used, but there must be a plan to sustain the learning

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE:

- Training materials and supplies
- Independent study/ tutors

SCHOOL NAME: _____

DIRECTOR: _____

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

Participants (Classrooms or individuals involved)	Professional Development Opportunity	# Sessions	Facilitator	Cost per session/ Total Cost

PLEASE BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is the overall plan for professional development at the site?

2. Please define the need for this professional development experience:

3. Please define the goals for this professional development experience:

4. Learning plan: describe how the learning will be reflected and sustained during the year:

5. Non-Judaic professional development: Please describe how the learning will be reflected and sustained Jewishly, both initially and throughout the year:

EVALUATION:

- Method used for evaluation:

- Timeframe for evaluation:

JRS PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMING FORM:

SCHOOL NAME: _____

DIRECTOR: _____

TOTAL FUNDS YEAR 1: $3,000

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

Participants (Classrooms or individuals involved)	Parent Engagement Opportunity Title/Description	# Sessions	Facilitator	Cost per session/ Total Cost

PLEASE BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is the overall plan for parent engagement at the site?

2. Please define the need for this parent engagement experience:

3. Please define the goals for this parent engagement experience:

4. How will you sustain this plan during the year?

EVALUATION:

- Method used for evaluation:

- Timeframe for evaluation:

JRS FAMILY PROGRAMMING FORM:

SCHOOL NAME:

DIRECTOR:

TOTAL FUNDS YEAR 1: $2,000

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

Participants (Classrooms or individuals involved)	Family Programming Opportunity Title/Description	# Sessions	Facilitator	Cost per session/ Total Cost

PLEASE BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is the overall plan for family programming at the site?

2. Please define the need for family programming at your site:

3. Please define the goals for family programming at your site:

4. How will you sustain this plan during the year?

EVALUATION:

- Method used for evaluation:

- Timeframe for evaluation:

Memorandum of Understanding

Introduction

We are grateful to have received funding for this program from the Jim Joseph Foundation.

The Early Childhood Education Initiative (ECEI) has now been operating in the Bay Area for almost four years, and has a proven track record of success in implementing programs that address core needs in the field of Early Childhood Jewish Education.

The Early Childhood Education Specialist Program, a new program of the ECEI and funded by the Jim Joseph Foundation, will create a new position, the Early Childhood Jewish Resource Specialist (JRS), at five top quality preschools in the Bay Area. Those selected to this position will be responsible for deepening Jewish curriculum and more fully engaging parents in Jewish life and community. The JRS will be a resource to the entire school, as well as the community.

The goal of this program is to create a replicable model for other Jewish preschools in the Bay Area and around the country to create a resource within the school that supports professional development, along with quality curriculum development and family engagement. It will be expected that the JRS position will be built into the school's budget once the three-year funding cycle has been completed.

Purpose of, and Parties to, this Memorandum of Understanding

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to clarify the relationship between the sites involved in the Jewish Resource Specialist program and the Early Childhood Education Initiative (ECEI) of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Community. The Jewish Community Federation of the East Bay, the Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley, and the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties are affiliated with, and represented by, the ECEI.

This Memorandum of Understanding will address:

1. Program Outline
2. Goals of the Program
3. Delineation of Responsibilities
4. Financial commitment and agreement between ECEI & site
5. Reporting requirements for site to ECEI
6. Program evaluation
7. Review of MoU
8. Timeline

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Funding Breakdown
Appendix 2: Timeline Breakdown

Memorandum of Understanding

Program Outline

The Early Childhood Education Specialist Program will create a new position, the Early Childhood Jewish Resource Specialist (JRS), at five top quality preschools in the Bay Area, which will be responsible for deepening Jewish curriculum for the children at the school and more fully engaging the parents in Jewish life and community. The JRS position will be filled by an exemplary teacher at each school who will be paid for an additional 10 hours per week to work with the teachers and parents to achieve the program goals. The position is also designed to create a much-needed career track and compensation ladder for Jewish early childhood education (ECE) professionals ("preschool teachers"). The program also responds to the high interest level expressed by Jewish preschools for an in-house expert in Jewish education who can mentor and be a resource for the staff and families.

The JRS will work closely with the Site Director, the ECEI Director, and the Consultant assigned to this project who will be responsible for mentoring all JRS faculty and convening the Communities of Practice meetings and retreats. In conjunction with this group of individuals, each JRS will begin the year by creating a professional development plan for staff, and family programming plan for site families, that will be implemented and reported on throughout the year. Additionally, the JRS will be responsible for collecting pre and post surveys from parents, teachers and Site Directors (survey guidelines will be provided to the JRS), and will be required to attend Community of Practice meetings and retreats throughout the year. Specific deliverables are articulated in the Timeline section of this MoU.

The ECE Specialist Program's target populations include: 1) ECE professionals currently employed at the five preschools who will be benefit from professional development and coaching by JRS faculty ; 2) the children and parents at the schools who will be engaged in meaningful Jewish learning and activities; and 3) the professional leadership of the preschools and larger organizations housing the preschools who will be educated about the importance of sustaining this initiative in their operations.

The ECE Specialist Program, which is the first of its kind, will be a flagship program of the Federation's ECEI, which was initiated and funded in part by the Jim Joseph Foundation and is in its fourth year of operation in the Bay Area. The ECEI is a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of and access to early childhood Jewish education programs through professional development, engagement of families with young children, improvements in compensation and financial models, and standards of excellence. The end goal of this program is to refine the model and establish this program as replicable and relevant to the entire Jewish ECE community. JRS faculty will be responsible for working with the team in order to create a final project report at the end of the three years that shows guidelines and implementation of the program that can be adapted in other communities.

Memorandum of Understanding

Goals of Program

The target population for the Jewish Resource Specialist Program includes:

1) The JRS faculty at the five selected sites who will be the direct recipients of training and coaching provided by the Director of the ECEI and expert consultants.
2) The preschool teachers (up to 100) at the five sites who will be mentored by the JRS faculty, and will have access to increased professional development opportunities.
3) The preschool children (up to 400) who will benefit from the enhanced Jewish learning and activities.
4) The preschool parents (up to 700) who will benefit from their involvement with their children's learning, the designated family activities and the direct coaching by the JRS.
5) The professional leadership at each institution who will gain a greater understanding and appreciation for the value of Jewish ECE and engaging preschool families.
6) Jewish professionals in the larger Jewish community who will be integrated into the offerings of the ECE Specialist Program, such as PJ Library® coordinators, day school staff, religious school staff, Jewish Family & Children's Services, rabbi's and others who provide Jewish experiences for children and their parents.

Goals and Objectives as related to the target populations are:

- The infusion and integration of high quality Jewish curriculum and experiences at five pilot ECE sites that inspires children, teachers and parents to further learning and engagement with Judaism and the Jewish community.

- Assisting teachers in deepening the Jewish curriculum and activities.

- Serving as a concierge for families to increase their involvement with the Jewish community.

- Creating a career ladder and compensation ladder for Jewish preschool teachers;

- Developing a model that can be adapted in other schools and communities.

Measures of Success as related to goals and objectives (by the end of the program):

- Innovative and effective Jewish family experiences will be available to all families in the preschool, with at least 75% of all families participating each year.

- Teachers will implement effective Jewish curriculum and activities for the children of which at least 40% involves some level of parent participation or learning.

Memorandum of Understanding

- 80% of teachers and 50% of parents will have a working knowledge of relevant Jewish vocabulary and Jewish literacy. They will have command of basic Hebrew terms that represent Jewish values, such as Bikkur Cholim, visiting the sick.

- 100% of parents will be informed about Jewish educational choices for themselves and their children, and 60% of graduating children and their parents will continue their Jewish involvement after preschool.

- A career ladder in early childhood Jewish education with increased compensation and professional development will be established at the five schools.

- At the end of the three year pilot, the schools will have acquired the resources to endorse and disseminate the JRS concept and integrate the position into future operating budgets.

Delineation of Responsibilities

The ECEI will:

- Work with each JRS to develop a plan for their school for each year;
- Provide technical assistance for fundraising for years 2 and 3
- Hire and supervise the project consultant;
- Hire and supervise the project evaluator;
- Hire website developer and establish it as a tool for all JRS faculty and the Bay Area Jewish community;
- Provide 100% funding for Year 1 for each site, 75% of funding for Year 2 for each site, and 40% of funding for Year 3 for each site;
- Notify JRS faculty of report deadlines and guidelines;
- Assist each site in fundraising for the Israel trip in Year 2;
- Work with all JRS faculty to create a final report that will be disseminated to the community in order to establish the program as replicable and relevant to the national ECE community.

The JRS Faculty will:

- Conduct needs assessment pre-program survey with parents at the site, and determine parent programs based on interests;
- Work with JRS consultant, ECEI Director and Site Director to deepen Jewish curriculum content for children and educators at the site level;
- Research and partner with Jewish engagement opportunities available in the community;
- Work with parents to identify their next steps in their family's Jewish journey;

Memorandum of Understanding

- Meet regularly with each teacher at the site to discuss professional development and career objectives;
- Create a "lexicon" of shared Jewish vocabulary and Jewish literacy for teachers, parents and children that can be seen and heard throughout the school environment;
- Attend Community of Practice sessions two to three times each semester with other JRS faculty, JRS consultant, and ECEI Director in order to develop as a cohort and share best practices as they develop curriculum, mentor teachers, and coach parents;
- Agreement to document the process in order to disseminate and share best practices and lessons learned from the program in order for it to be replicated in other schools and communities;
- Work with Site Director to fundraise and ensure sustainability for the JRS position, increased professional development funds for site educators, and funds for parent engagement activities.

The Site Director will:

- Will be the main liaison between the school and the ECEI for the JRS program;
- Supervise and work with JRS to develop family programming and professional development plan for each year, and ensure that professional development with funds given is only reserved for Jewish Early Childhood Education;
- Assist JRS in reporting process, specifically in financial reporting;
- Meet with JRS project consultant and ECEI Director in order to report on progress of program and make recommendations, including an annual evaluation of the JRS;
- Will hire a replacement JRS in the event that the originally-selected JRS is unable to complete the three-year obligation;
- Work with JRS to fundraise and ensure sustainability for the JRS position, increased professional development funds for site educators, and funds for parent engagement activities.

The Host Institution will:

- Work with Site Director to achieve financial commitment in years 2 and 3 of the program;
- Agree to fund the project for a minimum of three years after the completion of the grant period;
- Agree that the funds distributed to the site for the JRS program will go toward those purposes and no others;
- Provide release time for JRS to attend monthly meetings and two 2-day retreats;
- Provide release time for Site Directors to attend meetings throughout the year;
- Participate in an evaluation of the program where information from this program will be shared and disseminated to the larger community. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained.
- Agree to support efforts of collaboration with the ECEI and other institutions that are conducting the program.

Memorandum of Understanding

Financial Commitment & Outline

The ECEI/JCF will disperse two checks annually for the JRS program in conjunction with reports. The first check will be distributed in August of each fiscal year, the second in January of each fiscal year, upon receipt and approval by ECEI Director of reporting from the JRS.

See Appendix 1: Funding Breakdown for detailed distribution of funds

Budget Discussion:

Based on current projections for staffing stipends, professional development on the site level, and family programming costs, each site will cost $27,980 per year, with the grant funding the first year program in its entirety. The site will pay 25% of these costs in year two, and 60% of these costs in year three. The site will assume these costs after year three and the JRS position will be built into the institution's budget.

The funds that will be going to the site include the stipend for the JRS at $13,760 per site per year. This is based on an extra 10 hours of work per week, at $32 per hour for 43 weeks per year. A substitute teacher fund will also be distributed to the sites to cover approximately two hours per week at $20 per hour for 43 weeks to total $1,720 per site per year, in order to cover time for the JRS or other site teachers working on the ECE Specialist Program or professional development activities. Additionally, a professional development fund for the entire site will be given at $10,000 per year in order to promote increased professional development activities for all site educators. This will go to the site to become a part of their professional development fund, in order to raise the level of learning for the entire preschool. $2,500 per site per year will go toward family programming which the JRS will plan and convene. These costs total the $27,980 per year per site to operate the program.

The Israel trip is estimated to cost $70,000 for 10-12 people to go to Israel at the end of Year Two. $15,000 has been set aside for this Israel trip, with $55,000 to be raised by the JRS faculty in conjunction with the ECEI director and the site directors.

Memorandum of Understanding

Reporting Requirements

There will be a total of six reports throughout the three year period expected of the JRS. In addition, at the end of the program, the JRS is expected to work with JRS faculty from each site, all Site Directors, the program consultant, and the ECEI staff in order to develop a full report on the program that will be disseminated to the community as a guideline to replicating and modifying the program in different communities.

Reporting requirements for bi-annual reports are outlined below. All reports will need to be approved by the ECEI Director. Funding will be released in two equal disbursements annually, once in August and subsequently in January in conjunction with the receipt of reports.

MoU signed and returned	Due by June 15th, 2011 *First half of funds released in August 2011*
Report 1: -Statement of outcomes and activities detailed in the Logic Model - Achievement of benchmarks and challenges encountered -Narrative discussing new professional development and family programming that JRS has implemented at the site; -Results of pre-survey given to parents, teachers and Site Directors; -2011-12 School Budget with Revenue and Expenses including financial statement providing detail on how funds have been distributed thus far for JRS program.	Due by December 15th, 2011 *Second half of funds released in January 2012*
Report 2: -Annual evaluation of JRS from site director (this will be the only part of the report completed by site director); -Statement of goals and benchmarks determined at the beginning of the year; -Progress toward goals; -Challenges encountered in reaching goals, and how JRS addressed previous challenges noted in last report; -Narrative discussing professional development and family programming that JRS has implemented at the site and impact it has had on teachers/families/site;	Due by June 30th, 2012 *First half of funds released in August 2012*

Memorandum of Understanding

-Results of pre-survey given to parents, teachers and Site Directors, compared to post-survey; -Financial statement providing detail on how funds were distributed for the 2011-12 fiscal year for JRS program; -2012-2013 School Budget with revenue and expenses including documentation that site/host institution has set aside 25% of 2012-13 budget for JRS program.	
Report 3: -Statement of goals and benchmarks determined at the beginning of the year; -Progress toward goals; -New/continuing challenges encountered in reaching goals; -Narrative discussing new professional development and family programming that JRS has implemented at the site, and what has been done differently from Year 1 to Year 2; -Results of pre-survey given to parents, teachers and Site Directors for Year 2; -Financial statement showing how funds have been distributed thus far for JRS program. -Update on funds raised for Israel trip; -Update on how new website has/has not impacted your site;	Due by December 15th, 2012 *Second half of funds released in January 2013*
Report 4: -Annual evaluation of JRS from site director (this will be the only part of the report completed by site director); -Statement of goals and benchmarks determined at the beginning of the year; -Progress toward goals; -Challenges encountered in reaching goals, and how JRS addressed previous challenges noted in last report; -Narrative discussing professional development and family programming that JRS has implemented at the site and impact it has had on teachers/families/site, and discussion of how programs have changed from Year 1 to Year 2;	Due by June 30th, 2013 *First half of funds released in August 2013*

Memorandum of Understanding

-Results of pre-survey given to parents, teachers and Site Directors, compared to post-survey for Year 2; -Financial statement showing how funds were distributed for the 2012-13 fiscal year for JRS program; -Proof that site/host institution has set aside 40% of 2013-14 budget for JRS program.	
Report 5: -Update on how new website has/has not impacted your site in Year 3; -Statement of goals and benchmarks determined at the beginning of the year; -Progress toward goals; -New/continuing challenges encountered in reaching goals; -Narrative discussing new professional development and family programming that JRS has implemented at the site, and what has been done differently from Year 2 to Year 3; -Results of pre-survey given to parents, teachers and Site Directors for Year 3; -Financial statement showing how funds have been distributed thus far for JRS program.	Due by December 15th, 2013 *Second half of funds released in January 2014*
Report 6: -Annual evaluation of JRS from site director (this will be the only part of the report completed by site director); -End of grant report that will cover the following: -Documentation of goals and benchmarks for each year, how JRS addressed goals and benchmarks, successes and challenges as related to these goals; -Impact determined by pre and post surveys each year on families, teachers and Site Directors; -Implementation strategy that JRS recommends to other communities based on their site; -Financial statement for all three years showing how funds were spent each year; -Plans for next steps and moving forward with JRS program at the site.	Due by June 30th, 2014

Memorandum of Understanding

Timeline

December 2010- August 2011: Planning Period (no grant funds required)

The planning period will consist of:

- Site and JRS faculty selection for the ECE Specialist Program;
- Signature and acceptance of the Memorandum of Understanding between sites and ECEI;
- Development of partnerships with educators in specialized fields, such as Jewish family education, Jewish outreach and parent education who will help train the JRS faculty; and
- Development of resources and curriculum for the JRS faculty to implement at their sites.

See Appendix 2: Timeline for detailed timeline during the grant period: July 2011-July 2014

The Early Childhood Education Initiative

Jewish Resource Specialist Program

Funding breakdown: 2011-2014

	2011-12		2011-12		2011-12		
	Grant to site	Site contribution	Grant to site	Site contribution	Grant to site	Site contribution	Line Item Description
JRS Stipend	$ 13,760	$ -	$ 10,320	$ 3,440	$ 5,504	$ 8,256	Based on extra 10 hrs/wk at $32/hr for 43 wks
Pro Development	$ 10,000	$ -	$ 7,500	$ 2,500	$ 4,000	$ 6,000	Professional development fund for all site educators
Substitutes	$ 1,720	$ -	$ 1,290	$ 430	$ 688	$ 1,032	2 hrs/wk at $20/hr for 43 wks
Family Programs	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 1,875	$ 625	$ 1,000	$ 1,500	Specific for family programming that JRS will plan/oversee
In-kind support	$ -	See description	$ -	See description	$ -	See description	This figure will vary, dependent on the site. It includes things such as administrative support, site director time and supplies
Total:	$ 27,980	$ -	$ 20,985	$ 6,995	$ 11,192	$ 16,788	Site will contribute 25% in year 2, 60% in year 3, then continue to operate the program for 3 years upon completion of grant period
Total per Year		**$ 27,980**		**$ 27,980**		**$ 27,980**	

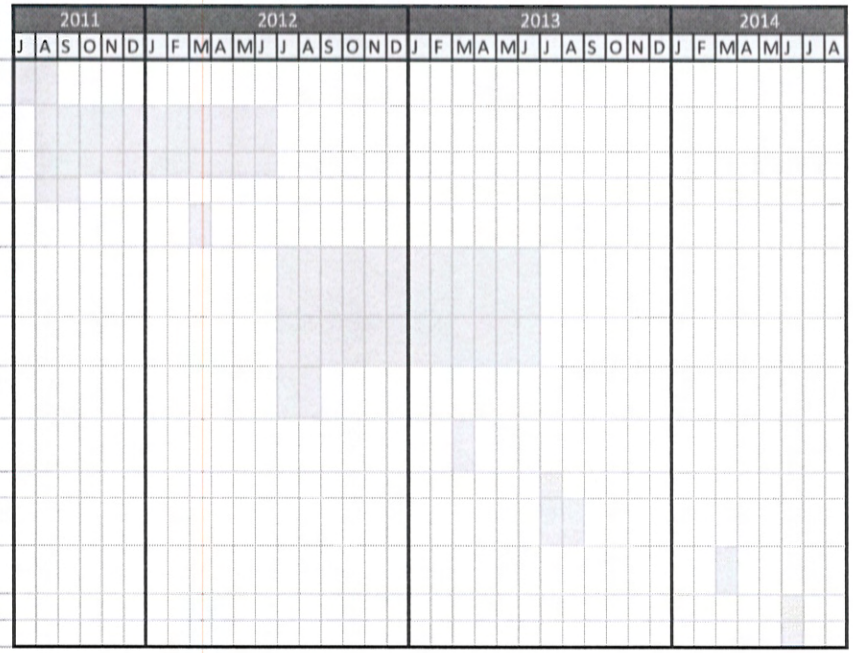
The Early Childhood Education Initiative

Jewish Resource Specialist Program

Years 1, 2 & 3

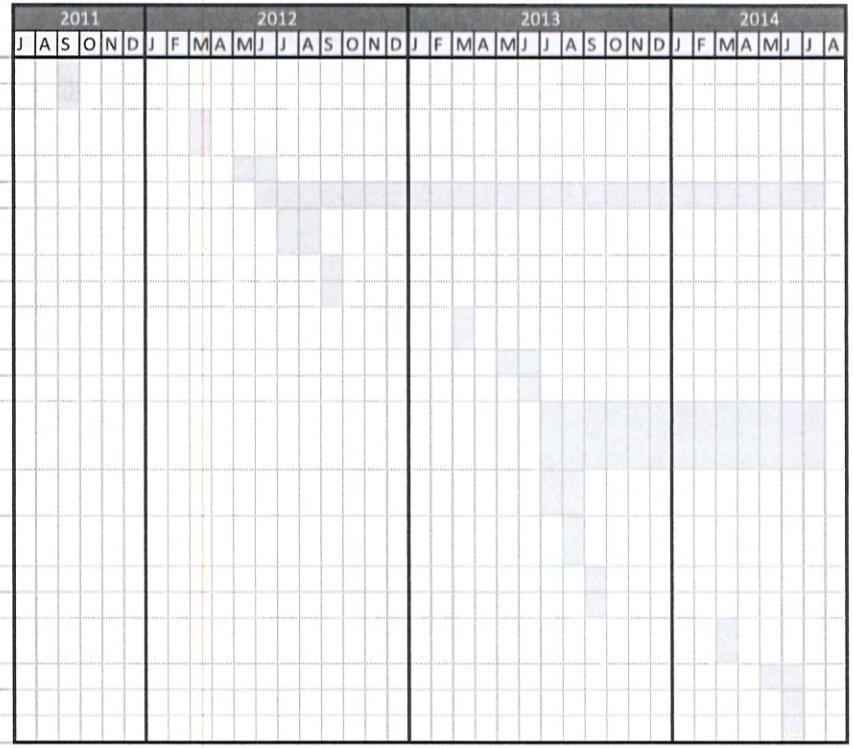
July 2011 - July 2014

	ECEI Timeline of Responsibilities
1	ECEI Director meets with ECE Site Directors, JRS consultant and JRS faculty teams to set up short, medium and long term goals for each site and determine professional development and family programming for year 1
2	ECEI will generate comprehensive resource website developed in conjunction with a web developer for parents and educators in the Bay Area community.
3	ECEI staff will work with JRS faculty teams and sites to fundraise for Israel trip in year two
4	ECEI hire evaluator to begin pre-intervention research and logic model development
5	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 1
6	Comprehensive resource website completed and utilized in conjunction with social media, blogs and other "new" communication methods to document successful Jewish curriculum, family and professional resources specific to the site and the general Bay Area Jewish community
7	Continue fundraising for Israel trip for JRS faculty in conjunction with JRS consultant, ECEI Director, and Site Director. Target date for trip is June 2013.
8	ECEI Director meets with ECE Site Directors, JRS consultant and JRS faculty teams to set up short, medium and long term goals for each site and determine professional development and family programming for year 2
9	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 2
10	Israel Trip (pending funding)
11	ECEI Director meets with ECE Site Directors, JRS consultant and JRS faculty teams to set up short, medium and long term goals for each site and determine professional development and family programming for year 3
12	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 3
13	ECEI Director and JRS faculty refine the "program model" for potential replication at other preschool sites.
14	A community celebration will highlight the work of the JRS faculty and school.



Appendix 2: Timeline

	JRS Faculty Timeline of Responsibilities
1	JRS send out pre-evaluations to parents, teachers and directors for Year 1
2	JRS begin implementing professional development and family programming plans for Year 1
3	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 1
4	JRS send out post-evaluation to parents, teachers and directors to inform year 1 report
5	JRS Faculty present at Bay Area Jewish ECE conferences
6	ECEI Director meets with ECE Site Directors, JRS consultant and JRS faculty teams to set up short, medium and long term goals for each site and determine professional development and family programming for year 2
7	JRS send out pre-evaluations to parents, teachers and directors for Year 2
8	JRS begin implementing professional development and family programming plans for Year 2
9	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 2
10	JRS send out post-evaluation to parents, teachers and directors to inform year 2 report
11	Israel Trip (pending funding)
12	JRS faculty will mentor an additional teacher(s) at the school to take on some responsibilities of the ECE Specialist Program, which will allow the JRS faculty to expand their work based on the needs and interests of the school.
13	ECEI Director meets with ECE Site Directors, JRS consultant and JRS faculty teams to set up short, medium and long term goals for each site and determine professional development and family programming for year 3
14	Yom Iyun (Day of Study) with JRS faculty, Site Directors, and leadership of host institution for the purpose of reflection and institutionalizing JRS Program.
15	JRS send out pre-evaluations to parents, teachers and directors for Year 3
16	JRS begin implementing professional development and family programming plans for Year 3
17	JRS work with ECEI Director, ECE Site Director, JRS consultant to assess initial goals and track progress for Year 3
18	JRS send out post-evaluation to parents, teachers and directors to inform year 3 report
19	ECEI Director and JRS faculty refine the "program model" for potential replication at other preschool sites.
20	A community celebration will highlight the work of the JRS faculty and school.



Appendix 2: Timeline

Reporting	2011						2012												2013												2014							
	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
1 First report due (see reporting guidelines for details)																																						
2 Lessons learned from year one are gathered and integrated into planning for year two. Second report due.																																						
3 Third report due (see reporting guidelines for details)																																						
4 Lessons learned from year two are gathered and integrated into planning for year three. Fourth report due.																																						
5 Fifth report due (see reporting guidelines for details)																																						
6 Final Report for program due, and results of program shared with national ECE community																																						
6 Share results of final report with national ECE community																																						

Community of Practice Sessions	2011						2012												2013												2014							
	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
1 JRS faculty attends two days Yom Iyun (Days of Study)—first Community of Practice session																																						
2 Second Community of Practice session of Year 1																																						
3 Third Community of Practice session of Year 1																																						
4 JRS faculty attend first Community of Practice session of Year 2																																						
5 Second Community of Practice session for Year 2																																						
6 Third Community of Practice session of Year 2																																						
7 JRS faculty attend first Community of Practice session of Year 3																																						
8 Second Community of Practice session for Year 3																																						
9 Third Community of Practice session of Year 3																																						

Evaluation Timeline	2011						2012												2013												2014							
	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
1 ECEI hire evaluator to begin pre-intervention research and logic model development																																						
2 Evaluator complete Year 1 analysis and begin Year 2 evaluation plan																																						
3 Based on reports on information gathered, Evaluator create mid-term evaluation to share with the community																																						
4 Evaluator complete Year 2 analysis and begin Year 3 evaluation plan																																						
5 Final Evaluation completed and shared along with program results																																						

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