



# Reening DII



HaRav Ahron Lopiansky
Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva of Greater Washington, MD



Rabbi Yaakov Sadigh Head of School, HANC, NY



Rabbi Yerachmiel Garfield, Ed.D, Head of School, Yeshivat Torat Emet, Houston, TX

### LILMOD U'LILAMED TAKES ROOT COJDS'S NEW PROGRAM

The Consortium of Jewish Day Schools has always prided itself on not resting on its laurels, but rather seeking out new and innovative ways to enhance the Jewish day school experience for students, teachers, and heads of schools across North America. Their secret often lies in identifying a need in communities serviced by CoJDS and taking it a step further by problem solving through innovation from the ground up. During the last few years, through outreach efforts with many out-of-town communities, it has become apparent that many of these areas were facing a shortage of staff for *limudei kodesh* positions. These communities have local *kollelim* that were having a tremendous influence on many facets of the communities at large and have also become more and more attractive for young families with school-age children. Rabbi Glass and his team observed this dynamic and recognized that the components necessary to develop an innovative model to service the day schools' teacher shortage already exist in these communities. *Lilmod U'lilamed* is an apt name for CoJDS's new program as it became apparent that the same learned, dynamic CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CONVERSATION AMONG ADMINISTRATORS

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and motivated bnei Torah who were learning in kollel are the key to facilitating a new relationship with the day schools in the communities that they already are so heavily invested in. CoJDS was gratified when HaRav Shalom Kamenetsky, Rosh Yeshiva, Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia, enthusiastically supported the concept and reiterated the successful partnership that can be formed between a community kollel and school in order to provide quality *Rebbeim* to day schools in need.

In truth, the groundwork for a project of this magnitude had been lain over the past several years. Rabbi Zecharia Weitz, Assistant Principal of Caskey Torah Academy of Greater Philadelphia, has logged many miles on behalf of the Consortium while traveling around the Central East and studying the educational trends and needs of many out-of-town communities. He has met with administrators and teachers to see what is working and their perceived school requirements, and noticed both similarities, as well as the unique voice, that gives communities their individual flavors. Rabbi Weitz was able to build upon this knowledge base to formulate the basis for programming for the first Lilmod U'lilamed cohort. In a way, Rabbi Weitz was a prototype for the concept behind Lilmod U'lilamed. After completing semicha from Ner Yisrael Rabbinical College, he joined the kollel in Columbus, Ohio. Rabbi Weitz eventually transitioned to Columbus Torah Academy where he served as a Rebbi for twelve years and eventually assumed the role of Coordinator of Upper School Judaic Studies for his last eight years there. Rabbi Weitz has been personally able to appreciate the tremendous impact that a transition from full-time *kollel* member to a respected *Rebbi* can have on both the individual and the students and school touched by a local community member. As he eloquently puts it, "The passion to elevate *Yiddishkeit* in "out-oftown" communities is what brought these families to their respective kollellim. Joining the local day school is a

further opportunity to make a profound and long-lasting influence on the lives of young Jewish neshamos and, by extension, their families. It is a chance for a community kollel family to take their impact to the next level."

The *Lilmod U'lilamed* program was launched in January of this year with approximately a dozen motivated and talented men vetted from kollelim located in Calgary, Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Jacksonville, Philadelphia and Lower Merion Philadelphia. Once the cohort members were identified, Rabbi Weitz reached out to the local day schools to ascertain their specific needs and the unique dynamic that makes each school tick. In this way the crucial relationship between school and *Rebbi* can be cemented from the start.

There are two components to the program and each one is crucial to providing the *kollel* members with the highest chances of success in entering and staying in their chosen field. A theme is developed each month covering a crucial topic in education today. There is a webinar given on the theme, with a plethora of prereading articles and exposing participants to different aspects of each month's concepts. For example, Rabbi Yaakov Sadigh, principal of HANC, launched the program with a webinar on an introduction to chinuch and how relationships impact the foundation of *chinuch*. More recently, Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky, Rosh Yeshiva of The Yeshiva of Greater Washington, spoke about the mindset and potential of someone who is entering the field. These webinars are followed up with opportunities to share new concepts learned in meaningful ways. The second aspect of the program is unique in that it is hands-on and allows the aspiring educator to interface directly with *Rebbeim* and teachers at his prospective community school. Cohort members are given an opportunity to connect to the local school and meet with senior faculty in order to understand the dynamics and the inner workings of the school. Each participant is

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MAURICE RALPH JULIS PRINCIPAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

assigned a mentor at the school, with formal meetings occurring approximately twice a month. Moreover, each member of the cohort is encouraged to visit the school often to observe, question, and relate. Cohort members' visits to prospective schools revolve around prompts that are provided by Rabbi Weitz based on each month's theme and webinar. In this way theoretical concepts are refined while additionally cementing relationships with the school. The directive of the Lilmod U'lilamed program is clear: observe and learn.

There has been a warm response to the program from the schools that have been involved. Day schools clearly see the benefit of tapping into talented community members that are already familiar with and invested in

the community. Kollel members have developed relationships and are a known entity both in the neighborhood and the schools. Additionally, the support that these new *Rebbeim* are receiving is tremendous. It is well known that the biggest drop off in the field of education is right in the beginning, often due to a lack of support for a struggling new educator. The Lilmod U'lilamed program provides the necessary encouragement and resources while setting up a safety net so that chances for success are maximized. The lessons are not theoretical, but are often playing themselves out in the kollel member's future workplace. This is the point where the program comes full circle in providing success, not just for the individual, but for the community at large. �

#### Day schools clearly see the benefit of tapping into talented community members that are already familiar with and invested in the community.



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As time moves on and circumstances evolve, CoJDS has been providing support to administrators to help them find their place within the new school environment defined by COVID. In addition to the more formal programs and professional development that has been rolled out, it is often beneficial for heads of schools and principals to share best practices and their challenges in a more candid manner. CoJDS has facilitated a webinar series entitled "A Conversation Among Administrators" that does exactly that.

A small peek into these conversations:



#### SCHOOL CLOSURES



**Rabbi Daniel Alter** Head of School, The Moriah School, Englewood, NJ



**Rabbi Isaac Entin** Menahel, Caskey Torah Academy, PA



**Miriam Gettinger** Principal, Hasten Hebrew Academy, IN

On January 17, CoJDS hosted an online conversation among administrators on the topic of school closures and their impact on students, faculty and the parent body. The program was facilitated by Rabbi Daniel Alter, Head of School, The Moriah School in Englewood, NJ, Rabbi Isaac Entin, Menahel, Caskey Torah Academy in Philadelphia, PA, and Miriam Gettinger, Principal, Hasten Hebrew Academy in Indianapolis, IN. Rabbi Alter framed the evening by quoting General Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Plans are useless, but planning is indispensable", underscoring the critical fact that school leaders need to have a clear plan of action, yet recognize the need to be limber and able to adjust. Rabbi Entin built on that concept, discussing the importance of checklists when a crisis hits, while Mrs. Gettinger talked about the responsibility of each individual and their impact on others.

#### **CURRICULUM**



Rabbi Yossi Rosenblum Head of School, Yeshiva Schools of Pittsburgh, PA



Rabbi Zach Swigard Head of Jewish Life & Academics Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy, CA



Temima Feldman General Studies Principal, Torah Academy for Girls, NY

February 8 featured a conversation among administrators about how school closures and distance learning have impacted academic growth and what principals are doing about it. The session featured Rabbi Zach Swigard, Head of Jewish Life and Academics, Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy in Beverly Hills, CA, Temima Feldman, General Studies Principal, Torah Academy for Girls in Far Rockaway, NY, and Rabbi Yossi Rosenblum, Head of School, Yeshiva Schools, Pittsburgh, PA. Rabbi Swigard addressed the question of how to weigh and balance the social emotional needs of students with academic losses. He noted that McKinsey and Company identified students behind approximately 1.5 months in English and 3 months in math. Temima Feldman noted that early in the pandemic, when 80% of students across the globe had their learning disrupted, most schools were looking at the same set of challenges and learning loss, but during this (20/21) school year, some schools are open, some are closed, and others are using a hybrid system, there is a significant disparity between schools and communities. Rabbi Rosenblum discussed the strong connection between emotional health and academic success: "Kids need to feel successful". He further shared how COVID has presented educators with an opportunity to reassess what is ultimately important in *chinuch*, and shared sample standards and strategies for hybrid learning.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Rabbi Dr. Mordechai Loiterman Head of School, Eitz Chaim Schools, Toronto



Rabbi Yehuda Gabay Associate Principal, Cincinnati Hebrew Day School, OH



Tanya Rubin, M.Ed General Studies Principal Rohr Bais Chaya Academy, Tamarac, FL

On March 16th "A Conversation Among Administrators" focused on Professional Development and featured Rabbi Dr. Mordechai Loiterman, Head of School, Eitz Chaim Schools, Toronto, Tanya Rubin M.Ed, General Studies Principal, Rohr Bais Chaya Academy, Florida, and Rabbi Yehuda Gabay, Associate Principal, Cincinnati Hebrew Day School, Ohio.

A common theme amongst school administrators was the apprehension of tackling on additional work for teachers in the name of professional development during COVID's highly stressed time of uncertainty. Key strategies included acknowledging teachers' feelings, keeping it stress-free and getting inspired as a team. By primarily focusing on the emotional well-being there was a tremendous opportunity to build cohesion amongst staff and faculty. At this point teachers want to get back to normal professional development. All the presenters noted that in order for professional development to be effective it requires planning and buy-in from their team well before the actual PD sessions. •

#### Webinars can be accessed at cojds.org/video





## SPOTLIGHT ON... Rabbi Yisroel Weiner Principal Phoenix Hebrew Academy, Phoenix, AZ

The Principal Training Institute which was started by CoJDS is not only a breeding ground for discovering new talent and furthering current principals' skill base, but it is also a vibrant indication of the manner in which school administrators can chart their path from classroom teacher to school principal, thereby extending their positive reach exponentially. Rabbi Yisroel Weiner graduated with the 2017 PTI cohort and credits his training at the institute and the relationship he has developed with the Consortium as being extremely helpful in his role as principal at the Phoenix Hebrew Academy in Arizona. Rabbi Weiner has lived in Phoenix since 2011, after having started his educational career in various schools in Baltimore, where he himself had attended Ner Yisroel for both high school and *beis medrash*. He began as a

full time 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade *Rebbi* at the Phoenix Hebrew Academy, a position which he held for five years with the intent to move into administration, building upon his master's degree in administration and supervision. During his time as a beloved *Rebbi*, Rabbi Weiner took the initiative and began to take on some administrative duties and leadership roles. He began to work on *middos* programming and eventually developed the entire Judaic Studies curriculum from K-8, which expanded his regular duties at the school. In 2016, Rabbi Weiner took over as principal. Although it is generally difficult to break into administration, Rabbi Weiner had already taken the initiative to break into his new role, and the community stood behind him as a result of his good name and reputation for getting things done.

His goals at the school are to combine a high level of academics and Torah learning with growth and inspiration in every facet of school life.

Since taking the administrative helm, Rabbi Weiner has started several programs in the school which have proved to be transformational. Of utmost importance to him was a culture that emphasized *middos*, and one of the first things that he did as principal was put a program in place called Successful Me which was initially modeled on a program in place at a San Diego day school. Students are introduced to a new middah each month, and since Successful Me is an annual spiraled program, by the time a child graduates middle school he or she will have had nine years in grades K-8 to work on a *middah* in a scaffolded manner. Both the *Limudei* Kodesh and Limudei Chol teachers tie the middah into whatever point they are at in their regular curriculums thereby giving the program a practical aspect as well. Reinforcement and enthusiasm for the unique middos program are achieved by teachers who send home postcards to parents of students who have exemplified the *middah* at school. At the end of the month several grade winners who best personified the *middah* during the month are chosen, and they are given a certificate and the honor of having their picture hang on the Wall of Fame for a month. The bridge between school and home is further reinforced by sending the picture and a cover letter home to the winner's parents at the end of the month.

Rabbi Weiner is a believer in building skills along with inspiration. He instituted a program to reinforce basic skills covered in the CoJDS L'havin U'lehaskil curriculum, to ensure the success of the curriculum vis-à-vis the students. Rabbi Weiner initiated a system of drills which students complete each morning. These drills are based on 146 vocabulary words, 220 shorashim, and the prefixes and suffixes which are developed in the *L'havin U'lehaskil* program. Each student receives his or her drill of five words each day. After successfully passing, he or she is given the next drill, which reviews the previous five words and adds another day's five words. The program is sprinkled with cumulative tests in order to return to the material again and again. The 94 drills which are available to the students can be completed within the school year cycle, and with its completion a wealth of information is at their fingertips. The response from the students has been fantastic and the self-motivated students' enthusiasm is contagious. Although the drills don't count towards a final grade, students are busy studying for daily drills during carpool or in the moments before class begins. This newfound fluency has carried over to many other subjects, such as Haschalas Gemarah in sixth grade, as the strong basis that the students have garnered holds them in good stead.

The Phoenix Hebrew Academy was founded over half a century ago and was the first Jewish day school in the region and one of the first Jewish day schools outside New York City. Rabbi Weiner keeps this in mind as he continues to innovate and bring all he has to offer to the Phoenix community. •

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## STAYING GROUNDED WHILE LOOKING FORWARD

#### PRESENTED BY RABBI DR. DAVID FOX

The Consortium of Jewish Day Schools prides itself on its ability to be cognizant of the ever-changing landscape in Jewish day school education and its readiness to pivot their services to provide the support that is called for at any point in time. This general outlook has served them well during the last few months, and the hundreds of day schools, heads of schools and principals that they work with have learned that they can rely on the Consortium to help them identify and establish best practices during these tenuous times. It was quickly apparent to the Consortium that the social-emotional health aspect of the much anticipated 2020-2021 school year was one which would define the school year. Various resources were created by CoJDS to give day schools the tools and contacts that they might need to begin the year on proper footing. As the Consortium saw it, the goal was to not only physically open school buildings, but to also provide an emotionally healthy work environment for the adults and children in the school. In this vein, one of the highlights of the July virtual Think Tank was the presentation given by Rabbi Dr. David Fox on the topic of "Returning to the New (Ab)normal: Best Practices for a School Culture of Social Emotional Health". Dr. Fox is a forensic and clinical psychologist based in Los Angeles with over 40 years of experience in the field, as well as a graduate school professor and

director of crisis intervention for Chai Lifeline. His presentation focused on ways in which heads of schools can guide their students, staff, and parent body through what was anticipated to be an exceptional school year. Riding on the overwhelming success of this presentation, in early September the Consortium once again saw the opportunity to pivot and fulfill a need that has been little addressed during this difficult COVID-19 period: the social and emotional impact of the pressures and challenges facing professional Jewish day school administration.

Rabbi Glass, Chairman of the Consortium of Jewish Day Schools, has spent the past eight months in countless meeting and phone calls with day school leaders and was in a position to reflect on the need for emotional support for these same individuals. "In the course of my work day I speak to many principals and heads of school. During the last few weeks when I would ask principals how things were going, unfortunately, I could literally hear the stress in their voice." Rabbi Glass was dismayed that principals were simply taxed to such a point that they were merely surviving through their school's reopening, while lacking the energy to muster up the enthusiasm for anything more. This recognition was the impetus for the CoJDS webinar held at the end of October entitled, "Head First: Stay-

## Principal Training Institute

ing Grounded While Looking Forward," which aimed to give administrators and heads of school a mental hygiene model that they could draw upon during the upcoming months. Rabbi Dr. Fox spent the evening addressing tactics, tools and techniques that heads of school, principals, and administrators can use to help themselves and ultimately be there in a productive way for students, staff, and their parent body. The relevance of this topic was evident by the over 150 heads of schools who attended. Participants spanned the globe across North America, the United Kingdom and the former Soviet Union. The varied group of participants were able to find aspects of Dr. Fox's talk that could be personalized and integrated into their school culture.

The webinar began with Dr. Fox recognizing the many concurrent roles of any individual in school administration, particularly at this time, and the manner in which these demands affect social and emotional health. For example, speaking from his unique vantage point as a traumatologist and neuroscientist, he explained the vicarious stress that principals might be experiencing because of one of their primary roles at this time: nurturing and being a support source for faculty and students. When someone is in a position of leadership, as he or she relieves the distress of others, often that same mentor begins to display the symptoms and stress of those whom he is helping. This can continually grow into a collective burden. Another example of the new challenges heads of schools are facing, as explained by Dr.

Fox, are the external realities of health care concerns and changes to school schedules and setups. Ironically, during this stressful time, routine scheduling and structure, which are foundations to mental hygiene, are in constant flux as schools have no choice and are forced to reshuffle in an everchanging algorithm.

The webinar not only addressed how leaders could gauge their own stress levels, but more importantly, discussed several tools that administrators can use to deal with their newfound circumstances. One of the many suggestions that Rabbi Dr. Fox encouraged participants to try was collaborative leadership through peer support as well as problem solving among heads of schools. He posits that administrators would be well advised to create forums by which they can discuss shared concerns and gain the crucial validation from a group of peers that is critical at this time. Additionally, Dr. Fox explained that these collaborative sessions can be used as a basis for problem solving one's own problems. It is always easier to critique the struggles of someone else and look at problems with another set of eyes. In turn this often gives one the opportunity to formulate solutions to one's own dilemmas. This peer group can oftentimes be built upon and make use of a social media community which can share resources. More importantly, participants' experiences and findings can be generalized. This is an excellent resource for picking up personal motivation and momentum that is on the decline.

Finally, the webinar gave the over 150 participants advice on how the self-care methods and various suggestions made by Dr. Fox can help set the positive school culture that institutions are aiming for at this point. School leaders who are working on their own internal climate will set the tone for the staff and students who are looking to them for leadership. Attitude is contagious. For example, administrators can leverage patience. The recognition that patience is needed is more important now than ever because each school's systems is not necessarily in place and working with best practices. Schools are often simply using trial and error methodology while looking for ways to get it right. This brought the webinar back full circle to the concept of collaborative problem solving because it is readily apparent that no one has the full vision. What is unique to a school's culture will ultimately influence the path that a school leader must take in order to practice a social emotional recipe that will work for him or her.

The feedback from the two hour webinar confirmed CoJDS's foresight in recognizing the im-

portance of bringing the topic of mental hygiene for school leaders to the fore. As a head of school from Canada related, "More than anything, this evening was important in validating the feelings that we have as school leaders. We put pressure on ourselves to be superhuman, something we never expect of anyone else we know. We can acknowledge that this is unrealistic when we see it in others, but not in ourselves. Thank you for highlighting the reality of secondary trauma and helping us to see that it is okay – and even important – for us to be human."

As a direct result of Dr. Fox's presentation, an idea was generated by several senior principals to create a cohort of principals who would meet to validate experiences, gain insights, and share ideas. CoJDS invited veteran principal and psychologist Rabbi Dr. Yaffe to facilitate this cohort in conjunction with Dr. Fox. Cohort participants have expressed their appreciation to CoJDS for spearheading this initiative, feeling supported and validated in their struggle to maintain their equilibrium while facing the significant challenge of school leadership during COVID. §

- I would be excited to join a cohort like this. These are challenging times, to say the least. I can't thank you enough for your continued support of the field, our schools, and our own professional growth.
- Thank you for arranging such a forum. Aside from the practical insights that can be gained, meeting and being with other principals is very encouraging and productive. I would love to join and participate.
- Or. Fox was phenomenal- both in the summer webinar and in the recent one for school leaders. It was indeed validating. Thank you for initiating this.

Being a principal is wonderful, but also absolutely grueling, and often isolating. Support from fellow principals can make a big difference.



Cross River is proud to partner with Consortium of Jewish Day Schools (CoJDS) to build a brighter Jewish future for students across the country. CoJDS' contributions will enhance our communities and all of K'lal Yisroel for years to come.

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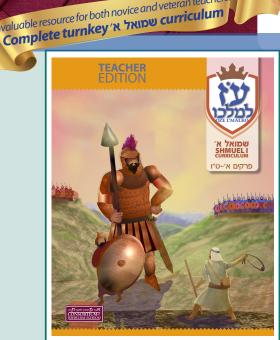
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נביא



skills and understanding

ts will gain an understanding and appreciation of the following deeper concepts and life le

- •The greatness of doing מצוות that are unpopular •Teaching by example
- Meaning well is not an excuse, we have to be so careful with other people's feelings
- · Davening from the heart
- Judging favorably Accepting and ack



#### QUESTION & ANSWER Why not call him שָׁאָלְתִּיוּ or שאול?

A1: רלב"ג: It is common for names not to follow the exact pronunciation or wording of the phrase that explains the meaning of their name.

Unit objectives: knowledge,

· Examples: • ראובן - "פָּי רָאָה ה' בְּעָנְיִי" - ראובן

• נַיִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ נֹחַ לֵאמֹר: זֶה יְנַחֲמֵנוּ – נח מִמֵּעֲשַׁנוּ וּמֵעִצְבוּן יָדֵינוּ, מִן הָאֲדָמָה

A²: שְׁמוּאֵל - is a combination of two words: מלבי״ם - requested, מא-ל - from Hashem. requested her child from 'ה, and from Him

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(י) וְהִיא מָרַת נָפָשׁ וַתְּתְפַּלֵל עַל ה' וּבָכֹה תִבְּכָה:

This מסוק tells us three components that made מחוה's davening so powerful. (כ 1, איא מרת נפש - She felt broken-hearted, 'ה listens to תפילות uttered with true anguished humility

nvaluable resource for both novice and veteran teachers:

- ורסווו a broken neart.
  2. יתתפלל על ה' and relied on ה' alone כוונה

**Engaging Higher Order** 

עו

Thinking questions

magine you are עלי and you are presented with a two-year-old to raise and educate. What would be your reaction? What might have been thinking?

Perhaps he is a bit too young to be left in the (רלב"ט)? Therefore, משבן says... (continued next מסוק)

Sources referenced and quoted on the bottom of the page

Rich and clear פסוק-by-

explanation פסוק

מצודת דוד אפרתי על צוף יאמר, שהיה גם הוא מהר אפרים, ולא מבני אפרים, כי לוי היה ומבני קרח:

. רלב"ג והרצון בזה שהוא היה מן האנשים היושבים ברמה שהיו צופים ר"ל נביאים כי היושב ברמה יקרא רמתי כמו שהיושב במצרים יקרא מצרי והוא הנדער כדה כי ממשפחות בראנים היה שהני וושבים ברמה ולזה קבוע שם

The decided site should be glainted a simil, he made it happening it laws). When we ask 'n for a good year and to fulfill our needs on אין, we must remember, like and like and like like and like like and like like and like and like like and like like and like and like and like like and like like and like like and li . We should be aware of the power of תפילה!

s in charge of the entire world. He can do anything. On איב השנה שה שנה של we crown 'ה a sour King – we ognize that He is The Master of the World. הנה did not have children for a very long time, but wher

- In order to merit a favorable judgment on ראש השנה, we should practice judging others favorably. (compare to 'עפילה 'מרנה)
- How we treat others is very important we need to evaluate continually our בין אדם לחברו practices
  and see how we can improve. (חנה treatment of חנה)
- 6. רחל אמינו and שרה אמינו (as were). ראש השנה and רחל אמינו)

ה'decided she should be granted a child, He made it happen right away.

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The Consortium of Jewish Day Schools (CoJDS) is dedicated to the empowerment, development, and improvement of Jewish day schools across North America promoting best practices and using traditional *Torah* values as our guide. Established in 2002 as a collaborative union among day school principals, CoJDS today encompasses educators from many schools across the U.S. and Canada, providing a powerful forum for continuous collaboration towards the realization of mutual goals, training programs and events.

CoJDS provides financial incentives and subsidies, and an amalgam of formal and informal endeavors which together empower day school administrators towards the achievement of excellence in their roles of educational leadership.

The Consortium works in partnership with schools to formulate and apply an individualized support system tailored to each institution's distinctive character.

CoJDS has developed a variety of approaches for the assessment, evaluation, and definition of a day school's particular needs, as well as the resources necessary to facilitate and fulfill those objectives.

