



Head of School

Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School

Rockville, MD



The Opportunity

Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School (CESJDS), one of the nation's preeminent pluralistic Jewish day schools, is seeking a Head of School to lead its next era of educational and institutional excellence.

CESJDS is built around a rigorous dual curriculum that exposes its more than 800 students in Grades JK-12 to both a premier general academic curriculum and the full breadth of Jewish learning and values. Located on two campuses in Rockville, MD—just outside Washington, DC --- the school offers students and faculty unparalleled opportunities for civic engagement, cultural enrichment, and real-world learning.

CESJDS is a vibrant and diverse Jewish community that reflects the breadth of Jewish practice and belief. With families affiliating across the spectrum—24% Orthodox, 53% Conservative, 9% Reform, 12% identifying as "Just Jewish," and 2% unaffiliated—the school fosters an environment where students learn to appreciate and engage with multiple expressions of Jewish life. As a true community day school, CESJDS nurtures and develops confident, compassionate thinkers who approach the world through the lens of Jewish values.

CESJDS is one of five pilot schools nationally that is participating in the Ronald S. Lauder Impact Initiative (LII)—a strategic multi-year investment to expand the visibility and appeal of Jewish day schools. This visionary effort seeks to grow Jewish day school enrollment by highlighting the transformative power of day school education. CESJDS is honored to be selected for this work, and the next Head of School will have the distinct opportunity to work together with The Lauder initiative to reimagine enrollment growth and community engagement.

As CESJDS approaches its 60th anniversary, this leadership transition comes at a pivotal moment—offering a rare opportunity to shape the school's future and make a meaningful impact on the broader landscape of Jewish education in North America.

Facts and Figures

Founded: 1965

Enrollment: 838

- Lower School: 368
- Middle School: 178
- High School: 292

Employees: 231

(139 full-time faculty members)

Operating Budget: \$30M

Annual Fund: \$1.8M

Endowment and Investments: \$45M

Tuition Assistance: \$9.5M

Student Faculty Ratio: 8:1

Average Class Size: 13

Average Faculty Tenure: 10 years

Accreditation: Association of Independent Schools of Maryland and DC (AIMS).



To learn much more about the CESJDS community visit: cesjds.org

Student Achievement

CESJDS students have earned local and national recognition for their achievements in academics, the arts, journalism, and athletics. Recent highlights include:

- The Class of 2024 earned acceptance to 121 colleges and universities and matriculated at 51 different schools. Its college placement is competitive with other independent schools in the area, Jewish and non-Jewish.
- Fourteen out of 78 students in the most recent graduating class were recognized as National Merit Commended Scholars.
- CESJDS varsity athletics programs: In the 2024-2025 season alone, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Girls Volleyball, Girls Tennis and Girls Basketball all won league championships, and the Boys and Girls Cross Country teams won Maryland State Championships.
- The Lion's Tale and Dimensions Yearbook were named Columbia Scholastic Press Association Crown Finalists, and Reflections, the CESJDS literary magazine, earned a "Superior" ranking from the National Council of Teachers of English.
- The 2023-2024 edition of The Melting Pot received First Place recognition from the American Scholastic Press Association.
- The High School Debate Team, Middle School Mathletes, and Robotics Teams have placed highly in local and regional competitions.

Academics at CESJDS

High-caliber academics and scholarship are the hallmark and foundation of CESJDS, shaping inquisitive, capable, and confident learners who are prepared for the challenges of an ever-evolving world. The school offers rigorous academics at multiple levels in a broad range of subjects with significant numbers of courses in STEM, world languages, genetics, journalism, Jewish history, and computer science in addition to the core subject areas. CESJDS is consistently recognized as a leader for its outstanding academic program nationally among both independent and Jewish day schools.

CESJDS takes pride in its exceptional faculty, who are not only experts in their fields but also dedicated mentors who inspire and motivate students. Small class sizes ensure personalized attention, fostering deep intellectual engagement and strong teacher-student relationships. Graduates consistently gain acceptance into top-tier colleges and universities, a testament to the strength of CESJDS's academic program and comprehensive college counseling.

Jewish Life and Israel

Jewish identity is at the core of the CESJDS experience. Students participate in *Zman Kodesh*, a sacred time each morning for spiritual growth, and come together every Friday for *Kabbalat Shabbat*, a beloved community tradition that blends *Torah*, talent, and reflection. From egalitarian, partnership, Sephardi and Ashkenazi *mehitzah* prayer services to creative spiritual expressions in music and the arts, CESJDS offers diverse opportunities to engage with Jewish tradition in meaningful ways.

Israel education is a cornerstone of the curriculum, culminating in the transformative Senior Capstone Israel Trip for three months in twelfth grade.

CESJDS is fortunate to have a large Israeli student population- more than 70 families who are an integral part of the school community. Many of these families are employed by the Embassy of Israel. This special and long-standing relationship between CESJDS and the Israeli community is an important reflection of the school's core values of fostering meaningful connections between students and the people of Israel.





The Program

Arts

The arts are a vibrant part of student life at CESJDS. From visual arts and music to theater and dance, students have numerous opportunities to explore their creativity through classes, performances, and exhibitions. The annual Arts Chai-lights event showcases student talent across all grade levels, reinforcing the school's commitment to artistic expression.

Athletics

CESJDS offers a robust athletic program for students in grades 6-12. Student-athletes compete in the Potomac Valley Athletic Conference, with opportunities to develop skills at both recreational and competitive levels. Notably, CESJDS's cross-country team has won five of the past six league championships and has been state champions [twice] over that period. The school's top-tier athletic facilities include multiple gymnasiums, tennis courts, soccer fields, a softball field, a baseball field, a weight room, and an Athletic Training room.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Through international and interfaith connections, CESJDS broadens students' perspectives and fosters cultural understanding. A new partnership with The Hebrew Reali School in Haifa deepens students' connection to Israel, and a cross-cultural exchange with Bishop McNamara High School, a local Catholic school, encourages interfaith dialogue and meaningful discussions about shared values.



Executive Leadership and Organizational Structure

CESJDS has built an Executive Team structure designed to foster and promote institutional alignment, strategic growth, and operational excellence. The Executive Team is comprised of the Head of School, the Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO), and the Assistant Head of School for Institutional Advancement and Strategy (AHOS).

In partnership with the Board of Directors, this team leads major strategic initiatives and ensures the school's long-term sustainability.

Together with the three Division Principals (Lower School, Middle School, and High School), they comprise the Leadership Team, which supports all educational and operational functions across both campuses, from Junior Kindergarten through 12th grade.

The incoming Head of School will step into this strong team and continue to evolve and align leadership and governance structures to support growth and excellence across the institution.

Position Summary

The Head of School (HOS) is the senior-most executive leader at Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School (CESJDS). In partnership with the Board of Directors and the Executive Team, the HOS will guide the school's strategic direction and ensure it remains a national leader in pluralistic Jewish day school education. This is an extraordinary opportunity to shape the next chapter of a thriving JK-12 institution.

The HOS will lead with presence—internally with students and staff, and externally with families, donors, alumni, and community partners. They will serve as CESJDS's public face, educational voice, and lead fundraiser, inspiring confidence and connection across every part of the school community.



Position Summary

The Head of School carries responsibilities in four key areas:

Institutional Leadership

- Shape and lead the next chapter for CESJDS, building on its strong foundation to drive innovation, academic excellence, and a vibrant Jewish community.
- Continue to evolve and grow CESJDS as a flagship pluralistic Jewish day school—both in the Washington, DC region and nationally.
- Build on current strategies and further develop a forward-thinking admissions plan that attracts mission-aligned families and increases overall enrollment.
- Lead the Executive and Leadership Teams, ensuring strategic and operational alignment across all areas of the school.
- In partnership with the Board of Directors and the Executive and Leadership Teams, guide the school's strategic direction and cultivate volunteer leaders to ensure a strong pipeline for future governance and leadership.

Education and Jewish Vision

- In an era of changing pedagogies and emerging trends, ensure that CESJDS continues to provide both an excellent general and Jewish studies education, on par with top peers in both areas.
- Embody and lead the vision and mission of the school, both educationally and Jewishly.
- Ensure a cohesive and seamless educational experience across the Lower and Upper Schools, integrating excellence in both general and Judaic studies.
- Partner with division heads to recruit, develop, and retain outstanding educators.
- Foster a deep commitment to Jewish values and learning, Hebrew language, and Israel education.
- Lead and nurture a culture, school and community that is warm and inclusive.

Fundraising and Community Engagement

- Serve as the lead fundraiser and external face of the school; work in partnership with the Institutional Advancement team and Board to engage in fundraising, including the cultivation, stewardship, and solicitation of major donors.
- Serve as the primary ambassador of CESJDS within the broader Jewish, Maryland, and Washington, DC communities.

Financial Management

- Collaborate with the CFOO to ensure sound financial management, strategic budgeting, and long-term fiscal sustainability.
- Partner with advancement and development staff to align fundraising goals with budgetary priorities and capital needs.
- Lead financial planning for strategic initiatives, including campus improvements, faculty compensation, and program expansion.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will have a strong track record of success in all areas of responsibility through the demonstrated use of these core competencies:

Drives Vision & Purpose Paint and build a compelling shared vision and strategy that motivates others to action.	Instills Trust Gain the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.	Strategic Mindset See ahead to future possibilities and translating them into breakthrough strategies.
Communicates Effectively Develop and deliver multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.	Stakeholder Focus Build strong stakeholder relationships and deliver targeted solutions.	Action Oriented Take on new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency, high energy, and enthusiasm.

Professional Qualifications

- Mission alignment with the core values of CESJDS.
- Ability to inspire, motivate and nurture a diverse community of stakeholders towards a shared vision.
- Strategic thinker with a track record of leading organizational change, growth and innovation.
- A relationship builder who displays a sincere interest in each student, teacher, donor, parent and community member, and engages others in the values and ethos of the school.
- Open and collaborative management and leadership style. Comfortable both soliciting input from others and making decisions quickly, effectively, and confidently.
- Experience with identifying, attracting, inspiring, and developing top talent.
- Demonstrated success with fundraising and securing major gifts.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to serve as an ambassador and spokesperson for the school to the wider community.



Details

Compensation and Benefits

Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School offers a competitive and comprehensive compensation package for this role. The salary range starts at \$400,000. The benefits package includes tuition assistance, medical, dental, and vision coverage, as well as a retirement plan.

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[Submit an application](#)

Application Requirements

DRG is conducting this search on behalf of Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School. Interested candidates should submit, as soon as possible, materials including the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position
- A current resume
- A statement of leadership philosophy

Application materials should be uploaded directly on the DRG website by visiting the [Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School listing](#).

This position description is based upon material provided by Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, an equal-opportunity employer.