

HEBREW COLLEGE 2026-2029

STRATEGIC PLAN

המכללה העברית
HEBREW COLLEGE



Dear Friends,

I've been thinking a lot lately about the Talmudic story of the proselyte – the ger – who approaches Hillel and Shammai and says, "Teach me the entire Torah while I'm standing on one foot." At first glance, it's an outrageous, even impudent request. But Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk has a different reading of this encounter – one that I love.

He invites us to listen to what's behind the rushed request. In his commentary, Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk suggests that what the ger is really asking is, "Teach me Torah that will keep me from toppling over." Teach me Torah that will enable me to keep standing when life destabilizes me and threatens to blow me over.

These days, I suspect a lot of us can relate to that ger. In these tumultuous times, many of us are feeling a little wobbly. What might help strengthen and steady us?

Here is Hillel's answer from more than two thousand years ago:

First – "Think about what is hateful to you and try not to do that to others." You're not alone. Look around you and pay attention to the needs of others, who may be feeling a little wobbly beside you. Try to be kind.

Second – "Go and learn." There is no one answer to cling to, but the story of this moment is not the whole story. Tether yourself to a life of Torah. Touch what is timeless and eternal. Keep learning, and you will be steadied by the discovery that you are part of a larger story that connects you to generations past and future, and to those searching alongside you.

This wisdom is both timeless and timely. At Hebrew College, we are working every day to put learning and lovingkindness at the center of Jewish life. For more than 100 years, we have responded to dramatically changing realities with a steadfast commitment to these enduring values and with a passionate embrace of the Jewish future we can create together.

Over the last several years, we have built a strong institutional foundation from which to grow. This Strategic Plan offers an ambitious and achievable set of goals for transformative impact over the next three years. We come to this moment grateful for and gratified by all that we have accomplished over the last several years, together with our students and alumni, our faculty and staff, our dedicated Board of Trustees, and our ever-widening circle of friends and supporters. Now, we look to the future with an immense sense of responsibility, possibility, and hope, as we continue to reimagine Jewish learning and leadership for an interconnected world.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld

President, Hebrew College

Rooted in Tradition. Inspired by Possibility.

For more than a century, Hebrew College has cultivated Jewish leaders, opened doors to Jewish learning, and nurtured communities grounded in the wisdom and vitality of Jewish tradition. Today, we stand at a pivotal moment for Jewish life. Rising antisemitism, deepening polarization, changing relationships with Israel, and growing social fragmentation are challenging how we understand ourselves and connect with one another. Amid these challenges, people are yearning for meaning, connection, and a deeper sense of purpose. They are seeking Jewish learning that speaks to their lives, communities where they can belong, and opportunities to experience the wisdom, creativity, and joy of Jewish tradition. Hebrew College's strategic plan is an ambitious response to this moment and an invitation to imagine what Jewish life and leadership can become.

Grounded in rigorous learning, spiritual formation, pluralism, and community, Hebrew College is uniquely positioned to meet this moment.

Over the next three years, we will focus on five strategic priorities:

- Cultivating inspiring rabbis
- Empowering outstanding educators
- Expanding pathways to Jewish learning and belonging
- Advancing pluralism and connection across difference
- Strengthening institutional capacity and sustainability





Our Mission

Reimagining Jewish learning and leadership for an interconnected world — making our lives more meaningful, our communities more vibrant, and our world more whole.

Our core values

אהבת תורה | Love of Learning

ערבות | Communal Responsibility

אלו ואלו | Engaging Diversity

יצירה | Fostering Creativity

Today, that commitment calls us to invest where the Jewish community needs us most:

- **RABBIS** who can guide individuals and communities through complexity with intellectual depth, spiritual grounding, and moral courage.
- **EDUCATORS** who inspire joyful, rigorous, and inclusive Jewish learning.
- **PATHWAYS INTO JEWISH LIFE** that welcome people of every background to learn, grow, and belong.
- **COMMUNITIES** that strengthen relationships, bridge difference, and model pluralism in action.

Building on Strength.
Reaching Toward the Future.

This work builds on a strong foundation. Since our last strategic plan, Hebrew College has eliminated historic debt, completed a $15 million capital campaign, strengthened operations and organizational capacity, expanded core programs, and built a vibrant shared campus. Guided by measurable goals, careful stewardship, and a commitment to continuous learning, we move into this next chapter with clarity, momentum, and hope.

Over the last 3 years:

GROWING JEWISH LEADERS

315+

rabbis, cantors, and rabbinical students bringing talent, passion, and purpose to Jewish communities worldwide

800+

emerging Jewish leaders and educators supported through fellowships and professional development programs

CONNECTING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

170+

parents and teens engaged in meaningful learning about Israel and interreligious leadership

50

Christian and Muslim clergy equipped to stand as allies in confronting antisemitism

EXPANDING PATHWAYS TO LEARNING AND BELONGING

10,000+

learners engaged in transformative Jewish learning across Greater Boston and beyond

1,500

people brought together through art exhibitions and musical performances

7,000

people reached through the digital Interfaith Psalms Project



1

Cultivate

Inspiring Rabbis

Objective 1 | Grow and Strengthen the Rabbinical Student Pipeline

Strengthen recruitment efforts to attract a diverse, talented cohort of students called to serve the evolving needs of Jewish communities and increase enrollment by 20%.

Objective 2 | Prepare Rabbis for Contemporary Jewish Leadership

Strengthen rabbinical education through rigorous Jewish learning, spiritual formation, leadership development, and practical preparation for the increasingly complex roles rabbis are called to play.

Objective 3 | Support Rabbis Throughout Their Careers

Expand continuing education, professional development, mentorship, and opportunities for connection that sustain rabbis and strengthen their leadership over the long term.



HIDDUSH FELLOWSHIP FOR EMERGING LEADERS

The Jewish future depends on people who feel called to lead — and on mentors and role models who nurture that calling.

The path to Jewish leadership often begins years before someone applies to rabbinical school, in the formative moment when a young person first begins to see themselves as an active participant in the unfolding story of the Jewish people. Building on an enormously successful pilot program last year, **The Hiddush Fellowship for Emerging Leaders** will create a vital new pathway into the rabbinate. Fellows encounter the depth of Jewish tradition, the transformative power of pluralism, and the rigorous, relational learning that defines Hebrew College. By investing in emerging leaders before their paths are fully defined, we can help cultivate a new generation prepared not only to inherit Jewish life, but to renew, strengthen, and reimagine it.

Spotlight

IMMERSIVE YEAR-LONG EXPERIENCE IN ISRAEL FOR FUTURE RABBIS

Preparing rabbis to lead Jewish communities today requires a deep, nuanced, and enduring relationship with Israel and its people.

Through Hebrew College's renewed Year in Israel program, rabbinical students will immerse themselves in Israeli life — deepening their Torah learning and Hebrew language skills while encountering the extraordinary diversity, creativity, beauty, and complexity of contemporary Israel. At a moment when Israel can be a source of profound connection as well as tension within North American Jewish life, this immersive experience is an essential investment in educating rabbis who have the knowledge, confidence, and capacity to build bridges, hold complexity, and help shape a more connected and resilient Jewish future.





2

Empower

Outstanding Educators

Objective 1 | Strengthen the Educator Pipeline

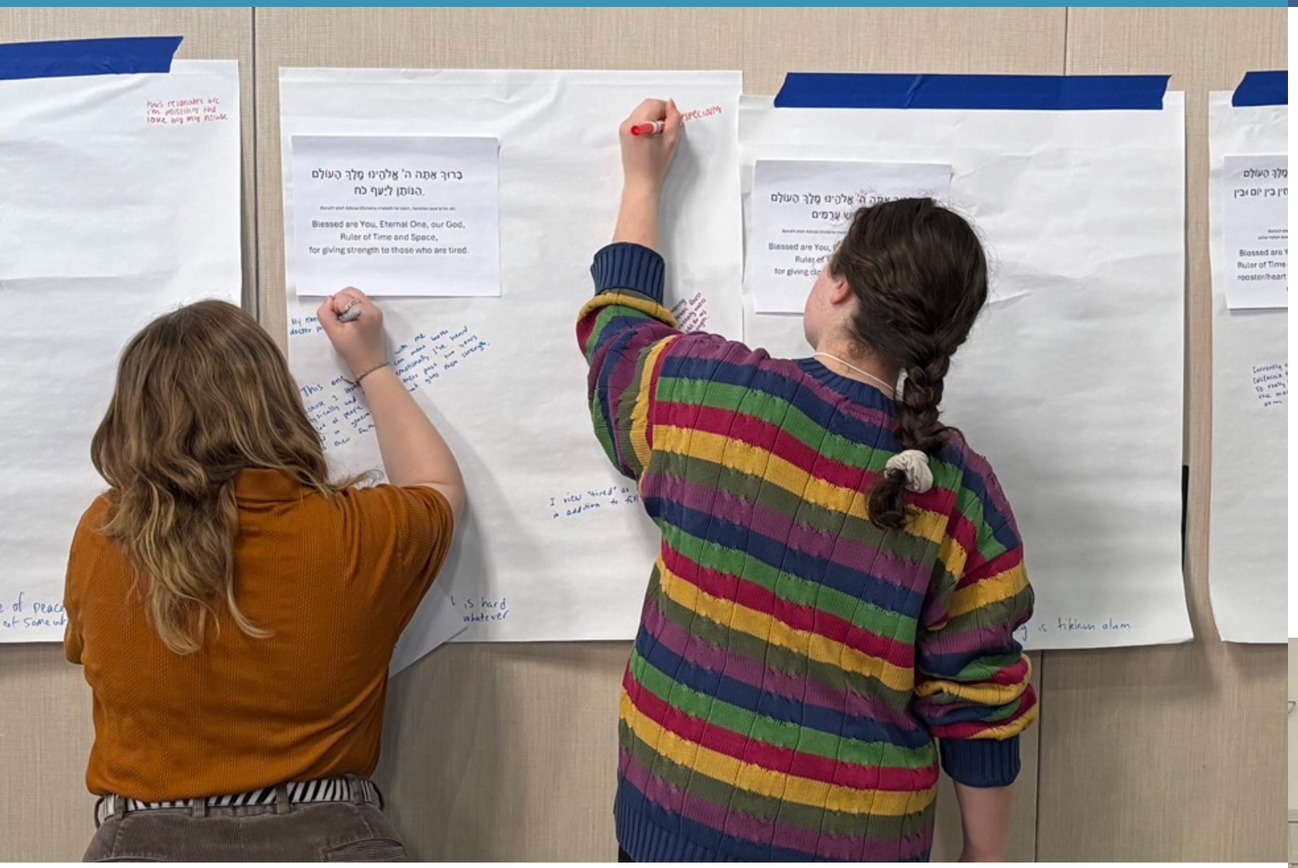
Increase enrollment in Jewish education certificate and degree programs by 20% through strengthened recruitment, marketing, and program visibility.

Objective 2 | Advance Programmatic Excellence and Innovation

Strengthen program quality and expand offerings to meet emerging needs through leadership development, innovative learning models, and new educational approaches.

Objective 3 | Bolster Professional Learning and Leadership

Expand the reach and visibility of Hebrew College's professional learning opportunities to strengthen and support more Jewish educators and educational leaders across North America.



BONIM B'YACHAD: BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF JEWISH EDUCATORS

Great Jewish educators ignite curiosity, nurture belonging, and help young people discover their place in the Jewish story.

Bonim b'Yachad invests in the educators who make those transformative moments possible. Through a year-long fellowship combining expert mentorship, practical learning, and a supportive community of peers, novice educators develop the skills, confidence, and sense of purpose they need not only to enter the field, but to flourish and remain in it. Building on a successful pilot, Hebrew College will expand Bonim b'Yachad as a vital investment in the Jewish educator pipeline — ensuring that a new generation of talented educators is prepared, supported, and inspired to shape vibrant Jewish learning and life for years to come.

Spotlights

PARTNERING WITH ALUMNI TO CULTIVATE LEARNING COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE U.S.

With hundreds of Hebrew College alumni serving as rabbis, cantors, educators, and communal leaders across North America, we have an opportunity to strengthen Jewish learning far beyond our campus.

Over the next three years, Hebrew College will partner with alumni in Minneapolis, Washington, D.C., the Bay Area, Chicago, Atlanta, and New Haven — to bring our core pedagogies of pluralism, spirituality, and relational learning into new settings. These partnerships will serve as hubs for professional learning, embedded coaching, and community-building — strengthening local leadership and cultivating communities where Jewish learning becomes a source of connection, belonging, and growth.





3

Deepen

Jewish Learning and Belonging

Objective 1 | Grow and Diversify Engagement

Double enrollment in adult learning opportunities while broadening access and deepening engagement across Greater Boston and beyond.

Objective 2 | Integrate Arts and Culture as Pathways to Jewish Learning

Expand Jewish arts, music, and cultural offerings as meaningful entry points into learning, connection, and belonging.

Objective 3 | Strengthen Institutional Identity and Visibility

Strengthen recognition of Hebrew College as a leading center for pluralistic Jewish learning rooted in intellectual rigor, openness, and spiritual depth.



NEW PATHWAYS INTO JEWISH LEARNING AND BELONGING

Hebrew College is developing three new signature programs that invite people into Jewish learning, community, and connection.

Engaging Israel Across the Generational Divide
creating space for deeper understanding across diverse perspectives and lived experiences.

Belonging in the Beit Midrash
cultivating inclusive learning communities grounded in relationship, reflection, and shared inquiry.

Hebrew College Community Scholars Program
featuring leading figures in Jewish religious, cultural, and intellectual life to spark important community conversations.

Together, these programs will expand participation, deepen engagement, and create new pathways into Jewish life and community.

Spotlight

ARTS AND CULTURE: JEWISH LIFE SHAPED THROUGH MUSIC, ART, AND THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION

Jewish life is shaped not only through study, but through music, art, and the creative imagination. Hebrew College's arts and culture programs bring that rich legacy to life.

Through music, performance, exhibitions, artist collaborations, and creative learning, Hebrew College invites people into experiences that are intellectually rich, spiritually resonant, and deeply human. By expanding arts and culture programming and activating the shared campus as a destination for Jewish creativity, Hebrew College will engage wider audiences, nurturing artists, musicians, and cultural leaders, and helping to shape a future in which creativity is not at the margins, but at the heart of Jewish life.





4

Advance

Pluralism and Connection Across Difference

Objective 1 | Increase Capacity for Dialogue Across Difference

Expand programs that equip Jewish leaders, students, and community members with the skills to listen deeply, navigate disagreement, and sustain relationships across ideological, religious, and cultural differences.

Objective 2 | Deepen Interreligious and Intercommunal Partnerships

Nurture opportunities for Jewish leaders to learn and build relationships with leaders from other religious and cultural communities, strengthening collaboration and mutual understanding.

Objective 3 | Scale and Amplify Impact

Expand the reach of Hebrew College's pluralism and bridge-building work through thought leadership, publications, and models that can be adapted by communities locally and nationally.



THE DIGNITY PROJECT FOR INTERRELIGIOUS TEEN LEADERS

At a time when polarization too often teaches young people to retreat from difference — or reduce one another to labels — the Dignity Project offers another way forward.

High school students from across Greater Boston come together to encounter one another with curiosity, courage, and care, learning what it takes to build relationships across religious and cultural divides. Through a transformative year of storytelling, dialogue, learning, and shared experiences, fellows practice listening deeply, asking harder questions, navigating disagreement, and recognizing the dignity and humanity of people whose lives and perspectives may be profoundly different from their own. Along the way, they discover something equally important: that they are not powerless in the face of division. They have the capacity to build trust, bridge differences, and help create the kind of world they want to inherit.

Spotlight

PANIM EL PANIM: ENGAGING ISRAEL ACROSS DIFFERENCE

Navigating intra-communal dynamics about Israel is among the thorniest issues Jewish leaders must face today.

Our fellowship Panim el Panim: Engaging Israel Across Difference equips Jewish leaders with the skills and tools to navigate conversations about Israel that too often strain relationships, fracture communities, and leave even experienced leaders feeling stuck. Our fellowship creates the rare space to speak honestly, listen courageously, and remain in relationship even when agreement feels impossible. Fellows emerge with stronger relationships across ideological divides; deeper capacities for resilient listening, dialogue, and navigating conflict; greater confidence facilitating difficult conversations in their own institutions; and a trusted network of colleagues they can turn to when communal tensions arise.

Participants have applied our unique pedagogy to heal relationships within their families, synagogues, organizations, and broader communities, extending the fellowship's impact far beyond the cohort itself. By equipping influential leaders to meet differences with curiosity, courage, and humanity, Panim el Panim is building a Jewish communal culture that is strong enough to hold complexity — and connected enough to face the future together.





5

Strengthen Hebrew College

Objective 1 | Elevate Institutional Identity and Visibility

Increase awareness of Hebrew College's distinctive mission, programs, and impact through strategic communications, marketing, and storytelling.

Objective 2 | Grow Philanthropic Investment and Financial Sustainability

Expand annual, major, and planned giving while strengthening long-term financial sustainability and deepening philanthropic partnerships.

Objective 3 | Invest in Systems, Talent, and Organizational Culture

Continue strengthening the people, practices, and systems needed to foster accountability, effectiveness, learning, and continuous improvement.

Objective 4 | Activate the Shared Campus as a Hub of Collaboration and Innovation

Activate Hebrew College's shared campus as a vibrant hub of Jewish communal life that expands pathways into Jewish learning and belonging.



SHARED CAMPUS: BUILDING A MODEL FOR COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

More than a place to house offices, Hebrew College's shared campus is a bold vision for what Jewish communal life can become through the power of proximity.

Eight partner organizations now learn, create, gather, and grow alongside one another, transforming the campus into a vibrant hub of Jewish learning, culture, spirituality, and connection. This ecosystem of multidimensional learning has sparked new partnerships, opened unexpected pathways into Jewish life, and created a palpable sense of belonging for people of different ages, backgrounds, and entry points. As Hebrew College expands its reach, the shared campus will become an even more powerful platform for innovation and collaboration – strengthening the fabric of Jewish life across Greater Boston and modeling what a more connected Jewish future can look like.

Spotlight

INVESTING IN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FUTURE JEWISH LEADERS

At a time of growing competition for exceptional rabbinical and educational leaders, Hebrew College is investing in the people who will shape the future of Jewish life.

Dedicated supporters are helping ensure that talented students can pursue lives of leadership, service, and purpose. To catalyze this portion of the Strategic Plan, Hebrew College has recently secured four new endowed scholarships and is working to create six more, each funded at $500,000 over five years, to strengthen long-term recruitment and expand access. These investments do more than reduce financial barriers – they open doors, nurture outstanding talent, and help future rabbis, educators, and communal leaders answer their calling and bring their gifts to the Jewish world.



A Jewish Future Filled with Meaning, Purpose, and Joy

The promise of this strategic plan extends far beyond the programs we will build or the goals we will achieve. It lives in the people whose lives will be transformed through Jewish learning: emerging leaders discovering their calling, seekers finding wisdom and spiritual grounding, educators inspiring the next generation, and individuals and communities experiencing a renewed sense of connection and belonging.

By opening new pathways into Jewish life, nurturing courageous and compassionate leadership, and creating spaces for learning, creativity, and discovery, Hebrew College will help more people find clarity in uncertain times, purpose in their commitments, and joy in the richness of Jewish tradition.

Together, we will shape a Jewish future that is rooted in wisdom, nurtured with purpose, and alive with possibility.

Thank you!

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