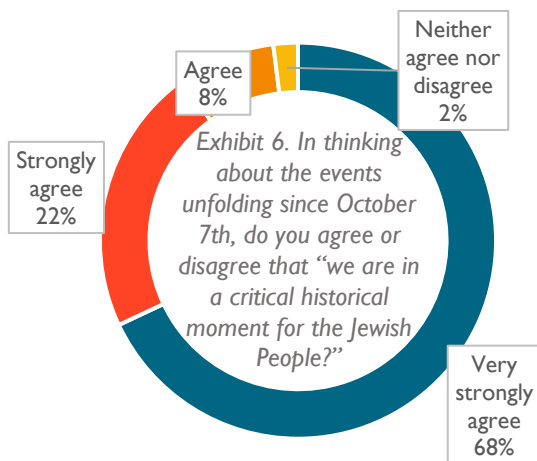


A DIFFERENT APPROACH IS NEEDED: SOLIDARITY ALONE LEAVES EDUCATORS UNPREPARED TO RESPOND TO ISRAEL AND A WORLD IN CRISIS

The tendency of most educators is to embrace one of the solidarity, complexity or criticism approaches, which we argue is not productive for forging a response to the post October 7th crisis, or any other emotional crisis or challenge for that matter. Either solidarity or criticism when taken alone cannot enable education to strengthen emotional bonds between Jews who hold different opinions in the face of crisis. Alternatively, complexity cannot stand as a goal unto itself, as the creation of positive bonds between Jews and Israel is a core goal of Jewish education.

Currently the dominant approach to Israel in Jewish education emphasizes “solidarity,” educating for love of Israel. The result is that many Jewish educators are unprepared for responding to intensely negative events that require consideration of a complex social, moral and political reality and divisive Jewish communal environment. **Many Jewish educators are expressing feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, unsure of how to tackle the negative intensity of their personal emotions and those of their learners.**

An Event of Historic Magnitude



98% of the respondents agree that that we are in a critical historical moment for the Jewish People, with 90%, “very strongly agreeing” (68%) or “strongly agreeing” (22%).

Exhibit 6. Comparison between Wave 1 and Wave 2

| | Wave One (November 2023) | Wave Two (June/August 2024) |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Very Strongly Agree | 79% | 73% |
| Strongly Agree | 17% | 19% |
| Agree | 2% | 6% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 1% | 2% |
| Disagree to very strongly disagree | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

The comparison between wave one and wave two responses shows little difference in terms of the perceived magnitude of the event. 8 to 9 months later, October 7th is still perceived as powerful an event as was the case in the second month following the outbreak of the war. The following quotations provide diverse examples of the emotional intensity that continues to see October 7th and the ensuing fallout as an historical event.

What is your greatest challenge post-October 7th?

"Helping students to make sense of a world that is newly frightening; provide historical context to the contemporary moment. Doing the best I can to teach others what I know."

"The hardest challenge has been raising parents' awareness of the conflict, connecting them to antisemitism education, Israel education and equipping them with the necessary tools to listen to and guide their children while managing their own emotions. **The generation of parents in their mid-30s to 40s did not experience this level of anti-Semitism in American colleges or society; therefore, they have no tools to deal with it."**

"I feel that I am on a sinking ship alone with people floating along next to me just watching or ignoring me as I bail out the water, to no avail. The anger that is filling me only increases when I hear people say they are being critical of politics, but they never use the politician's name, and use the country and its people as the blame."

I Have an Important Role to Play

Eight to nine months in, Jewish educators continue seeing themselves playing an important role. 94% agree that “I have an important role to play in helping my learners grapple with this historical moment,” with 75% either “very strongly agreeing” (44%) or “strongly agreeing” (31%).

Here too the comparison between wave one and wave two responses shows little difference in terms of the perceived importance of the role that the respondent feels as a Jewish educator or engagement professional.

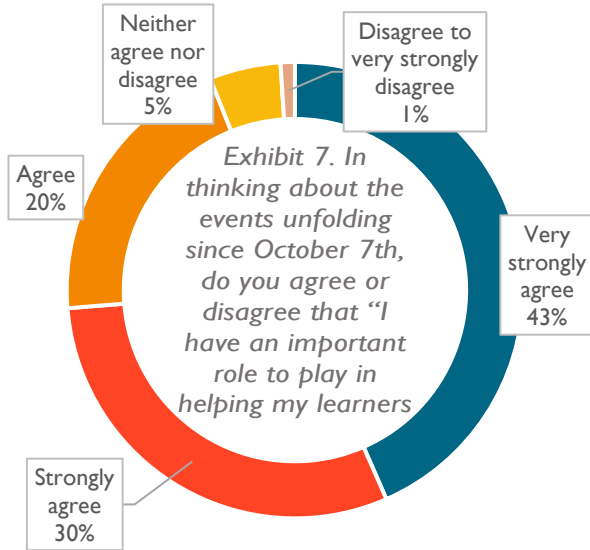


Exhibit 8. Comparison between Wave 1 and Wave 2

| | I have an important role to play in helping my learners grapple with this historical moment | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| | Wave One (November 2023) | Wave Two (June/August 2024) |
| Very Strongly Agree | 54% | 47% |
| Strongly Agree | 28% | 33% |
| Agree | 16% | 18% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 2% | 1% |
| Disagree to very strongly disagree | 0% | 1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

Confidence in Responding to the Challenge

18% feel fully confident responding - “very strongly agreeing” that they “feel able to take on this important role.” An additional 22% “strongly agree,” leaving 60% who are less than very confident.

Respondents to wave one and wave two show similar levels of “feeling able to take on this important role”.

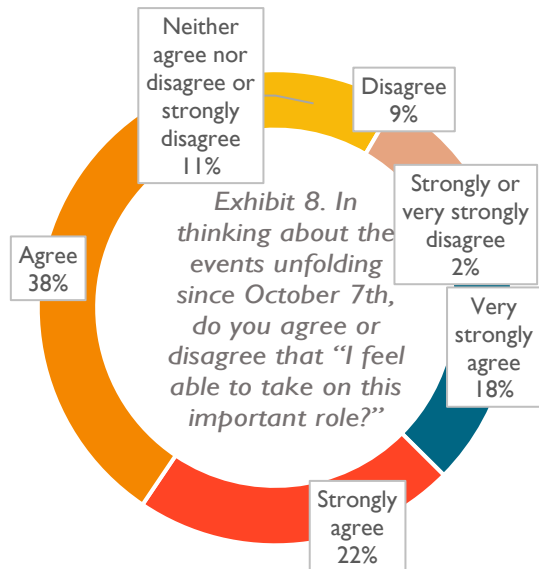


Exhibit 8. Comparison between Wave 1 and Wave 2

| | I feel able to take on this important role | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| | Wave One (November 2023) | Wave Two (June/August 2024) |
| Very Strongly Agree | 16% | 18% |
| Strongly Agree | 19% | 24% |
| Agree | 44% | 39% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 10% | 5% |
| Disagree | 9% | 12% |
| Strongly disagree or very strongly disagree | 2% | 2% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |