



APRIL 2023

A Census of Jewish  
Supplementary Schools in  
North America  
2019-2020



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# A Census of Jewish Supplementary Schools

For over a century, The Jewish Education Project, formerly the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, has worked with the educators who served in “Supplementary schools” – now broadly referred to as the field of part-time Jewish education. For the last century, these programs have been identified as the primary access point for Jewish Education among non-Orthodox North American Jewish families. As we move further into the 2020’s, we wanted to know, to the best of our ability, how many children actually *do* receive their primary form of Jewish education in this setting?

Frustrated by not knowing how many learners were attending these schools, we became committed to this work, mapping the field of part-time Jewish education across North America. The Jewish Education Project deemed this research to be so significant that we opted to self-fund this study.

This report presents the results of a census of supplementary schools, which includes data collected in 2021 and 2022, and where possible and appropriate comparisons to the 2006-2007 census of supplementary schools commissioned by the (now-sunsetted) AVI CHAI Foundation conducted by Jack Wertheimer.

*A Census of Jewish Supplementary Schools* depicts this sector during a slice of time. The data is rich, providing a timely understanding of part-time Jewish education in North America today. **The findings presented here demonstrate that it is time to reflect and plan; simply put, the number of children *not* receiving Jewish education in this way is staggering.**

Our team revisited AVI CHAI’s original questionnaire to ask supplementary school leaders to report on their 2019-2020 school year. What you will not find in here is an entirely contemporary story, though it may be reasonable to ask yourself what about this field has already changed since these census responses were completed considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on nearly all facets of society.

We present to you an “updated census,” part of The Jewish Education Project’s documenting of trends, contexts, and successes in part-time Jewish Education. Discover more at: [pathways.jewishedproject.org](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org).



## Acknowledgements

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We are also grateful for our meaningful partnerships with the following institutions whose staff provided contact information and helped us compile our population frame, and/or distributed the census:

### *National Organizations*

- Association of Directors of Communal Agencies for Jewish Education (ADCA)
- Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE)
- Chabad
- Jewish Emergent Network (JEN)
- Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA)
- Nitzan: A Network for Renewing Jewish Learning After School
- Reconstructing Judaism
- Shinui: The Network for Innovation in Part-Time Education
- Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ)
- Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)
- United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ)

### *Local/Regional Organizations*

- Bronfman Jewish Education Center (BJEC).....Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- Builders of Jewish Education (BJE) ..... Los Angeles, California, USA
- Center for Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE).....Miami, Florida, USA
- Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) ..... Boston, Massachusetts, USA
- Institute for Southern Jewish Life (ISJL).....Jackson, Mississippi, USA
- Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island .....Providence, Rhode Island, USA
- Jewish Education Center of Cleveland (JECC) ..... Cleveland, Ohio, USA
- Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta ..... Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas..... Dallas, Texas, USA
- Jewish Federation of Greater Houston ..... Houston, Texas, USA
- Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest..... Scotch Plains, New Jersey, USA
- Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver..... Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- Jewish Federation of Greater Washington.....Washington, District of Columbia, USA
- Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County ..... West Palm Beach, Florida, USA
- Jewish Learning Venture .....Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, USA
- Jewish Learning Works ..... San Francisco, California, USA
- Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago (JUF).....Chicago, Illinois, USA
- Macks Center for Jewish Education of The Associated (CJE)..... Baltimore, Maryland, USA
- Milwaukee Jewish Federation..... Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA
- UJA-Federation of Greater Toronto .....Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- UJA-Federation of New York.....New York, New York, USA



### *Practitioner and Scholarly Validation*

The following scholars served in a supportive capacity to review the methodology utilized and provide feedback on the creation of this report: Matthew Boxer, Gage Gorsky, Susan Kardos, and Ari Kelman.

This work also benefited greatly from consulting with our advisory committees, including Nicki Greninger, Miriam Heller Stern, Saul Kaiserman, Jonathan Krasner, Jon A. Levisohn, Arielle Levites, Nancy Parkes, and Rachel Stern.

### *Authorship and Citation*

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Due to the collaborative nature of this work, The Jewish Education Project team prefers that this document is cited as: The Jewish Education Project. (2023). *A Census of Jewish Supplementary Schools in North America, 2019-2020*. Retrieved from: [pathways.jewishedproject.org/form/findings2023](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org/form/findings2023).



## *Limitations*

This findings report is part of a larger publication from The Jewish Education Project, which includes tracing critical contexts relating to how people, religious identity, education, and access to information has changed in the time since the original census, and the relation between those milieus, the North American Jewish community and supplementary school structures and enrollment. See more at [pathways.jewishedproject.org](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org).

Several external circumstances shaped the Jewish supplementary schools open in the 2019-2020 school year. Those topics were beyond the purview of our questionnaire. Our biggest limitation is the constraint around making any direct comparisons with the prior study; there are several places where we cannot in good faith make “apples to apples” comparisons, and places where we can. We only make comparisons when the data collected matches the exact conditions of the AVI CHAI census.

In the case that figures are incomparable, in that they include Canadian schools and/or pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten enrollment data, you will see a maple leaf (☁) and/or teddy bear (🐻), respectively.

## *Accessibility Statement*

A high contrast version of this document, as well as other research and responses can be found at: [pathways.jewishedproject.org/research](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org/research).

To submit a question or response to this report, or to inquire about a visual need not being met by this version, please contact [research@jewishedproject.org](mailto:research@jewishedproject.org).



## Instrumentation

Recognizing that every time has its own particular idiosyncrasies and differences, for comparative purposes we did our best to replicate as much as possible the 2006-2007 AVI CHAI sponsored census (which can be read at: <https://avichai.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Supplementary-School-Census-Report-Final.pdf>).

Not all aspects of the two censuses are exactly the same; these two research projects are comparable on most, but not all, measures.

A summary of the questionnaire can be found below:

### School Overview

1. *Years of Operation*: The first question asked for how many years the school/educational program has been in operation and if it was no longer, a few follow-up questions about its closing.
2. *Merging*: Next, there were questions about whether the school has altered its structure in the past 15 years. Every school/educational program which designated themselves “merged” received follow-up from The Jewish Education Project to determine if the schools merged, congregations merged, if a new entity was formed, etc., which create a variety of scenarios that were represented in the dataset.
3. *Movement Affiliation*: After that, there was a question about with which of the major movements/streams of Jewish life the school is associated, if at all. We allowed respondents to check all that apply and to provide their own definition should they prefer.
4. *Budget*: Following was an inquiry about the school’s operating budget,<sup>1</sup> defined as: “program, salaries, and all other planned costs/expenses,” in categories from less than \$50,000 to \$1 million or more.
5. *Enrollment*: In addition to grades offered, respondents were asked to make note of how many students were enrolled in their school during the 2019-

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<sup>1</sup> This definition is complicated by the factors that can drastically impact a school’s budget (for example, some schools consider building and maintenance fees in that definition and other do not). When making meaning out this variable, keep in mind that the budget is based on the respondent’s perception of the question and definition provided, and may not include the same expenditures.

2020 and 2020-2021 school years. However, the report does not address the 2020-2021 enrollment data at all, due largely to shifting perceptions.<sup>2</sup>

## Structure and Instructional Offerings

6. *Hours, Days, and Weeks Offered:* Respondents were asked about how instruction was structured: for how many weeks, on which days (weekdays, Shabbat, and Sunday), and how many days and hours per week for each grade. Respondents were also asked to compare the days per week and hours per week of instruction in the 2019-2020 school year to their school's 2014-2015 school year to see if they perceived enrollment to increase, decrease, or stay the same.
7. *Faculty and Staff:* Next, respondents were asked to count the number of (1) Principals (roles like: Director of Education, Program Director, and/or other senior executive positions); (2) Teachers (including lead teachers and clergy); (3) *Madrichim* (teaching aides/assistants, often but not necessarily teenagers); and (4) Administrative Support at their school or educational program. They designated which of these staff members were employed full-time, part-time, and as volunteers.
8. *Online Learning:* In addition, they responded to a question about the offering of any online instruction (including classes, tutoring, and/or other programs) in a full or hybrid way in both the 2019-2020 school year and 2020-2021 school year.

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<sup>2</sup> During the review of the preliminary findings, the researchers set out to study 2019-2020, and chose to write about field agnostic to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Once that decision was made, 2020-2021 enrollment questions were made optional in some subsequent forms of the census questionnaire, decreasing the number of respondents who provided 2020-2021 data. There is only 2020-2021 enrollment data for 873 of the 1,458 schools in the census.

9. *Goals/Priorities*: Lastly, respondents were asked how important certain goals were to their school, and to designate the most important one from the list below (*note*: goal monikers were added after for ease of analysis and for reading in this document. They were not included in the questionnaire itself). Respondents also had the opportunity to add up to three additional goals.

- **BELONGING**: Help students develop a sense of belonging to the Jewish people.
- **BETTERING THE WORLD**: Instill the importance of making the world a better place by caring for self, others, the earth, and all of creation.
- **BNAI MITZVAH**: Prepare students for their bar/bat mitzvah (e.g., to lead services, read from the Torah, teach Torah).
- **HEBREW**: Expose students to Hebrew language and text.
- **ISRAEL**: Familiarize students with the history of the Land and State of Israel, and with contemporary Israeli society in all its complexity.
- **JEWISH EXPERIENCES**: Provide a safe space for students to engage in meaningful Jewish experiences.
- **JEWISH TRADITIONS**: Familiarize students with Jewish texts, prayer, rituals, lifecycles, and holidays.
- **SPIRITUALITY**: Develop students' emerging understanding of, and language for, evolving, inherent spirituality.
- **STRENGTH & WELLNESS**: Foster students' understanding of Judaism as a source for strength, wellness, and growth.



# Methods

This chapter summarizes the strategies related to data collection and as well as the inclusionary variables associated with participation in this study. There is also a discussion of response rates, and the protocol for treatment of non-respondents.

## *Data Collection*

### *Census Distribution*

The census was distributed between October 2021 and October 2022. The first phase of data collection was led by our partners at Rosov Consulting, who collected contact lists from 20 federations and 7 other movements/organizations. They distributed the census questionnaire directly to participants through a direct email link and created a generic link for larger posting and outreach via RSS feeds and social media. The link, as well as reminders for educators to check for their census questionnaire was distributed via public means, like the JEDLAB Facebook group, and eJewishPhilanthropy's Your Daily Phil newsletter.

Each federation partner who provided a list was kept abreast of those who responded and were instructed to encourage those who had not to do so at least five times. Every school for which we had contact information and no response received up to 12 emails and up to 5 phone calls inviting them to respond to the census.

As a matter of policy, neither Chabad nor the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) share their contact lists. In the case of Chabad, they managed the messaging to their schools internally and gave the team an exact number of how many schools to expect. For URJ, the list of congregations was web-scraped from URJ.org. Once clean (removing duplicates of schools received by other agencies), the team researched possible contacts for each school, either by looking for the school's website, calling their phone number, or by connecting with a local or community contact to ask if they could provide information about the school. In May 2022, the researchers were given the opportunity to send the list of the Reform schools yet to reply to the Association for Reform Jewish Educators, who confirmed for which schools they had a member (thus suggesting that they were likely eligible for the census).

In June of 2022, The Jewish Education Project brought the data warehousing and collection in-house and merged what Rosov found with the data frame from the 2006-2007 census. The summer was spent refining contacts and identifying new organizations that could possibly meet the criteria for the census. The researcher also contacted every school that identified as merged to understand in what way they merged to hone which schools had actually not replied.



In August, the team reopened the census to the remaining schools that had not responded, boosted by a targeted email distribution by the URJ to its educators. Additional email (up to 8) and phone call (up to 3) outreach was conducted, and the team created a new survey type -- with just years of operation and 2019-2020 enrollment questions, to boost response. A qualitative instrument was launched to follow up with schools who reported enrollment growth. By November 2022, the census questionnaire closed, and the team began to meet with trusted colleagues for synthesis and analysis.

The 2006-2007 data mentioned in the report is almost entirely from the publicly available document linked above with one exception. In November 2022, the team was given access to a previously archived dataset including 2006-2007 enrollment data by grade, which is mentioned briefly in the section labeled “School Size” below.

### *Strategy for the Imputing of Missing Data*

To give as full a picture as possible, the study treats missing values in two ways. Firstly, in the case that a school responded to the census inquiry in some way, but did not provide comprehensive 2019-2020 enrollment data, the contact was sent a follow-up questionnaire reminding them how important the variable was to our analysis and asking them to reconsider giving grade level enrollment data or to give categorical enrollment data (1-50 students, 51-100, 101-150, 151-200, 201-250, 251-300, or 300+).

In the case that the respondent chose 300+, the survey encouraged them to provide an estimate, rounded up to the nearest 50. Always, if a school did not want to provide the exact figure, their enrollment was rounded up to nearest 50, so “between 101 and 150 students” was marked as having 150 students in the dataset.

Second, in the case that the school either opted out or did not respond in any way, but the team is extremely confident that the school meets the criteria, we imputed the enrollment data based on a rigorous estimation protocol. A multinomial logistic regression was used to determine which variables predict categorical school size (e.g., 1-50, or not 1-50, etc.) the best as well as an exploratory, which evolved into a hierarchical, multiple linear regression to determine which variables best predict student enrollment numerically. In both ways, the team was able to determine that if one knew the school’s geographic subregion (from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration, see breakdown on [Appendix C. US Regions and Divisions](#)) and movement affiliation, one could determine with at least 90% certainty 2019-2020 enrollment.



As stated earlier, the goal was to always “round up”, i.e., defaulting to the most students possible, within reason. For example, the model predicts that Reconstructionist schools, on average, have 66 students enrolled, but when also considering location in the Middle Atlantic where other Reconstructionist schools are a bit smaller, the algorithm produces an estimated 46 students enrolled. That school would be designated as having a likely or imputed enrollment of 50 students. In the case where there is not sufficient evidence (e.g., there are not enough/no responses from Reform and Conservative joint schools in Canada), we did not impute enrollment data and instead found another way to contact another leader in the community (e.g., clergy, board members, executive directors), and ask about school size during the 2019-2020 school year.

Another example of “rounding up” was the decision surrounding estimation and the exclusion of pre-K and Kindergarten students. In the case that a school provided just categorical enrollment (e.g., 1-50, 51-100, etc.) and did not provide grades offered, the database retained those students in the non-grade related enrollment estimates. While it is reasonable to guess that some of the students included in the comparison data *may* be in pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten, the team opted to not reduce the estimates.

It is important to acknowledge that some of the numbers may be jarring; we assure you that our intention is not to catastrophize or startle. Our goal, instead, is to present data as transparently as possible so that the policymakers, educators, and families we care so deeply about can reflect on, celebrate, connect to, and better schools and educational programs. For this reason, we felt that estimation and imputation were crucial. A way to read the enrollment figures in this report is perhaps to say, “at most.” For example, “at most,” there are 135,087 students enrolled in grades 1-12 at “at most” 1,398 American schools.

### *Considering the Current Data Surrounding Jewish Children*

The team determined that there were approximately 38,000 American children eligible for this type of Jewish education per age cohort in 2020 (see [Map I. Logic for Developing an Eligible Participants Estimate](#)).

Using a variety of demographic factors and enrollment in other educational offerings, outlined in [Appendix A. 1990, 2000, 2020 North American Jewish Population](#), from a variety of validated sources (see [Appendix B. Citations for Demographic and Educational Affiliation among American Jews](#)), it was important to address the findings relative to a population statistic. To read more about these contexts, please refer to the *From Census to Possibilities* report, which can be found at [pathways.jewishedproject.org/form/report2023](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org/form/report2023).

## Map I. Logic for Developing an Eligible Participants Estimate

$$1,583,000 \div 18 = \sim 88,000$$

### Jewish children per grade in the United States in 2020

The American Jewish Population Project estimates that there were ~1,583,000 children in Jewish households (placing a 95% confidence interval that the actual was between 1,309,000 and 1,919,000) in 2020. Dividing that estimate by 18, which represents the number of years of which individuals are considered children, creates an estimate that, per birth year cohort, there were 88,000 Jewish children in the US per grade.

$$88,000 \times 50\% = \sim 44,000$$

### Non-Orthodox Jewish Children per grade in the US in 2020

It is likely that only non-Orthodox children are attending part-time Jewish education. Pew 2020 estimated that in each new decade, the proportion of Orthodox individuals amongst American Jews will increase, on average, 4-6%. We can reasonably deduce that at least 22% of American Jews between 10-18 years olds and 26% of American Jews under 9 are Orthodox. However, Pew also estimates the Orthodox Jews have more than twice as many children as non-Orthodox Jews (3.3 vs. 1.4), so we could estimate that as many as by 70% of American Jewish children are Orthodox. A growing number of scholars and practitioners are using 50% as a reasonable and data-informed estimate, which the team feels is appropriate in this circumstance.

$$44,000 - 6,000 = \sim 38,000$$

### Non-Orthodox Jewish children per grade in the US in 2020, who do not attend day schools

Using the idea that children enrolled in day schools are unlikely to attend supplementary educational programs, the team also wanted to remove them from the estimate. Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools, who conducts regular research, creating knowledge about the *pulse* of enrollment trends, provided an estimate of 2019-2020 day school enrollment.<sup>3</sup> Their team estimated 85,000 enrolled in these day schools in 2020 (12,000 of which are Canadian). The remaining 73,000, divided by 12 grades = ~6,000, which was removed from the estimate.

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<sup>3</sup> See more about Prizmah's Knowledge Center and latest enrollment report:  
<https://www.prizmah.org/knowledge/resource/enrollment-pulse-survey-report-october-2021>

## Response Rates

Our team is extremely grateful to our respondents, as well as our movement and federation partners, for helping this census to reach a sufficient sample size.

- **1,250 schools responded to the census.** Of those, 921 (74%) submitted completed responses. The remaining 329 (26%) submitted incomplete responses, which can mean one of two things: (1) the respondent received a copy of the entire census, but did not address every question ( $n = 172$ ); or (2) the respondent received a shortened version of the census (which only had years of operation and 2019-2020 enrollment on it) and did not opt to be sent a full version of the census questionnaire ( $n = 157$ ).
- **369 schools opted out of participation in the census.** Of those, 129 (35%) actively opted out meaning that they told the researcher they are candidates for the census but did not want to participate. The remaining 240 (65%) have not responded at all. The team learned quite a bit of information about those 240 (through triangulation of internet research, calls to community members, and organizational partnerships) and have evidence to believe that only 79 of them (33%) meet the criteria for the census. Therefore, 208 (i.e., 129+79) schools were added to the dataset as likely schools and their enrollment numbers were imputed (*how* explained earlier in the report). It is by those means that the overall estimate for the total number of schools in North America was adjusted to 1,458.<sup>4</sup>
- **1,084 schools from the distribution list were not eligible for the census.** To be counted, the school had to be open in the 2019-2020 school year (i.e., have at least one student enrolled and meet the criteria in the [Defining Supplementary School](#) section that follows). We found that 556 (51%) institutions that once had supplementary schools were closed, and an additional 205 (19%) education programs were closed within institutions that were still open. The remaining 30% of ineligible schools included duplicates (due to multiple replies as well as results of school mergers) and otherwise ineligible (most commonly, communities outside of the US and Canada, or those that were espousing Messianic Judaism).

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<sup>4</sup> If you lead a school or education program that opted out of the census in either way, and would now like to respond post hoc, please email Amanda Winer at [research@jewishedproject.org](mailto:research@jewishedproject.org).



- **Most often, the school's Principal or Director of Education-type role completed the questionnaire.** However, the team engaged with multiple representatives from the schools and educational programs. For some schools, there are up to five different contacts, and the team had to, in a few cases, combine responses that were a bit different from, for example, an Executive Director and a Rabbi. If an Education Director or Principal completed the census, the team defaulted to their response, and if not, a researcher called to clarify or took the largest enrollment, staff count, budget, etc. response given.
- In 2006, the AVI CHAI census estimated between 1,920 and 2,020 schools (1,720 responses and between 200 and 300 non-respondents and opt-outs) nationwide. Subtracting the Canadian respondents, our estimate is that **there were 1,398 supplementary schools in the US open in the 2019-2020 school year.**

## *Defining Supplementary School*

Several terms are used in colloquial and insider discourse for this kind of schooling, including congregational schools, complementary schools, Hebrew schools, religious schools, Sunday schools, afterschool programs, supplemental schools, *Talmud Torahs*, and more. There is resistance by some to use the word “school” at all and included “school/education program” was written on the census questionnaire to be inclusive. Both “supplementary” and “school” can be parsed, critiqued, and challenged.

Coalescing on a title has only become more complicated as models have proliferated, and schooling has moved out of congregational settings. For example: Do tutoring programs consider themselves by any of these names? What about year-long camp engagement and education? The “what if” possibilities are endless, indicating that the team needed to clarify an exemption-free definition of which would and which would not count as a “supplementary school” for the purposes of the census.

Considering AVI CHAI’s criteria and a desire for relative comparison, the definition of “supplementary school” for the census includes Jewish education programs that:

1. Require annual registration.
2. Meet on a consistent basis, at least twice a month.
3. Intend to be or most often class students together by grade level or age.
4. Are largely structured for group learning although some programs offer or even require 1 on 1 learning or tutoring as well).
5. Do not primarily serve the ultra-Orthodox or Haredi community.
6. Serve as a secondary form of instruction to complement public, private, or home schooling.



# Comparable Findings

This chapter looks at the 2019-2020 findings on their own, as well as through the lens of the 2006-2007 data.

## *The Numbers of Schools and Students*

The researchers found that, enrolled in pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the United States and Canada in the 2019-2020 school year, there were approximately 141,000 students in the 1,458 supplementary schools (see [Table 1. Enrollment by Grades Included in Each Census](#)). However, moving forward, this chapter utilizes the criteria from the 2006-2007 census, which removes Canada (🇨🇦) and those in Pre-K and Kindergarten (🎒).

Amongst the 1,398 schools in the United States, this report estimates there were 135,087 students enrolled in grades 1-12 (see [Table 2. Enrollment by Grade Using 2006-2007 Criteria](#)), inferring that the average school had just under 100 students.

For clarification, here are definitions for the terms used throughout this report (and Tables 1 and 2) when discussing student count:

- *Reported*: Students accounted for by completed census responses
- *Adjusted*: Reported plus the proportionate number of additional students for respondents who answered questions including total enrollment and grades offered<sup>5</sup>
- *Estimated*: Adjusted plus an imputation of students at schools that provided no enrollment data<sup>6</sup>
- *Weighted*: Adjusted plus best guess at how many students were likely missing among schools that opted out (from AVI CHAI census only)

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<sup>5</sup> These numbers were *adjusted* relative to the proportions by grade exhibited in the data ex. more students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade than in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade if the school offered both. In the case of categorical enrollment response, the team chose in this census to round up to the next 50. For example, if the respondent reported they enrolled between 151-200 students, the school is marked as having 200 enrolled.

<sup>6</sup> A predictive model using mean imputation and a few variables that, through statistical testing and logic, proved to be most significant like location and movement affiliation was created. Once again, estimate counts were rounded up to the next 50 students.



**Table 1. Enrollment by Grades Included in Each Census**

Grade	Enrollment Reported	2006-2007 Reported	Adjusted Enrollment	2006-2007 Estimate	Estimated Enrollment	2006-2007 Weighted
<i>Pre-K</i>	3,763	n/a	4,414	n/a	5,931	n/a
<i>Kindergarten</i>	6,640	n/a	7,788	n/a	10,465	n/a
<i>1st grade</i>	7,433	16,047	8,718	17,746	11,715	19,202
<i>2nd grade</i>	8,256	18,443	9,683	20,396	13,012	22,069
<i>3rd grade</i>	9,233	21,959	10,829	24,285	14,552	26,276
<i>4th grade</i>	9,737	22,729	11,420	25,136	15,346	27,198
<i>5th grade</i>	10,128	23,357	11,879	25,831	15,962	27,949
<i>6th grade</i>	10,399	24,383	12,197	26,965	16,389	29,177
<i>7th grade</i>	9,716	23,340	11,396	25,812	15,313	27,929
<i>8th grade</i>	4,202	14,971	4,928	16,557	6,623	17,914
<i>9th grade</i>	3,103	10,240	3,639	11,324	4,891	12,253
<i>10th grade</i>	3,212	8,947	3,767	9,895	5,062	10,706
<i>11th grade</i>	1,851	4,510	2,171	4,988	2,917	5,397
<i>12th grade</i>	1,618	3,284	1,898	3,632	2,550	3,930
<b>Total</b>	<b>89,291 * ✖</b>	<b>192,210</b>	<b>104,728 * ✖</b>	<b>212,566</b>	<b>140,728 * ✖</b>	<b>230,000</b>



## Enrollment by School Grade

Students are overall clustered in grades leading up to Bnai Mitzvah experiences, and the most populated grade continues to be 6<sup>th</sup> like in 2006-2007. At least two in every five students are in grades 5, 6, or 7, which is more than double the population of 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade combined. Not surprisingly, the number of schools that offer programming post-7<sup>th</sup> grade also drops precipitously (from 97% having a 5<sup>th</sup> grade, to 62% in 8<sup>th</sup>, to 37% in 11<sup>th</sup>).

**Table 2. Enrollment by Grades Using 2006-2007 Criteria**

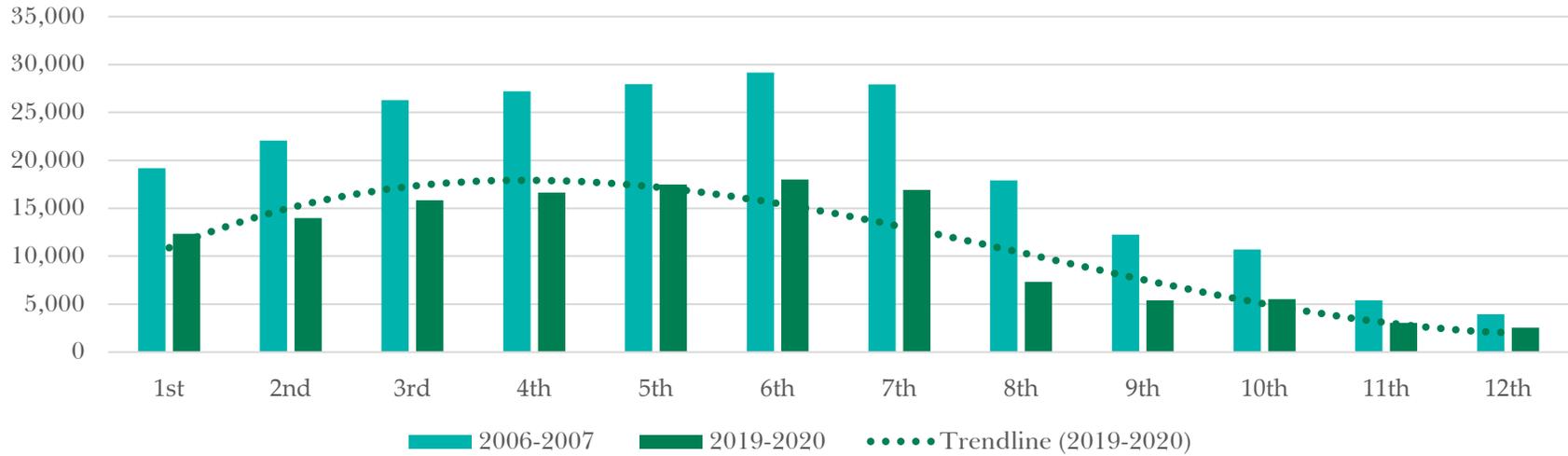
Grade	Enrollment Reported	2006-2007 Reported	Adjusted Enrollment	2006-2007 Estimate	Estimated Enrollment	2006-2007 Weighted
1 <sup>st</sup>	6,859	16,047	9,106	17,746	12,345	19,202
2 <sup>nd</sup>	7,766	18,443	10,310	20,396	13,978	22,069
3 <sup>rd</sup>	8,796	21,959	11,677	24,285	15,832	26,276
4 <sup>th</sup>	9,247	22,729	12,276	25,136	16,643	27,198
5 <sup>th</sup>	9,717	23,357	12,900	25,831	17,489	27,949
6 <sup>th</sup>	10,009	24,383	13,287	26,965	18,015	29,177
7 <sup>th</sup>	9,410	23,340	12,492	25,812	16,937	27,929
8 <sup>th</sup>	4,073	14,971	5,407	16,557	7,331	17,914
9 <sup>th</sup>	3,004	10,240	3,988	11,324	5,407	12,253
10 <sup>th</sup>	3,066	8,947	4,070	9,895	5,518	10,706
11 <sup>th</sup>	1,696	4,510	2,252	4,988	3,053	5,397
12 <sup>th</sup>	1,411	3,284	1,873	3,632	2,540	3,930
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,054</b>	<b>192,210</b>	<b>99,637</b>	<b>212,566</b>	<b>135,087</b>	<b>230,000</b>

The data presented above demonstrates in which grades the most and fewest students are enrolled. The projection is about 95,000 students less than the 2006-2007 census (230,000 minus 135,087). Across individual grades, the differences range from at least 1,300 to at most 11,000 fewer students in comparison.

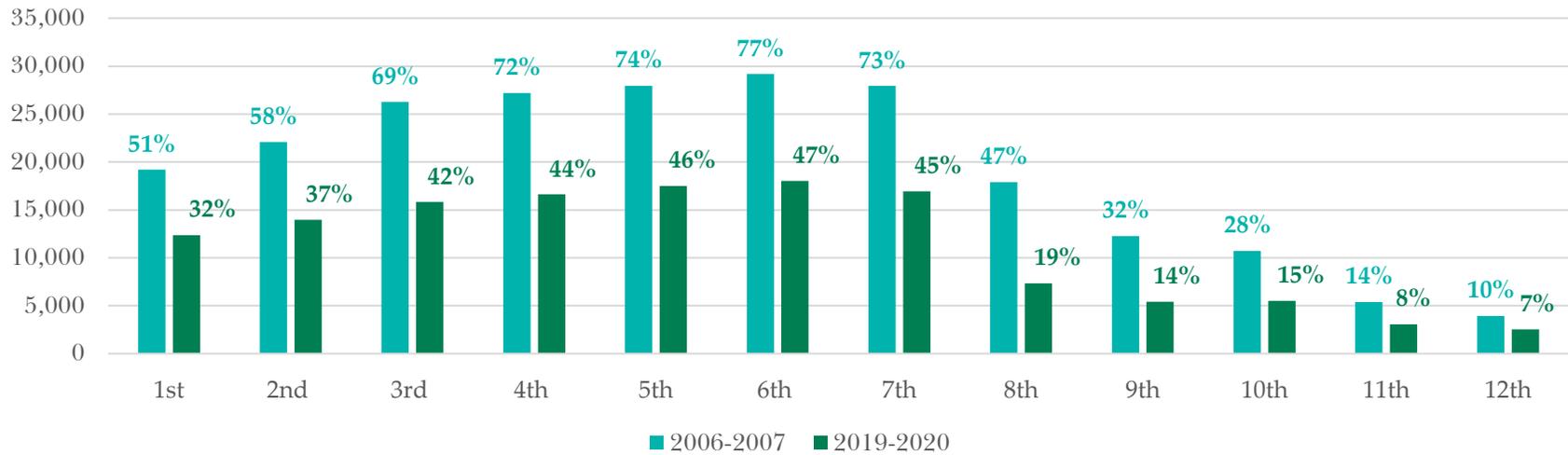
The decrease is not entirely proportionate ranging from 35% (the smallest decrease) in 12<sup>th</sup> grade to 59% (the largest decrease) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. [Chart A. Comparison of Enrollment by Grade](#) shows the enrollment, by grade, for each census using the exact same criteria, as well as a trendline which can be used for estimating the likely frequency per grade for the 2019-2020 data.

[Chart B. Comparison of Enrollment by Grade Including Proportion of Eligible Students](#) includes the enrollment data with an additional variable, a comparison relative to the estimated available students (strategy developed in the previous section entitled *Considering the Current Data Surrounding Jewish Children*).

**Chart A. Comparison of Enrollment by Grade**



**Chart B. Comparison of Enrollment by Grade Including Proportion of Eligible Students**



## *Enrollment by Movement Affiliation*

The census questionnaire allowed respondents to check all movements that apply to them or to designate that they do not affiliate with a particular movement, also known as a *denomination*. For the 1119 respondents who provided affiliation data, 996 identified with only one movement or none, 105 with two, 25 with three, 4 with four, and 3 with 5 movements. Upon cleaning the data, many of those who selected multiple movements or a particular movement and “Other” could concisely fit a single category. One group was those who explained that their school was Secular Humanist (the census questionnaire listed *Humanist* alone) and those schools were put in a newly titled category of “Secular Humanist” along with all who identified as “Humanist”. A second group of schools were both Reform and Conservative, so a category was established for those. Others were a third category of community schools serving congregations with three or more affiliated backgrounds, most often Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist. Those schools were placed in the Community category. A full *N* of 1398 schools is used when discussing movements because the team was able to track down the affiliation of schools using lists provided by the movement and/or internet research in the case that they did not complete that question on the census. The frequencies and proportions are presented numerically in [Table 3. Movement Affiliation, School Count, and Student Enrollment](#) and graphically in [Charts C. and D. Proportion of Schools and Students Enrolled by Movement](#) that follow.

Across all responses, school affiliation data demonstrates the growth of Chabad-affiliated education programs (which often serve families with little or no Jewish background) and the decline of the Conservative movement. While Chabad schools are amongst the smallest in the ratio of student count to school size (and 80% of Chabad schools enroll less than 50 students), there is a sizeable increase in both school count and enrollment since 2006-2007. There are almost 150 less Conservative schools than there were in 2006-2007, but only a 2% decline in the proportion of enrolled students. Most (87%) of Conservative schools enroll less than 150 students, compared to Reform schools, of which 74% have less than 150 students. A growing number of combined Reform AND Conservative schools responded to the census, though they tend to be smaller than either Reform or Conservative schools, on average.

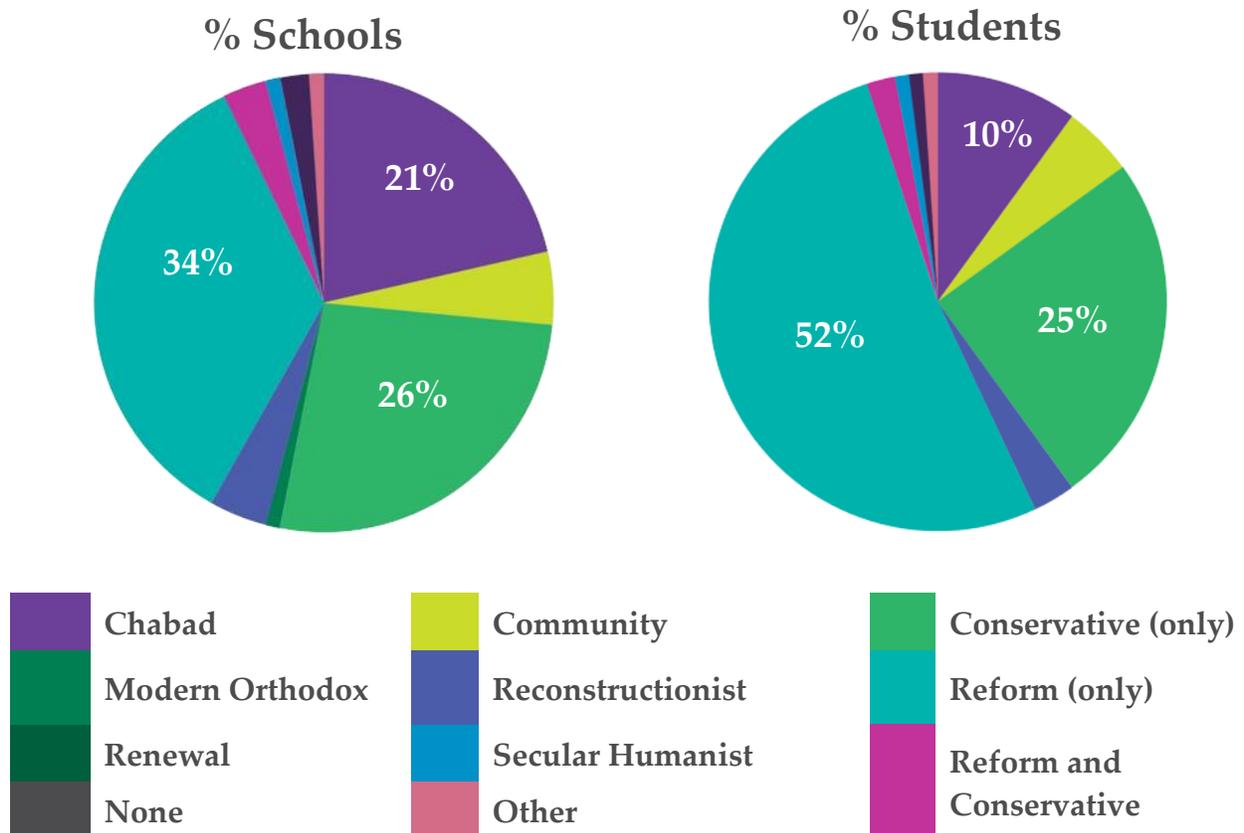
The Reform movement has, on average, the most schools, when compared to other movements. Reform schools are also, on average, the largest by enrollment. More than half (52%) of all students enrolled are doing so at a Reform school, more if those at Reform AND Conservative joint-programs are included.



**Table 3. Movement Affiliation, School Count, and Student Enrollment**

Movement	Schools	% of Total Schools	Imputed Enrollment	% of Total Enrolled	Average School Size (in students)
<i>Chabad</i>	299	21%	13,647	10%	45.64
<i>Community</i>	76	5%	6,754	5%	88.87
<i>Conservative (only)</i>	370	26%	34,132	25%	92.25
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	14	1%	587	0%	41.93
<i>Reconstructionist</i>	53	4%	3,576	3%	67.47
<i>Reform (only)</i>	481	34%	70,603	52%	146.78
<i>Ref &amp; Cons</i>	36	3%	2,269	2%	63.03
<i>Renewal</i>	4	0%	213	0%	53.25
<i>Secular Humanist</i>	15	1%	710	1%	47.33
<i>None</i>	32	2%	1,831	1%	57.22
<i>Other</i>	18	1%	765	1%	42.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,398</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>135,087</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96.63</b>

**Charts C and D. Proportion of Schools and Students Enrolled by Movement**



## School Size

Overall, the census responses demonstrate that 53,312 American students are being educated in the 71% of schools that have enrollments under 100 students (43% having less than 50 students, see [Table 4. Number of Schools and Enrollment by School Size](#) below). There are very few (52) schools that have over 300 students, and 44, or 85%, are Reform. The 20 largest schools nationwide are all Reform. Among the schools with enrollments above 301, they average at least 437 students, with the largest enrolling 792 students, excluding pre-K and Kindergarten.

**Table 4. Number of Schools and Enrollment by School Size**

School Size	Schools	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total
<i>1-50 students</i>	606	43%	20,197	15%
<i>51-100</i>	387	28%	33,115	25%
<i>101-150</i>	206	15%	28,402	21%
<i>151-200</i>	82	6%	14,775	11%
<i>201-250</i>	37	3%	8,330	6%
<i>251-300</i>	28	2%	7,526	6%
<i>300+</i>	52	4%	22,742	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,398</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>135,087</b>	<b>100%</b>

Among the schools with enrollment under 51 ( $n = 606$ ), the average is 24 students, with 45 schools (7%) enrolling less than 10 students in total. More than half of the schools with enrollments under 10 students total are affiliated either with Chabad or the Conservative movement: 19 are Chabad and 9 are Conservative. The relation between a school's movement affiliation and size can be found in [Table 5. School Affiliation and School Size](#).

There is a statistically significant relation between school budget (when treated as an ordinal variable) and the number of students ( $R^2 = 0.445$ ,  $p < .001$ ) (see [Chart E. School Size and Estimated Budget](#)) meaning that larger schools typically have larger budgets. A few schools are outliers (i.e., more or less expensive than average when considering the number of students, or bigger or smaller than average for schools costing that price). The most expensive (\$1 million budget or more) schools have the largest standard deviation, meaning that as cost increases, there is greater variety in school size. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) suggests that average budget in non-ordinal categories (e.g., "small") does sufficiently predict school size ( $F = 176$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

There is an overall enrollment decline when looking at the totality of the field. There are limitations in the ability to directly compare a school's size with itself. The team can estimate that in two ways. First, respondents were asked if they perceived their school enrollment to be larger, smaller, or the same as it was five years prior (in the 2014-2015 school year). Nearly 29% of respondents believed that their enrollment is higher, 82% of whom enroll under 150 students now. This data can be found in [Table 6. School Size and Perceived Growth in Enrollment](#).

Second, when looking at some of the enrollment data from the 2006-2007 census, there are very few schools significantly larger now than they were 15 years ago. There are just shy of 500 schools that submitted complete enrollment data (including grade) on the 2006-2007 *and* 2019-2020 censuses. The school that grew the most did so with 149 students. The 13 schools that grew by more than 100 students are dispersed by region and urbanicity, and 100% of those schools are affiliated with the Reform movement. On average, though, schools have 62 less students (*mean* = -61.69, *SD* = 113.59).

Most schools are clustered around no change, in a unimodal, left-skewed distribution. A histogram and five-number summary demonstrating the trends related to enrollment loss and gain can be found in [Chart F. Histogram of Enrollment Change in Schools 2019-2020 vs. 2006-2007](#). The by-grade comparison/change in enrollment can be found in [Chart G. By Grade 2019-2020 vs. 2006-2007 Difference Box and Whisker Plot](#).

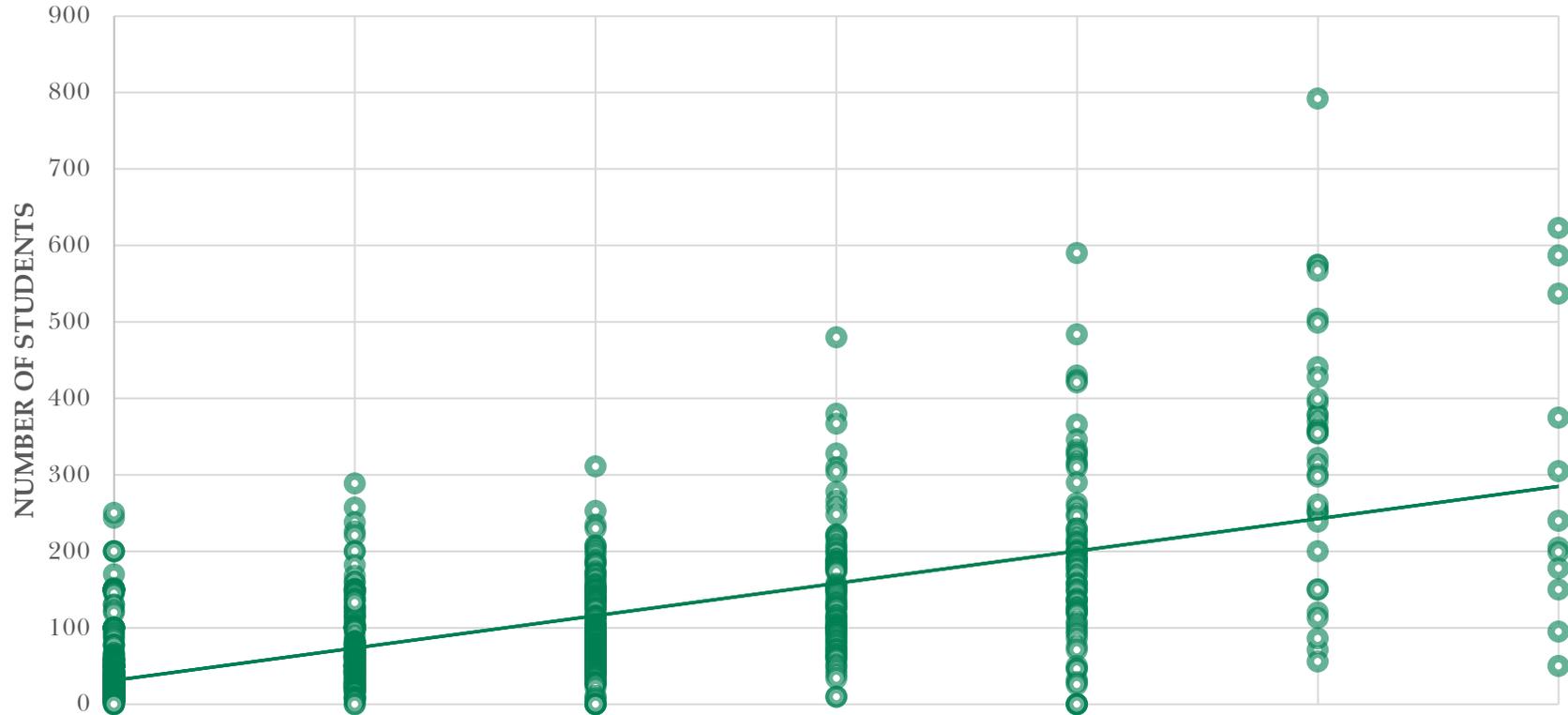
**Table 5. School Affiliation and School Size**

Movement	1-50	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301+	Total
<i>Chabad</i>	240 (80%)	44 (15%)	10 (3%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)	299 (100%)
<i>Community</i>	28 (37%)	28 (37%)	11 (14%)	5 (7%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	76 (100%)
<i>Conservative (only)</i>	118 (32%)	167 (45%)	38 (10%)	25 (7%)	10 (3%)	6 (2%)	6 (2%)	370 (100%)
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	12 (86%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (100%)
<i>Reconstructionist</i>	31 (58%)	17 (32%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	53 (100%)
<i>Reform (only)</i>	110 (23%)	104 (22%)	138 (29%)	43 (9%)	25 (5%)	19 (4%)	44 (9%)	483 (100%)
<i>Reform &amp; Conservative</i>	22 (61%)	8 (22%)	4 (11%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	36 (100%)
<i>Renewal</i>	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
<i>Secular Humanist</i>	11 (73%)	4 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (100%)
<i>None</i>	22 (69%)	5 (16%)	3 (9%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	32 (100%)
<i>Other</i>	10 (63%)	6 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>606 (43%)</b>	<b>387 (27%)</b>	<b>206 (14%)</b>	<b>82 (5%)</b>	<b>37 (2%)</b>	<b>28 (2%)</b>	<b>52 (3%)</b>	<b>1,398 (100%)</b>

**Table 6. School Size and Perceived Growth in Enrollment**

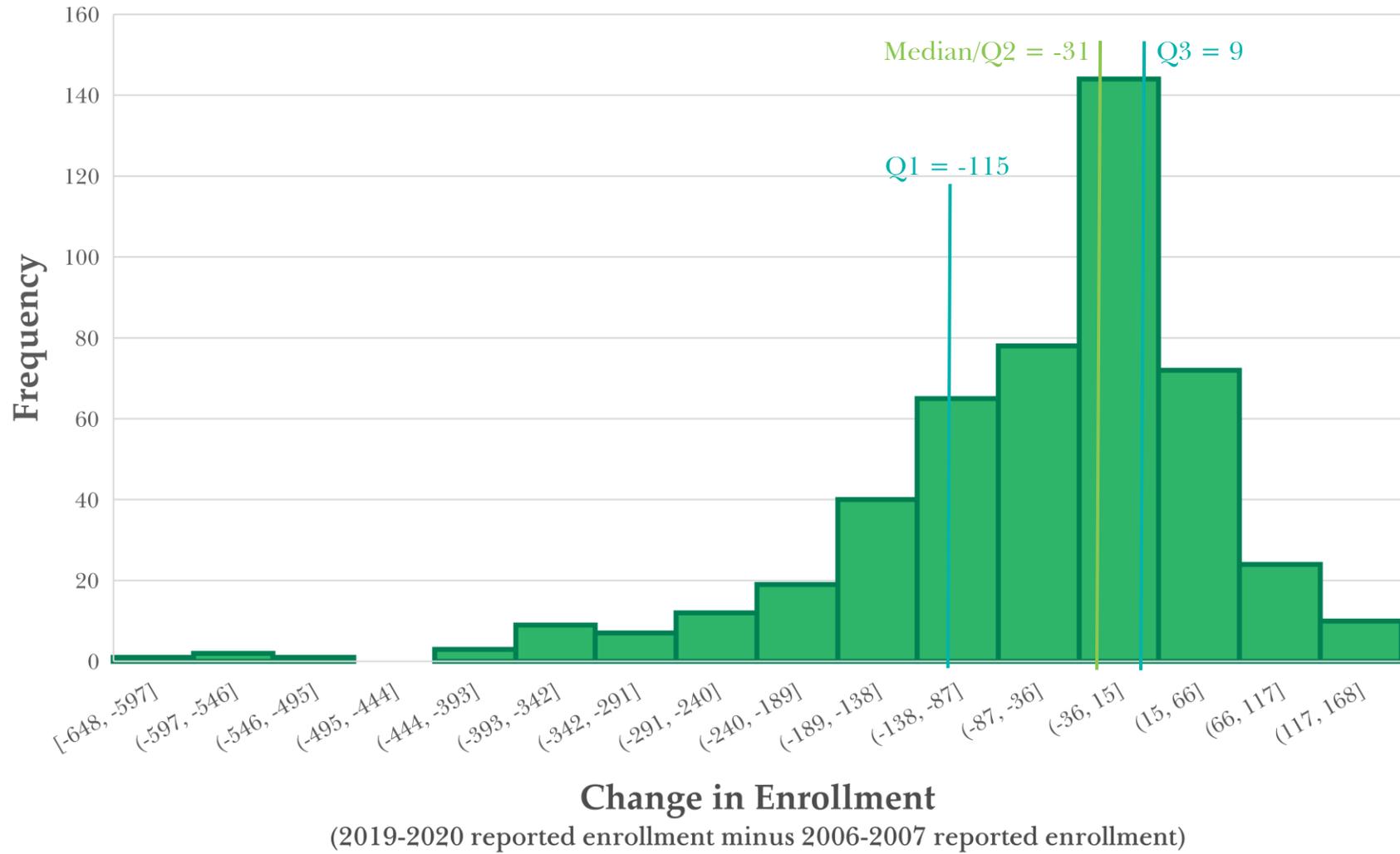
School Size (in students)	Higher	The Same	Lower	Total	Didn't Know or Answer
<i>1-50</i>	103 (44%)	100 (42%)	133 (39%)	336	270
<i>51-100</i>	59 (25%)	60 (25%)	91 (27%)	210	177
<i>101-150</i>	30 (13%)	35 (15%)	41 (12%)	106	100
<i>151-200</i>	14 (6%)	20 (8%)	31 (9%)	65	17
<i>201-250</i>	8 (3%)	4 (2%)	17 (5%)	29	8
<i>251-300</i>	6 (3%)	5 (2%)	11 (3%)	22	6
<i>300+</i>	12 (5%)	12 (5%)	19 (6%)	43	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>232 (100%)</b>	<b>236 (100%)</b>	<b>343 (100%)</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>587</b>
<i>% of Response</i>	29%	29%	39%	100%	--
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>42% (of 1,398)</b>

**Chart E. School Size and Estimated Budget**



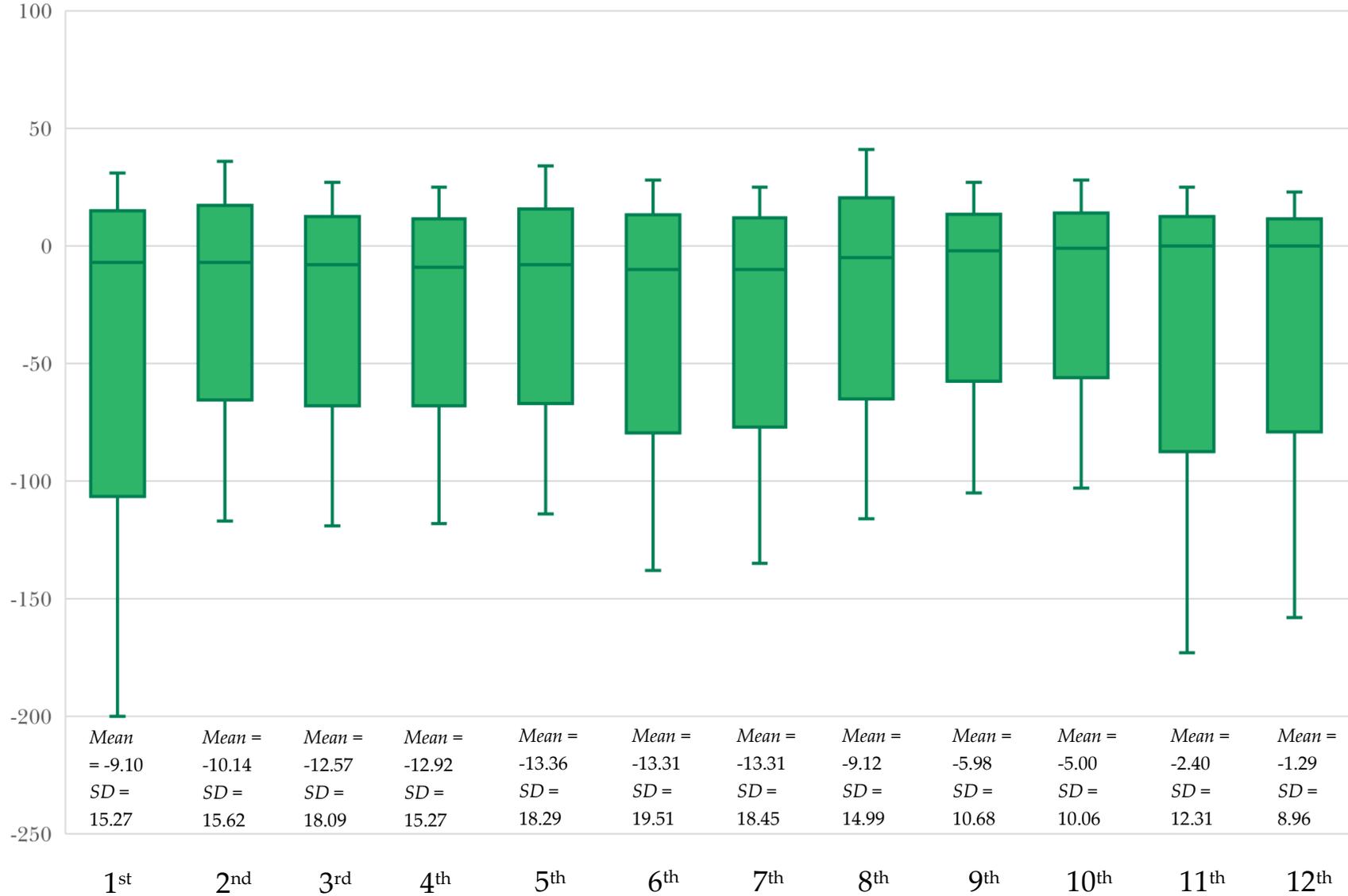
	<i>Less than \$50k</i>	<i>\$50k- \$100k</i>	<i>\$100k- \$200k</i>	<i>\$200k- \$300k</i>	<i>\$300k- \$500k</i>	<i>\$500k- \$1m</i>	<i>\$1m or more</i>
<i>Average Enrollment</i>	44.24	76.83	106.92	161.04	209.24	361.12	322.42
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	42.99	51.55	55.97	87.60	122.16	181.94	206.68
<i>Range (min-max)</i>	1-262	8-327	10-321	19-520	24-635	72-792	52-674

**Chart F. Histogram of Enrollment Change in Schools 2019-2020 vs. 2006-2007**



### Chart G. By Grade 2019-2020 vs. 2006-2007 Difference Box and Whisker Plot

Instructions on how to interpret a box and whisker plot can be found [here](#).



## Years of Operation

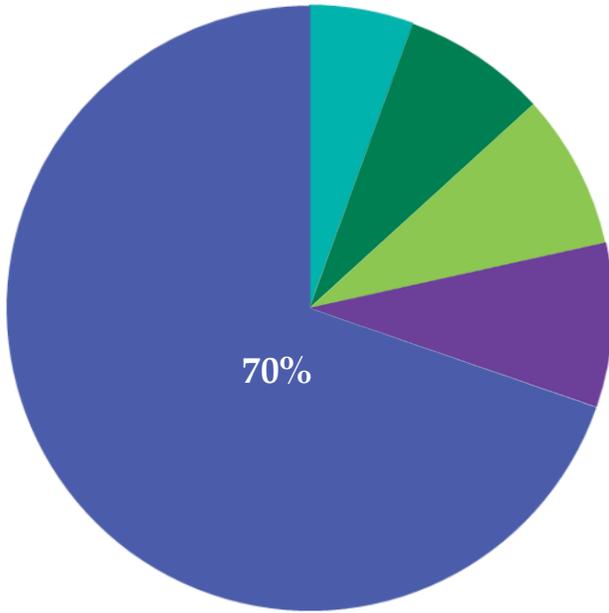
Based on responses, the team determined that 744 schools from either 2006-2007 data and/or lists given by movements and federations have closed in the United States. However, when considering the 1,013 schools in the United States open in 2019-2020 who answered this question while completing their census questionnaire, 70% have been open for over 20 years (presented numerically [Table 7. Years of Operation](#) and graphically in [Charts H. and I. Proportion of Schools and Students Enrolled by Years of Operation](#)).

The researchers looked at the 706 schools operating for over 20 years through the lenses of movement, size, and budget. These schools follow very similar trends to the average school, with a few exceptions, including that they are more likely to be affiliated with the Conservative movement, tend to be slightly larger, and tend to have higher budgets (see more in [Table 8. Demographic Features of Schools Operating Over 20 Years](#)).

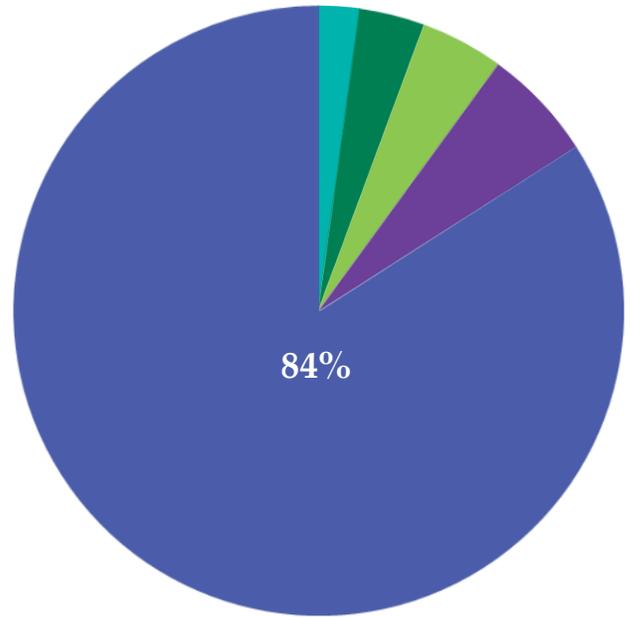
**Table 7. Years of Operation**

Years of Operation	Schools	% of Total Schools	% of Respondents	Cumulative % of Respondents	Imputed Enrollment	% of Enrollment
<i>2 to 4 years</i>	56	4%	6%	6%	1,964	2%
<i>5 to 9 years</i>	78	6%	8%	13%	3,152	3%
<i>10 to 14 years</i>	84	6%	8%	22%	4,003	4%
<i>15 to 19 years</i>	89	6%	9%	30%	5,415	6%
<i>20 or more years</i>	706	51%	70%	100%	76,625	84%
<b>Response Total</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>100%</b>	--	<b>91,159</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Didn't Know or Answer</i>	385	28%	--	--	43,928	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,398</b>	<b>100%</b>	--	--	<b>135,087</b>	--

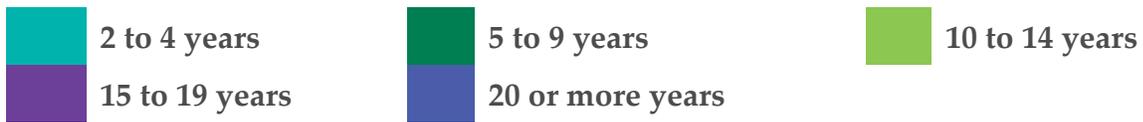
## Charts H and I. Proportion of Schools and Students Enrolled by Years of Operation



**% Schools**



**% Students**



**Table 8. Demographic Features of Schools Operating Over 20 Years**

	Schools	% of Schools
<b>Movement Affiliation</b>		
<i>Reform (only)</i>	334	47%
<i>Conservative (only)</i>	220	31%
<i>Chabad</i>	47	7%
<i>Community</i>	34	5%
<i>Reconstructionist</i>	29	4%
<i>None or Other</i>	27	4%
<i>Reform &amp; Conservative</i>	12	2%
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	3	0%
<i>Total</i>	706	100%
<b>School Size</b>		
<i>1-50</i>	223	33%
<i>51-100</i>	203	30%
<i>101-150</i>	120	18%
<i>151-200</i>	59	9%
<i>201-250</i>	31	5%
<i>250-301</i>	24	4%
<i>300+</i>	46	7%
<i>Total</i>	706	100%
<b>Budget</b>		
<i>Less than \$50k</i>	201	28%
<i>\$50k to less than \$100k</i>	166	24%
<i>\$100-\$200k</i>	138	20%
<i>\$300k-\$300k</i>	71	10%
<i>\$300k-\$500k</i>	62	9%
<i>\$500k to less than \$1m</i>	27	4%
<i>\$1m or more</i>	10	1%
<i>Did not Answer</i>	31	4%
<i>Total</i>	706	100%

## Findings Beyond Comparison

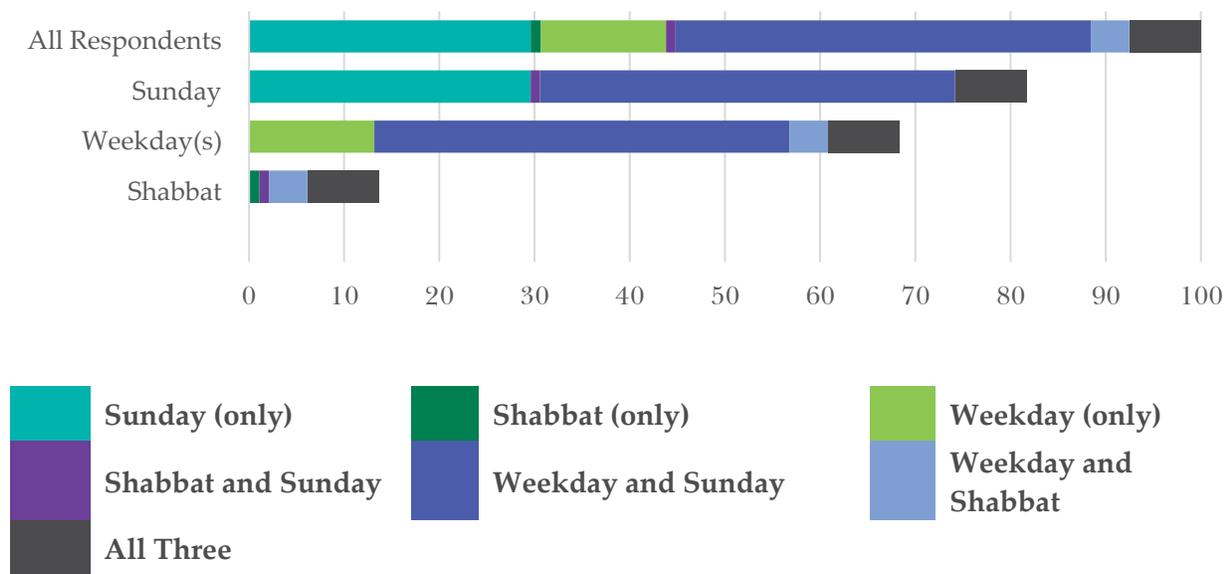
This section outlines findings that are beyond reasonable equating to the 2006-2007 census, because the questions were not asked in the census at all or in the same way.

### *Days of Instruction* (✳️)

Most schools (82%) offer instruction on Sunday (see [Chart J. Frequency of Days of Instruction](#) below). Across those schools, 30% offer instruction ONLY on Sunday. 76 schools, representing 8% of respondents, hold classes on weekday(s), Shabbat, and Sunday. Of those who offer Shabbat school at all, 51% are in the Northeast, and over 55% are affiliated with the Conservative movement. The data surrounding each structure's number of schools, average enrollment, and average budget can be found in [Table 9. Days of Instruction, Size, and Budget](#). Response to this question was not provided by 387 schools.

In the 2019-2020 school year, 11% of schools utilize virtual or online learning in some way. A proportion (4%) of all schools were entirely virtual, enrolling 3,273 students.<sup>7</sup>

### **Chart J. Frequency of Days of Instruction** (✳️)



<sup>7</sup> Structure and instruction were altered greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the implementing of (mostly hybrid) online learning. In the 2021-2022 school year, the proportion of schools utilizing online learning increased from 11% to 69%.

**Table 9. Days of Instruction, Size, and Budget (✳️)**

Days of Instruction	Number of Schools	Average Enrollment	Average Budget
<i>All Three</i>	76 (8%)	155.22	\$100k - less than \$200k
<i>Shabbat and Sunday</i>	10 (1%)	77.30	\$50k - less than \$100k
<i>Weekday and Shabbat</i>	41 (4%)	113.71	\$100k - less than \$200k
<i>Weekday and Sunday</i>	441 (44%)	129.27	\$100k - less than \$200k
<i>Sunday (only)</i>	299 (30%)	57.46	Less than \$50k
<i>Shabbat (only)</i>	11 (1%)	40.09	\$50k - less than \$100k
<i>Weekday (only)</i>	133 (13%)	60.22	\$50k - less than \$100k



## School Goals

Another area that cannot be compared exactly to the AVI CHAI census is priorities, as it was necessary to adjust the list of goals to meet the post-2020 field of part-time Jewish education. On the 2006-2007 version of the census, there were ten possible options presented to rank without the opportunity to add one's own. In this original study, the top school goals were, in order:

1. Giving children positive Jewish experiences (31%)
2. Hebrew reading for participation in religious services (18%)
3. Teaching about holidays and rituals (11%)
4. Preparing children to live as decent (*menschlich*) people (10%)
5. Inspiring children to observe Jewish religious rituals (9%)
6. Preparing children for bar/bat Mitzvah (7%)

Items that scored below 5% include: (7) Teaching about Israel; (8) Exposing children to the Bible; (tied 9) Teaching children to engage in *Tikkun Olam*; and (tied 9) Engaging children in family education along with their parents.

In an attempt to broaden and contemporize the question, the census offered nine goals, and allowed for respondents to add up to three additional goals in their own words. Instead of asking respondents to rank goals against one another, respondents designated how important each goal was on a scale of not at all important = 1, to very important = 4.

The proportions of answers ( $n = 900$ ) can be found on [Chart K. Importance of School Goals](#) below, and the arithmetic means in [Table 10. Schools' Primary Goal](#). For example, the spirituality-related goal (*Develop students' emerging understanding of, and language for, evolving, inherent spirituality*) had a mean of 3.71, meaning that, the average importance is between "somewhat important" and "very important," closer to "very important."

All the averages are above 3, indicating that most of these goals are important to most of these respondents. The goal that respondents were most likely to claim as "not at all important" was Bnai Mitzvah (i.e., *to prepare students for their bar/bat mitzvah e.g., to lead services, read from the Torah, teach Torah*), and the goal that most respondents said "not at all" or "only slightly" important to was Israel (*to familiarize students with the history of the Land and State of Israel, and with contemporary Israeli society in all its complexity*).



There is, also, a discrepancy in ordering the goals when comparing respondent means vs. ranking related to top goals (see [Map II. Comparison of Rank via Importance Mean vs. Rank via Top Goal](#)). For example, when looking at the goal related to *Spirituality*, it is ranked seven out of nine for the top goal. However, when comparing the means, valuing those who selected that this was an important goal, it ranks fourth.

An additional 506 respondents added in 642 written goals, the themes of which are defined on [Map III. Themes Expressed by Additional Goals](#).

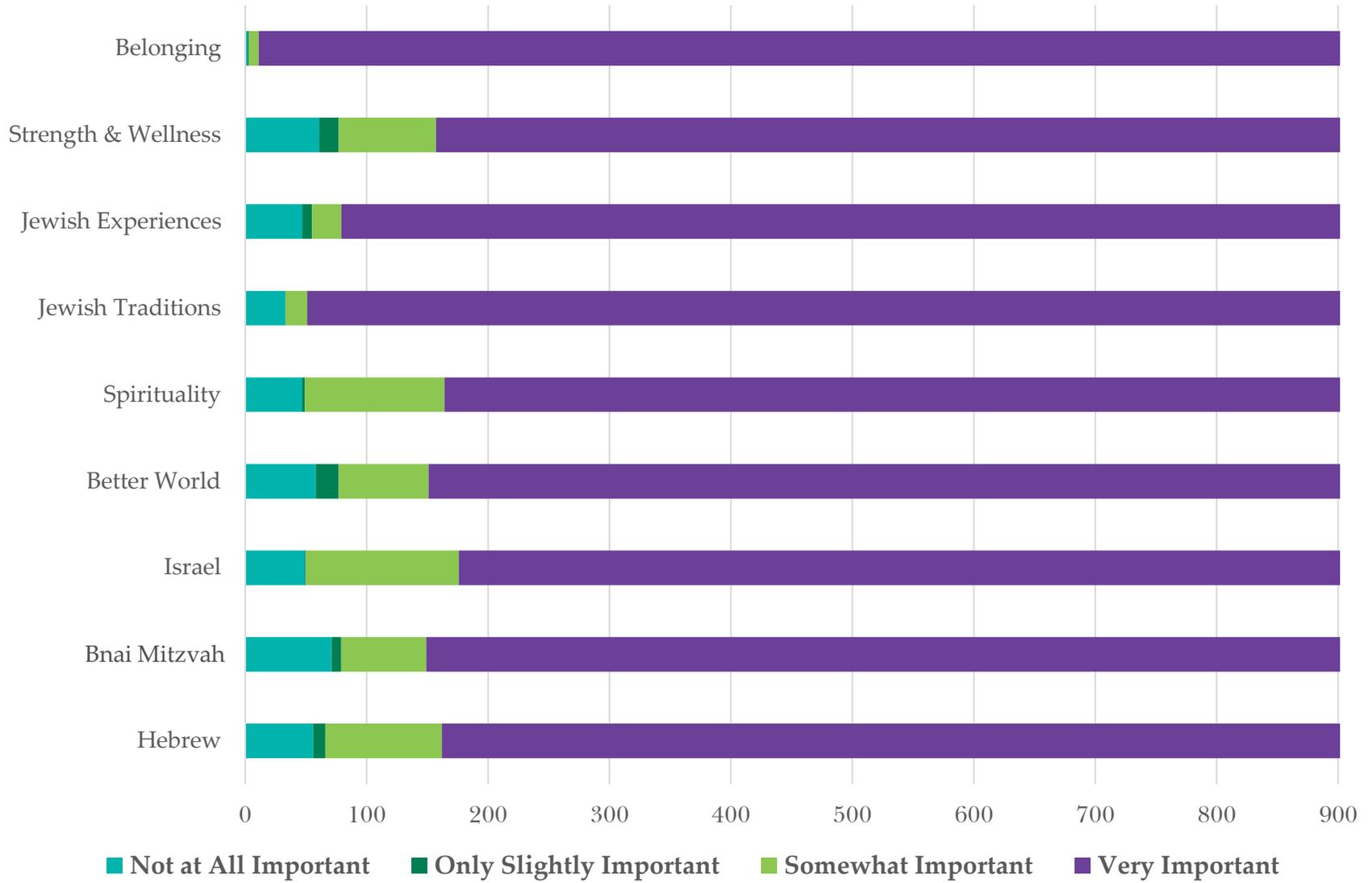
Overwhelmingly, top goal across all supplementary schools was to *Help students develop a sense of belonging to the Jewish people*. In fact, when looking at only those respondents who did not select belonging as their top goal ( $n = 490$ ), most are either Reform (32%,  $n = 155$ ) that instead mostly chose: to *provide a safe space for students to engage in meaningful Jewish experiences*, or Chabad (23%,  $n = 115$ ) who most often selected a response in which they added. Belonging is, on average, the top goal of these educational programs.

**Table 10. Schools' Primary Goals (★)**

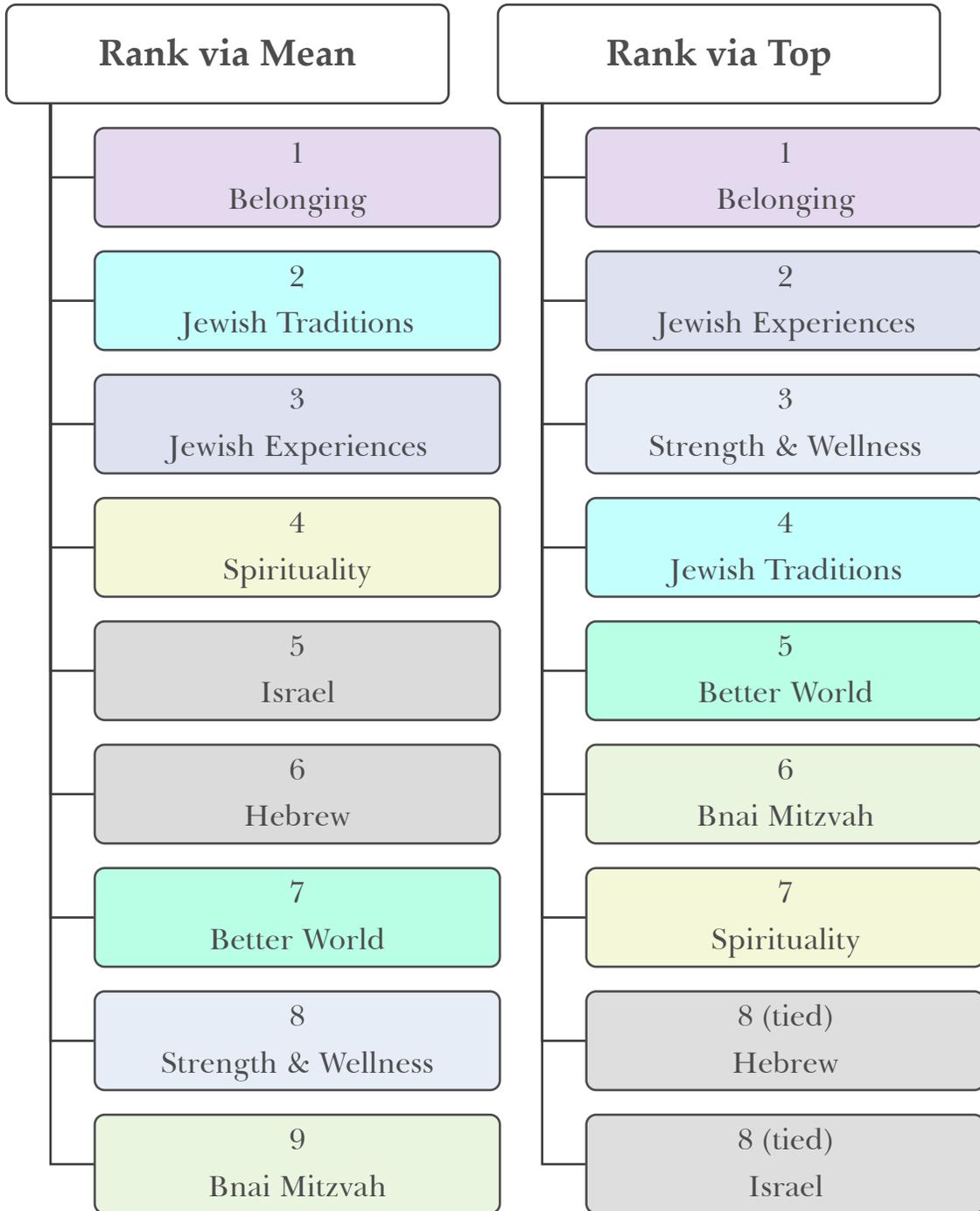
Goal	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	% Top Goal	Top Goal Rank
<b><i>BELONGING</i></b> Help students develop a sense of belonging to the Jewish people.	3.98	0.18	29%	1
<b><i>JEWISH TRADITIONS</i></b> Familiarize students with Jewish texts, rituals, lifecycles, and holidays.	3.87	0.58	9%	4
<b><i>JEWISH EXPERIENCES</i></b> Provide a safe space for students to engage in meaningful Jewish experiences.	3.80	0.70	24%	2
<b><i>SPIRITUALITY</i></b> Develop students' emerging understanding of, and language for, evolving, inherent spirituality.	3.71	0.72	1%	7
<b><i>ISRAEL</i></b> Familiarize students with the history of the Land and State of Israel, and with contemporary Israeli society in all its complexity.	3.70	0.74	<1%	8 (tied)
<b><i>HEBREW</i></b> Expose student to Hebrew language and text.	3.69	0.78	<1%	8 (tied)
<b><i>BETTER WORLD</i></b> Instill the importance of making the world a better place by caring for self, others, the earth, and all of creation.	3.68	0.80	6%	5
<b><i>STRENGTH &amp; WELLNESS</i></b> Foster students' understanding of Judaism as a source for strength, wellness, and growth.	3.67	0.81	12%	3
<b><i>BNAI MITZVAH</i></b> Prepare students for their bar/bat mitzvah (e.g., to lead services, read from the Torah, teach Torah).	3.67	0.84	2%	6
<i>Selected an Added-in Goal</i>	n/a	n/a	17%	n/a



**Chart K. Importance of School Goals (🇨🇦)**

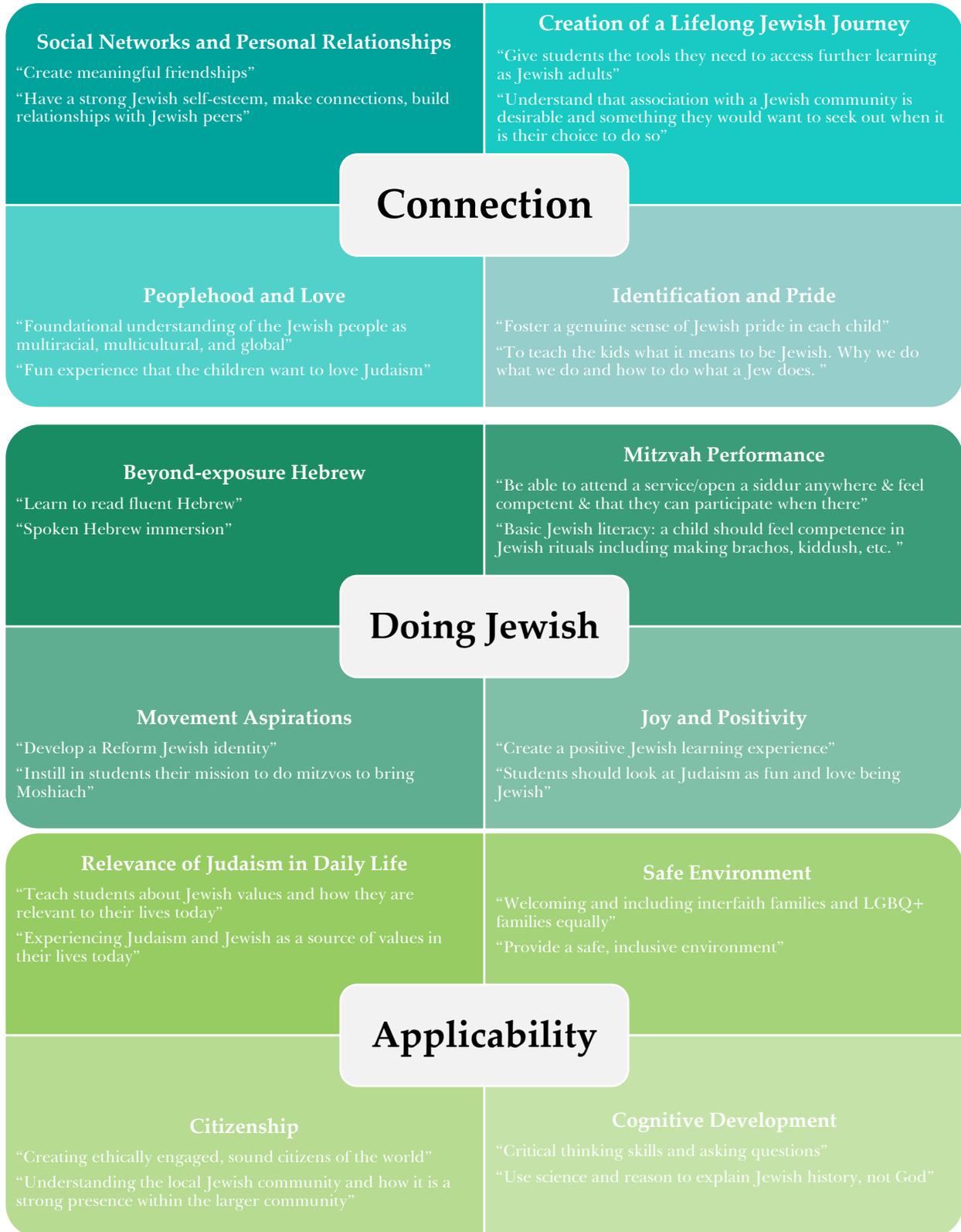


**Map II. Comparison of Rank via Importance Mean vs. Rank via Top Goal (★)**



## Map III. Themes Expressed by Additional Goals (🍁)

*In quotations are verbatim excerpts from respondents.*



## *Geographic Distribution<sup>8</sup>*

Most supplementary schools are located in the Northeast (see [Table 11. Number of Schools and Students in Each Region](#)), including 16% of all US schools are in New York and 8% in New Jersey (see [Table 12. Number of Schools and Students in Each US States](#)). Other states or provinces with 100+ schools are California (188 schools) and Florida (105 schools). The census did not include any supplementary schools in North Dakota or Wyoming (see [Map IV. Schools and Enrolled Students by US Census Regions](#) and [Map V. Schools and Enrolled Students by US Census Divisions](#)).

The researchers also looked at some metropolitan areas (see [Table 14. Number of Schools and Students in Selected Cities](#)) to see if the state trends were overwhelmingly influenced by larger cities. Divisions and regions (see [Appendix C. US Regions and Divisions](#)) are divided using the U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration and Canada was cut in half by the border of Manitoba (to the west) and Ontario (to the east) (see Canadian data in [Table 13. Number of Schools and Students in Each Canadian Province](#) and [Map VI. Schools and Enrolled Student by Canadian Province](#)).

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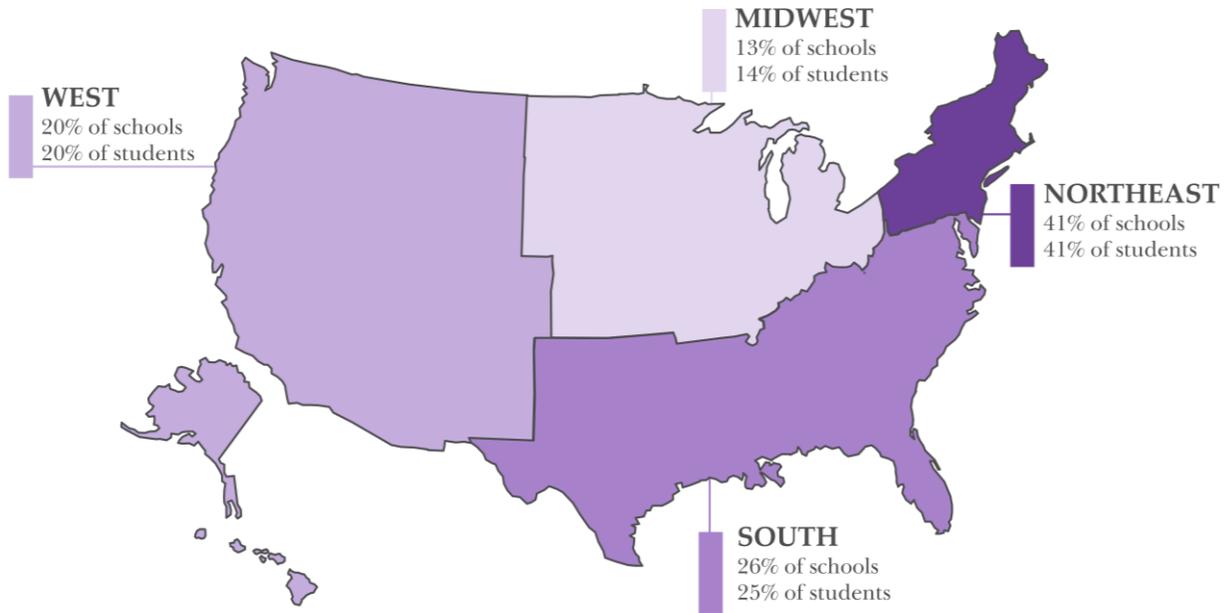
<sup>8</sup> Two schools are located online entirely and do not serve a single geographic region. They were removed from this section. Otherwise, it is extremely important to look at the geographic distribution of schools and enrollment using the totality of our census (including Canada and pre-K/Kindergarten) to give as accurate a count as possible. Therefore, this section has some comparison to 2006-2007, but does not use the same criteria.

**Table 11. Number of Schools and Students in Each Region (★ 🇺🇸)**

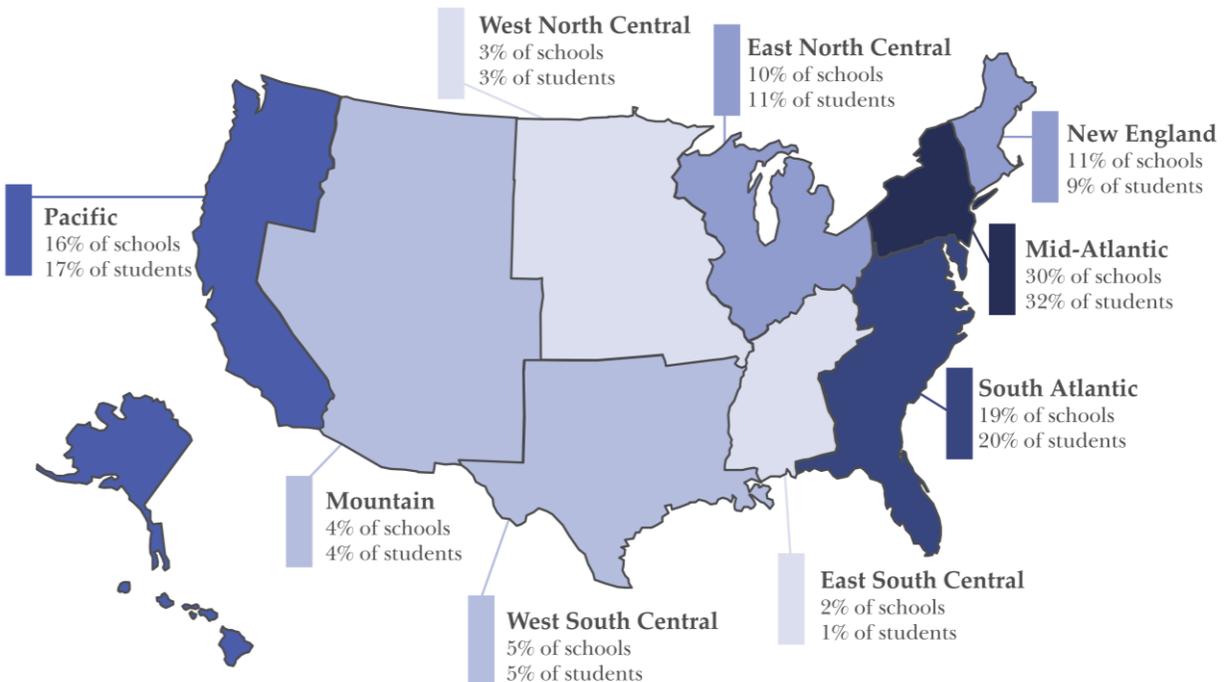
	Schools	%	Estimated Students	%	Region	Schools	%	Estimated Enrollment	%
<i>New England</i>	155	11%	12,096	9%	Northeast	577	40%	54,793	39%
<i>Middle Atlantic</i>	422	29%	42,697	30%					
<i>East North Central</i>	145	10%	14,620	10%	Midwest	183	13%	18,466	13%
<i>West North Central</i>	38	3%	3,846	3%					
<i>East South Central</i>	22	2%	1,267	1%	South	360	25%	34,403	24%
<i>West South Central</i>	69	5%	6,287	4%					
<i>South Atlantic</i>	269	18%	26,849	19%					
<i>Pacific</i>	220	15%	22,324	16%	West	276	19%	27,365	19%
<i>Mountain</i>	56	4%	5,041	4%					
<i>Eastern Canada</i>	47	3%	4,888	3%	Canada	60	4%	5,641	4%
<i>Western Canada</i>	13	1%	753	1%					
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>1,456</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>140,668</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>1,456</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>140,668</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Map IV. Schools and Enrolled Students by US Census Regions (✎)



## Map V. Schools and Enrolled Students by US Census Divisions (✎)



**Table 12. Number of Schools and Students in Each US State (✳)**

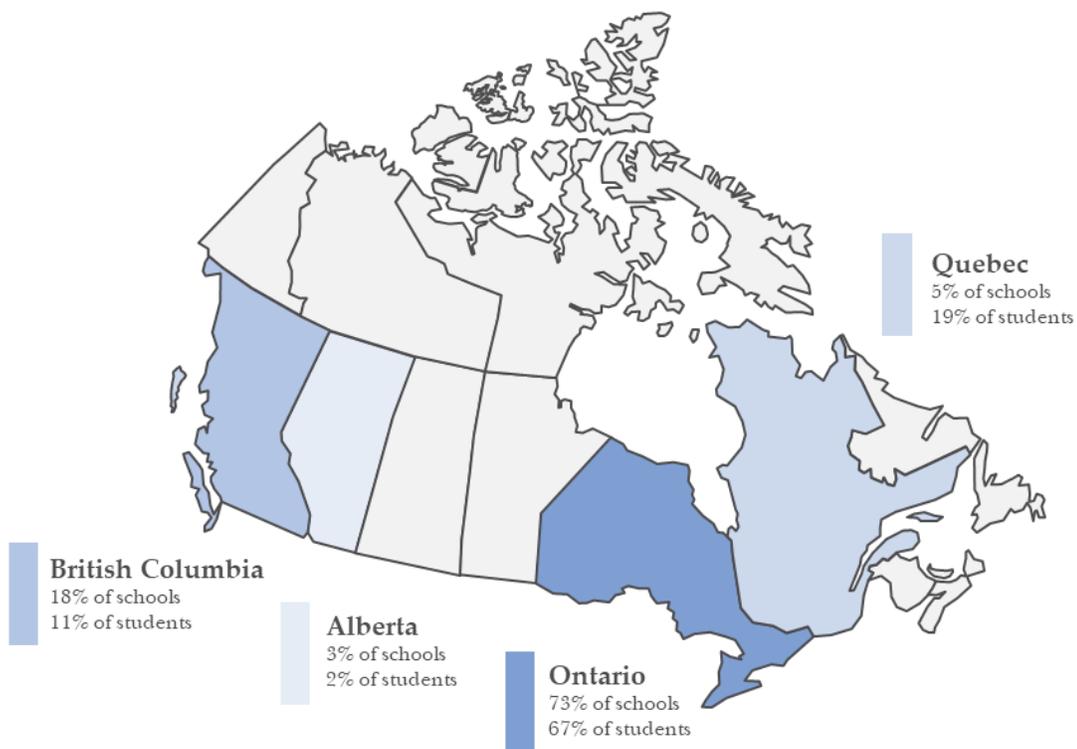
<i>States</i>	<i>Schools</i> % of Total if >5%	<i>Enrollment</i> % of Total if >5%	<i>States</i>	<i>Schools</i> % of Total if >5%	<i>Enrollment</i> % of Total if >5%
<i>Alabama</i>	8	322	<i>Montana</i>	1	18
<i>Alaska</i>	3	186	<i>Nebraska</i>	5	377
<i>Arizona</i>	19	1,859	<i>Nevada</i>	6	483
<i>Arkansas</i>	2	130	<i>New Hampshire</i>	8	440
<i>California</i>	188 (13%)	19,514 (14%)	<i>New Jersey</i>	116 (8%)	11,985 (9%)
<i>Colorado</i>	18	1,760	<i>New Mexico</i>	6	389
<i>Connecticut</i>	42	3,220	<i>New York</i>	222 (16%)	22,978 (17%)
<i>Delaware</i>	5	336	<i>North Carolina</i>	19	1,689
<i>District of Columbia</i>	7	1,674	<i>North Dakota</i>	0	0
<i>Florida</i>	105 (8%)	8,917 (7%)	<i>Ohio</i>	35	2,558
<i>Georgia</i>	33	3,938	<i>Oklahoma</i>	2	133
<i>Hawaii</i>	2	84	<i>Oregon</i>	10	905
<i>Idaho</i>	3	151	<i>Pennsylvania</i>	84 (6%)	7,734 (6%)
<i>Illinois</i>	67	8,330 (6%)	<i>Rhode Island</i>	9	592
<i>Indiana</i>	6	254	<i>South Carolina</i>	6	365
<i>Iowa</i>	6	277	<i>South Dakota</i>	1	50
<i>Kansas</i>	6	483	<i>Tennessee</i>	7	662
<i>Kentucky</i>	5	245	<i>Texas</i>	52	5,102
<i>Louisiana</i>	13	922	<i>Utah</i>	3	381
<i>Maine</i>	3	212	<i>Vermont</i>	6	227
<i>Maryland</i>	60	6,056	<i>Virginia</i>	33	3,724
<i>Massachusetts</i>	87 (6%)	7,405 (5%)	<i>Washington</i>	17	1,635
<i>Michigan</i>	23	2,431	<i>West Virginia</i>	1	150
<i>Minnesota</i>	11	1,628	<i>Wisconsin</i>	14	997
<i>Mississippi</i>	2	38	<i>Wyoming</i>	0	0
<i>Missouri</i>	9	1,031	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,396</b>	<b>134,977</b>



**Table 13. Number of Schools and Students in Canadian Provinces (✳ ✎)**

Province	Schools	% of Total	Enrollment	% of Total
<i>Alberta</i>	2	3%	120	2%
<i>British Columbia</i>	11	18%	633	11%
<i>Manitoba</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>New Brunswick</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Newfoundland and Labrador</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Northwest Territories</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Nova Scotia</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Nunavut</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Ontario</i>	44	73%	3,797	67%
<i>Prince Edward Island</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Quebec</i>	3	5%	1,091	19%
<i>Saskatchewan</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Yukon</i>	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,641</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Map VI. Schools and Enrolled Students by Canadian Province**



**Table 14. Number of Schools and Students in Selected Cities (✳️)**

*In the case of difference, net increase in shown using green font, net neutrality in yellow, and net decrease in red.*

Region Determined by JFNA Federation Catchment Area	2019-2020 Schools % of Total if >3%	2019-2020 Enrollment % of Total if >5%	2006-2007 Schools (if in AVI CHAI Census)	2006-2007 Schools (if in AVI CHAI Census)
<i>Atlanta</i>	26	3,477	25 (+1)	2,759 (+718)
<i>Austin</i>	5	681	--	--
<i>Baltimore</i>	15	1,513	--	--
<i>Boston</i>	59 (4%)	5,528 (4%)	--	--
<i>Broward County</i>	21	1,597	12 (+9)	2,468 (-871)
<i>Chicago</i>	55 (4%)	7,445 (5%)	58 (-3)	11,596 (-4,151)
<i>Cincinnati</i>	8	753	--	--
<i>Cleveland</i>	11	1,120	19 (-8)	3,057 (-1,937)
<i>Dallas</i>	12	1,545	--	--
<i>Denver</i>	14	1,667	--	--
<i>Detroit</i>	12	1,701	--	--
<i>East Bay/Oakland</i>	29	2,744	--	--
<i>Houston</i>	18	1,691	--	--
<i>Kansas City</i>	6	507	--	--
<i>Las Vegas</i>	4	243	4 (0)	543 (-300)
<i>Los Angeles</i>	63 (4%)	7,897 (6%)	72 (-9)	11,387 (-3,490)
<i>Miami</i>	15	1,649	--	--
<i>Minneapolis/St. Paul</i>	9	1,585	10 (-1)	1,531 (+54)
<i>New York City</i>	187 (13%)	20,820 (15%)	201 (-14)	27,945 (-7,125)
<i>South Palm Beach</i>	7	1,132	6 (+1)	1,364 (-232)
<i>Philadelphia</i>	56 (4%)	5,482 (4%)	53 (+3)	9,733 (-4,251)
<i>Phoenix</i>	16	1,623	15 (+1)	2,502 (-879)
<i>Pittsburgh</i>	12	911	--	--
<i>Portland</i>	5	715	--	--
<i>San Diego</i>	16	1,634	--	--
<i>San Francisco Bay Area</i>	31	2,863	27 (+4)	3,977 (-1,114)
<i>Seattle</i>	11	1,148	--	--
<i>St. Louis</i>	6	917	--	--
<i>Toronto</i>	37	3,541	--	--
<i>Vancouver</i>	9	572	--	--
<i>Washington, DC</i>	56 (4%)	7,492 (5%)	--	--

**Table 15. Schools by Movement Affiliation by Region (✳️)**

	<i>Northeast</i>		<i>Midwest</i>		<i>South</i>		<i>West</i>		<i>Canada</i>		<i>Total</i>
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
<i>Chabad</i>	110	19%	34	18%	80	22%	75	27%	21	35%	320
<i>Community</i>	29	5%	12	7%	18	5%	15	5%	6	10%	80
<i>Conservative (only)</i>	184	32%	40	22%	91	25%	55	20%	10	17%	380
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	11	2%	2	1%	1	0%	0	0%	2	3%	16
<i>Reconstructionist</i>	26	5%	8	4%	8	2%	11	4%	2	3%	55
<i>Reform &amp; Cons</i>	11	2%	6	3%	12	3%	7	3%	0	0%	36
<i>Reform (only)</i>	182	32%	65	35%	135	38%	101	37%	14	23%	497
<i>Renewal</i>	1	0%	1	1%	1	0%	1	0%	1	2%	5
<i>Secular Humanist</i>	3	1%	6	3%	3	1%	3	1%	2	3%	17
<i>None</i>	13	2%	5	3%	8	2%	6	2%	2	3%	34
<i>Other</i>	7	1%	4	2%	3	1%	2	1%	0	0%	16
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>577</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,456</b>
<i>% by Region</i>		40%		13%		25%		19%		4%	100%

**Table 16. Enrollment by Movement Affiliation by Region (✳ 🇺🇸)**

	<i>Northeast</i>		<i>Midwest</i>		<i>South</i>		<i>West</i>		<i>Canada</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>#</i>
<i>Chabad</i>	5,614	10%	1,359	7%	3,512	10%	3,162	12%	2,054	36%	15,701
<i>Community</i>	2,476	5%	1,056	6%	1,439	4%	1,723	6%	1,214	22%	7,908
<i>Conservative (only)</i>	15,689	29%	3,911	21%	8,818	26%	5,714	21%	679	12%	34,811
<i>Modern Orthodox</i>	497	1%	75	0%	15	0%	0	0%	405	7%	992
<i>Reconstructionist</i>	1,650	3%	460	2%	425	1%	1,041	4%	47	1%	3,623
<i>Reform &amp; Cons</i>	960	2%	302	2%	673	2%	334	1%	0	0%	2,269
<i>Reform (only)</i>	26,329	48%	10,521	57%	18,896	55%	14,857	54%	1,032	18%	71,635
<i>Renewal</i>	39	0%	93	1%	0	0%	81	0%	0	0%	213
<i>Secular Humanist</i>	300	1%	237	1%	101	0%	72	0%	63	1%	773
<i>None</i>	868	2%	209	1%	423	1%	331	1%	147	3%	1,978
<i>Other</i>	371	1%	243	1%	101	0%	50	0%	0	0%	765
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>54,793</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18,466</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>34,403</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>27,365</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,641</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>140,668</b>
<i>% by Region</i>		39%		13%		24%		19%		4%	100%

## Concluding Thoughts

The team at The Jewish Education Project would like to highlight the following key findings from this census:

- 1,250 schools responded to the census. An additional 208 opted out of the census, but we have overwhelming reason to believe that they meet the criteria. By those means, the census estimates that, during the 2019-2020 school year, there were 1,458 schools in the United States and Canada, and 1398 in just the United States.
- In all schools, the 2019-2020 enrollment (including adjustments and imputation) was just shy of 141,000 students. Utilizing comparison to the earlier census of the AVI CHAI foundation, one could compare the 230,000 students in 2006-2007 to 135,087 in 2019-2020.
- The decrease in students is proportionately larger than the decrease in schools. The average school size has also decreased, and every single grade is, on average, smaller.
- Another area of comparable difference is in movement affiliation. Most notably, Chabad has increased its reach in both students and school count, and the Conservative movement is on the decline. The Reform movement continues to educate over 50% of all students in supplementary schools.
- Geography and movement affiliation (if any) play the most significant role in predicting school size.
- Bnai Mitzvah remains a “graduation” point from supplementary schools, with just shy about 50% of eligible students enrolling in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and less than 20% in all grades 8<sup>th</sup> and beyond.
- When asked, most census respondents express that the most important purpose of supplementary school is to foster a sense of belonging to the Jewish people amongst their pupils.

To continue your journey in learning about and engaging with this project, join us at: [pathways.jewishedproject.org](https://pathways.jewishedproject.org).



## Appendix A: 1990, 2000, 2020 North American Jewish Population

The structure of this chart is based on *A Time to Act* (citation on [Appendix B. Citations for Demographic and Educational Affiliation among American Jews](#)). The table below shows Jewish population statistics in the US and Canada across the last 30+ years, and estimates for enrollment in Day Schools, Supplementary Schools, and Jewish Summer Camp. The years in parentheses reflect the year or school years (e.g., 2019-2020) for which the data is reflective. Population statistics are estimates and/or rounded in some places.

Jewish Population	US 1987	Canada 1989	US 2000	Canada 2001	US 2020	Canada 2019
<b>Total</b>	5,944,000	310,000	6,400,000	374,060	7,631,000	335,300
<b>School Age (3-17)</b>	950,000	57,000	1,350,000	73,000	1,583,000	79,000
<b>Educational Offerings</b>						
<b>Day Schools</b>	800 schools; 120,000 participants		759 schools; 204,035 participants (2003-2004)		906 schools; 292,172 participants (2018-2019)	
<b>Supplementary Schools</b>	1700 schools; 280,000 participants		2,000 schools; 230,000 participants (2006-2007, does not include Canada)		1,458 schools; 140,728 participants (2019-2020)	
<b>Camps</b>	120,000 in day camps; 85,000 in residential		No day camp statistic; 83,000 in residential (2000)		75,500 in day camps; 77,000 in residential (2019)	

# Appendix B: Citations for Demographic and Educational Affiliation among American Jews

1980s and 1990s: Lanham, MD. (1991). *A Time to Act: The report of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America: November 1990*. Retrieved from: <https://archive.org/details/timetoactetlaaso0000comm>

2000s

**US Total:** Ament, J. (2005) American Jewish Religious Denominations. Retrieved from [https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/307/NJPS2000\\_American\\_Jewish\\_Religious\\_Denominations.pdf](https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/307/NJPS2000_American_Jewish_Religious_Denominations.pdf); and, Kotler-Berkowitz, L. (2005). *The Jewish Education of Jewish Children: Formal schooling, early childhood programs and informal experiences*. Retrieved from [https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/NJPS2000\\_The\\_Jewish\\_Education\\_of\\_Jewish\\_Children.pdf](https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/NJPS2000_The_Jewish_Education_of_Jewish_Children.pdf)

**Canadian Total:** *National Household Survey: The Jewish Population of Canada* (2011). Retrieved from <https://www.jewishdatabank.org/databank/search-results/study/409>

**Day Schools:** Schick, M. (2005). *A Census of Jewish day schools in the United States 2003-2004*. Retrieved from <https://avichai.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Census-of-JDS-in-the-US-2008-09-Final.pdf>

**Supplementary Schools:** Wertheimer, J. (2008). *A Census of Jewish Supplementary Schools in the United States 2006-2007*. Retrieved from <https://avichai.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Supplementary-School-Census-Report-Final.pdf>

**Overnight Camps:** Tobin, G., et al. (2000). *Jewish Camping-2000*. Institute for Jewish & Community Research. Retrieved from <https://nyuscholars.nyu.edu/en/publications/jewish-camping-2000>

2010s and 2020s

**US Total:** *US Jewish Population Estimates 2020*. US Jewish Population Estimates 2020 - American Jewish Population Project. Retrieved from [https://ajpp.brandeis.edu/us\\_jewish\\_population\\_2020](https://ajpp.brandeis.edu/us_jewish_population_2020)

**Canadian Total:** *Canadian Jewish population, 2019* (2020). Retrieved from [https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/2019\\_Canadian\\_Jewish\\_Population\\_\(AJYB\\_Shahar\)\\_DataBank\\_Final.pdf](https://www.jewishdatabank.org/content/upload/bjdb/2019_Canadian_Jewish_Population_(AJYB_Shahar)_DataBank_Final.pdf)

**Day Schools:** Besser, M. (2020). *A census of Jewish day schools 2018-2019* (2020). The AVI CHAI Foundation. Retrieved from [https://avichai.org/knowledge\\_base/a-census-of-jewish-day-schools-2018-2019-2020/](https://avichai.org/knowledge_base/a-census-of-jewish-day-schools-2018-2019-2020/)

**Day Camps:** *Highlights from Foundation for Jewish Camp 2019 Day Camp Census*. (2019). Retrieved from [https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/FJC\\_CENSUS\\_DAY\\_2019\\_FINAL.pdf](https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/FJC_CENSUS_DAY_2019_FINAL.pdf)

**Overnight Camps:** *Camp Census. Foundation for Jewish Camp. (2022)*. Retrieved from <https://jewishcamp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/FJC-Census-Report-2022.pdf>

