

MILWAUKEE JEWISH FEDERATION Education Task Force Report

Research

Community Input: We conducted 76 local interviews including 14 rabbis, four cantors, and 22 education directors (representing all Milwaukee Jewish schools), 14 informal educators, nine lay leaders, and 13 others. There was an online questionnaire completed by 137 people from 18 schools, 12 synagogues, camps, youth groups, the Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC, and multiple Milwaukee Jewish Federation programs. The questionnaire was a tool for gathering input from the community, not a statistically valid survey.

Local resources: The work of the Education Task Force was informed by local research including student censuses of Jewish education conducted by the Coalition for Jewish

Learning from 1992 to 2017, as well as the 2011 Jewish Community Study of Greater Milwaukee Revised. The results of the census can be seen on this page. Notice that for the first time in Milwaukee's history there are more students attending day schools than supplementary schools.

National resources: The task force's work was informed by national research into best practices in Jewish education from around the United States, participation at the Association of Directors of Central (Education) Agencies, consultation with Jewish Education and Engagement Director at Jewish Federations of North America, and many books and articles about issues and best practices in Jewish education.

What We Learned

- In order to be successful, Jewish education must be joyful, fun, and engaging
- All forms of Jewish education, if done well, can be effective
- Family is the greatest influence upon Jewish identity
- Intensity and duration of experiences are both important
- Jewish friends and social networks are key influencers
- Gaps and transitions between programs present opportunities
- Engagement can occur at multiple entry points
- There is cascading effect of engagement
 - Earlier engagement is an important foundation
 - Teen engagement is critical

Goals

- More children involved in Jewish education (preschool, supplementary school, youth groups, overnight camp, day school)
- Greater retention across all programs
- Increased family involvement across all programs
- More continuity in participation (fewer gaps)
- Innovation and more consistently high quality education
- More teens participating in intensive experiences (youth groups)

Recommendations

The Education Task Force made four recommendations to the Community Planning and Allocations Committee for the coming fiscal year. The committee liked the recommendations and will

consider these recommendations as they prepare their budget proposal for the Milwaukee Jewish Federation board. Stay tuned for more information about the progress of these recommendations.

Objectives

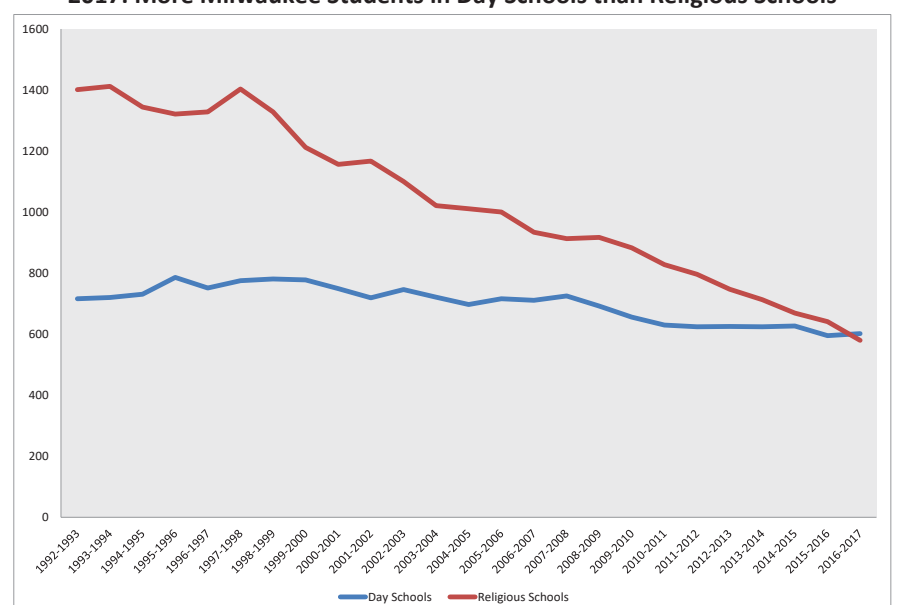
The objective of the task force was to identify realistic recommendations for funding Jewish education in Milwaukee that help fulfill the Federation's mission of securing a strong Jewish community today and tomorrow. The scope of the task force's work included local formal Jewish education and informal Jewish education of children from preschool through age 18.

2016-2017 Census

School	2016-2017
Pre-Schools	
Jewish Beginnings	125
JCC Gan Ami (Whitefish Bay)	211
JCC Gan Ami (Mequon)	48
Mequon Jewish Preschool	33
Subtotals	Preschool Students: 417
Day Schools	
Bader Hillel Academy	124
Bader Hillel High School	34
Milwaukee Jewish Day School (MJDS)	134
Torah Academy Milwaukee (TAM)	35
Wisconsin Institute for Torah Study (WITS)	63
Yeshiva Elementary School (YES)	212
Subtotals	Day School Students: 602
Religious Schools	
Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid School of Jewish Studies	47
Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun	91
Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha	29
Milwaukee Community Hebrew School (The Shul)	38
Peltz Hebrew School/Congregation Agudas Achim Chabad	59
Congregation Shalom	243
Congregation Sinai	73
Yavneh (Congregation Shir Hadash)*	x
Subtotals	Religious School 580
GRAND TOTALS	TOTAL 1599

*Shir Hadash was a small school in 2013-14, but it was not included in the census. In 2014-15 it reopened at Yavneh School. There is no school for 2016-17.

2017: More Milwaukee Students in Day Schools than Religious Schools



Task Force Members

Co-chairs: Linda Bader and Dan Sinykin

Members: Nancy Kennedy Barnett, Barbara Glazer, Sara Hermanoff, Joe Kasle, David Lowe, Dana Margolis, Andrea Schneider, Susan Solvang, and Louise Stein

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