



## *2018-2019 Census of Milwaukee Area Jewish School Enrollment: An Overview*

This year's census was conducted by the Coalition for Jewish Learning (CJL), the Education Department of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. The census is based on responses from local schools.

CJL's annual census documents that the number of children enrolled in Milwaukee Area Jewish schools rose from 1611 to 1622. This slight rise (.6%) reflects a rise in the number of preschool and day school students. While this is a very small increase, it represents a turnaround in the downward trend of many years.

Analysis of these figures is limited by the absence of a full census of school age Jewish children. A decline in attendance could be attributed to a number of factors, but some educators cite a decline in the number of Jewish children which is reflected in their enrollment numbers. Lower rates of synagogue affiliation also impact the number of children in supplementary schools.

### **Preschool Enrollment**

There was a 4% increase (19 students) at the preschool level, from 437 last year to 456 this year. This is the highest ever preschool enrollment (since we have started doing the census) with the exception of 2008 when there were 470 children.

### **Day School Population**

There was 1.8% increase (11 students) in day school enrollment, from 600 last year to 611 this year. Just like last year, there is considerable variance on a school by school basis, but overall the schools grew. All the schools grew, stayed the same, or decreased by 1 student. This is the highest day school enrollment since 2014-15.

### **Religious School Trend Continues**

There was a 3% decrease (19 students) in religious school enrollment from 550 to 531. This is smaller than the decrease last year and the year before.

Once again the census included students getting individualized education and informal education. The Coalition for Jewish Learning recognizes that students learn in many settings, so the census reflects learning through Jewish Youth Groups and PJ Library. It should be noted that since students may belong to multiple youth groups and/or be counted in the school census, the total number of students participating in programs does not represent the total number of children.

### **Youth Group Enrollment**

There was a 10% increase (67 students) in youth group participation. This in part reflects that last year's census did not include one of the local groups.

### **PJ Library**

There are 690 local children (birth-age 11) who get books from PJ Library.

### **Overall Education and Engagement**

When we consider the total number of children engaged in formal and informal education, there has been a 2% increase (72 children). We are providing education and engagement for 2,923 children, and this does not even include summer camp and other local Jewish program. Milwaukee can be proud of our education and engagement programs.

**I wish to thank the schools for their cooperation which allows us to provide this important information to the community.**