

A CENSUS OF JEWISH  
DAY SCHOOLS  
IN THE UNITED STATES  
2008–2009

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October 2009

The complete list of schools for which enrollment data were collected may be found at [www.avichai.org](http://www.avichai.org) under the publications section. This listing provides in most cases the complete addresses of these schools, as well as their denominational affiliation. It has been placed online as a service to the field so that others may have a baseline list from which to work. It is also being made available so that we may learn about schools that were not reached by the census survey or for which we have incorrect information. Enrollment numbers for each school do not appear on the listing because the census survey promised to treat such data with confidentiality.

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## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This census of the Jewish day schools in the United States covers the 2008-09 school year. It is a follow-up to the comprehensive studies of 1998-99 and 2003-04, both conducted by Dr. Marvin Schick and sponsored by The AVI CHAI Foundation.

The statistics in this census include grade by grade enrollments for every Jewish day school in the United States.

- There were 228,174 students in Jewish elementary and secondary schools—the four-year-old level through grade 12—in the 2008-09 school year. This represents an increase of 23,000 or 11% from 2003-04, and an increase of more than 43,000 or nearly 25% since 1998-99. There continues to be significant growth in day school enrollment.
  - Orthodox day school enrollment continues to grow significantly—a 56% increase in Chassidic schools and a 34% increase in Yeshiva-world schools over the past ten years—in large part due to high fertility rates.
  - Community day schools continue to demonstrate growth, both in the number of schools—98 in 2008-09 as compared to 75 in 1998-99—and enrollment, which has grown by more than 40% over the past decade. Of note is the increase in Community day high schools, which generates a significant increase in the number of students in non-Orthodox high schools.
  - The difficulties facing the Conservative movement can be seen in the nearly 25% decrease in enrollment over the past ten years.
- Overall, enrollment in non-Orthodox schools is down 2.5% since 2003-04, yet is still 5% higher than it was in 1998-99.
  - Outreach and immigrant schools, which tend to serve more Judaically-at-risk populations, have lost enrollment, most likely due to a diminishing pool of potential students.
  - Outside of New York and New Jersey, 47% of day school students are enrolled in non-Orthodox schools.
  - Five out of six day school students in the United States are in Orthodox schools.



## A THIRD CENSUS OF JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS

This is the third survey of Jewish day school enrollment in the United States sponsored by The AVI CHAI Foundation. It was conducted during the 2008-09 school year, five years after the previous study and ten years after the first survey. The span of a full decade provides comparative data and perspective on an activity that is crucial in American Jewish life. There is value in determining enrollment patterns at half-decade intervals; hopefully, there will be a fourth census during the 2013-14 school year.

The enrollment data in this census were gathered during a period of sharp economic decline, a development that inevitably has affected organized American Jewry in a significant way. The impact on day schools has been severe, although in all likelihood it will not be possible to know how severe until some time in the 2009-10 school year.<sup>1</sup> It is already certain that tuition collection has been impacted because parents have lost jobs and charitable contributions are also down. In the course of this research, school officials reported that their institutions face unprecedented financial hardship. There have been staff reductions, with more in the offing, and other measures aimed at weathering the downturn. What remains to be seen is whether parents are opting out of day school.

Even before the economic downturn, day school education had been under pressure. There is constant and increasing talk about the tuition crisis, about how the tendency of schools to raise tuition annually and often by considerable amounts has resulted in families, some with relatively large incomes, saying that they are unable to meet their obligations, at least not without sacrificing commitments or desires that they are loathe to sacrifice. The tuition crisis has moved from the talking stage to the action stage, with parents exploring educational options other than the conventional day schools to which their children have been sent.

A somewhat parallel development is the much-publicized charter school movement which as of this writing has spawned a single school with something of a Hebraic or Jewish orientation that has apparently impacted day school enrollment in the South Florida area where it is located. Another school will shortly open in Brooklyn. Whether charters that emphasize Hebrew language or have another Jewish connection will wean students away from day schools is an issue that will likely get increased attention in the years ahead.

These lines may not convey the extent of the flux or unease in the day school world. There are a few schools that were operating in September 2008 that did not make it through the school year. Other schools included in the census will not be open in the 2009-10 school year. Even more are wondering how much longer they can survive. There have been day school mergers and more are likely to occur. Among the Solomon Schechter schools that are vital for the Conservative movement, there is a strong sense of decline that mirrors the issues and mood facing the movement.

<sup>1</sup> A mini-survey of larger schools in the non-Orthodox (Community, Solomon Schechter and Reform), Modern Orthodox and Centrist Orthodox sectors is planned for early in the 2009-10 school year. It will provide additional information on whether the economic situation has had an impact on enrollment.

School affiliation that over a long time has been a stable arrangement is now subject to greater shifts than ever before.

In short, the 2008-09 census comes at a time of uncertainty and change. In the aftermath of demographic studies nearly two decades ago showing an alarmingly high intermarriage rate and research pointing to day school education as having a potent positive impact on Jewish commitment and continuity, organized American Jewry, including philanthropic organizations, like never before have evinced a strong commitment to day school education. Whether this commitment will remain strong in the face of shrinking funds, the desire to support other goals and activities and to serve other commitments and the changing demographic profile of American Jewry is another issue that will be determined in the coming years.

Whatever the trends in the day school world, this world is at once not reflective and yet also reflective of American Jewish life and both for the same reason. Five out of six day schoolers are in Orthodox institutions, a statistic that is widely at variance with the profile of American Jewry, as demographers report that no more than 10-12% of U.S. Jews self-identify as Orthodox.<sup>2</sup> The fact that relatively few children from non-Orthodox homes attend day school provides a measure of confirmation that a powerful secular trend has transformed the status of being Jewish in the eyes of the majority of American Jews from being religious in some sense to being something else.

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## COMPLETENESS AND ACCURACY

As was true of its predecessors, the statistics presented here include day schools listed in the directories published by the Orthodox, Community (RAVSAK), Conservative, Reform and Chabad day school associations, as well as by educational and Federation agencies in communities with large Jewish populations. Dozens of additional schools not included on these lists have been located. Some of these schools apparently fell through the cracks, either because they do not clearly identify with any denomination or association or because they are very small and/or new.<sup>3</sup>

Although this report reflects a 100% response rate for all known schools, there doubtlessly are a small number that

have been omitted. Indeed, after the enrollment statistics were painstakingly compiled and this report was being written, a handful of schools not previously accounted for surfaced. Presumably, there are others. These are, for sure, small schools, so that their omission would have no more than a negligible impact on the data.<sup>4</sup>

Large schools sponsored by the major chassidic groups pose another problem. There is the tendency to open branches and the relationship between parent and branch is not always clear or settled. It is a challenge to avoid double counting, as when both the parent and branch submit enrollment numbers. A more serious and growing issue arises from conflict or division within chassidic groups, as the question of succession results in rival institutions and claims.

Enrollment surveys rely on self-reporting by participating schools. There is the prospect of inaccurate reporting, inadvertent or not, if school officials inflate their numbers.

<sup>2</sup> The narrow and vital field of Jewish demography is engulfed in statistical wars regarding the number of Jews and their characteristics. There is, however, a high degree of consensus regarding the number of Orthodox Jews, which is put at 10-12%. Interestingly, this statistic has scarcely changed in the nearly twenty years since the landmark 1990 National Jewish Population Survey despite 1) the extraordinarily high Orthodox fertility rate, 2) the aging of American Jewry and 3) the ninety percent who are regarded as non-Orthodox reproducing at significantly below the 2.1 children per family that is needed to sustain zero population growth. The U.S. Religious Landscape Survey conducted in 2008 by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life puts the Orthodox at 16% and indicates that the percentage is significantly higher for the below eighteen age bracket, which has major implications for American Jewry and, specifically, day school education.

<sup>3</sup> I will discuss in the text key issues relating to each school category. Since overwhelmingly enrollment is in Orthodox-sponsored institutions, the directory published by Torah Umesorah—the National Society of Hebrew Day Schools—is critical to this project. While in the past this directory was highly reliable and nearly complete, unfortunately that is not now the case. In fact, no directory was produced for the 2008-09 school year. Much of the problem arises from the organization having been in an unsettled situation because of leadership changes. The compilation of an Orthodox directory is a complicated task because of the large number of schools, many new and/or small, as well as developments within the yeshiva-world and chassidic sectors. There is a great deal of geographical movement, schools change their names, branches open, and there have been divisions within the Satmar and Bobov chassidic groups that have resulted in the establishment of new schools. It is also a challenge to get a complete reckoning of Chabad day schools that are in operation.

<sup>4</sup> At times, when walking in Borough Park or Williamsburg, I come across a sign posted on a small building announcing that a yeshiva or cheder not previously identified is located on the premises.

I am satisfied that the statistics presented in this report are very close to the mark and that there is a greater likelihood of under-reporting than over-reporting.

The primary purpose of this study is to secure enrollment data, not an easy task when school staffs are burdened by an expanding array of responsibilities, including questionnaires and other material from governmental sources that they are required to complete and return and from communal and philanthropic sources that they believe it is in their interest to complete. It does not help that apart from the relatively affluent schools, office staffs tend to be small and beleaguered as administrators, teachers, parents, students, lay people and perhaps others seek their attention and assistance.

This third survey affords the opportunity to analyze enrollment trends over a crucial decade and to assess the impact of heightened communal interest in day school education.

This issue is particularly crucial for non-Orthodox schools that have clearly benefitted from increased philanthropic support, notably in gifts aimed at improving their facilities, and from the near consensus in American Jewish life that to promote Jewish continuity it is necessary to provide a day school education to students who likely have other attractive educational options.

For the Orthodox, the notion that a day school or yeshiva education is mandatory is just about universally accepted and this together with high fertility ensures that enrollment will grow continually, especially in the fervently Orthodox yeshiva-world and chassidic sectors. There are an indeterminate number of Orthodox children who are being home-schooled, whether because of tuition charges, the unavailability of day schools in their community or another factor. It is also the case that Orthodox children with severe learning disabilities are often registered in a public facility. Among the Modern Orthodox, there are parents who opt for public schools, the most likely reason being their desire to avoid tuition, although at the secondary level there are parents who believe that their children are better off educationally or for career development if they attend a public or private high school. As already suggested, it remains to be seen whether the growing sense of a tuition crisis will impel more non-Orthodox or Modern Orthodox parents to choose public education. It also remains to be seen whether the emerging Jewish charter school movement will have a significant impact on day school enrollment.

This survey adheres closely to the format of its predecessor, thereby enhancing the ability to discern trends. Schools that have been in operation for at least five years were asked whether their enrollment was greater, lesser or about the same than it was in the 2003-04 school year. In view of the economic downturn that was already evident in September 2008, schools were asked whether they had been adversely affected. Those that responded that they had been affected were then asked to indicate the severity of the impact.<sup>5</sup>

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## THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS

There were 228,000 students enrolled in Jewish elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. in the 2008-09 school year, as is shown in Table 1.<sup>6</sup>

This is an increase of 23,000 students or 11% in a five-year period. In turn, the 2003-04 census showed a similar increase over the one conducted five years earlier. In the 2003-04 report I wrote, "If we project or extrapolate this growth rate over the course of an entire decade, and factor in the crucial element of Orthodox fertility, we can expect a nearly one-quarter increase in Jewish school enrollment in the decade between the 1998-99 and the 2008-09 school years." This has happened.

The growth rate is impressive and has huge implications for communal planning and funding, particularly for the Orthodox. If we project further, in another ten years day school enrollment should approach 300,000 students.

<sup>5</sup> Of the schools that responded to the question on enrollment, 252 said that they had more students than five years ago, 141 said enrollment was lower and 107 reported that it was about the same. Actually, when enrollment was examined for schools that were in operation in 2003, it turns out that 330 had increased enrollment, 256 had experienced enrollment decline and enrollment was about the same at 40 schools.

On the question of economic impact, many schools said that it was too early to assess the impact on enrollment. All schools that responded said that to one extent or another, the economic downturn had adversely impacted their financial situation.

<sup>6</sup> An indeterminate number of day school students are not Jewish by any definition. Almost all are in non-Orthodox schools. It is not known whether this phenomenon has spread. Small day schools are more likely to accept non-Jewish applicants, their view being that additional enrollment strengthens the institution by adding to the school income and by enlarging classes.

TABLE 1: ENROLLMENT IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS 2008-2009

| Classification             | # of Schools | 4-Year Olds   | 5-Year Olds   | 1st           | 2nd           | 3rd           | 4th           |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Centrist Orthodox          | 72           | 1,271         | 1,447         | 1,340         | 1,357         | 1,249         | 1,241         |
| Chabad                     | 73           | 1,023         | 1,298         | 1,253         | 1,045         | 1,136         | 1,010         |
| Chassidic                  | 105          | 5,003         | 7,230         | 5,236         | 5,128         | 4,636         | 4,443         |
| Community                  | 98           | 869           | 1,983         | 1,844         | 1,849         | 1,774         | 1,718         |
| Immigrant/Outreach         | 24           | 255           | 243           | 228           | 219           | 203           | 228           |
| Modern Orthodox            | 86           | 1,981         | 2,433         | 2,498         | 2,405         | 2,396         | 2,268         |
| Reform                     | 17           | 569           | 666           | 499           | 552           | 527           | 539           |
| Solomon Schechter          | 50           | 628           | 1,510         | 1,450         | 1,433         | 1,423         | 1,324         |
| Special Education          | 33           | -             | -             | -             | -             | -             | -             |
| Yeshiva                    | 244          | 3,918         | 5,658         | 5,560         | 5,273         | 4,992         | 4,828         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>802</b>   | <b>15,517</b> | <b>22,468</b> | <b>19,908</b> | <b>19,261</b> | <b>18,336</b> | <b>17,599</b> |
| <b>Percentage of Total</b> | -            | <b>6.801%</b> | <b>9.847%</b> | <b>8.725%</b> | <b>8.441%</b> | <b>8.036%</b> | <b>7.713%</b> |

TABLE 2: DAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 1998-2008

| Classification     | 1998           | % of 1998 Total | 2003           | % of 2003 Total | 2008           | % of 2008 Total |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Centrist Orthodox  | 20,504         | 11.12%          | 18,696         | 9.12%           | 17,650         | 7.74%           |
| Chabad             | 7,438          | 4.04%           | 8,609          | 4.20%           | 12,296         | 5.39%           |
| Chassidic          | 39,059         | 21.19%          | 48,446         | 23.63%          | 60,955         | 26.71%          |
| Community          | 14,849         | 8.06%           | 17,416         | 8.49%           | 20,838         | 9.13%           |
| Immigrant/Outreach | 5,136          | 2.79%           | 4,823          | 2.35%           | 3,432          | 1.50%           |
| Modern Orthodox    | 26,961         | 14.63%          | 28,720         | 14.01%          | 29,397         | 12.88%          |
| Reform             | 4,485          | 2.43%           | 4,462          | 2.18%           | 4,569          | 2.00%           |
| Solomon Schechter  | 17,563         | 9.53%           | 17,702         | 8.63%           | 13,223         | 5.80%           |
| Special Education  | 695            | 0.38%           | 1,780          | 0.87%           | 1,829          | 0.80%           |
| Yeshiva            | 47,643         | 25.85%          | 54,381         | 26.52%          | 63,985         | 28.04%          |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>184,333</b> | <b>100%</b>     | <b>205,035</b> | <b>100%</b>     | <b>228,174</b> | <b>100%</b>     |

| 5th           | 6th           | 7th           | 8th           | 9th           | 10th          | 11th          | 12th          | Special Education | Total          |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1,176         | 1,172         | 1,172         | 1,075         | 1,326         | 1,288         | 1,277         | 1,209         | 50                | 17,650         |
| 998           | 890           | 878           | 828           | 569           | 530           | 488           | 349           | 1                 | 12,296         |
| 4,375         | 4,128         | 4,104         | 3,846         | 3,673         | 3,164         | 3,171         | 2,818         | -                 | 60,955         |
| 1,683         | 1,506         | 1,502         | 1,371         | 1,205         | 1,259         | 1,130         | 1,128         | 17                | 20,838         |
| 211           | 250           | 213           | 264           | 290           | 290           | 284           | 254           | -                 | 3,432          |
| 2,298         | 2,239         | 2,195         | 2,156         | 1,642         | 1,650         | 1,584         | 1,633         | 19                | 29,397         |
| 466           | 324           | 206           | 180           | -             | -             | -             | -             | 41                | 4,569          |
| 1,357         | 1,178         | 1,076         | 973           | 193           | 248           | 213           | 217           | -                 | 13,223         |
| -             | -             | -             | -             | -             | -             | -             | -             | 1,829             | 1,829          |
| 4,622         | 4,481         | 4,095         | 4,125         | 4,222         | 4,224         | 4,029         | 3,790         | 168               | 63,985         |
| <b>17,186</b> | <b>16,168</b> | <b>15,441</b> | <b>14,818</b> | <b>13,120</b> | <b>12,653</b> | <b>12,176</b> | <b>11,398</b> | <b>2,125</b>      | <b>228,174</b> |
| 7.532%        | 7.086%        | 6.767%        | 6.494%        | 5.750%        | 5.545%        | 5.336%        | 4.995%        | 0.931%            | -              |

| Change 2003-08 | % Change 2003-08 | Change 1998-08 | % Change 1998-08 | 1998 # of Schools | 2003 # of Schools | 2008 # of Schools |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| -1,046         | -5.60%           | -2,854         | -13.92%          | 80                | 78                | 72                |
| 3,687          | 42.83%           | 4,858          | 65.31%           | 44                | 54                | 73                |
| 12,509         | 25.82%           | 21,896         | 56.06%           | 81                | 101               | 105               |
| 3,422          | 19.65%           | 5,989          | 40.33%           | 75                | 95                | 98                |
| -1,391         | -28.84%          | -1,704         | -33.18%          | 31                | 30                | 24                |
| 677            | 2.36%            | 2,436          | 9.04%            | 92                | 87                | 86                |
| 107            | 2.40%            | 84             | 1.87%            | 20                | 19                | 17                |
| -4,479         | -25.30%          | -4,340         | -24.71%          | 63                | 57                | 50                |
| 187            | 10.51%           | 1,272          | 183.02%          | 18                | 43                | 33                |
| 9,604          | 17.66%           | 16,342         | 34.30%           | 172               | 195               | 244               |
| <b>23,277</b>  | <b>11.35%</b>    | <b>43,979</b>  | <b>23.86%</b>    | <b>676</b>        | <b>759</b>        | <b>802</b>        |

Table 2 presents comparative enrollment data by day school sector over the ten years. Later in this report there is a discussion of the day school profile for each sector. What merits comment here is that were it not for a decline of 1,000 students during the past five years in the three non-Orthodox sectors, the overall growth rate would have been higher still. The decline among the non-Orthodox is surprising in view of the greater emphasis than previously on day school education throughout nearly all of Jewish communal life and strong indications of greater philanthropic support for these institutions.<sup>7</sup> As we will see, at the high school level, non-Orthodox enrollment grew considerably.

Table 1 data ranges from four-year olds in preschool through the twelfth grade. There are issues at both ends of the age/grade spectrum that have a bearing on the statistics. The inclusion of four-year olds in these censuses is a departure from the conventional reporting of educational statistics in the U.S. Five-year olds in general are referred to as in kindergarten and invariably they are the youngest school cohort, with younger children in preschool or nursery. Four-year olds need to be included in day school enrollment because this age group is a vital element in the curriculum and mission of many of these schools.

Not included, however, are younger children, although there are day schools with programs for children who are age three or younger and they are counted by the schools in their enrollment statistics. The census also does not include four-year olds—and some children who are a year older—who are in preschool programs in Jewish educational settings other than day schools such as synagogues, community centers and private kindergartens. The latter are familiar in the yeshiva-world sector, as either tuition considerations or space limitations, notably in Lakewood, New Jersey, result in parents not sending children who are four or even five to a local yeshiva.

Table 1 highlights this phenomenon. Despite the impact of high fertility which ordinarily should mean that each younger age or grade cohort is larger than the next one, five-year old enrollment shows a 50% increase over the four-year old figure. The explanation is that there are many four-year olds who are not in day school but in some other Jewish preschool setting.

Nearly all day schools in the U.S. adhere to specified age requirements for a child to be admitted into a particular grade. This is particularly relevant for the four-year old, five-year old and first grade cohorts. Thus, to enter the first grade a child must be six years old by a specified date. Cut-off dates are rigorously enforced, despite the insistence of some parents that their children are socially and/or intellectually advanced and despite criticism of the age formula by some educators. Chassidic schools generally do not adhere to the conventional cut-off dates, especially for boys, routinely accepting five-year olds into the first grade. This has a bearing on the grade-by-grade statistics, but not on the overall enrollment data.

Another issue arises at the other end of the spectrum, as chassidic and some yeshiva-world schools regard boys whose age would place them in the nominal high school grades as Beth Medrash or seminary students and not as high schoolers. There are also yeshivas where the seminary is an extension of the high school, with twelfth graders regarded as Beth Medrash students. In other institutions, the seminary is an entirely separate entity. In these situations, despite the students being in age categories that ordinarily make them high schoolers, there is a strong prospect that they are not included in the data presented here.

The thousands of students, male and female, who are clearly enrolled in seminary programs are not included in this census. A survey that encompassed all students from age four through grade twelve in all Jewish day school settings would likely produce an enrollment figure in the neighborhood of 250,000.

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## THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

There is no precise figure for the number of schools because of definitional challenges. In determining how many there are, much depends on whether separate boys and girls divisions operated by a single corporate entity that are entirely apart

<sup>7</sup> This is primarily reflected in financial support aimed at improving school facilities. A significant proportion of non-Orthodox schools have undertaken capital campaigns during the past decade.

in their program and staff should be considered as one or two institutions. A second issue concerns high schools connected to elementary schools. Are they separate institutions if they are in distinct facilities and are staffed separately? A third question is how to treat branches and satellite schools.

In any event, the number of students is a more critical indicator of what is occurring in the day school world than the number of schools. This census puts the school figure at about 800, up significantly from the 676 reported in 1998 and the 759 five years ago. To an extent, the increase in this census is attributed to a greater tendency to count separate divisions, branches, etc. separately and also to a noteworthy expansion in the Chabad school network. These schools, as well as new yeshiva-world institutions, are almost all small.

When compared to public schools and also to other types of non-public schools, religious and private, Jewish day schools tend to be small. Simple division of 800 schools into a total enrollment of 228,000, yields an average 280 students per school, surely a low figure. If we do not include chassidic schools in this arithmetic exercise, the average enrollment per school is much lower. The proliferation of small schools has major curricular, financial and perception implications.

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#### ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Day school enrollment is not an undifferentiated mass of 220,000+ students in 800 schools located in communities across the U.S. For all of the small and declining number of Americans who identify themselves as Jewish in a religious sense, we remain a remarkably diverse group. There are separate denominations, with shadings and variations within each denomination. Diversity is especially pronounced among the Orthodox. Although according to most demographers they constitute about 10-12% of American Jews, the Orthodox are divided into no fewer than four subgroups and perhaps five if Chabad is considered a distinct subgroup.

This diversity is reflected throughout Jewish communal life, primarily in synagogues and schools. For census purposes, a non-Orthodox day school may be counted together with a fervently Orthodox yeshiva. Yet, charedi yeshivas scarcely

resemble non-Orthodox schools. It may be convenient to identify the latter schools as non-Orthodox and leave it at that. In reality, there are distinctions between Community and Solomon Schechter schools. It is a challenge at times to determine which category defines particular schools. Indeed, the tendency toward intra-group distinctiveness in Orthodox life is largely responsible for the large number of Orthodox schools. This is most pronounced in the yeshiva-world sector. Although the aggregate enrollments of yeshiva-world and chassidic schools are nearly equal, there is more than twice the number of schools in the former category than in the latter. A second consequence of intra-Orthodox diversity is that especially away from the New York area, competition among yeshivas and day schools for the relatively small number of children in Orthodox homes has resulted in the proliferation of small schools.

In the discussion of the distinctive characteristics of each school category, I have retained the criteria employed in the previous censuses. The key elements that define which Orthodox subgroup a school identifies with are whether a school is coeducational, making it Modern Orthodox, or has separate divisions by gender, the emphasis on secular studies, the emphasis on intensive Jewish studies and how it incorporates modernity into its curriculum and ambience. Apart from special education schools, all of which are under Orthodox sponsorship, there are nine school categories, six of them Orthodox.

To facilitate comparative analysis, schools that have been in operation for at least five years are categorized as they were in the last census. There are exceptions, as when a school changes its affiliation, as several Solomon Schechters have done, or when curriculum or other changes clearly point to a new designation. A school that was once coeducational and now has separate divisions must be designated differently than it was previously.

There is no simple formula to designate Orthodox schools that have characteristics that suggest that it can be placed in more than one category. If another person conducted this research, doubtlessly some but not many schools would be placed in a different category. I have been objective and consistent, using reliable criteria, and I am confident that borderline schools have no more than a minimal impact on the data.

## NON-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS

There was a time, and not long ago, when Reform leaders appeared to encourage parents to send their children to a day school, a time when it appeared that there would be significant growth in the number of Reform day schools and in enrollment. This is no longer the case. It is evident that day school education is now downplayed, with the strong emphasis being on the movement's large network of supplementary and Sunday schools. A small number of congregations, invariably large and in major Jewish communities, sponsor Reform day schools. There are now 17 such schools, two fewer than in 2003 and three below the number a decade ago.

This de-emphasis of day schools is a nod to reality, as relatively few parents who identify as Reform accept the day school concept. Tuition is a factor, for sure, yet I believe that there are far more children from Reform homes enrolled in high-tuition private schools than there are in Jewish day schools. There are, of course, children from Reform homes in transdenominational Community schools and a scattering in other day schools.

The Reform day schools in operation are relatively large institutions and their enrollment appears to be stable. There is scarcely any change across the three censuses, with the 2008 data showing an increase of 66 students over a five-year period.

The **Solomon Schechter** schools are closely bound to the Conservative movement, as Conservatism goes so do these day schools. When the movement was self-confident and growing, Solomon Schechter schools were being established. Now that the trend is sharply and painfully in the other direction, schools are being lost. There were 50 in the school year covered by the census, a sharp decline from the 63 a decade ago.<sup>8</sup> One small school that was open in 2008-09 has since closed and at least several others are endangered. Those that are in good shape have benefitted from strong local leadership and commitment.

Not all of the schools that were previously Solomon Schechters have closed. Several have switched affiliation, becoming Community schools, likely because they are more comfortable with the transdenominational designation.

A second related factor is that from the standpoint of curriculum, Community schools generally have a lesser emphasis on Judaics than do the Solomon Schechters which have over the years drawn students largely from the traditional wing of Conservatism. Many non-Orthodox day school parents insist on a strong academic program and are less concerned about the Judaic curriculum component.

In stark statistical terms, the pattern of Solomon Schechter enrollment shows a bleak picture. During the past five years, there has been a decline of 25%. While much of this is attributable to changes in school affiliation, clearly the outlook is not good. The closing of two Solomon Schechter high schools in the New York metropolitan area has had an especially disheartening impact. There is a feeling that the economic downturn and the spreading sense of the tuition crisis will add to the toll.

**Community** schools are the flip side of the Solomon Schechter picture. Most, but not all, of these schools are affiliated with RAVSAK, a well-led organization that has created a sense of affinity among schools that do not have a common denominational base. The transdenominational concept is much in favor these days among Federations and other Jewish philanthropic sources and also strikes a receptive chord among Jews who are nondenominational or, as they are now termed, post-denominational.

Community schools are, inevitably, a varied lot. Among the nearly 100 in operation, a small number are close in Judaic ambiance to Modern Orthodox schools. As indicated, most are somewhat weaker in Judaics than the typical Solomon Schechter, although RAVSAK strives to strengthen member schools in this regard. How Community schools fare over the next decade will significantly determine the course of non-Orthodox day school education in the U.S.

The current census dramatically indicates the growth in Community school enrollment. There was a 20% increase over the 2003 figure and, for the decade, the increase is precisely double that amount. Although some of this growth

<sup>8</sup> The Solomon Schechter School Association includes Canadian schools that are not covered by this census. Included in this census is one school that is sponsored by a Conservative congregation that is not affiliated with the Solomon Schechter network.

came from former Solomon Schechters now being identified as Community schools, the figure is impressive. Community schools now constitute far more than half of all non-Orthodox school enrollment and their share is likely to grow.<sup>9</sup>

Of interest, there are now not many more Community schools than there were five years ago. This census shows 98 as compared to 91 in 2003. It merits mention that during this period, a number of Community schools have closed and several have become Chabad institutions. All of the closed schools and new Chabads were small Community day schools. Accordingly, more than seven Community schools were opened during the 2003-08 period. Another key point is that there are Community schools, two notably in South Florida, that have lost a significant portion of their enrollment over the past five years.

If the Community outlook is rosy, the statistics for all non-Orthodox enrollment are not and they may provoke concern for those who believe that this form of Jewish education is vital for children who are at-risk Jewishly. Not only is the percentage of day schoolers in non-Orthodox schools in decline, as may be expected because of Orthodox fertility, there was a decline of 1,000 students in these schools during the past five years, this despite the advocacy of day schools in most Jewish communal circles and the evident improvement of facilities in the non-Orthodox sectors.

Some may regard an enrollment decline of about 2.5% as negligible. I do not. The critical factors contributing to the decline have been touched on previously. They include the changed attitude toward day schools among the Reform, the weakening of the Conservative movement and the tuition crisis/economic downturn. The latter factor is exacerbated by the limited scholarship assistance available in nearly all non-Orthodox schools, a policy that especially hits hard in times of economic difficulty and especially among families of marginal commitment who opt out of day school if they regard the cost as too high.

We should know soon whether the 2003-08 decline is a trend. Much will depend on the economy, as well as the climate of opinion regarding day schools in non-Orthodox circles. If the reliance on day schools as the vehicle to promote continuity among the non-Orthodox is downplayed, as some demographers and contributors have suggested, the prospect is for more decline in the non-Orthodox day school sectors.

## ORTHODOX SCHOOLS

From its inception, the day school world has been dominated by the Orthodox and this pattern isn't going to change. In fact, Orthodox dominance grew between 2003 and 2008. Excluding the Orthodox-sponsored special education schools, 600 or more than three-fourths of all day schools are Orthodox in leadership and orientation. The percentage of Orthodox enrollment is higher than it was five years ago. Indications are that the Orthodox share will continue to grow because of the factors already described.

As discussed above, the Orthodox are a diverse group and this diversity is reflected in all sectors of communal life, primarily in day schools and synagogues. There are Orthodox schools that are co-educational, schools that have separate divisions within a single facility, schools that have separate divisions in separate facilities and schools that are single gender. There is also great disparity in the place of secular or academic studies in the curriculum. On the Judaic side, there are notable variations in what subjects are taught and how they are taught. In a word, despite the encompassing label "day school" used to identify each school, including the most fervently Orthodox, covered in this census, at the operational level a fervently Orthodox yeshiva and a day school with a modern orientation are rather different entities.

With notable exceptions in the Modern Orthodox sector, nearly all Orthodox schools are affiliated or involved with Torah Umesorah—the National Society of Hebrew Day Schools.<sup>10</sup> On a practical level, Torah Umesorah is under the direction of yeshiva-world deans and schools in that sector, as well as Centrist Orthodox institutions, constitute the primary base of Torah Umesorah's support and activity. Chassidic yeshivas generally are not actively involved in the organization as they are guided by their own Rebbes or other leaders.

<sup>9</sup> As will be discussed in the section dealing with enrollment by grade, Community enrollment has increased impressively at the high school level.

<sup>10</sup> Over the years, Torah Umesorah has increasingly distanced itself from coeducation. Coeducational high schools are not accepted as members. When the 2003 census was conducted, there was an Association of Modern Orthodox Day Schools that operated within the framework of Yeshiva University. That organization is now defunct. Some of its functions have been taken over the by Institute of University-School Partnership at Yeshiva University.

**Modern Orthodox** schools strive for what has been referred to as a synthesis between Torah education and modernity, as for example in the inclusion of girls in Talmudic study. These schools are coeducational, with a strong emphasis on the academic program, as well as Judaics, which includes subjects that are not emphasized in typical yeshivas. Hebrew is often the language of instruction in Judaic courses, particularly in the New York area. Israel is a powerful factor, not necessarily in the teaching of particular subject matter as in the mood that envelops the institution. High school graduates tend to go to Israel for a year—and sometimes more—of seminary study. The expectation is that after the return from Israel, high school graduates will attend a college.

It is possible to discern a pull away from modernity in many Modern Orthodox schools, as, for example, in the increase in single-gender classes for Judaic study. This observation is impressionistic. The trend may become more pronounced. While it has been said that this development arises from the influence of faculty members who tend to come from the charedi sectors, it is also true that within Modern Orthodoxy there are forces pulling many families away from modernity.

As indicated in Table 2, the percentage of dayschoolers enrolled in Modern Orthodox schools has slipped slightly from census to census, which isn't surprising because of this sector's relatively low fertility when compared with the fertility rate in the other Orthodox categories.<sup>11</sup> What is perhaps surprising is that in numbers, Modern Orthodox enrollment has grown over the decade from 27,000 to nearly 29,500, this despite increased aliyah resulting from 1) the strong Modern Orthodox identity with Israel, 2) expanded professional and financial opportunities in Israel and 3) the effective work of Nefesh B'Nefesh.<sup>12</sup>

**Centrist Orthodox** schools are not coeducational, except perhaps in the younger grades. Often there are separate boys and girls divisions in the same facility. As their designation suggests, Centrist Orthodox schools are located on the Orthodox spectrum between the Modern Orthodox and yeshiva-world, as they emphasize secular studies and Israel to a greater extent than the yeshiva-world and, generally, to a lesser extent than the Modern Orthodox.

Their in-between status may account for their slippage in enrollment, with their share of students declining from

11% in 1998 to below 8% in 2008. In numbers, Centrist Orthodox schools have lost 3,000 students in this period. There has also been a decline in the number of such schools, from 80 to 72.

I am at a loss trying to figure out what strikes me as a statistical anomaly, except to suggest that because of the dynamic character of our religious life, Centrist Orthodox families tend to be pulled either toward the yeshiva-world or the Modern Orthodox and, more likely, in the yeshiva-world direction. A corollary factor is the tendency for newly married Orthodox couples who live away from New York, as well as parents with young children, to move toward the New York area where their identity on the Orthodox spectrum may change. In smaller Jewish communities around the country, Centrist Orthodox schools often face competition from smaller yeshiva-world institutions, the result being that yeshiva-world families that previously would send their children to centrist institutions now opt for schools that more closely fit their religious outlook.

<sup>11</sup> In the 1998 census, I reported that there were 3.26 children in the families of Modern Orthodox eighth graders as compared to 6.57 and 7.92 children respectively in yeshiva-world and chassidic families. There is no reason to believe that these statistics have changed appreciably over the past decade, except perhaps for an increase in the size of yeshiva-world families. For all of the groups and notably the Modern Orthodox, it is necessary to keep in mind that because of the singles phenomenon the actual fertility rate is below these numbers. Among the Modern Orthodox, likely it is below 3.0.

<sup>12</sup> Aliyah has always been disproportionately Orthodox, according to Nefesh B'Nefesh reaching about two-thirds for *olim* from the United States. This must reduce the number of American Jews who identify as Orthodox and it must affect day school enrollment. Because U.S. aliyah has been very low, from the overall perspective of Jewish demography, the impact has been minimal. However, precisely because the Orthodox constitute a relatively small proportion of all American Jews, aliyah makes a difference in this sector. For day schools, the impact is enlarged by the children born into aliyah families both before and after the move to Israel. I am told by Nefesh B'Nefesh that there are approximately three children in each younger Orthodox family making aliyah. There are now what may be regarded as second, third and even fourth generation former American families, nearly all of whom have diminished U.S. day school enrollment through the first generation making aliyah. There is no way to calculate the number. My estimate or guess is that as a consequence of aliyah, current U.S. day school enrollment has been reduced by more than 20,000, mainly in the Modern and Centrist Orthodox subgroups. Relatively few chassidim, with the possible exception of the Ger grouping, have made aliyah. It is hard to get a handle on yeshiva-world aliyah, to an extent because there apparently are hundreds of kollel families with children living in Israel that have not formally made aliyah. As for the non-Orthodox, there clearly has been some impact on non-Orthodox day school statistics.

Table 3 provides evidence of the decline of Centrist Orthodox enrollment outside of New York and New Jersey.

TABLE 3: CENTRIST ORTHODOX SCHOOLS OUTSIDE NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY

| Census Year | Schools | Enrollment | Change |          |
|-------------|---------|------------|--------|----------|
|             |         |            |        |          |
| 1998        | 34      | 7,543      |        |          |
| 2003        | 34      | 6,589      | -954   | -12.647% |
| 2008        | 32      | 6,050      | -539   | -8.180%  |

**Yeshiva-world** schools continue to constitute the largest educational sector by enrollment. Also, 30% of all schools are identified as yeshiva-world, constituting by far the largest grouping. Except for Chabad, there is a tendency in this sector towards small schools, a point that will be developed further in this report. Especially at the boys high school level, the proliferation of small schools reflects the preference of parents for institutions that have no more than one or perhaps two classes per grade.

The terms yeshiva and yeshiva-world may suggest a monolithic pattern of education. The reality is otherwise. Among all of the sectors of day school education, again with the exception of Chabad, the yeshiva-world is the most pronounced in internal differentiation. Location is one critical factor, as schools outside of the New York area that are identified as yeshiva-world may have a more varied student body, which is reflected in the curriculum and in other ways. Brooklyn yeshivas and Lakewood yeshivas are not alike. Those in Lakewood are more intensive in Judaics and more insular, while those in Brooklyn continue to put some stress on secular studies. In the boys high schools in Lakewood, secular subjects are no longer taught. Girls schools, usually called Beth Jacobs, have a more balanced curriculum. In the yeshiva-world, boys and girls are never taught in the same facility, although there are situations in which a single corporate entity sponsors separate programs for boys and girls.

In general, boys yeshivas operate on Sundays and have long school days, extending from mandatory tefila or prayer in the morning until classes in the late afternoon or evening. They also require, usually starting with the upper elementary school grades, participation on one or more evening a week in religious study and this may extend well into the night.

After a designated grade, usually the fourth or fifth, the Judaic focus is primarily and, at times, nearly entirely on Talmudic study.

The growth in yeshiva-world enrollment is primarily attributable to fertility, as younger families in this sector typically have more children than their parents had.<sup>13</sup>

In 2008, there were nearly 64,000 yeshiva-world enrollees, representing 28% of all day school enrollment. This is substantially more than the combined enrollment in Modern and Centrist Orthodox schools. There were nearly 10,000 more yeshiva-world students in 2008 than in 2003. A huge proportion of this increase is in Lakewood, New Jersey, which has experienced explosive growth in Orthodox population, particularly in younger families, over the past decade. In 1998, Lakewood had 5,390 students. The number grew to 8,856 in five years. In this census, Lakewood schools enroll a total of 14,774 students, of whom 13,779 are in yeshiva-world institutions. This means that approximately one-half of all yeshiva-world growth between 2003 and 2008 has occurred in Lakewood. This is astounding.<sup>14</sup>

Overall, the yeshiva-world has grown by one-third since the last census, again with half of the growth in Lakewood. If we project this rate of growth—and it may even be greater—over the coming decade, by 2018 there will be more than 85,000 yeshiva-world students from age four through high school. This will necessitate the development of additional facilities, a difficult and expensive challenge.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> While in the early stage of yeshiva-world development, many schools had a kiruv or outreach function and accepted students from homes of lesser Orthodoxy and even from non-Orthodox homes, nowadays, few students who fit this description are accepted by yeshiva-world schools, the apparent fear being that they may have an untoward influence on other students.

<sup>14</sup> The Lakewood statistics are even more remarkable when we consider, as noted, that four-year olds by and large go to a private kindergarten or nursery and not to a regular school.

<sup>15</sup> Brooklyn remains the center of the yeshiva-world, with large boys schools and Beth Jacobs. However, with more and more yeshiva-world families deciding to remain in Lakewood due to lower housing costs and the preference for Lakewood's religious ambiance, the expectation is that there will be a decline in Brooklyn's yeshiva-world enrollment. This hasn't happened as yet, but over the past decade enrollment has been flat. There were 19,215 yeshiva-world students in Brooklyn schools in 1998. The 2008 census shows 20,009 students, for a gain of 794 enrollees or 4%.

**Chassidic** schools are with few exceptions sponsored by particular groups or sects. Although there are variations among chassidic schools, in the aggregate they display a monolithic character; in student dress and other key respects they are largely alike. In boys yeshivas, religious studies overwhelmingly dominate. In the younger grades, secular studies are minimal and they generally vanish after the conventional elementary school grades. Selected secular subjects are included in the curriculum for the girls schools, even at the high school level. All of the students come from rather similar homes and have rather similar attitudes.

From 1998 to 2008, chassidic enrollment grew by a remarkable 56% or by nearly 22,000 students. Although chassidic enrollment remains slightly below yeshiva-world enrollment, in another five years it is certain that the chassidic category will be the largest. If the rate of growth continues, which is to say that the fertility rate remains as it has been, we can project a chassidic school enrollment of more than 100,000 in ten years. This will require a significant addition of facilities, with some probably not being located close to where the students live.<sup>16</sup>

For all of the increased enrollment, the number of chassidic schools has grown by only four since 2003, providing convincing evidence that, in the main, these schools are large institutions, with branches being established to accommodate additional students. As noted, there are small chassidic schools, generally new institutions that can be located in a storefront or apartment, that are not included on any Jewish or governmental school list.

It merits mention that more than one-third of all chassidic enrollment or approximately 22,000 students are in Satmar schools. This represents 10% of all enrollment covered in the census.

**Chabad** day school education is a fascinating phenomenon that is reflected in the census statistics. In the early period of Chabad or Lubavitch development in North America, much emphasis was placed on establishing schools in major cities, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. That changed, for reasons that are not entirely clear, when the late Rebbe assumed leadership in the late 1940s. This was a period of considerable growth in yeshivas and day schools throughout the continent, yet the Rebbe downplayed the establishment

of new schools, preferring to focus the movement on other outreach activities, including after-school programs.<sup>17</sup> There was an attitudinal shift toward the end of the Rebbe's life, perhaps reflecting the remarkable spread of Chabad into communities throughout the U.S. and Canada, many with limited or no available day school education. Chabad schools were established and this trend has continued, with some existing day schools becoming Chabad institutions.<sup>18</sup> In a sense, the Chabad day school pattern has been similar in recent years to the movement's pattern of establishing new synagogues.

Accordingly, Chabad day schools are a varied lot, with older institutions functioning as mainstream yeshivas with a Lubavitch orientation and the newer ones resembling co-educational Modern Orthodox schools. In the newer schools, overwhelmingly the students come from non-Orthodox homes. There is also a handful of Chabad schools that serve the movement's emissary families. In these insular schools, the education of boys is often restricted to religious subjects, a policy that was endorsed by the Rebbe.

There are now 73 Chabad schools, up from 54 in 2003 and 44 in 1998. In enrollment, there are now nearly 5,000 more students than in 1998, with three-fourths of this increase being in the 2003-08 period. Outside of Brooklyn, Chabad schools are nearly all small and this has critical financial and curriculum implications.<sup>19</sup>

All of the schools that primarily serve **Immigrant** families or promote an outreach mission are Orthodox-sponsored and operate as Orthodox institutions, although many of the students in these schools come from homes that are not Orthodox or religious. The experience of these schools over the past decade reflects a troublesome change in the Orthodox commitment

<sup>16</sup> It is a remarkable sight to see school bus traffic in Borough Park and Williamsburg between 8 am – 9:30 am on weekday mornings. There are so many buses that quite a few can only complete their pick-ups and arrive at their destination a half-hour or more after the school day has begun.

<sup>17</sup> I have been told that the Rebbe felt that it was inappropriate for Chabad to compete with existing yeshivas and day schools because it would hurt their enrollments.

<sup>18</sup> This development has encompassed both Orthodox and non-Orthodox schools, always involving small schools that were in difficult financial shape.

<sup>19</sup> Because some of these schools are tiny, there are those that combine grades.

to provide a meaningful religious education to immigrant and outreach families. Whereas once there was a strong sense of obligation, notably in yeshiva-world circles, what remains now is an atrophied sense of commitment, with the prospect of further attrition in support for and enrollment in these schools.

In 1998 there were 31 schools in this category, with an enrollment of 5,000 students. In the current census, there are 24 schools and they show an enrollment decline of one-third over the course of a decade, this despite the opening of a large immigrant school that has served as many as 700 students.

One explanation for the changing fate of these schools is that emigration from Russia created a heightened sense of responsibility that has all but vanished as the Russians are no longer coming and the second generation has experienced a significant degree of acculturation and assimilation. The immigrant schools today attract mainly Bukharian families and there is little apparent interest in providing support to these schools. Furthermore, the data reflect the Orthodox mindset promoted by too many who are engaged in kiruv that outreach can be effective even without a nexus to day school education.<sup>20</sup>

It is not possible to get a good handle on **Special Education** students or schools. The numbers provided in Tables 1 and 2 drastically undercount. They do show considerable growth in enrollment. Some day schools have included special education students in their ordinary enrollment statistics. As for Special Education schools, all of which I believe are under Orthodox sponsorship, there are those that for reasons related to governmental funding accept students who are not Jewish.

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## ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL

There are reasons why from the perspective of grade level, the enrollment pattern should resemble a pyramid, with larger enrollments in the lower grades, starting with the powerful factor of fertility which dictates that within the two charedi or fervently Orthodox sectors that constitute 55% of all enrollment, each age or grade cohort should be larger than the level above it. To a lesser extent, fertility should also have a bearing on grade level distribution in the other sectors of the day school world. Another reason

for a pyramidal configuration is that there are parents, notably among the non-Orthodox, whose commitment to day school for their children is not open-ended. There are children who are enrolled only for preschool and there are children who first come after preschool, with some staying in the day school only for the lower grades. Still others may remain for all of elementary school and then transfer to a public or private high school. Furthermore, in some communities and, again, primarily in the non-Orthodox sectors, there are day schools that terminate after a particular grade and the students have no local Jewish school in which to enroll.

As Display 1 shows, putting aside the four-year old cohort, enrollment declines at each successive grade level, so that in grade twelve, the number of students is about 40% fewer than there are in the first grade. This statistic suggests that the downward movement as grade level goes up is modest. This is demonstrated in Display 1 which resembles no more than a mini-pyramid. If we calculate the decline starting with the five-year old cohort, the number of students in grade twelve is nearly 50% fewer than the number in that group.

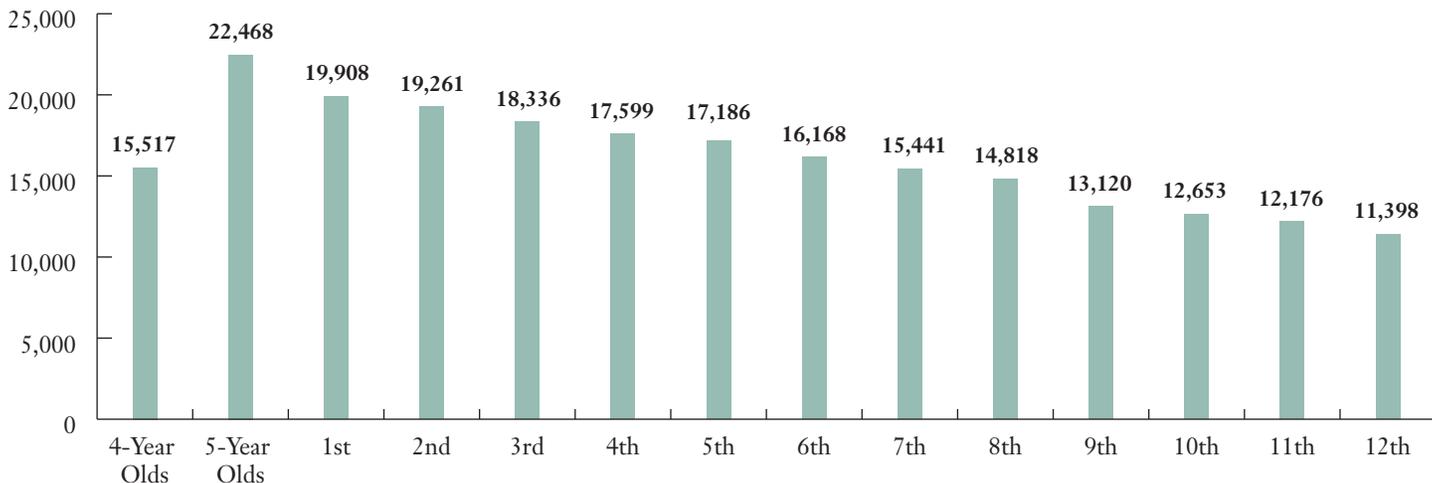
The greatest enrollment changes occur between the age-four and age-five levels and between age-five and the first grade. It is possible to figure out, as previously explained, why the age-four cohort is so much smaller than the five-year old cohort. There are day school children who were not enrolled until they were five and there is also a policy of many chassidic schools to accept children into the lowest grades at a younger age than other schools do. The point is that too much should not be read into the statistics for enrollment of four-year olds, five-year olds and even first grade students.

From the first grade on, the greatest declines occur after grades five and eight, they being the cut-off points for children whose parents believe that five or eight years of day school are sufficient and then are transferred into a public or private school.

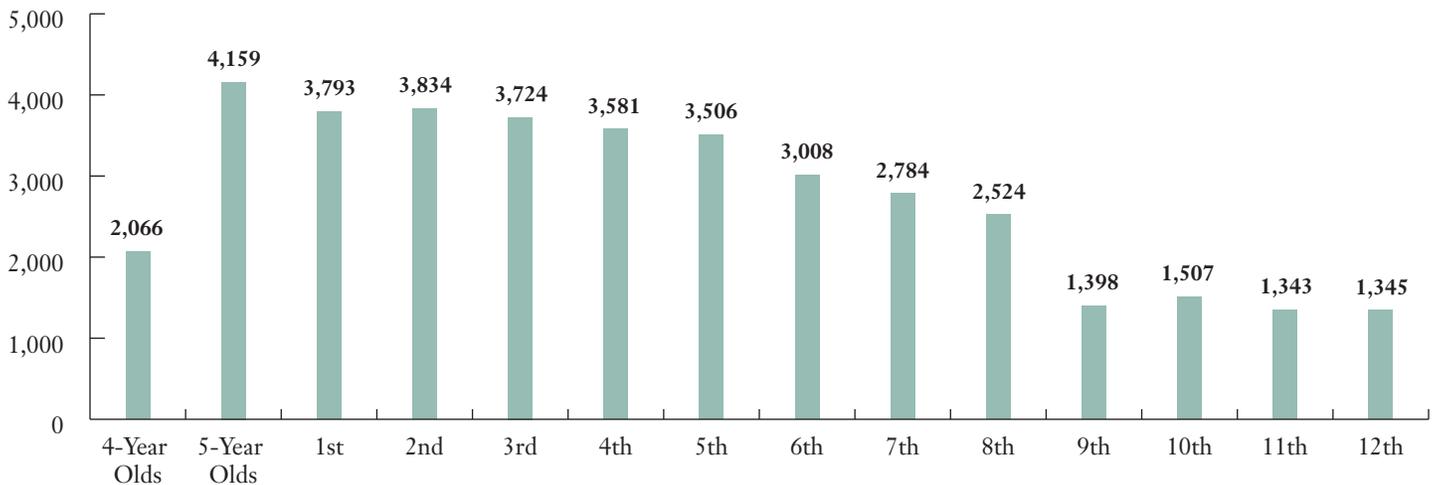
<sup>20</sup> There are, of course, children from immigrant or kiruv backgrounds in other day schools. My estimate is that they are not many, either because tuition is too high or because schools are reluctant to admit students who are not up to the expected standard in Jewish knowledge and observance.

There is a school in Brooklyn called Bambi or Big Apple that enrolls 1,500 Russian Jewish students in the elementary school grades. It is listed by New York State as a Jewish school but not included in this census because the curriculum consists exclusively of academic or secular subjects.

DISPLAY 1: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY GRADE



DISPLAY 2: NON-ORTHODOX ENROLLMENT BY GRADE



This is evident in the non-Orthodox sectors when enrollment for two 2003 cohorts is compared to the number of students in the same groupings five years later. In 2003, there were 4,188 first graders in Community, Solomon Schechter and Reform day schools. Five years later, when this cohort was in grade six, enrollment had declined to 3,008, a drop of more than 25%. In 2003, there were 4,044 third graders in these schools, while five years later when this cohort was in grade eight, the number was 2,524, a decline of more than 35%. This clearly demonstrates the extent of attrition in non-Orthodox schools, resulting mainly, but not entirely, from parents deciding that a specified span of years is sufficient for day school attendance.<sup>21</sup>

Display 2 presents the pattern for non-Orthodox enrollment and it shows a sharper degree of grade change than is indicated in Display 1. As expected, the most significant enrollment drop occurs after grade eight.

<sup>21</sup> In the non-Orthodox sector, there are schools that do not offer the full compliment of elementary school grades, so that these declines cannot be attributed entirely to parental decisions.

Attrition is modest in Orthodox schools, including those that are Modern Orthodox. In 2003, Modern Orthodox first grade enrollment was 2,383; five years later, this cohort had 2,239 enrollees in the sixth grade. The third grade had 2,287 students in 2003; five years later, in grade eight, the number was 2,156.

As we have seen, non-Orthodox enrollment declined between 2003 and 2008. It is useful to analyze the non-Orthodox statistics for the two censuses according to the following grade groupings:

TABLE 4: NON-ORTHODOX ENROLLMENT BY GRADE GROUPINGS

|                   | 2003          | 2008          |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 4 and 5-year olds | 6,103         | 6,225         |
| Grades 1-5        | 20,333        | 18,438        |
| Grades 6-8        | 9,093         | 8,316         |
| Grades 9-12       | 4,100         | 5,593         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>39,629</b> | <b>38,572</b> |

All of the non-Orthodox decline occurred in elementary school and not at either the preschool or high school levels. The enrollment loss was more pronounced in grades 1-5 than in grades 6-8. There was a significant increase of more than one-third in the high school grades, all of it attributable to growth in Community schools. This is a major development, indicating that there is greater receptivity than previously

for all-day Jewish high schools in non-Orthodox circles. There is, of course, the possibility that the grades 1-5 decline may ultimately result in a decline in non-Orthodox high school enrollment.

Is there an explanation for the nearly 10% student loss between 2003-08 in the lower grades, while there was a much smaller per grade loss in grades 6-8 and no decline in the preschool and certainly not in high school? An analysis of grades 1-5 data shows a decline over the five-year figure for each of these grades. All of this is attributable to what has occurred in Solomon Schechter schools. Furthermore, at the high school level, Solomon Schechter enrollment went down by a third since 2003.

Table 5 depicts the distribution of students for each day school sector according to the same four age/grade categories utilized in Table 4. For preschool, the pattern varies no more than modestly from group to group, the notable exception being the Reform where more than one-quarter of the students are in the 4-5 age group. The Reform also have the highest distribution in grades 1-5.

TABLE 5: TOTALS BY GRADE GROUPINGS

| Classification      | Total Students | 4-5 Age Group | 4-5 Age Group as % of Total | Grades 1-5 | Grades 1-5 as % of Total | Grades 6-8 | Grades 6-8 as % of Total | Grades 9-12 | Grades 9-12 as % of Total |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Centrist Orthodox   | 17,600         | 2,718         | 15.44%                      | 6,363      | 36.15%                   | 3,419      | 19.43%                   | 5,100       | 28.98%                    |
| Chabad              | 12,295         | 2,321         | 18.88%                      | 5,442      | 44.26%                   | 2,596      | 21.11%                   | 1,936       | 15.75%                    |
| Chassidic           | 60,955         | 12,233        | 20.07%                      | 23,818     | 39.07%                   | 12,078     | 19.81%                   | 12,826      | 21.04%                    |
| Community           | 20,821         | 2,852         | 13.70%                      | 8,868      | 42.59%                   | 4,379      | 21.03%                   | 4,722       | 22.68%                    |
| Immigrant/ Outreach | 3,432          | 498           | 14.51%                      | 1,089      | 31.73%                   | 727        | 21.18%                   | 1,118       | 32.58%                    |
| Modern Orthodox     | 29,378         | 4,414         | 15.02%                      | 11,865     | 40.39%                   | 6,590      | 22.43%                   | 6,509       | 22.16%                    |
| Reform              | 4,528          | 1,235         | 27.27%                      | 2,583      | 57.05%                   | 710        | 15.68%                   | 0           | 0.00%                     |
| Solomon Schechter   | 13,223         | 2,138         | 16.17%                      | 6,987      | 52.84%                   | 3,227      | 24.40%                   | 871         | 6.59%                     |
| Special Education   | 1,829          | -             | -                           | -          | -                        | -          | -                        | -           | -                         |
| Yeshiva             | 63,817         | 9,576         | 15.01%                      | 25,275     | 39.61%                   | 12,701     | 19.90%                   | 16,265      | 25.49%                    |

By contrast, 55% of Community enrollment is in preschool through grade five, with 23% in high school. As for the Solomon Schechters, two-thirds of the students are in the two lower grade categories and only 7% are in high school, another troubling statistic for the Conservative movement.

For all of their declining enrollment, the student distributions in immigrant/outreach schools is substantially weighted toward the upper grades, with one-third of the students in high school. The apparent explanation is that unlike the other sectors where invariably students enter in preschool or the first grade, in immigrant/outreach schools the entry point can be at any grade level, depending on the age when the children came with their family to the U.S. and also when the parents decided that their children should attend a Jewish day school.

There is nothing remarkable about the distribution in the four principal Orthodox categories, except that there is little intra-Orthodox divergence in the enrollment patterns. Modern Orthodox and yeshiva-world distributions are quite similar, which might not be expected in view of the far higher fertility rate among the latter.

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## SCHOOL SIZE

Jewish day schools are destined to be small institutions, certainly when compared to public elementary and secondary schools that tend to be large and, generally, also when compared to private schools or schools sponsored by other religious groups. This fate is the result of our geographic dispersal across a very large continent, as well as our denominational diversity. There is the added factor that especially in the yeshiva-world sector that has the largest number of students, there is an instinct for small boys schools, arising to an extent from parental preference and also out of the ambition of kollel graduates who are determined to remain in religious education and need to have their own place in the sun.

Even in the New York-New Jersey area which now includes about 70% of all enrollment, there is a multitude of small institutions, although this region also includes nearly all of the largest Jewish schools in the country. As we will see in the next section, at least for the Orthodox, the geographic concentration

of Jewish families and institutions has expanded in this region during the decade that these censuses have been conducted.

Smallness raises important communal, philanthropic and educational issues. Is it, for example, the responsibility of Federations that have much on their plate and insufficient funds to accommodate all who seek support to assist small schools? The question assumes, of course, as I do, that in a broad communal sense Federations are obliged to give meaningful assistance to the day schools in their service area. But should they support an institution that has two or three dozen students? What about the role of private philanthropy? It would appear that small schools need greater per-student assistance to meet the budget since tuition income cannot come close to closing the gap between income and expenses.

Most important are the educational issues. Although there may be exceptions, it is evident that small schools cannot have the variety of curricular offerings or library and other facilities that are available in many larger schools, nor can they offer an array of extra-curricular activities. Are students being shortchanged educationally in small schools?

Apart from the relevant factor that our community is bereft of centralized organizations that have the capacity to determine which schools should operate, there is the reality that some small schools invariably are functional from the communal standpoint and even, to an extent, from an educational perspective. This is evident in small Jewish communities that have but one day school. It is also true of larger communities. A not uncommon situation is where a small yeshiva-world high school is established to accommodate students whose parents will not send them to a co-educational high school. A number of Beth Jacob high schools have been opened specifically to deal with this reality. The small high school strengthens, in turn, the local Jewish community because it can serve as a magnet preventing yeshiva-world families from moving away.

Alternatively, there are small Community schools that accommodate families for whom the local Orthodox day school is too intensively religious or too weak on the academic side.

Even when such considerations do not come into play, a small school may be justified, as when the main day school charges high tuition that is beyond the reach of prospective parents. A number of small Chabad schools have been

established in such communities and they charge far lower tuition and have a more benevolent scholarship policy. In these situations—and others—diversity and smallness serve reasonable Jewish and educational needs. Even in the yeshiva-world which has a proliferation of small schools, there is justification because such small schools are thought to do a better job providing for the emotional, educational and Judaic needs of at-risk students.

Admittedly, there is some excess, but probably not that much. I believe that in the aggregate, smallness means that there are students in day school who otherwise would not be there. For all of the assumption that smaller schools add inordinately to the cost of day school education, the reality may be otherwise because nearly all small day schools are low-cost operations where the per student outlay is not greater and often less than what it is at larger institutions. Accordingly, if the students educated in small schools would be enrolled in larger schools, there is a good prospect that the cost would be even higher.

Table 6 provides a breakdown of schools according to size and provides the aggregate enrollment for each school size category. As discussed earlier, over the course of the past decade there has been a large increase in the number of day schools, from 676 to 802. This may suggest that during this period the share of day schools that are small has increased or, at least, remained stable. That is not the case. In 1998 and 2003, nearly 40% of all schools had 100 or fewer students. In this census, there has been a slight drop,

TABLE 6: ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL SIZE

| School Size  | # of Students | Total Students |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1-25         | 65            | 1,124          |
| 26-50        | 96            | 3,778          |
| 51-100       | 140           | 10,612         |
| 101-200      | 156           | 22,731         |
| 201-350      | 156           | 41,151         |
| 351-500      | 70            | 29,467         |
| 501-750      | 55            | 33,700         |
| 751-1,000    | 30            | 25,879         |
| 1,000+       | 34            | 59,870         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>802</b>    | <b>228,312</b> |

so that schools with 100 or fewer students now constitute 37.5% of the total. The smallest category, 1-25 students, now consists of four fewer schools than five years ago. There are now 15 more schools in the next category, 26-50 students, than there were in 2003.

At the other end of the size spectrum, this census includes 119 schools with 500 or more students, as compared to 113 five years ago. This isn't an appreciable change, especially in view of the overall enrollment increase of 23,000 students in the same period. We might have expected a greater number of large schools. However, these 119 schools have 53% of all enrollment.

Table 7 shows the distribution of school size for each day school category. Because size is generally not relevant in special education schools, if they are removed what emerges is a picture that has been touched on previously. More than 100 yeshiva-world institutions have fewer than 100 students, which is to say that more than 40% of yeshiva-world schools are small. There are, of course, a significant number of mid-size schools in this category and also larger schools. If we regard those institutions with 500 or more students as large, which I believe is the appropriate yardstick in the day school world, 41, or one out of six yeshiva-world schools, can be regarded as large. Only nine have more than 1,000 students.

By contrast, the chassidic category which has fewer than half the number of yeshiva-world schools has an abundance of large schools. Forty-nine out of the 105 chassidic schools have more than 350 students and 15, or one in seven, have more than 1,000 students. There are relatively few small chassidic schools, but as I have pointed out, there is a good prospect that this census may have omitted some of these.

The Centrist Orthodox and Modern Orthodox patterns show a fairly level distribution across the size spectrum, with the Modern Orthodox tending more toward larger institutions with 500+ students.

Chabad schools, as expected, are in the main small, with nearly half having 100 or fewer students. The likelihood is that Chabad schools that serve the families of the movement's emissaries or an outreach function will remain small. Nearly one-half of the immigrant/outreach schools are small and only two have 500 or more students. These statistics reflect the enrollment decline in this category.

TABLE 7: NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY SCHOOL SIZE

| Classification         | 1-25      | 26-50     | 51-100     | 101-200    | 201-350    | 351-500   | 501-750   | 751-1,000 | 1,000+    | Total      |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Centrist Orthodox      | 4         | 8         | 8          | 17         | 23         | 6         | 4         | 1         | 1         | 72         |
| Chabad                 | 14        | 13        | 17         | 13         | 7          | 3         | 2         | 1         | 3         | 73         |
| Chassidic              | 2         | -         | 16         | 15         | 23         | 20        | 9         | 5         | 15        | 105        |
| Community              | 6         | 15        | 15         | 28         | 16         | 8         | 6         | 3         | 1         | 98         |
| Immigrant/<br>Outreach | 3         | 4         | 4          | 8          | 3          | 1         | 1         | -         | -         | 24         |
| Modern Orthodox        | 2         | 7         | 16         | 18         | 14         | 13        | 7         | 4         | 5         | 86         |
| Reform                 | -         | -         | 5          | 1          | 8          | -         | 3         | -         | -         | 17         |
| Solomon Schechter      | 1         | 2         | 4          | 16         | 16         | 4         | 5         | 2         | -         | 50         |
| Special Education      | 12        | 12        | 5          | 2          | 2          | -         | -         | -         | -         | 33         |
| Yeshiva                | 21        | 35        | 50         | 38         | 44         | 15        | 18        | 14        | 9         | 244        |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>65</b> | <b>96</b> | <b>140</b> | <b>156</b> | <b>156</b> | <b>70</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>802</b> |

TABLE 8: NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL SIZE

| Classification         | 1-25         | 26-50        | 51-100        | 101-200       | 201-350       | 351-500       | 501-750       | 751-1,000     | 1,000+        | Total          |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Centrist Orthodox      | 82           | 335          | 651           | 2,638         | 6,242         | 2,695         | 2,461         | 936           | 1,610         | 17,650         |
| Chabad                 | 244          | 474          | 1,230         | 1,802         | 1,684         | 1,181         | 1,146         | 890           | 3,645         | 12,296         |
| Chassidic              | 45           | -            | 1,206         | 2,286         | 6,251         | 8,488         | 5,716         | 4,323         | 32,640        | 60,955         |
| Community              | 86           | 632          | 1,156         | 4,021         | 4,175         | 3,287         | 3,571         | 2,507         | 1,403         | 20,838         |
| Immigrant/<br>Outreach | 61           | 157          | 265           | 1,101         | 749           | 484           | 615           | -             | -             | 3,432          |
| Modern Orthodox        | 41           | 283          | 1,290         | 2,391         | 3,744         | 5,490         | 4,697         | 3,611         | 7,850         | 29,397         |
| Reform                 | -            | -            | 400           | 173           | 2,116         | -             | 1,880         | -             | -             | 4,569          |
| Solomon Schechter      | 22           | 87           | 331           | 2,335         | 4,116         | 1,704         | 2,874         | 1,754         | -             | 13,223         |
| Special Education      | 193          | 439          | 394           | 313           | 490           | -             | -             | -             | -             | 1,829          |
| Yeshiva                | 316          | 1,341        | 3,615         | 5,671         | 11,584        | 6,138         | 10,740        | 11,858        | 12,722        | 63,985         |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>1,090</b> | <b>3,748</b> | <b>10,538</b> | <b>22,731</b> | <b>41,151</b> | <b>29,467</b> | <b>33,700</b> | <b>25,879</b> | <b>59,870</b> | <b>228,174</b> |

The small number of Reform day schools are generally mid-size, with five having between 51-100 students. The Solomon Schechter schools have a similar pattern, as 32, or nearly two-thirds, of the 50 schools have between 100-350 students. Only seven have more than 500 students and an equal number are in the small-size category. Community schools tend overwhelmingly to be in the small and mid-size grouping, with 32% having fewer than 100 students and nearly twice this figure being mid-size, with between 101-500 students. There are but ten large Community schools.

For all of the proliferation of small day schools and the paucity of large schools, when school size is examined from the perspective of overall enrollment, what is evident is that large schools are dominant. More than one-half of all enrollment is in the three largest size categories and only 7% is in the three smallest categories. For all of the interest in the nearly 40% of the schools that have fewer than 100 students, these schools constitute a very small portion of all day school enrollment.

The distribution of enrollment by school size is shown in Table 8.

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## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

There is always geographic movement in Jewish life in the Diaspora. Older places of settlement lose population and may be abandoned and new places are established. In the contemporary period, far more than not, the newly-married decide not to live where their parents live, perhaps because of the cost of housing or because they prefer to make their home in a community where there are many young families. A host of other socio-economic factors contribute to the frequency of movement. We are or seem to be, in any case, a dispersed people who though relatively few in number are found nearly everywhere, invariably together with an infrastructure of Jewish communal life.

All of this has consequences for our educational institutions, including day schools. Population shifts may result in existing schools suffering enrollment declines that threaten their viability and they may create the need for additional schools to serve communities that are growing. Day school education therefore is always, in a geographical sense, a

work in progress. These censuses are testimony to how much change has occurred in the brief span of a decade.

Although day schools in a broad sense mirror American Jewish living patterns and trends, because they are so much an Orthodox phenomenon, the geographic distribution of these institutions varies significantly from the geographic configuration of American Jewish life. Overwhelmingly, day school education is concentrated, not dispersed, which is to say that movement and changes occur within mostly limited geographic zones. If housing is not available or too expensive in neighborhoods that abound with religious life—a condition that is common in Orthodox life—the tendency is for those who seek housing to veer toward nearby neighborhoods or communities. As a fascinating illustration, there is the ongoing experience of Williamsburg and Satmar chassidim who are pushing into Bedford-Stuyvesant, one of the major African American neighborhoods in the country. This is a remarkable development that has received very little attention. When the Orthodox move into new neighborhoods, the likelihood is that these will also be the localities for new yeshivas and day schools.

Among the nearly 90% of American Jews who are not Orthodox, the movement into new areas often is a result of, or leads to, the downsizing of Jewish commitment and identity and this, too, obviously has consequences for day schools because as commitment wanes, so does the likelihood that children will be sent to a day school. Even when after there have been population shifts a commitment to day school education remains strong among non-Orthodox families, it is a challenge to ensure that school facilities are within close proximity to where families with young children live. Population movements are an important aspect of American Jewish life and they have been a factor in the significant building boom in non-Orthodox day school education over the past decade.

Table 9 provides enrollment figures by state, including comparison with the 1998 data. Day schools are located in thirty-nine states, one fewer than four years ago, and also the District of Columbia. However, eight states have fewer than 50 day schoolers and another two have fewer than 100. Furthermore, in the 1998-2008 period, there were enrollment declines in 15 states, this in a period when overall day school enrollment grew by nearly 25%.

Many states have gained students, yet the picture that emerges from the data is of ever-greater geographic concentration.

TABLE 9: STATE ENROLLMENT TOTALS

| State                | 1998    | 2008    | Change<br>1998-2008 | % Change<br>1998-2008 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Alabama              | 152     | 92      | -60                 | -39.47%               |
| Arizona              | 589     | 950     | 361                 | 61.29%                |
| Arkansas             | -       | 17      | 10                  | -                     |
| California           | 14,696  | 15,762  | 1,066               | 7.25%                 |
| Colorado             | 782     | 889     | 107                 | 13.68%                |
| Connecticut          | 1,673   | 1,801   | 128                 | 7.65%                 |
| Delaware             | 94      | 47      | -47                 | -50.00%               |
| District of Columbia | 180     | 245     | 65                  | 36.11%                |
| Florida              | 8,129   | 9,354   | 1,225               | 15.07%                |
| Georgia              | 2,014   | 2,621   | 607                 | 30.14%                |
| Hawaii               | 19      | 10      | -9                  | -47.37%               |
| Illinois             | 5,127   | 5,069   | -58                 | -1.13%                |
| Indiana              | 416     | 273     | -143                | -34.38%               |
| Iowa                 | 52      | 131     | 79                  | 151.92%               |
| Kansas               | 338     | 251     | -87                 | -25.74%               |
| Kentucky             | 148     | 30      | -118                | -79.73%               |
| Louisiana            | 75      | 40      | -35                 | -46.67%               |
| Maine                | 36      | 39      | 3                   | 8.33%                 |
| Maryland             | 6,926   | 8,003   | 1,077               | 15.55%                |
| Massachusetts        | 3,189   | 3,496   | 307                 | 9.63%                 |
| Michigan             | 2,419   | 2,555   | 136                 | 5.62%                 |
| Minnesota            | 822     | 933     | 111                 | 13.50%                |
| Missouri             | 734     | 681     | -53                 | -7.22%                |
| Nebraska             | 22      | 43      | 21                  | 95.45%                |
| Nevada               | 419     | 579     | 160                 | 38.19%                |
| New Jersey           | 17,954  | 28,704  | 10,750              | 59.88%                |
| New Mexico           | 60      | 59      | -1                  | -1.67%                |
| New York             | 103,909 | 132,573 | 28,664              | 27.59%                |
| North Carolina       | 354     | 572     | 218                 | 61.58%                |
| Ohio                 | 3,355   | 3,166   | -189                | -5.63%                |
| Oklahoma             | 79      | 34      | -45                 | -56.96%               |
| Oregon               | 249     | 299     | 50                  | 20.08%                |
| Pennsylvania         | 4,016   | 3,227   | -789                | -19.65%               |
| Rhode Island         | 386     | 271     | -115                | -29.79%               |
| South Carolina       | 248     | 276     | 28                  | 11.29%                |
| Tennessee            | 464     | 505     | 41                  | 8.84%                 |
| Texas                | 2,260   | 2,674   | 414                 | 18.32%                |
| Vermont              | -       | -       | -                   | -                     |
| Virginia             | 565     | 562     | -3                  | -0.53%                |
| Washington           | 635     | 650     | 15                  | 2.36%                 |
| Wisconsin            | 748     | 691     | -57                 | -7.62%                |

Aside from New York and New Jersey, there are ten states with 2,000 or more students. They are California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. By and large, these are states with important, even major, Jewish communities. They have in this census a total of 55,927 students, as compared to 52,131 a decade ago. Accordingly, they gained 7% in enrollment. This is a low figure when we consider, once more, that nationally the increase was close to 25%.

Another way to look at the states outside of New York and New Jersey is the breakdown between Orthodox and non-Orthodox schools. As is shown in Table 10, what emerges—and perhaps surprisingly—is a nearly equal distribution, for Orthodox schools have about 35,200 students or 52.7% and the non-Orthodox have about 31,600 students or 47.3%.

What makes this surprising is that from its inception, the day school world has been overwhelmingly an Orthodox phenomenon and for decades Torah Umesorah focused on the development and strengthening of day schools throughout the continent. For whatever reasons, this is no longer the case. Were it not for recently-established Chabad schools, numerically non-Orthodox enrollment would be about equal to the Orthodox enrollment away from New York and New Jersey.

TABLE 10: ENROLLMENT EXCLUDING NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY

| Classification            | Students      | % of Total    |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Orthodox</b>           |               |               |
| Centrist Orthodox         | 6,050         | 9.04%         |
| Chabad                    | 5,023         | 7.51%         |
| Chassidic                 | -             | 0.00%         |
| Immigrant/Outreach        | 332           | 0.50%         |
| Modern Orthodox           | 11,944        | 17.85%        |
| Special Education         | 217           | 0.32%         |
| Yeshiva                   | 11,668        | 17.44%        |
| <b>Orthodox Total</b>     | <b>35,234</b> | <b>52.67%</b> |
| <b>Non-Orthodox</b>       |               |               |
| Community                 | 19,182        | 28.67%        |
| Reform                    | 4,002         | 5.98%         |
| Solomon Schechter         | 8,479         | 12.67%        |
| <b>Non-Orthodox Total</b> | <b>31,663</b> | <b>47.33%</b> |
| <b>Non NY NJ Total</b>    | <b>66,897</b> |               |

This distribution also lends support to the idea developed previously that in communities around the country that have been centers of Orthodox life, younger families are gravitating to the New York area.

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## NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

The other side of the geographic distribution picture is the concentration of schools in New York and New Jersey, as well as the overwhelming Orthodox domination in these two states. New York has 132,500 students, up from 104,000 ten years ago, while New Jersey has nearly 29,000 students, up from 18,000 in 1998. New Jersey's gain is nearly all attributable to Lakewood, although there has been meaningful growth in Bergen County and the Passaic area. At the same time, Solomon Schechter enrollment in New Jersey has declined precipitously.

From 1998 to 2008, U.S. day school enrollment grew by 43,000. Of this, these two states account for nearly 39,500, which is astounding. If this rate of growth is maintained over the next decade—and there is no reason to believe that it will not be, especially since in New York the chassidic sectors have contributed enormously to the growth—by 2018, New York and New Jersey will have more than 50,000 additional day school and yeshiva students than they now have. This will tax facilities and school budgets. With the exception of key chassidic groups, there is nothing on the communal or day school horizon to indicate that there is planning to accommodate this growth and, for that matter, there is little prospect that there will be adequate funding to meet the additional needs. As it is, many schools in New York and New Jersey do not have adequate funding to meet their current needs.

There are now 346 schools in New York and 120 in New Jersey, constituting 57% of day schools in the U.S. Already, a large number of these schools are striving to make payroll and dozens are not succeeding. The economic downturn is a factor. But even if the economy was in better shape, the situation of many of these schools would be exceedingly difficult.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The burden to sustain the existing schools, as well as those that are to be established, is overwhelmingly on the Orthodox. This is apart from other educational institutions that serve the Orthodox, including Beth Medrash, seminary and kollel programs. There is also a remarkable network of projects and activities that assist tens of thousands of people in need. In short, the charitable capabilities of Orthodox life are already being severely tested.

As is indicated in Table 11, the largest share of New York enrollment is in the city itself, with Brooklyn having more than 80% of all of the students in the city.

TABLE 11: NEW YORK CITY ENROLLMENT

|               | 1998          | 2003          | 2008          |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Bronx         | 433           | 1,347         | 1,608         |
| Brooklyn      | 61,967        | 67,777        | 76,840        |
| Manhattan     | 4,487         | 4,326         | 4,354         |
| Queens        | 8,318         | 8,285         | 9,618         |
| Staten Island | 926           | 828           | 854           |
|               | <b>76,131</b> | <b>82,563</b> | <b>93,274</b> |

Table 12 gives the city breakdown according to day school categories. What is quickly evident is the large concentration of students in the chassidic sector, mostly in Brooklyn. All but 2.5% of New York City's enrollment is in Orthodox institutions.

TABLE 12: NEW YORK CITY ENROLLMENT BY DAY SCHOOL CATEGORY

| Classification            | Students      | % of Total    |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Orthodox</b>           |               |               |
| Centrist Orthodox         | 4,727         | 5.07%         |
| Chabad                    | 6,345         | 6.80%         |
| Chassidic                 | 40,239        | 43.14%        |
| Immigrant/Outreach        | 2,781         | 2.98%         |
| Modern Orthodox           | 9,255         | 9.92%         |
| Special Education         | 849           | 0.91%         |
| Yeshiva                   | 26,711        | 28.64%        |
| <b>Orthodox Total</b>     | <b>90,907</b> | <b>97.46%</b> |
| <b>Non-Orthodox</b>       |               |               |
| Community                 | 1,240         | 1.33%         |
| Reform                    | 567           | 0.61%         |
| Solomon Schechter         | 560           | 0.60%         |
| <b>Non-Orthodox Total</b> | <b>2,367</b>  | <b>2.54%</b>  |
| <b>NYC Total</b>          | <b>93,274</b> |               |

The distribution is not much changed when enrollment in the city and its major suburban counties are calculated. This is shown in Table 13.

Although the tables shown here demonstrate that there already is a remarkably high degree of geographic concentration in the day school world, the dynamics of Orthodox life point to New York and New Jersey having in the years ahead an even greater share of enrollment. This will clearly result in enormous financial and other pressures.

TABLE 13: NEW YORK CITY, NASSAU, SUFFOLK, WESTCHESTER & ROCKLAND ENROLLMENT

| Classification        | Students       | % of Total    |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Orthodox</b>       |                |               |
| Centrist Orthodox     | 7,835          | 6.42%         |
| Chabad                | 7,098          | 5.82%         |
| Chassidic             | 50,999         | 41.81%        |
| Immigrant/Outreach    | 2,781          | 2.28%         |
| Modern Orthodox       | 12,964         | 10.63%        |
| Special Education     | 1,074          | 0.88%         |
| Yeshiva               | 34,777         | 28.51%        |
| <b>Orthodox Total</b> | <b>117,528</b> | <b>96.34%</b> |
| <b>Non-Orthodox</b>   |                |               |
| Community             | 1,240          | 1.02%         |
| Reform                | 567            | 0.46%         |
| Solomon Schechter     | 2,657          | 2.18%         |
| Non-Orthodox Total    | 4,464          | 3.66%         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>121,992</b> |               |

As I complete this research, my hope is that there will be a fourth survey in the 2013-14 school year. My further hope is that our community will be able to meet the challenges arising from continued substantial enrollment growth.

I will soon enter my sixtieth year of activity on behalf of day school education. This is a long stretch of time in the life of one man, if not in the experience of the Jewish people. There are times when I wonder how all of this happened and there are times when I question whether this is the path that I should have taken. Intense and endless devotion to this field does take a toll. For all of the difficulty, I hope that through this activity there are schools and individuals that have been helped and that somehow this activity has contributed both to the strengthening of the Jewish people and the connection of individuals to our glorious heritage. I conclude with gratitude to The AVI CHAI Foundation for its commitment to day school education, for sponsoring this research and for allowing me to make through this Foundation an additional contribution to a field and activity that I believe is sanctified.

**Marvin Schick**

August 2009





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