

A CENSUS OF JEWISH
DAY SCHOOLS
IN THE UNITED STATES
2013-2014

MARVIN SCHICK

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LETTER FROM AVI CHAI'S CHAIRMAN

It is with enormous gratitude to Dr. Marvin Schick that I introduce to you the fourth Census of Jewish Day Schools. Dr. Schick has been a friend, colleague and intellectual force within The AVI CHAI Foundation for nearly three decades. As described below, Dr. Schick's insights have helped shape how we developed our philanthropy. The Trustees and staff of AVI CHAI join me in thanking Marvin for his years of devotion and dedication to the future of the Jewish people. We wish him "*ad meah v'esrim shana*" – may he continue to share his insights and experience and serve our community in good health "until 120."

Dr. Schick conducted the first census of Jewish day schools for AVI CHAI in 1998. It was an intensive, first-time effort to collect and document enrollments at all day schools in the United States. The census became a resource for planning agencies, funding agencies and philanthropies seeking to capitalize on opportunities to provide excellent, intensive and immersive Jewish educational experiences for our youth. From the outset, we planned to conduct a census every five years, and the current series provides longitudinal data over 15 years.

For AVI CHAI, "Marvin's censuses," as they are affectionately called, have provided our Trustees and staff with data-rich perspectives on our work, which grew to include programs to offer interest-free building loans for new construction and renovation, library grant programs to build up day school offerings, principal training programs and in-service teacher mentoring programs to ensure top-notch educational leadership and classroom instruction. We have developed Judaic studies curricula designed to match the best in secular studies, and we have worked with day schools to provide them the best in marketing materials, resources and new media training to showcase the uniqueness of their day school. More recently we have embarked on a programmatic agenda designed to ensure day schools are frontrunners in the use of new educational technologies and 21st century learning models.

In 2008, as a result of the economic downturn, Dr. Schick began an annual mini-census of a more narrow range of day schools – from Centrist Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Solomon Schechter, Community and Reform day schools. These more limited but more frequent censuses helped AVI CHAI and others track the impact of the economic downturn on enrollment. The downturn and subsequent enrollment concerns led to a new role for AVI CHAI in developing programs for day school affordability and sustainability. Since then, we have developed, with our partners, national endowment programs, fundraising and recruitment academies as well as the day school MATCH program, which is designed to attract new donors to day schools.

As AVI CHAI plans to sunset in 2020, this fourth census is the last that will directly inform our grant making. We hope that this census and the next, in 2018-19, which will be the last AVI CHAI-sponsored census, will provide useful information for the day school field. As always, we welcome your comments and your feedback.



Mem Bernstein

Chairman, The AVI CHAI Foundation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the fourth census of Jewish day schools in the United States sponsored by The AVI CHAI Foundation. Conducted at five-year intervals, beginning with the 1998-99 school year, this research provides a clear picture of trends in the day school world over an extended period of time. Accordingly, this report presents enrollment data for the recently concluded 2013-14 school year, and it also provides an analysis of what has occurred in the day school world since 1998. The statistics included in this document were provided by every known Jewish day school in the U.S. They are not extrapolations. Although self-reporting may result in a small number of instances of schools exaggerating their enrollment, wherever possible what schools reported have been checked against governmental records and data available through local Boards of Jewish Education and Federations, the result being a high degree of confidence in the accuracy of the statistics that have been given to us by the schools.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

There were nearly 255,000 students enrolled from the four-year old level through 12th grade in Jewish elementary and secondary schools in the 2013-14 school year. This represents an increase of 27,000 students or 12% since the previous census and 37% since 1998. In 1998-99 there had been 184,000 day-schoolers. In the span of 15 years, enrollment has grown by 70,000 students. This is an impressive rate of growth, yet just about all of it is attributable to increased enrollment in Charedi schools, primarily in the Chassidic sector but also in Yeshiva World schools. It is certainly a challenge to provide the classrooms to accommodate so many additional students and also to raise the funds necessary to meet the attendant increase in the operating deficit of so many schools.

It is likely that this growth rate will continue over the next five years, so that within a short period total day school enrollment will reach 300,000 students.

THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SIZE

There were 861 day schools in 2013-14, significantly above the 802 schools reported in the previous census. In 1998-99, the number was 676. More than half of this increase is in the Yeshiva World sector, where at the high school level for boys there is a strong preference to have small schools with but one class per grade. There were also meaningful increases in the number of Chabad and Community (RAVSAK) schools, as well as in the Chassidic sector where the tendency is to have large institutions. If we divide the number of students by the number of schools, the average per school is 296 students. When the Charedi schools are excluded from this reckoning, the average is 239 students per school, which is quite small by American educational standards.

Smallness is embedded in the Jewish day school world, the inevitable consequence of geographic and denominational diversity. For each of the four censuses, approximately 40% of day schools have fewer than 100 students.

Smallness is self-perpetuating because a small school has

a limited curriculum and limited facilities, and this feeds the perception in homes of marginal religiosity that it is preferable to send their children to public schools that are tuition-free and have a substantially wider range of educational offerings and extra-curricular activities.

ENROLLMENT BY AFFILIATION

Day schools mirror our religious diversity. There are three categories of non-Orthodox schools: Reform, Solomon Schechter (Conservative) and Community. These schools now constitute but 13% of all day school enrollment, down from 20% in 1998. Reform schools constitute 1.5% of all enrollment. There has been a sharp decline in the number of Solomon Schechters and in enrollment in these schools, mirroring the difficulties now confronting this movement. There were 39 Solomon Schechters in 2013, down from 63 in 1998. In this span enrollment declined by 45%, from 17,700 to 9,700. Community schools have fared well, increasing in number in the same period from 75 to 97 and in enrollment from nearly 15,000 students to 20,500 students. Increasingly, RAVSAK has emerged as the key day school address for schools that are not within the ambit of the National Society of Hebrew Day Schools – Torah Umesorah.

As is well known, there is much diversity among the Orthodox. At the educational level, there are five primary categories for Orthodox day school enrollment: Modern Orthodox, Centrist Orthodox, Yeshiva World, Chassidic and Chabad. In addition, there are Immigrant/Outreach schools that are under Orthodox sponsorship, although their students come overwhelmingly from non-Orthodox homes. The Special Education schools that serve our community are all under Orthodox sponsorship. The pattern is complicated by the changing character of some schools. There are Modern Orthodox schools that have become more modern and there are Modern Orthodox schools that have become Centrist in orientation. A further complication arises from the establishment of blended learning schools that combine traditional classroom and online education. All are Orthodox

in affiliation. There is a growing number of Montessori schools, most but not all Orthodox in orientation.

Enrollment in Modern Orthodox schools scarcely changed between 1998 and 2013. There was a modest decline in Centrist Orthodox enrollment. Yeshiva World and Chassidic schools' enrollment has grown dramatically, by nearly 60% in the former category and 110% in Chassidic schools. This growth in the two fervently Orthodox sectors is attributable to high fertility. These two categories now constitute 60% of all day school enrollment.

There has been significant growth in the Chabad network, from 44 schools in 1998 to 80 schools in 2013, with a commensurate growth in enrollment. These schools tend to have low enrollment, as many now serve small Jewish communities. There has been a steep decline in the number of students in Immigrant/Outreach schools, arising from the sharp decline in immigration from the Former Soviet Union. In addition, these schools no longer attract much communal attention.

THE GEOGRAPHIC FACTOR

There are Jewish day schools in 37 states and the District of Columbia. In ten of these states, enrollment is below 100, and in 16 states, over the course of the four censuses there has been a decline in the number of students. Enrollment has held up in California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan and Texas.

New York and New Jersey are, to a great extent, the center of the day school world. Between 1998 and 2013, enrollment in New York day schools grew by 47,000 or by 45%. In New Jersey, the number grew by nearly 21,000 or by 116%. Nearly all of New Jersey's growth is attributable to Lakewood. Over the 15 year span of these censuses, Lakewood day school enrollment has risen from 5,300 to 23,600. All told, New York and New Jersey had 190,000 day-schoolers in 2013.

Outside of these two states, day school enrollment has been essentially stable over the years.

DAY SCHOOL CENSUS REPORT 2013-14

In the school year that recently ended, I conducted a fourth census of Jewish day school enrollment in the United States. As was true of its predecessors conducted in the 1998-99, 2003-04 and 2008-09 school years, this research was sponsored by The AVI CHAI Foundation which for a full generation has made day school education the centerpiece of its philanthropic activity in North America.

The five-year interval between each of the censuses provides comparative data and perspective on an activity that is crucial in American Jewish life. We can measure changes over time in enrollment patterns and try to determine the extent to which developments in the day school world mirror what is happening in American Jewish life. Hopefully, there will be another census during the 2018-19 school year, shortly before AVI CHAI terminates its grant-making operations.

In the world in which we live, social and technological changes of a significant nature are commonplace. Although religious life – and certainly Orthodox Jewish life – is generally conservative in nature, overall, American Jewish life has been far from static. Nor, in fact, has Orthodox Jewish life been static. There have been profound changes, ranging from the disaffiliation of a great many who were born and raised Jewish at one end of the spectrum to the embrace of more intensive religiosity at the other end of the spectrum. These developments, as well as many between these poles, have had a profound impact on American Jewish life, including day school education.

It is well at the outset to note some of these developments.

The 2008-09 Census was conducted as a severe economic downturn was underway. It was already apparent that day school education had been impacted, including a decline in

tuition collection and increased requests for financial aid. However, because day school parents had already committed their children to this educational path, the likelihood was that the short-term impact on enrollment would be limited. The greater consequence would be in potential day school parents not registering their younger children in day school, and that would not be evident until the passage of several years. The latest census allows us to have greater insight into whether the economic downturn has been translated into enrollment decline, particularly among the non-Orthodox.

Even before the economic crisis arrived, there was talk in Jewish life of a tuition crisis. Although intrinsically the notion of a tuition crisis speaks of middle and upper middle class families calculating that rising day school tuition may be beyond their reach, it is also a state of mind in which day school and potential day school parents calculate that even if they could nominally afford the requested tuition, there are better things to do with their available funds. Summer camping in sleep-away facilities is a viable alternative for many families, especially because, with both parents working being more the norm than not, sleep-away camps are attractive in a way that day schools cannot be. It is noteworthy that even as enrollment in non-Orthodox schools has been static or even slipping, the number of children from this sector of Jewish life who are sent to a sleep-away camp appears to be growing.

The transition of the Conservative movement from what appeared to be for many years a dominant position in American Jewish life to a denomination that is struggling for its identity and perhaps even its survival is a startling development. There has been a steady loss in the number of Solomon Schechter (Conservative) schools. This survey provides additional insight into the state of the movement and the condition of its school system.

For many years, RAVSAK has served as a sort of institutional address for non-Orthodox day schools that are not aligned with either the Conservative or Reform movements. It has in recent years expanded into what can be regarded as a multi-service organization that caters to a broader range of schools, most of them not Orthodox but also a handful that are clearly Orthodox. Accordingly, there are schools that have been and continue to be identified with other day school organizations that are now active members of RAVSAK. For the day schools that have embraced multiple identities, the process of selecting the category into which they are to be put has become more complicated.

For a while, the Reform movement, which according to demographers has been ascendant in the number of nominal adherents, seemed to advocate day school education. Reform leaders spoke often about the value of day schools and encouraged the more traditional sector of Reform to opt for day school education. This is no longer the case, so that with respect to the number of Reform day schools, enrollment in these schools and the existence of a Reform-oriented day school association, the message appears to be that the Reform movement is no longer looking in this direction.

The growth of the day school world in the 1990s coincided with the establishment of institutions that served immigrant populations and/or a *kiruv* or outreach mission. The 1990s was a period of expanded communal and philanthropic interest in Russian Jewry and also in utilizing day schools as a vehicle to promote stronger Jewish identity. Each census provides insight into whether the enthusiasm for Immigrant/Outreach day schools that was evident in the 1990s is still a factor.

Five years ago, the Hebrew charter school movement was no more than a small speck on the American Jewish educational

landscape. There are now additional charters that target Jewish children, and more schools are in the planning stage. Apart from the critical question of whether charters with their Hebrew language instruction and their voluntary Jewishly-oriented after-school programs are effective vehicles for Jewish identity building, there is the issue of whether they have adversely affected day school enrollment in the communities where they are located.

Each of these developments directly involves the day school world. This world constitutes an important sector of contemporary American Jewish life, a sector that even more than previously is confronted by serious challenges. There are additional challenges that arise not from the internal communal developments touched on above but from what is happening more broadly among American Jews. The day school world is a part of a larger community and what happens in the general Jewish community inevitably has an impact on Jewish education. Day schools and yeshivas are often referred to as oases, as places of Torah, tradition and continuity. This is a metaphor that I readily accept. Yet, even oases are affected by the environment they are in.

Overwhelmingly among American Jews – perhaps for as many as 80% – yeshivas and day schools are, in a sense, foreign territory. As more American Jews, including many from traditional homes, move further away from any sense of religious commitment, the notion of Jewish day school education is increasingly not favored by a large segment of our people. We can believe fervently in day school education and we can demonstrate statistically through the abundance of demographic studies that have been conducted over the past quarter of a century that day school education is far and away the greatest guarantor of Jewish continuity, yet for an overwhelming number of American Jews, including those who continue to identify as Jewish by religion, Jewish commitment is articulated in more secular terms. As a practical matter, this can translate into diminished philanthropic support for day schools and also into a diminished number of children available for day school education within those sectors of American Jewish religious life that are most in need of what a day school education can provide.

THE COMPLETENESS OF THIS SURVEY

When the previous three censuses of day school enrollment were completed, I believed that the research was complete, meaning that grade-by-grade enrollment had been obtained for every Jewish day school in the United States. This belief was accurate in the sense that data had been secured for every school listed in any of the several day school directories or whose existence was known to me from other sources. It turned out, however, that in each census there had been a very small number of small schools that had escaped detection, almost always because they had been recently established and were not included in any directory or list of day schools.

This census is complete, although there is a good prospect that a small number of small schools that were not included will come to light after this report is published. It is the culmination of an intensive effort to reach out and to have the cooperation of every yeshiva and day school in the country. For about half of the schools, the process was straightforward. Schools received the census questionnaire and they responded fairly quickly. For most of the other schools, the process was painstaking, consisting of a very great number of phone calls and emails, the constant message being a plea to schools to participate because the aim was to have a complete census.

What needs to be underscored is that the data presented here are not extrapolations. They are the enrollment numbers reported by approximately 860 schools. Likely, once more, a small number of small schools have been missed. These omissions scarcely affect the overall presentation of data.

Of greater concern than completeness is the issue of accuracy. Without exception, reliance is placed on self-reporting. There is no governmental agency or Jewish agency that can corroborate the data. It is a good bet that there are schools – I believe a small number – that have misstated their enrollment by providing an exaggerated figure, perhaps because they perceive some financial benefit in doing so. More likely, overstatement arises from an emotional source, as school officials find it difficult to face the reality that their numbers have gone down.

The quest for accuracy is also challenged by rapidly occurring developments in the day school world. There are schools that change their name. There are schools that relocate. There are schools that merge. Perhaps most critically, there are schools that are branches of existing schools – a phenomenon prevalent in Chassidic groups – and care must be taken to ensure that there is no double counting.

There are, it needs to be noted, deliberate omissions. Although the census includes the four-year-old cohort, a significant number of children in this group and even some in the five-year-old cohort are not included in the data presented here because the census excludes institutions that operate exclusively at the preschool level. Accordingly, children enrolled in community centers or any other programs that terminate before the first grade are not included. Because of extraordinary space constraints in Lakewood, New Jersey, the tendency in that community is for four-year-olds, and in some instances five-year-olds, not to be enrolled in a formal school setting. There are ad hoc programs that operate out of homes or some other arrangement that resulted in their exclusion from the data presented in this report.¹

There is also the elusive issue of home-schooling for children of nominal school age. Clearly, there is a home-schooling phenomenon within Orthodox Jewish life, perhaps expanded by the tuition crisis. Unfortunately, it is not possible to even come close to pinning down the number of Jewish children of nominal school age who are being home-schooled in a curriculum that broadly resembles the dual curriculum taught in day schools.²

¹ Many day schools, notably in the non-Orthodox sectors, have programs for children under the age of four. These programs strengthen the financial base of the schools. Since the youngest cohort included in the census is the four-year-old group, younger children are not counted in the census.

Bambi, also known as the Big Apple School, is located in Brooklyn and enrolls 1,500 Russian Jewish students in the elementary school grades. The New York State Education Department lists this school as Jewish. It is not included in the census because its curriculum consists entirely of academic or secular subjects.

² I once thought that the Jewish home-schooling phenomenon was significant, perhaps exceeding more than 1,000 children. But after devoting a fair amount of time trying to pin down this phenomenon, I have concluded that the number is probably much lower.

TABLE 1: ENROLLMENT IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS 2013-2014

Classification	# of Schools	4-Year Olds	5-Year Olds	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Centrist Orthodox	77	1,199	1,786	1,660	1,545	1,465	1,423	1,411
Chabad	80	1,239	1,270	1,240	1,114	1,072	1,044	923
Chassidic	137	9,015	8,400	7,277	6,900	6,564	6,146	6,030
Community	97	980	1,795	1,722	1,696	1,666	1,639	1,653
Immigrant/Outreach	19	211	210	177	177	168	155	136
Modern Orthodox	83	1,758	2,399	2,289	2,185	2,237	2,127	2,051
Reform	13	381	449	474	413	428	449	421
Solomon Schechter	39	532	993	1,000	1,045	996	996	1,067
Special Education	34	12	18	16	8	5	17	18
Yeshiva	282	4,376	6,757	6,676	6,272	6,020	5,833	5,453
Total	861	19,703	24,077	22,531	21,355	20,621	19,829	19,163
Percentage of Total		7.734%	9.451%	8.844%	8.383%	8.095%	7.784%	7.522%

There are additional issues concerning how schools and children are classified that will be discussed in the ensuing presentation of enrollment data. Table 1 on pages 6-7 presents enrollment data by school classification and grade for all of the day schools in the U.S. Table 2 on pages 10-11 will present comparative data for the four censuses that I have conducted on behalf of The AVI CHAI Foundation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL CATEGORY

As much as some may wish it were otherwise, denominational diversity is a crucial aspect of American Jewish life.

Our nearly insatiable appetite for population studies is significantly predicated on denominational identity. It is not sufficient to inquire about belief and practice. We also need to know whether a person self-identifies as Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, unaffiliated or in some other fashion. Although Jews do not constitute more than 1.8% of the American population, even these four categories are not sufficient. At least with respect to the Orthodox, there is the

impulse or necessity to have subcategories, such as Modern Orthodox, Yeshiva World and Chassidic.

Whatever justifications may be offered for the conduct of American Jewish demography, it is not possible to understand the Jewish day school world without indulging in sub-categorization. As Table 1 (above) indicates, in the recently ended school year there were 255,000 students enrolled in Jewish day schools operating at the elementary and secondary school levels in the United States. These students were not an undifferentiated mass. They came from homes that self-identified with one or another of the denominations or perhaps with no denomination.

Our communal life reflects this remarkable diversity. A synagogue is not only a place of worship, it is an institution that has an identity, and that identity includes where it is located on the denominational spectrum. The same is true of the day school world. A day school is generally identified as an educational institution with a dual curriculum, religious and academic. In counting the number of schools,

6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Special Education	Total	% of Total
1,324	1,279	1,211	1,211	1,168	1,124	1,028	91	18,925	7.429%
847	715	722	734	704	605	407	13	12,649	4.965%
5,628	5,310	4,900	4,700	4,290	3,588	3,189	3	81,940	32.165%
1,454	1,615	1,404	1,160	1,250	1,182	1,185	12	20,413	8.013%
152	154	159	167	171	176	171	0	2,384	0.936%
2,016	1,919	1,969	1,571	1,636	1,556	1,478	26	27,217	10.684%
320	195	174	0	0	0	0	0	3,704	1.454%
828	752	785	171	188	172	193	0	9,718	3.815%
9	12	10	5	12	8	12	1,956	2,118	0.831%
5,273	4,966	4,652	5,279	4,883	4,698	4,264	279	75,681	29.708%
17,851	16,917	15,986	14,998	14,302	13,109	11,927	2,380	254,749	
7.007%	6.641%	6.275%	5.887%	5.614%	5.146%	4.682%	0.934%	100.000%	

a non-Orthodox school and a fervently Orthodox yeshiva are included in the same reckoning. It is certain, however, that Charedi (fervently Orthodox) yeshivas operate very differently from non-Orthodox schools. It may be said, in fact, that they are nearly a world apart. Even among the non-Orthodox, denominational diversity is often an indicator of significant Jewish educational diversity. As a primary example, Solomon Schechter schools tend to have a more fully developed Judaic curriculum than most Community day schools and all Reform day schools.

How to identify a school can be challenging. For the overwhelming number of yeshivas and day schools, the designation is self-evident. Schools sponsored by the major Chassidic groups readily self-identify, and much the same can be said about most of the educational institutions in each of the other denominational categories. However, there are schools that straddle more than one zone of identity. This phenomenon has been spreading because, like the rest of American Jewish life, the day school world is subject to change and growing complexity.

In the past censuses, I determined how each of the schools was to be identified, employing criteria that fairly can be described as objective. This census retains the same criteria. However, unlike its predecessors, schools were asked to indicate how they wanted to be identified. Overwhelmingly, their choices coincided with mine. In perhaps two dozen instances, schools opted for multiple identities, and it was left for me to determine which to choose. In other instances, an even smaller number of schools chose an identity that differed from my selection and here, too, the decision was mine. In some instances I accepted their designation; in others, I did not. I readily acknowledge that a small number of my choices might be challenged.³

What makes this census more difficult is not how schools self-identify, but rather whether operational changes they

³ In more than a few instances, self-identity by responding schools was clearly in error. Much depended on who in the school completed the questionnaire. Often this task was relegated to a secretary who had access to the enrollment data, and this resulted in choices that clearly were not acceptable, including when Yeshiva World Orthodox schools checked off that they are Community day schools.

have made since the previous censuses indicate that a change should be made in their identity. As an important example, Orthodox day schools that educate boys and girls in the same classroom have been categorized as Modern Orthodox. However, at least some of these schools now separate classes by gender at the middle school level or even earlier. Perhaps they should now be identified as Centrist Orthodox. There are schools previously identified as Centrist Orthodox that once split classes according to gender at the middle school level or earlier that have increased the degree of gender separation. Should they continue to be identified as Centrist Orthodox?⁴

There are day schools that may be regarded as Modern Orthodox that have become more modern in orientation and have joint affiliation with Torah Umesorah-The National Society of Hebrew Day Schools, which is Orthodox, and RAVSAK, the Community day school organization. There are Solomon Schechter schools that are also members of RAVSAK. And so it goes. The point is that identifying schools has become more difficult. Should a school that was previously in one category be moved to another category? Or should the previous identification be maintained, unless the changes that have occurred within the school compel a change in identity? Whenever changes are made in how schools are identified, there is an inevitable impact on enrollment statistics.

My preference is to retain to the greatest degree possible the identities that were previously used. When a school has clearly changed in character and affiliation, I have abandoned its previous identity and utilized the one that best conforms to its present status. I have striven to be objective. The choices that I have made, again in a limited number of instances, do not have a great bearing on the overall statistics.

⁴ Of all the day school categories, Centrist Orthodox is the most fluid in terms of definition and also in trying to figure out which schools fit into this category. There are schools that were identified as Centrist Orthodox in previous censuses that have changed sufficiently in curriculum and ambiance to be located in a different category. As a result, as will be seen later in this report, although enrollment in schools previously identified as Centrist Orthodox has held up, the switch away from Centrist Orthodox identity of some schools has resulted in a decline in the number of students reported in the census as being educated in Centrist Orthodox schools.

THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS

As noted, there were nearly 255,000 students enrolled in Jewish day schools operating at the elementary and secondary school levels in the United States in the 2013-14 school year.⁵

This represents an increase of 27,000 students or 12% in the five-year period between the 2008-09 census and this research. Each of the previous two censuses showed increases of 11% over their predecessors. It appears, accordingly, that the rate of growth in the day school world has accelerated, certainly good news for advocates of day school education. In a way, this growth is surprising because the 2008-09 census was conducted during the early stage of the severe financial crisis that inevitably affected, to an extent, day school enrollment during the subsequent five years leading up to this census. In addition, some of the developments already touched on – including the Hebrew Charter School movement – could be expected to cut into day school enrollment. For these reasons, the growth rate is certainly impressive.

⁵ I do not refer in the text to the number of “Jewish students” enrolled in Jewish day schools, the understandable explanation being that it would be redundant or unnecessary to make this point. In fact, however, there are non-Jewish students, by which I mean that they are not regarded as Jewish by any segment of our community, who are enrolled in Jewish day schools. There are a number of reasons for this, including faculty or other staff who may not be Jewish and who for convenience sake want their children to attend the school where they work. More critically, there are small schools that willingly accept – and at least several recruit – non-Jewish students because they believe they need to have increased enrollment which also brings with it increased tuition income and that helps to ensure their viability.

Whatever the number, it appears to be growing. Few such students are enrolled in Orthodox schools, including Modern Orthodox institutions. In the course of this census, it became clear that a number of non-Orthodox day schools eagerly seek non-Jewish students and in several schools, they constitute a significant proportion of the enrollment.

In RAVSAK schools, there has been a steady increase in the number of non-Jewish enrollees. In January 2014, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported on this phenomenon in an article by Uriel Heilman. As a prime example, there is the Lippman School in Akron, Ohio. Of its 2013-2014 enrollment of 101 students, 43 were Jewish, meaning that 58 were not Jewish by any definition. The Tucson Hebrew Academy reported that there were 20 non-Jews among the school’s 164 students. Perhaps most importantly, the article quotes Marc Kramer, RAVSAK’s Executive Director, as saying that, “In a recent survey of 50 RAVSAK schools, 18 reported accepting non-Jewish students.”

In asking schools for their enrollment data, consideration was given to inquiring whether the school enrolled students who were not Jewish by any definition and, if they did, how many might there be. The question was not included because I was certain that many schools would not respond and therefore any statistics that I might report would not be complete.

However, the growth rate is entirely lopsided. As will be described further in this report, there are sectors that have not done well in enrollment. Nearly all of the growth in the number of students is in the Chassidic and Yeshiva World sectors that now comprise more than 60% of all day school enrollment. The implications of this are enormous and will be touched on in the course of this report.

In the previous censuses, schools were asked to indicate whether they educated boys or girls or were coeducational. They were not asked to provide a numerical breakdown according to gender. In the present census, they were asked to provide a breakdown. Excluding Special Education schools, there were 130,490 male students and 121,879 female students. Interestingly, at each level – preschool (four and five-year-old cohort), elementary school (grades 1-8) and high school – there were more boys than girls. Nearly 52% of the students in Jewish day schools are male. Could the explanation for the fairly significant gender gap be that parents feel more strongly about sending their sons to a Jewish day school than they do about sending their daughters? Readers of this report are invited to provide their explanations for the gender gap.⁶

Five years ago I wrote that, “in another ten years, day school enrollment should approach 300,000 students.” If we project a growth rate of 12% between the census reported on here and, hopefully, the statistics that will emerge from research conducted during the 2018-19 school year, five years from now there will be nearly 300,000 students in Jewish day schools in the United States.

THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

It is a greater challenge to count the number of schools than it is to count the number of students. At the institutional level, much depends on whether schools that have separate divisions for boys and girls at separate locations are considered a single institution or two schools. Another familiar issue is whether

⁶ Every other year, the U.S. Department of Education conducts a survey of private school enrollment. As this report was being completed, I came across the most recent Federal survey, for the 2011-12 school year. It shows that male enrollment is greater than female enrollment throughout the private school sector. Because the gender gap issue is intriguing, I am planning a separate examination of this issue after the census report has been published.

schools that have separate branches, notably those operated by major Chassidic groups, are regarded as a single institution. The general rule that I have followed is to rely on how the schools themselves respond to the census questionnaire. If they indicate that they have gender-based separate divisions or separate branches, then that is the way they are calculated for the purpose of this report.

Although it is a greater challenge to have precision regarding the number of schools, what primarily matters is the number of students. It scarcely makes a difference for research purposes whether a sponsoring Chassidic group reports that it has one institution or multiple institutions.

This acknowledged, the number of schools indicated in this census is considerably above the 802 reported five years ago. The latest research shows 861 schools, a substantial increase. Ten years ago, the number was 759 and in the 1998-99 school year, it was 676. The 30% increase in the number of schools over the past 15 years probably has important financial implications for both the day school world and for Jewish philanthropy.⁷

Nearly all of the growth in the number of schools over the past five years has been in the fervently Orthodox sectors, primarily within the Yeshiva World sector where for a host of reasons there is a tendency for smaller schools, especially those that serve boys and especially those that operate at the high school level. These schools, usually called *mesivtas*, tend to be small because the preference of educators and parents is to have but one class per grade.

Although there are large schools, because of geographic dispersal and also denominational diversity, Jewish day schools in the aggregate are small institutions – certainly when they are compared to public schools, as well as to most

⁷ The U.S. Department of Education report referred to in the previous footnote indicates that there were 954 Jewish day schools in the U.S. in 2011-12, nearly 100 more than my research indicates that there were in the 2013-14 school year. Part of the explanation is that the Federal data includes schools that operate only at the kindergarten level, while this research does not. There is also a somewhat higher total enrollment number reported for Jewish day schools. As the Federal statistics are based on a high degree of sampling and extrapolation, I am confident that the statistics reported in this document are accurate.

TABLE 2: DAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 1998-2013

Classification	1998	2003	2008	2013	Change 1998-2003	% Change 1998-2003	Change 2003-2008
Centrist Orthodox	20,504	18,696	17,650	18,925	-1,808	-8.818%	-1,046
Chabad	7,438	8,609	12,296	12,649	1,171	15.743%	3,687
Chassidic	39,059	48,446	60,955	81,940	9,387	24.033%	12,509
Community	14,849	17,416	20,838	20,413	2,567	17.287%	3,422
Immigrant/Outreach	5,136	4,823	3,432	2,384	-313	-6.094%	-1,391
Modern Orthodox	26,961	28,720	29,397	27,217	1,759	6.524%	677
Reform	4,485	4,462	4,569	3,704	-23	-0.513%	107
Solomon Schechter	17,563	17,702	13,223	9,718	139	0.791%	-4,479
Special Education	695	1,780	1,967	2,118	1,085	156.115%	187
Yeshiva	47,643	54,381	63,985	75,681	6,738	14.143%	9,604
Total	184,333	205,035	228,312	254,749	20,702	11.231%	23,277

nonpublic schools, whether they be religious or private. If we divide the number of students by the number of schools, the average is 296 students per school, an increase over the 2008-09 average of 280 students per school. If we exclude Chassidic schools from this calculation, there are 724 schools with 172,800 students, for an average enrollment per school of 239 students. By American educational standards, Jewish day schools are small, a circumstance that has financial and curriculum implications. Smallness feeds the perception in many homes of marginal religiosity that it is preferable to send children to much larger public schools that have a wider range of educational offerings and extracurricular activities than the typical Jewish day school.

ENROLLMENT BY GRADE

In view of the steady enrollment growth over the past 15 years, it isn't surprising that enrollment in the younger grades is significantly greater than it is in the upper grades. This is indicated in Table 1 on pages 6-7. If we exclude four-year-olds, a justifiable step because many parents do not send children at that age to a conventional day school, from the five-year-old

cohort through the 12th grade, at each higher grade level there is a decrease in enrollment. In the aggregate, over the span of the elementary school grades, the enrollment increase is significant. Thus, the five-year-old cohort has 24,000 students, while the 8th grade enrollment amounted to about 16,000 or about two-thirds of the number in the five-year-old group. If we calculate enrollment from the five-year-old group through the 12th grade, the increase across the span of years is 100%, as five-year-old enrollment is double 12th grade enrollment.⁸

ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Much of the attention given to day school education within the Federation and Jewish philanthropic world focuses on non-Orthodox schools, as well as Orthodox schools that have a modernist orientation. There are good reasons for this focus, specifically the recognition that especially for Jewish families at risk, day school education is an essential element in providing for Jewish commitment and continuity. Overwhelmingly, however, day school enrollment veers

⁸ A more detailed analysis of enrollment by grade is presented later in this report.

% Change 2003-2008	Change 2008-2013	% Change 2008-2013	Change 1998-2013	% Change 1998-2013	1998 # of Schools	2003 # of Schools	2008 # of Schools	2013 # of Schools	Change # of schools 1998-2013
-5.595%	1,275	7.224%	-1,579	-7.701%	80	78	72	77	-3
42.827%	353	2.871%	5,211	70.059%	44	54	73	80	36
25.821%	20,985	34.427%	42,881	109.785%	81	101	105	137	56
19.649%	-425	-2.040%	5,564	37.471%	75	95	98	97	22
-28.841%	-1,048	-30.536%	-2,752	-53.583%	31	30	24	19	-12
2.357%	-2,180	-7.416%	256	0.950%	92	87	86	83	-9
2.398%	-865	-18.932%	-781	-17.414%	20	19	17	13	-7
-25.302%	-3,505	-26.507%	-7,845	-44.668%	63	57	50	39	-24
10.506%	151	7.677%	1,423	204.748%	18	43	33	34	16
17.661%	11,696	18.279%	28,038	58.850%	172	195	244	282	110
11.353%	26,437	11.579%	70,416	38.200%	676	759	802	861	185

heavily toward the more intensively Orthodox. The largest enrollment group is in Chassidic institutions which now have nearly one-third of all day school enrollment. About 30% of all enrollment is in Yeshiva World institutions. Since approximately one-half of enrollment in Chabad schools can also be identified as fervently Orthodox, as is true of Chabad schools in Crown Heights in Brooklyn and several other communities, two-thirds of all day school enrollment is what can fairly be identified as fervently Orthodox.

With but a small number of exceptions, these students come from homes where day school or yeshiva education is firmly embedded in the belief system of the family. Few children from these homes will be found in public schools.

The data regarding fall-off from Orthodox identity after the school years have been completed are subject to dispute. Noted demographers claim that the Orthodox abandonment rate is significant. What these researchers apparently overlook is the difference between Orthodox identity as measured by synagogue affiliation and Orthodox identity as measured by religious practice and belief. When the former criterion is utilized, obviously the

abandonment rate is significantly higher than when the religious commitment standard is utilized. What is certain is that over the past generation, there has been a steady rise in Orthodox retention. When this development and Orthodox fertility is linked to the data of enrollment in Orthodox day schools, what surely emerges is the steady increase in the percentage of Orthodox Jews in the overall American Jewish population.

Enrollment in the three non-Orthodox school categories amounts to nearly 34,000 students or about 13% of the total number in all Jewish day schools. This represents a small proportion of all children of school age in non-Orthodox homes. This is a matter of obvious concern because the low number is indicative of what might be fairly termed the atrophy of much of American Jewish life outside of the boundaries of the Orthodox. A collateral concern is that low enrollment in non-Orthodox schools may serve as the harbinger of reduced foundation, Federation and other philanthropic support for day schools.

At the same time, declining enrollment in non-Orthodox schools and the reality that a smaller number of children

from non-Orthodox homes are now enrolled in Orthodox institutions than once was the case are indicators of the growing rate of abandonment of Jewish religious identity throughout nearly all of American Jewish life.

Table 2 on pages 10-11 provides a snapshot of enrollment across the span of the four censuses that have been conducted. The data clearly show the overall growth of the Jewish day school world. In 1998, there were 184,000 students enrolled in all day schools in the U.S., while in the latest census, as has been underscored, the figure shows a total enrollment of 255,000. This represents an increase of about 70,000 enrollees or 38% over a 15-year period. In terms of facilities, day school financing and communal planning, the addition of 70,000 students in what is not much more than half of a generation is an extraordinary achievement. In turn, the significant increase in enrollment is reflective of the enormous challenges that the day school world has faced. Especially because governmental funding is not available for capital purposes or operating expenses, it is a great challenge to build facilities and to find seats for 70,000 additional children, and it is a great challenge to find the funds to meet the steadily increasing cost of operating the day school world.⁹

What is evident is that the day school world is going in two directions: greater enrollment in Orthodox schools, notably those in the Chassidic and Yeshiva World sectors, and declining enrollment in non-Orthodox schools. Each of these developments poses multiple challenges for communal, lay and professional leaders who have responsibility for these schools.

As Table 2 shows, over the span of these censuses, enrollment in Modern Orthodox schools has essentially remained constant. This is impressive because of developments that could have resulted in a significant loss of students

⁹ The issue of government funding is more nuanced and complicated than is indicated in the text. Although constitutional strictures are a barrier to direct governmental support of parochial school education, many states have programs that provide financial assistance to religious schools. In New York, for example, there is state support for record keeping and for the purchase of textbooks. In general, this funding constitutes a very small part of the typical day school operating budget.

Public funding, at times significant, is available to day school families and children in need, and this can be a major factor in the financial profile of some schools that serve such families, notably in the Chassidic community.

in these schools. These factors which will be discussed more fully in the analysis of Modern Orthodox enrollment include the tuition crisis, *aliyah*, the rightward movement of many Modern Orthodox families and a declining Judaic commitment in some other Modern Orthodox families.

Although Centrist Orthodox schools lost more than 1,500 students in the same period, overall enrollment in this sector has held up. As discussed in a footnote, the loss results not from fewer students being in these schools but rather from the changing character of schools that were previously identified as Centrist Orthodox and in this research are placed in a different category.

ENROLLMENT IN NON-ORTHODOX SCHOOLS

As noted, enrollment in non-Orthodox schools in 2013-14 amounted to nearly 34,000 or 13% of all day school enrollment. This figure represents a decline in enrollment in the three non-Orthodox school categories. In 1998, there were nearly 37,000 students combined in Reform (Pardes), Conservative (Solomon Schechter) and Community (RAVSAK) day schools; in 2003 there were 39,500 students; and in 2008 there were 38,600 students. Put otherwise, 15 years ago 20% of all day schoolers were in non-Orthodox schools, while now the figure is 13%. In raw numbers, there are nearly 6,000 fewer students in non-Orthodox schools than there were ten years ago.¹⁰

A number of explanations can be offered for this decline, including the tuition crisis, the impact of the major recession, changing attitudes toward day school in many non-Orthodox homes and the closing of non-Orthodox schools in smaller Jewish communities. Each factor and perhaps several others, notably the singles phenomenon and a low fertility rate among non-Orthodox couples, have made their contribution. What remains to be seen is whether the decline can be staunched. Right now, the signs are not promising.

¹⁰ When we consider the enrollment pattern in non-Orthodox schools in the context of the acceptance of non-Jewish students in some of these schools that was described in a previous footnote, what emerges is that the decline in the number of Jewish students enrolled in non-Orthodox schools has been greater than is indicated in the text of this report.

Although the three non-Orthodox school categories have been combined thus far in this section, it is well to consider each of them separately because there are distinctive factors that affect enrollment in each of the categories.

It cannot be said that the **Reform** movement has ever emphasized day school education. Overwhelmingly, children of school age in nominally Reform homes are either in a supplementary school – often a once-a-week Sunday school – or in no Jewish school. There was a time, however, when in the aftermath of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, Reform movement leaders stated that day school education was beneficiary. These days, day schools are a declining presence in the Reform scheme of things. In 1998, there were 20 schools linked together in an association called Pardes. In the past school year, the number was 13. Between 1998 and 2013, enrollment in Reform day schools declined by nearly 25%. In view of the number of children being raised in homes identifying as Reform, the 2013 statistic of 3,700 children in Reform day schools clearly points to day school education being minimalistic in the Reform scheme of things.¹¹

It is also noteworthy that enrollment in Reform day schools is primarily concentrated in the preschool and lower grades. There is no high school under Reform auspices and in the middle school grades, enrollment is exceedingly low.

As the Conservative movement goes, so go the **Solomon Schechter** schools. When the Conservative movement was expanding, notably in suburbia, new Solomon Schechters were established and enrollment in these schools grew rapidly. In what seems to be the blink of an historic eye, there has been an extraordinary reversal. As has been widely reported, many Conservative synagogues have merged, while others simply closed and still others continue, albeit with a constant increase in the number of empty seats. This is not the place to go into the causes of this profoundly important development. It clearly translates into fewer children in Conservative homes available for day school enrollment.

¹¹ There are, of course, children raised in Reform homes who attend RAVSAK schools. I imagine that there are also some in Solomon Schechters.

The Solomon Schechter school movement has been in a state of constant shrinkage, both in the number of schools and in total enrollment. In 1998, there were 63 schools with an enrollment of about 17,500. Five years later there were six fewer Solomon Schechter schools. Interestingly, enrollment inched up by a tiny number. Then came a rapid turnaround. The 2008 census showed enrollment of 13,200, a decline of nearly 4,500 students or about 25%. Also, an additional seven schools had closed between 2003 and 2008. The census reported on here shows fewer than 10,000 students in 39 Solomon Schechters.¹²

A portion of this enrollment decline is attributable to several schools shifting away from the Solomon Schechter orbit to RAVSAK. Even so, the loss of students is remarkable. There is no indication that the harsh trend will be reversed. To the contrary, several Solomon Schechter schools that operated in the 2013-14 school year will not be open in the 2014-15 school year.¹³

Thanks in large measure to significant philanthropic support, including from AVI CHAI, **RAVSAK** has been transformed from a modest organization consisting of day schools that were not Orthodox in orientation and yet also not members of either the Reform or Conservative school associations to a major organization that now serves a considerable proportion of day schools in the U.S. There are schools that were once Solomon Schechters that now self-identify as Community institutions and are comfortably within the RAVSAK ambit. There are day schools that are Orthodox in orientation yet perhaps because they are not comfortable about being affiliated with Torah Umesorah, by far the main Orthodox day school network, have become members of RAVSAK.

¹² Although it does not challenge the picture of enrollment in Solomon Schechters presented here, it needs to be noted that an indeterminate number of children in Conservative homes are enrolled in other day schools. Community schools are an obvious choice, particularly in localities where there is no Solomon Schechter. There are also children from Conservative homes who attend Orthodox day schools.

¹³ At least two schools with a combined enrollment of about 1,250 students that are not identified in this report as Solomon Schechters are members of the Solomon Schechter School Association.

The expansion of RAVSAK to include schools that once were not affiliated with it raises the following question: Should enrollment in institutions that have joint affiliation with RAVSAK and the Solomon Schechter Association be counted with the former or the latter? Likewise, what to do about schools that are members of the Chabad Association and RAVSAK? A further question concerns Orthodox schools that have become members of RAVSAK.

Ten years ago, there were 95 RAVSAK schools. Five years later, the number grew to 98. This census reports that there were 97 such schools in the last school year. Clearly, if schools with joint affiliation are included, there are more than 97 schools that self-identify as RAVSAK members. My preference, which I think is justified, is to select a single affiliation because joint affiliation is a complication that undermines data collection and reporting. This means that day schools that are RAVSAK members and also have another identity are in most instances not counted as RAVSAK schools. It needs to be underscored, accordingly, that the reach of RAVSAK is greater than is indicated by the enrollment statistics reported here.

Over the years, there has been a significant increase in enrollment in schools that are identified in this census as RAVSAK institutions. In 1998, the number was a bit below 15,000 and now it is above 20,000, an increase of 37% in the span of 15 years. There was a slight dip of 420 students between 2008 and 2013, almost certainly attributable to the financial crisis.

The 97 schools are a varied lot. There are those that in their Judaic curriculum and religious ambience veer toward Modern Orthodoxy and there are others, a greater number, that are less rigorous in Judaics than the typical Solomon Schechter. It is evident that over the years, the organization's leadership has promoted an agenda of greater religious purposefulness, and it is probably also the case that the headmasters and principals of RAVSAK schools are committed to a stronger Judaic curriculum and religious ambience. However, it is equally evident that the central organization does not operate the schools and, that as is true of so much else in the day school world, what most

determines the character of an institution is set at the local community level. In view of what is happening overall in American Jewish life, the primary pull affecting a significant number of RAVSAK schools is toward a reduced Judaic commitment and weaker Judaic ambience.

An aspect of this development and also powerfully contributing to it is the critical factor that a number of RAVSAK schools now accept and in some cases recruit students who are not Jewish by any definition. There is no way to escape the reality that this development inevitably has some impact on the character of the institution. The prospect is that in some communities non-Jewish enrollment in RAVSAK institutions will continue to grow.

ORTHODOX SCHOOLS

Schools under Orthodox auspices have always been dominant in the Jewish day school world. For many years, these were the only day schools. Even with the enthusiastic establishment of Solomon Schechters in the post-Holocaust period and then expanded non-Orthodox interest in day schools in the aftermath of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, Orthodox schools have remained by a great margin the largest component of the day school world. If only because of the contraction in non-Orthodox sectors already touched on, the proportion of students in Orthodox schools has grown. This growth is fueled even more strongly by high Orthodox fertility, especially in the Chassidic sector but also in the Yeshiva World sector. As noted, the latest census shows 70,000 more day schoolers than there were 15 years ago and almost all of this increase is attributable to enrollment in Orthodox schools.¹⁴

¹⁴ It warrants mentioning once more that enrollment in Orthodox schools is not identical to the enrollment of Orthodox students in Orthodox schools. There are today few students from Orthodox homes in non-Orthodox day schools. There are many more students from non-Orthodox homes, albeit fewer than was the case in previous censuses, in Orthodox schools. Non-Orthodox students enrolled in Orthodox schools are primarily in Modern Orthodox and Immigrant/Outreach day schools, as well as in those Chabad schools that have an outreach orientation.

Demographers routinely note that although the Orthodox constitute a relatively small proportion of all American Jews – perhaps 12% today – they are a varied lot, and this has a direct bearing on how to look at the census data. In this research, as in its predecessors, there are what may be regarded as four primary Orthodox categories: Modern Orthodox, Centrist Orthodox, Yeshiva World and Chassidic. I will shortly describe the characteristics for each of these categories.

In addition and to perhaps complicate matters, there are Chabad schools that increasingly act as a world apart from the rest of the Orthodox day school world. There are Immigrant and Outreach institutions, all of them under Orthodox auspices. I believe that all of the Special Education schools whose mission it is to serve special needs Jewish students are also under Orthodox auspices.

Over the past five years, two new groupings have emerged: Montessori schools and Blended Learning schools that combine the traditional classroom configuration with learning over the Internet. There are nearly 20 of the former and ten of the latter. In this census, the Montessoris and Blended Learning schools are not presented as separate categories. All of the Blended Learning schools are Orthodox in their orientation. As for the Montessoris, they are a mixed lot. There are Montessoris that are Community schools, there are Montessoris that are Modern Orthodox schools and at least one Montessori is identified as Chabad. Five years from now, it may be necessary to treat the Montessoris and Blended Learning schools as distinct categories.¹⁵

There are further complications. The day school world is dynamic, not static, and this is especially relevant to our understanding of each of the Orthodox categories. If some non-Orthodox schools, especially in the RAVSAK ambit, have been affected by forces in American Jewish life that impel them toward greater secularity and therefore lesser religiosity, within Orthodox life there are forces that impel many yeshivas and day schools toward greater religiosity.

¹⁵ As the draft of this report was being completed, there was a press release announcing “a new partnership” between the Schechter Network and the Jewish Montessori Society. It is not possible to gauge as yet how this partnership will function or whether it has any bearing on the denominational identity of the Montessori schools.

As is true in general of Modern Orthodoxy, **Modern Orthodox** schools are being pulled in polar directions. Some are becoming more modern in their orientation, with the Orthodox element in a sense peeling away, while others have been affected by what is happening in the rest of Orthodox life, so that they are shedding attributes of modernity and moving toward the center. One aspect of the latter development is the tendency in certain Modern Orthodox schools to split classes by gender at an earlier grade than used to be the case. Some of these schools may be said to occupy a space on the continuum of Orthodoxy that once was identified as Centrist Orthodox.¹⁶

As for the Centrist Orthodox, their schools can clearly be said to have moved rightward, so that there is greater gender separation, as well as additional hours of religious study. The Yeshiva World has not been immune from these developments, as in this sector the tendency is toward greater emphasis on the number of hours of religious study. It follows that this results in a collateral de-emphasis of the academic curriculum. Geography is a significant determinant of the character of Yeshiva World institutions. Lakewood schools are more “yeshivish” than those in Brooklyn and those in Brooklyn are more “yeshivish” than those away from the New York Metropolitan area.

It would be foolhardy to divide the Orthodox day school world into additional categories, yet it is certain that a Yeshiva World school in Lakewood varies significantly in curriculum and ambiance from many Yeshiva World schools away from New York.

There are several characteristics that distinguish **Modern Orthodox** schools. Generally, they are coeducational. Even with the recent trend to separate by gender in religious studies at the middle school level and perhaps earlier, coeducation remains a principal feature of these schools. There is a strong emphasis on both Judaics and the academic

¹⁶ One fascinating indication of how Modern Orthodox schools have been influenced by the Charedi world is the establishment of *mishmar* or after-school Torah learning programs, some mandatory and others voluntary. Another indicator is the remarkable, perhaps even exotic, tendency of young boys in these schools to wear their *tzitzit* out. Years ago, few boys did this, even in Yeshiva World schools.

program, and the curriculum tends to include subject matter that is not included in the curricula of typical yeshivas. Hebrew language is stressed, and it is often the language of instruction in Judaic courses. Identifying with Israel and Zionism is essential in these institutions, not only in the teaching of subject matter but perhaps more critically in the attitudes that are embedded in the school. At the high school level, the expectation is that graduates will go to Israel for at least a year of seminary study, and that when they return home, they will enroll in college.

As is indicated in Table 2 on pages 10-11, over the course of the four censuses, enrollment in Modern Orthodox schools has been stable. There was an increase between 1998 and 2003 and then again between 2003 and 2008. The current census, however, indicates a decline of nearly 2,180 students over the past five years, and that is a huge loss. Just the same, 2013 enrollment was a tad above the 1998 figure. Several factors seem to be responsible for the recent decline. Modern Orthodox schools tend to charge very high tuition by Orthodox school standards, and they also tend to be relatively skimpy in providing scholarship assistance. The economic downturn clearly did not help. The still young Hebrew charter school movement has drawn away some students and, probably more critically, a growing number of graduates from Modern Orthodox elementary schools go to secular high schools.¹⁷

Aliyah is another factor. While it is difficult to pin down numbers, the strong impression is that in the relatively high *aliyah* statistics of the past decade, there is a large representation of Modern Orthodox families. While some such families do not have children of school age and, of course, many *olim* have not yet married, inevitably, day school enrollment in Modern Orthodox schools in their former country is affected.

As is true more broadly of Centrist Orthodoxy, **Centrist Orthodox** day schools occupy a somewhat unclear position on the continuum of Orthodox Jewish life. They partake

¹⁷ I recall reading in an article published in an English-language Los Angeles Jewish newspaper that in one local public high school there were 40 boys wearing *kippot*.

of meaningful doses of modernity, including a strong emphasis on the academic program and strong support of Israel, yet they also are pulled in the direction of the more fervently Orthodox, as is evident in the spreading tendency to divide classes by gender, either altogether or at an earlier grade than used to be the case. The outcome of Centrist Orthodox schools being pulled in two directions is that they are somewhat less modernistic and less Zionist than they used to be. Yet, they remain significantly more committed to a strong academic program and to Israel than Yeshiva World institutions.¹⁸

Centrist Orthodox schools are, in the main, coeducational in the sense that they enroll boys and girls, albeit with a growing emphasis on gender separation, including total gender separation at some schools. There are schools that are single gender institutions that are considered Centrist Orthodox in this census, including the two high schools associated in New York with Yeshiva University and the two Yeshiva University of Los Angeles high schools.

The current census shows that Centrist Orthodox schools enrolled nearly 19,000 students, which while more than 1,500 students below the 1998 figure, represents an increase of 1,275 students over the 2008 statistic. Could it be that the uptick in enrollment over the past five years is to an extent related to the decline in enrollment in Modern Orthodox schools? There are parents of a modernist orientation who may prefer a greater degree of gender separation, apart from which, tuition at Centrist schools is invariably below what it is in Modern Orthodox institutions, and scholarship assistance is more readily provided.

There were nearly 75,700 students in **Yeshiva World** schools in 2013, representing a tad below 30% of all enrollment. This represents an increase of 11,700 students or 18% between 2008 and 2013, an impressive growth rate. However, nearly all of the

¹⁸ In the main, what is happening in Centrist Orthodox schools, as well as some that are Modern Orthodox, results from trends in Orthodox life that impel individuals and institutions toward more fervent religiosity. I also believe that educational leaders in Centrist and other Orthodox schools are often more fervently Orthodox in their personal orientation than the schools that employ them, and they impel these institutions toward greater religiosity.

increase is attributable to the remarkable growth in enrollment in Lakewood, New Jersey schools. With few exceptions, Lakewood schools are in the Yeshiva World category.

Furthermore, whereas in the previous censuses Yeshiva World schools constituted the largest category of enrollees, in this census that distinction goes to the Chassidic grouping of schools.

Although the designation “Yeshiva World” might suggest great homogeneity among the institutions that are so described, the fact is that this category is broad, with a wide range of schools. At one end of the spectrum there are intensive yeshivas, in Lakewood and elsewhere, where the religious studies curriculum is overwhelmingly predominant and the academic program is relegated to a back seat. At the other end of the spectrum, there are schools, primarily located away from New York and New Jersey, that have many of the attributes of Yeshiva World institutions and yet in terms of their curriculum operate far differently because the academic program is taken more seriously. Greater identification with the State of Israel is also an attribute of Yeshiva World schools at that end of the spectrum.

A further point is that this category, as well as the Modern Orthodox and Centrist Orthodox categories, refers to the orientation of the institution and not necessarily to the character of the student body. There are Yeshiva World schools, for example Beth Jacobs, that enroll a considerable number of students from Chassidic homes. It is also the case that there are a handful of schools that are under the leadership of a Chassidic Rebbe and yet are included in the Yeshiva World category because in ambiance and curriculum they essentially belong in that category.¹⁹

Although there are a number of large schools included in this category, in the aggregate Yeshiva World institutions tend to be small. This point is suggested by the Table 1 statistic on pages 6-7, showing that 282 of the 861 schools included in the census are Yeshiva World institutions. The next largest category in

¹⁹ To give one example, so that the point will be clear, the Brooklyn yeshiva established and headed by the Novominsker Rebbe is regarded as a Yeshiva World institution.

the number of schools is the Chassidic, which though larger in total enrollment does not have quite one-half of the number of schools that there are in the Yeshiva World category.

There are several explanations for the small size of Yeshiva World schools, one being the powerful tendency in *mesivtas* (high schools for boys) to limit enrollment to one class per grade, a policy that is strongly preferred by both educators and parents. Ambition is another critical factor, it being the determination of men who have devoted many years to Torah study – primarily at Beth Medrash Govoha, the great advanced yeshiva in Lakewood, NJ which now enrolls 7,000 students – to have positions commensurate with their scholarly skills. Since there are few high-level Judaic teaching positions open in yeshivas, a number of Lakewood alumni have established small *mesivtas*.

In the first census, **Chassidic** schools had fewer than 40,000 students. In 2013, enrollment was 82,000 students, an increase of 110% in the 15-year span. This extraordinary growth rate is largely attributable to high Chassidic fertility. There are two interesting sociological factors that add to the impact of fertility. The first is that unlike all other sectors of American Jewish life, including the other Orthodox sectors, the singles phenomenon is not a major factor in Chassidic life. The tendency is to marry young and to have children quite soon and also to have many children.²⁰

A second factor is that despite the sophomoric efforts of some writers, the dropout rate among Chassidim is astonishingly low by the standard of American ethnic groups. Of course, some drop away, but not many, despite Chassidim living in a society that has all kinds of mobility and all kinds of attractions that might impel younger Chassidim away from a Chassidic lifestyle.

Chassidic schools tend to be large, especially those associated with Satmar which has nearly 30,000 students or close to 12% of all yeshiva and day school enrollment.

²⁰ Although the point has been made in the text, it needs to be underscored here that enrollment of Chassidim in yeshivas and day schools is not the same as enrollment in Chassidic schools. A significant number of students from Chassidic homes attend Yeshiva World institutions. It may also be noted that a considerable proportion of enrollment in Special Education day schools is Chassidic.

Chassidic schools also tend to be far more monolithic in their enrollment patterns, which is to say that few non-Chassidim are found in these schools. There is also a high degree of homogeneity in the parent body, student dress and curriculum. Religious studies overwhelmingly dominate, especially in the boys' schools where secular studies are minimal and often vanish after the conventional elementary school grades. The curriculum for the girls' schools is more varied, even at the high school level, with the focus often being on mathematics and writing skills.

All of the major Chassidic dynasties, including those that are primarily located in Israel, such as Belz and Ger, operate schools in the United States. Each group has separate schools for boys and girls, and each has schools that begin at the pre-school level and continue through seminary for male students. It is a tribute to the Chassidic communities that they have been able to raise the funds for much needed capital construction and also to meet the ongoing operational budgets of their schools.²¹

Excluding Chabad, which is treated as a separate category, all Chassidic school enrollment is in New York and New Jersey. There are, of course, Chassidim living elsewhere in the U.S. They either send their children to local schools or perhaps have an arrangement with family members living in the New York/New Jersey area that permits their children to attend the schools operated by their group.

There are now 80 **Chabad** day schools in the U.S., up from 73 in 2008 and 44 in 1998. There is now a significant emphasis within Chabad on day school education. Actually, this emphasis was apparent in the first stage of Chabad development on these shores: when the previous Rebbe arrived in 1940, he immediately set out to establish yeshivas and day schools, primarily in major cities in the Northeast and Midwest. When he was succeeded by his son-in-law, the late Rebbe, there was a shift in policy, my view being that it

²¹ As a perhaps fascinating aesthetic footnote, the Chassidic schools operated by the major groups are invariably attractively maintained, a significant achievement in view of the heavy use of these facilities, often including a catering hall that provides income to the school but also presents maintenance challenges.

arose from the determination of the Rebbe not to establish Chabad schools that would compete with existing yeshivas and day schools. The movement focused for many years on after-school programs, summer camps and other activities that pointedly veered away from establishing Chabad day schools.

This changed in the last years of the Rebbe's life, almost certainly because Chabad emissaries felt that they needed to have local schools that could help further their mission and perhaps also serve as places where they could educate their young children. What also furthered this development was the weakening and, at times, disappearance of day schools, Orthodox and non-Orthodox, that served small Jewish communities.

Because of the ad hoc nature of certain Chabad activities, particularly in education, it is difficult to have a comfortable grasp of the Chabad day school network. Presently, there may be four subcategories of Chabad schools. The largest in enrollment, mainly located in Brooklyn, educates children from Chabad homes. These schools have a strong Lubavitch student body and orientation. A second category consists of what may be regarded as outreach schools established by the emissaries to primarily serve local families that themselves are not Chabad. The attraction for parents, many of them ex-Israelis, is a Judaic curriculum and Judaic ambiance, as well as remarkably low tuition charges. Then there are day schools mainly in small communities that have had nothing historically to do with Chabad. As enrollment in these schools declined and there were attendant financial problems, those who were previously responsible for these schools withdrew, and Chabad rabbis took over leadership of the schools without substantially changing their orientation and program. By and large, I have retained the previous designation of these schools, so those that were designated in the earlier censuses as Community schools continue to be identified in the same fashion. Finally, in small Jewish communities there are ad hoc Chabad schools that pop up to serve the children of Chabad families for a year or two as needed and then disappear from the scene.

The current census places Chabad day school enrollment at 12,650, a small increase over 2008, but an increase of 4,000

students or nearly 50% since 2003. Were it not for the Chabad network, thousands of children now being educated in day schools would not be receiving a meaningful Jewish education.

The 1990s was a period of excitement regarding immigration from the Former Soviet Union, and there was heightened activity to provide a Jewish education for children in FSU families. There was a collateral interest in the 1990s to establish and fund day schools with an outreach orientation. In a sense, the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey and the arrival of FSU families coincided, and this resulted in the establishment of schools and other activities aimed at strengthening the Judaic commitment of Russian Jews and also children being raised in families that were being reached out to. Perhaps inevitably, this communal commitment would be diluted as the years went by.

In 1998, there were more than 5,000 students in schools designated as **Immigrant and Outreach** institutions. Five years later, there was slight slippage to 4,800 students. By 2008, Russian immigration was no longer a major communal concern, nor were there as many outreach families with younger children who might be enrolled in Jewish schools. Enrollment declined to 3,400. This census shows a further decline to nearly 2,400 students. In short, between 1998 and 2013 there has been a decline of more than 50% in enrollment of these schools.

A considerable number of Immigrant and Outreach schools have closed. There were 31 in 1998; in 2013, there were 19, and some of these are barely surviving. There is no indication of significant communal interest in sustaining these schools, all of which are under Orthodox auspices, although much of the parent and student body is not Orthodox. However, because immigrant enrollment is heavily Bukharian and not what may be referred to as Russian, there is a strong traditionalist orientation, which enhances the prospect for effective outreach and beneficial Judaic outcomes.

It will never be possible to have a comfortable understanding of enrollment in **Special Education** schools. One obvious issue is that there are mainstream schools that have classes or tracks devoted to special needs students, and these

schools tend to include enrollment statistics for these children in their overall figures. As for schools exclusively established for special education purposes, since they rely enormously on public funding, there is an obligation to accept non-Jewish children. This census has made a substantial effort to accurately count special education enrollment, and I believe that the figure we have come up with is close to the mark. In 2013, there were more than 2,100 students in special education schools under Jewish sponsorship, a modest increase over 2008 but a three-fold increase over 1998. The current census identifies 34 schools as being distinctly for special education students.

ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL

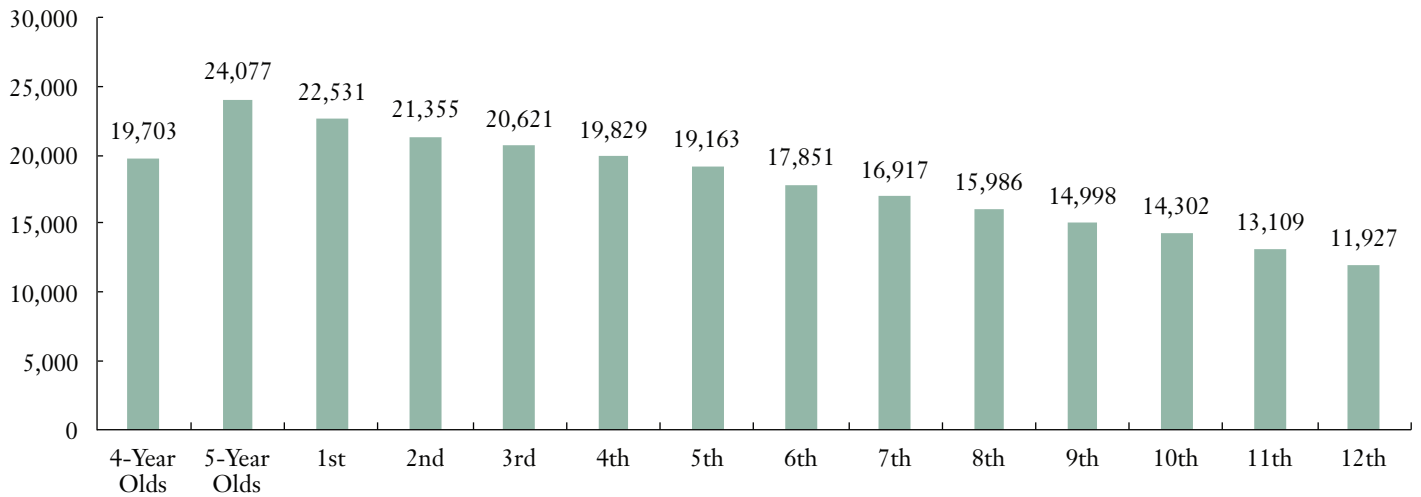
In most school systems, enrollment does not vary significantly from one grade to the next. Of course, there are exceptions, particularly in the high school grades. But overall, the pattern is one of stability, so that a school that has two classes at one grade level is likely to have two classes at the other grade levels that it operates. Jewish day schools do not adhere to this pattern. As the previous censuses disclose, the enrollment pattern is pyramidal, meaning that the lower grades have greater enrollment than the upper grades and that, indeed, overall enrollment generally increases each year.²²

There are two powerful reasons for this pattern. The first is high Orthodox fertility, notably in the fervently Orthodox sectors that constitute more than 60% of all day school enrollment. High fertility inherently dictates that lower grades have greater enrollment than higher grades and that, as a rule, enrollment increases grade by grade as grade level goes down. The enrollment increase of 70,000 students between the first census and this research is clear testimony to this pattern.

The second explanation for the decline in enrollment as grade level goes up pertains specifically to non-Orthodox schools.

²² As I have noted elsewhere in the text, there is a tendency in Yeshiva World schools operating at the high school level to limit the number of classes per grade to one. In these schools, enrollment per grade is either stable or, for reasons that need not be described here, enrollment is greater in the upper high school grades than in the lower high school grades.

DISPLAY 1: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY GRADE



There are parents who send their children to these schools for a limited number of years, often only for the lower grades or even when their children continue through elementary school, certainly not into high school. There are several reasons for this. As the college years approach, with their attendant extraordinarily high tuition and other costs, parents become more reluctant to pay day school tuition. Another factor is the parental attitude that, whether to receive a quality education or to have better prospects of getting into a top notch college, Jewish schools are a worse bet than a strong public high school or another form of private school. Parents rationalize their decisions by stating that they have already given their children a good “Jewish” education.²³

It also warrants noting that there are communities that do not have Jewish high schools. Even among many Orthodox, there is a reluctance to send children to a high school that is away from home. Among the non-Orthodox, rarely are parents willing to have their children go to a high school in a distant community. There also are day schools that terminate before the full

²³ There is strong impressionistic reason to contradict this parental belief. In the aggregate, graduates of Jewish high schools do very well on standardized tests. Many years ago, I conducted an informal survey of admissions by top-flight colleges of graduates of Jewish high schools. The results were stunning in that they pointed to a strong inclination to accept Jewish high school graduates.

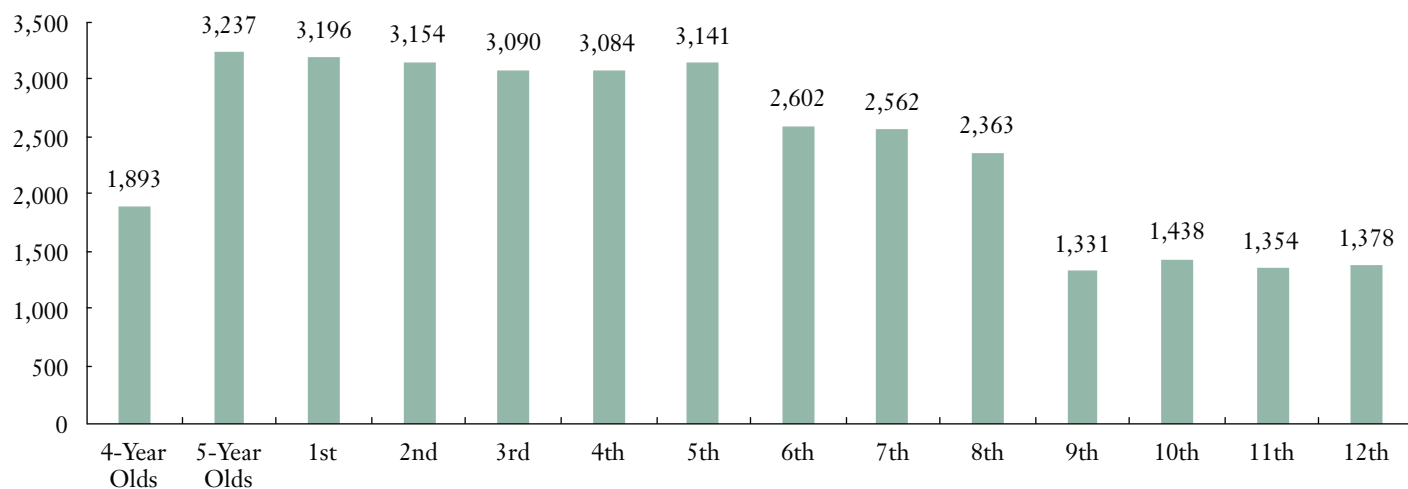
complement of elementary school grades. Here, too, parents are often required to send their children to a local public school.

Display 1 (above) indicates that with the exception of the four-year-old cohort, the enrollment pattern by grade resembles a modest downward slope. The exception of four-year-olds has already been attributed to many children not being enrolled in a Jewish day school until they reach the pre-1A or kindergarten level. As for all other grades, there is a decline in the number of students from grade to grade, starting with the five-year-old cohort all the way through the 12th grade. Without exception, each successive grade has fewer students than the grade below it. By and large, the decline from grade to grade is modest, usually in the range of about a thousand students.

Of course, since enrollment declines without exception as grade level goes up, the cumulative impact is considerable. Thus, the 12th grade with a tad under 12,000 students has approximately 50% of the enrollment of the five-year-old cohort.

The pattern is altered when we examine only non-Orthodox school enrollment. Again, putting aside the four-year-old group, what we witness, as is indicated in Display 2 on page 21, is extreme stability from the five-year-old group through the 5th grade. What is evident is that, unlike Orthodox schools, fertility isn’t a factor in determining the enrollment pattern

DISPLAY 2: NON-ORTHODOX SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY GRADE



in non-Orthodox schools, which suggests that perhaps the number of children in non-Orthodox day school families comes to about 2.1 or the point of zero population growth.

In non-Orthodox and Modern Orthodox schools, the 5th grade often represents the termination of what is referred to as the lower school. This helps to explain why there is a sharp drop-off of about one-sixth in enrollment between the 5th and 6th grade in non-Orthodox schools. There are day school parents who believe that five or six years of a Jewish day school education is sufficient and the time has come to transfer their children to other school settings, primarily public school.²⁴

Enrollment in the middle school grades, referring to grades 6-8, is relatively stable in non-Orthodox schools. However, there is a sharp drop between enrollment at the conclusion of middle school and enrollment in the high school grades. Again, this is attributable to parents believing that their children would be better off if they were not in a small

²⁴ Many non-Orthodox day schools, including small institutions, and some Modern Orthodox day schools regard grades 1-5 as a separate component that is called the lower school. Often there is a separate administrative set-up for this component, as when a school has a lower school principal and then also a middle school principal, etc. Could it be that this arrangement contributes to the parental notion that the completion of the 5th grade is an appropriate time to switch a child from a Jewish school to another school?

Jewish high school, as well as to the financial consideration that was mentioned earlier. Another factor is that in many communities there is no Jewish high school for students who graduate from a Jewish elementary school.

Table 3 (below) provides a snapshot of non-Orthodox enrollment by grade groupings across the four censuses. Since enrollment in these schools has declined by 6,000 students over the past decade, we might expect a decline in each group of grades. In fact, that has occurred for each of the elementary school cohorts, with the greatest losses being experienced in grades 1-5. If there is one silver lining in the cloud, it is that high school enrollment has essentially held its own. Although there was a modest decline between 2008 and 2013, over the past decade the story has been one

TABLE 3: NON-ORTHODOX ENROLLMENT BY GRADE GROUPINGS

	1998	2003	2008	2013
4 and 5-year-olds	6,384	6,103	6,225	5,130
Grades 1-5	20,381	20,333	18,438	15,665
Grades 6-8	7,815	9,093	8,316	7,527
Grades 9-12	2,190	4,100	5,593	5,501
Total	36,770	39,629	38,572	33,823

TABLE 4: 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	18,834	2,985	15.85%	7,504	39.84%	3,814	20.25%	4,531	24.06%
Chabad	12,636	2,509	19.86%	5,393	42.68%	2,284	18.08%	2,450	19.39%
Chassidic	81,937	17,415	21.25%	32,917	40.17%	15,838	19.33%	15,767	19.24%
Community	20,401	2,775	13.60%	8,376	41.06%	4,473	21.93%	4,777	23.42%
Immigrant/Outreach	2,384	421	17.66%	813	34.10%	465	19.51%	685	28.73%
Modern Orthodox	27,191	4,157	15.29%	10,889	40.05%	5,904	21.71%	6,241	22.95%
Reform	3,704	830	22.41%	2,185	58.99%	689	18.60%	0	0.00%
Solomon Schechter	9,718	1,525	15.69%	5,104	52.52%	2,365	24.34%	724	7.45%
Special Education	2,118								
Yeshiva	75,402	11,133	14.76%	30,254	40.12%	14,891	19.75%	19,124	25.36%

of increased enrollment, in large measure attributable to communal and philanthropic efforts to promote and support high schools that serve non-Orthodox families.

The vital information regarding grade distribution by school category and by grade category is incorporated into Table 4. There are once more four primary grade groupings. As noted previously, Reform day schools are heavily oriented toward the four and five-year-old group. What might be regarded as strange or puzzling is that in Chassidic schools, more than 21% of enrollment is in the same group. This is 50% higher than the distribution for four and five-year-olds in Yeshiva World schools.

Part of the explanation is that many Yeshiva World families do not send their children to yeshiva until they are five. Perhaps a more critical factor is that while Yeshiva World schools tend to adhere to standard cut-off dates for admission, so that a child must be four by a stated date to be allowed into kindergarten and five by a stated date to be admitted to pre-1A, Chassidic schools are far more flexible. This is particularly true of Chassidic boys' yeshivas. The attitude is that boys must be taught to

read from a *siddur* (prayer book) at a younger age than is generally standard in Yeshiva World schools, and therefore they are enrolled in yeshiva at a younger age than is true of all other school categories.

There is an additional question regarding Chassidic schools at the other end of the grade spectrum. While a quarter of all Yeshiva World enrollment is in the nominal high school grades, 9-12, in Chassidic schools the comparable figure is below 20%. The apparent explanation is that in nearly all Chassidic schools for boys, what might be regarded as high school or *mesivta* enrollment is terminated after the 10th grade and perhaps after the 9th grade, at which point the students are essentially in a *Beth Medrash* or seminary.

With respect to the other school categories, as mentioned previously, there are no Reform movement high schools. An amazingly low proportion of Solomon Schechter school students are found in high school, and this may be regarded as one more indication of the difficulties confronting the Conservative movement. At the same time, high school enrollment in Community schools is strong, not far from one-quarter of all enrollment in community schools. Also

strong is the proportion of high schoolers in Immigrant and Outreach schools. These schools tend to accept students who apply at whatever grade level, irrespective of whether they have the requisite Judaic skills.

SCHOOL SIZE

A number of factors combine to ensure that, in the aggregate and by the standard of American society, Jewish day schools are small institutions. The United States covers a vast territory. Jews have always been an intrepid people. When we first came to these shores, many trekked across the continent. Synagogues and communal institutions, including day schools, invariably followed wherever Jews settled in meaningful numbers. On top of geographic diversity, there is denominational diversity, meaning Orthodox, Conservative and Reform, and this is further complicated by the establishment of Community or transdenominational day schools and, even more, by intra-Orthodox diversity. It is no wonder that a great number of our day schools are small and even tiny by societal standards.²⁵

It merits mentioning once more that especially in the Yeshiva World there are small schools that were established because an educator decided that he needed to have an institution that he could call his own.

As a consequence of these factors, smallness is a major feature of the Jewish day school world. As Table 5 shows, about 10% of all day schools enroll no more than 25 students and a bit more than another 10% enroll between 25 and 50 students. In the 51-100 student category, there are 160 schools. In the aggregate, nearly 40% of all Jewish day schools have no more than 100 students, and most of this 40% have far fewer. These 160 schools have a total enrollment of nearly 17,000 students or only 6.6% of the enrollment in all Jewish day schools in 2013-14.

²⁵ It appears that with the exception of Catholic schools, the small school phenomenon is typical of the non-public school sector. The Federal survey referred to in previous footnotes reports, “The average school size in 2011-12 was 146 students across all private schools.” Furthermore, “44% of all private schools in 2011-12 enrolled fewer than 50 students.” Part of the explanation for the extraordinary high percentage of truly small schools is that the Federal survey includes schools that operate only at the kindergarten level.

TABLE 5: ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL SIZE

School Size	# of Schools	Total Students
1-25	84	1,431
26-50	92	3,367
51-100	160	12,066
101-200	165	24,001
201-350	151	40,214
351-500	76	31,667
501-750	66	39,968
751-1000	27	23,286
1000+	40	78,749
Total	861	254,749

Interestingly, the 40% statistic for enrollment in small day schools has been constant for all four censuses, which is also to say that smallness is embedded in the Jewish day school world for the reasons that I have described. The consequences of smallness are self-evident, including a relatively high institutional mortality rate. More importantly, smallness is a dynamic factor, meaning that it feeds on itself. Because a small school cannot have a multi-varied curriculum, there are students who have special requirements, either because they are gifted or because they have special needs, whose parents will not send them to a small school. There are other parents who simply believe that a small school is for both social and educational reasons not for their children. Of course, there are other parents – a much smaller number – who regard small classes, an obvious collateral feature of small schools, as beneficial to their children.²⁶

For all of the ramifications of smallness, the reality is that, from a communal standpoint, small day schools have efficacy. They do not, as a rule, charge higher tuition because there is a small parent/student base to help pay the bills. For all

²⁶ Although the proportion of Jewish day schools that are small has remained constant, smallness inevitably has meant that with each new census there are schools that operated five years previously that have closed. The mortality rate is, I believe, about 3%. Between 2008 and 2013, approximately 25 day yeshivas and day schools closed.

TABLE 6: NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY SCHOOL SIZE

Classification	1-25	26-50	51-100	101-200	201-350	351-500	501-750	751-1000	1000+	Total
Centrist Orthodox	7	8	11	12	22	11	4	-	2	77
Chabad	13	8	23	21	9	1	2	1	2	80
Chassidic	3	9	14	25	28	15	17	7	19	137
Community	7	10	23	21	20	5	6	4	1	97
Immigrant/Outreach	3	4	4	4	2	2	-	-	-	19
Modern Orthodox	3	6	16	20	13	8	8	4	5	83
Reform	-	1	-	3	6	1	2	-	-	13
Solomon Schechter	-	1	7	11	8	10	1	1		39
Special Education	10	12	6	2	4	-	-	-	-	34
Yeshiva	38	33	56	46	39	23	26	10	11	282
Total	84	92	160	165	151	76	66	27	40	861

of their indisputable shortcomings in facilities, educational enhancements and extra-curricular activities, they may provide stability for a community. Beth Jacob schools for girls that are scattered around the country illustrate the point. A number of them are tiny, and yet without these schools, there are families that would not remain in the community. Chabad day schools outside of New York also tend to be small, and here, too, the argument can be made that preservation of a small day school helps to preserve what remains of a committed Jewish community.

Table 6 (above) demonstrates that small schools are not spread anything close to evenly across the day school world. There are 282 Yeshiva World institutions, of which 127 have 100 students or fewer, while only 47 have more than 500 students. This is in contrast to the pattern in Chassidic schools. Although there are fewer than half the number of schools in this category than there are Yeshiva World schools, 43 have more than 500 students and only 27 have fewer than 100. Modern Orthodox schools also tend to be relatively large. By contrast, 40 of the 97 Community day schools have fewer than 100 students. Chabad institutions are even more prone to smallness, with 44 of the 80 schools in this category having fewer than 100 students. Only four Chabad schools have more than 350 students, and these are located in Brooklyn and serve Chabad families.

When we examine enrollment data by school size, as is shown in Table 7 on page 25, what becomes clear is that for all of the great number of small schools, smallness comprises but a small proportion of all day school enrollment. Nearly 17,000 Jewish day-schoolers attend schools with 100 students or fewer. This is a considerably smaller number than those who attend schools in the next category, 101-200 students, where there are 24,000 enrollees. At the other end of the spectrum, about 79,000 students or nearly one-third of the total number are in schools with 1,000 or more students. In short, from the standpoint of the number of schools and for many communities across the country, the smallness of day schools figures large. When examined from the perspective of total enrollment, what emerges is large school dominance. One-hundred and forty-two thousand Jewish dayschoolers are in schools with 500 or more students.

THE GEOGRAPHIC FACTOR

As the saying goes, what matters in real estate is location, location and location. In addition to their inherent educational mission, day schools are a form of real estate because they consist of buildings located in localities. As the community goes, so go the day schools that serve the community.

TABLE 7: NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL SIZE

Classification	1-25	26-50	51-100	101-200	201-350	351-500	501-750	751-1000	1000+	Total Students
Centrist Orthodox	107	295	872	1,910	6,043	4,719	2,312	-	2,667	18,925
Chabad	219	259	1,577	2,966	2,524	351	1,080	806	2,867	12,649
Chassidic	65	342	1,165	3,717	7,586	6,137	10,217	6,038	46,673	81,940
Community	131	400	1,763	3,020	5,286	2,188	3,287	3,277	1,061	20,413
Immigrant/Outreach	60	150	270	511	480	913	-	-	-	2,384
Modern Orthodox	36	197	1,221	2,864	3,634	3,317	5,019	3,390	7,539	27,217
Reform	-	50	-	456	1,707	378	1,113	-	-	3,704
Solomon Schechter	-	30	567	1,681	1,918	4,167	535	820	0	9,718
Special Education	147	410	393	223	945	-	-	-	-	2,118
Yeshiva	666	1,234	4,238	6,653	10,091	9,497	16,405	8,955	17,942	75,681
Total	1,431	3,367	12,066	24,001	40,214	31,667	39,968	23,286	78,749	254,749

As noted, Jewish settlement in the United States was spread across much of the country, specifically including every large American city and many that were moderately-sized or even smaller. There was hardly a city in the country that did not have one or more synagogues, and a great number had other accoutrements of Jewish communal life, including day schools. There were and still are considerably more than 100 Federations in the U.S. and a great number of either separate Boards of Jewish Education or an educational agency that is an integral part of Federation.

Americans move quite a bit, and we Jews certainly have not been an exception to this pattern. In fact, because of our high degree of socio-economic mobility, we probably have been more prone to locational mobility than most other Americans. There is also the unwritten commandment adhered to religiously in many families that mandates, “Thou shalt not live near your parents.” Communities and neighborhoods that were once home to a significant number of Jews have experienced critical population shifts, the result being a great decline in the number of Jews and, consequently, a decline in the institutions and instrumentalities of local Jewish life. This factor alone has contributed to the closing of day schools in communities where there no longer was a sufficient number of children to sustain the institution.

Assimilation and abandonment of Jewish identity has been a powerful collateral factor in the changing, meaning declining, character of Jewish life in many localities. Even where the number of nominal Jews, as defined by our demographers, has remained stable, there has been a decline in the number of those who identify in religious terms as Jews, whether as Orthodox or another denomination, and, as a consequence, there certainly is a decrease in the number of families that might be committed to a Jewish day school education.

Away from the New York Metropolitan area, there are communities that have not adhered to the pattern of Jewish population and/or Jewish identity loss. In these communities, mostly major American cities, Orthodox Jewish life has been strong, and therefore Jewish institutional life has flourished. Most major American cities continue to have vibrant Jewish communal life, including day schools. Nevertheless, even where the Orthodox have been a strong presence, there often have been losses in their ranks, because newlyweds have tended not to stay in the places where they grew up. Many have gravitated toward New York and New Jersey, with those who are fervently Orthodox tending to settle in Lakewood, New Jersey, a phenomenon that I shall describe more fully.

TABLE 8: ENROLLMENT BY STATE

State	1998	2003	2008	2013	Change 1998 to 2013	% Change
Alabama	152	104	92	69	-83	-54.61%
Alaska	-	-	-	-	-	
Arizona	589	769	950	788	199	33.79%
Arkansas	-	7	17	14	-	
California	14,696	15,533	15,762	15,270	574	3.91%
Colorado	782	832	889	866	84	10.74%
Connecticut	1,673	1,666	1,801	1,845	172	10.28%
Delaware	94	110	47	54	-40	-42.55%
District of Columbia	180	158	245	316	136	75.56%
Florida	8,129	8,956	9,428	9,248	1,119	13.77%
Georgia	2,014	2,399	2,621	2,319	305	15.14%
Hawaii	19	7	10	-	-	
Idaho	-	-	-	-	-	
Illinois	5,127	5,021	5,099	5,248	121	2.36%
Indiana	416	342	273	283	-133	-31.97%
Iowa	52	141	131	97	45	86.54%
Kansas	338	298	251	225	-113	-33.43%
Kentucky	148	86	30	9	-139	-93.92%
Louisiana	75	124	40	48	-27	-36.00%
Maine	36	34	39	41	5	13.89%
Maryland	6,926	8,207	8,003	7,556	630	9.10%
Massachusetts	3,189	3,523	3,496	3,084	-105	-3.29%
Michigan	2,419	2,430	2,555	2,505	86	3.56%
Minnesota	822	732	933	655	-167	-20.32%
Mississippi	-	-	-	-	-	
Missouri	734	751	681	552	-182	-24.80%
Montana	-	-	-	-	-	
Nebraska	22	21	43	49	27	122.73%
Nevada	419	271	579	855	436	104.06%
New Hampshire	-	-	-	-	-	
New Jersey	17,954	22,488	28,738	38,804	20,850	116.13%
New Mexico	60	62	59	39	-21	-35.00%
New York	103,909	116,661	132,573	151,391	47,482	45.70%
North Carolina	354	479	572	455	101	28.53%
North Dakota	-	-	-	-	-	
Ohio	3,355	3,276	3,166	3,095	-260	-7.75%
Oklahoma	79	44	34	46	-33	-41.77%
Oregon	249	304	299	305	56	22.49%
Pennsylvania	4,016	3,636	3,227	3,156	-860	-21.41%
Rhode Island	386	308	271	204	-182	-47.15%
South Carolina	248	265	276	217	-31	-12.50%
South Dakota	-	-	-	-	-	
Tennessee	464	522	505	375	-89	-19.18%
Texas	2,260	2,434	2,674	2,825	565	25.00%
Utah	-	-	-	-	-	
Vermont	-	13	-	-	-	
Virginia	565	573	562	495	-70	-12.39%
Washington	635	723	650	709	74	11.65%
West Virginia	-	-	-	-	-	
Wisconsin	748	725	691	637	-111	-14.84%
Wyoming	-	-	-	-	-	

TABLE 9: ENROLLMENT OUTSIDE OF NY & NJ

Classification	1998	2003	2008	2013	Change 1998-2013		1998 # Schools	2013 # Schools	Change # Schools 1998-2013	
						% 98-13				% Change # Schools 1998-2013
Centrist Orthodox	7,543	6,593	6,050	6,957	-586	-7.769%	34	38	4	11.765%
Chabad	3,544	3,925	5,023	5,738	2,194	61.907%	34	49	15	44.118%
Community	13,883	16,424	19,182	18,463	4,580	32.990%	69	85	16	23.188%
Immigrant/Outreach	647	700	332	354	-293	-45.286%	5	4	-1	-20.000%
Modern Orthodox	11,578	11,556	11,944	9,064	-2,514	-21.714%	57	49	-8	-14.035%
Reform	4,128	3,956	4,002	3,188	-940	-22.771%	19	12	-7	-36.842%
Solomon Schechter	11,606	11,719	8,479	6,098	-5,508	-47.458%	41	27	-14	-34.146%
Special Education	113	187	321	274	161	142.478%	3	7	4	133.333%
Yeshiva	9,428	10,790	11,668	14,418	4,990	52.927%	44	75	31	70.455%
Total	62,470	65,850	67,001	64,554	2,084	3.228%	306	346	40	13.072%

Table 8 on page 26 provides day school enrollment for the four censuses for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Presently, there are 13 states that do not have a Jewish day school, a greater number than in the previous surveys. In seven of the states, total enrollment is under 50, and in another three, enrollment is below 100. In 16 states, enrollment declined across the four censuses. Twenty-one states experienced enrollment increases. In several of these, the number of students was quite small to begin with. Putting aside for the moment New York and New Jersey, in most states with major cities that have a significant number of Jews, enrollment has held up and usually has increased. This is true of California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan and Texas. However, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Ohio experienced declines.

This brief analysis calculates enrollment change from 1998 to 2013. In a sense, this presents a mildly distorted picture because there are states that gained enrollment over the 15-year period, but lost students between 2008 and 2013. There were slight dips during that five-year span in California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland and Michigan. As pointed out previously, what likely is at work in states away from New York that have had a significant number of Orthodox Jews is that younger families do not stay and often end up in the New York/New Jersey area.

Table 9 (above) examines enrollment patterns for all categories of schools outside of New York and New Jersey for the four censuses. Chassidic schools are not listed because, as noted, there are none outside of New York and New Jersey. What is most striking and consistent with the overall picture described earlier is the Solomon Schechter decline over the 15-year period. In 2013, there were 5,500 fewer students, or nearly half the number enrolled in Solomon Schechters in 1998. There has been a commensurate decline in the number of schools identified as Solomon Schechter, from 41 to 27.

Not surprisingly, day schools associated with the Reform movement have also experienced a decline in enrollment and in the number of schools. What is possibly surprising are the data concerning Modern Orthodox schools. They have lost 2,500 students or more than 20% of their enrollment over the 15-year period, and they now have eight fewer schools. Since Modern Orthodox school enrollment has held up over the 15-year period, it is obvious that there now is a greater concentration of Modern Orthodox families in New York and New Jersey.

RAVSAK or Community schools have fared rather well, gaining 4,500 students and 16 schools across the 15-year period. This represents enrollment growth of nearly a third. Chabad schools have also done well, growing by

TABLE 10: LAKEWOOD ENROLLMENT

	Schools		Students		Schools		Students		Change in # of Students 1998-2013		Percentage
	1998	2003	2008	2013	1998-2013	Percentage					
Centrist Orthodox	-	-	1	112	1	91	-	-	-	-	
Chassidic	2	464	1	200	2	703	10	2,527	2,063	444.61%	
Modern Orthodox	1	119	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Solomon Schechter	1	119	-	-	-	46	-	-	-	-	
Special Education	-	-	1	109	1	201	3	287	-	-	
Yeshiva	16	4,613	33	8,528	51	13,779	70	20,815	16,202	351.22%	
Total	20	5,315	36	8,949	55	14,820	83	23,629	18,314	344.57%	

about 2,200 students, or more than 60%. In 2013, there were 15 more Chabad day schools than operated in 1998. The statistics also provide a sense of the relative smallness of Chabad schools. There were an equal number of Chabad and Modern Orthodox schools, but the latter category had many more students.

Although New York and New Jersey are the center of the Yeshiva World, in most major cities there are schools in this category, and they have fared well over the 15-year period. Enrollment has grown by nearly 5,000 or more than 50% and there are now 75 schools so identified, up from 44 15 years ago. It should be noted once more that quite a few of these Yeshiva World schools are at the high school level and are small.

Between 2008 and 2013, day schools outside of New York and New Jersey lost a bit more than 2,000 students, with all of the loss and then some attributable to non-Orthodox schools. In 2008, these schools had 31,663 students. Five years later, they had 27,749 students, representing a loss of nearly 4,000 students. In the same period, enrollment in Orthodox schools grew by about 1,600 students. Put otherwise, while in 2008 Orthodox enrollment outside of New York and New Jersey was 52.7% of the total, by 2013 the proportion had grown to 57% of the total.

The decline in non-Orthodox enrollment is reflective, at least to an extent, of changes in Jewish communal life in

many localities across the country. Simply put, there are fewer children in non-Orthodox homes whose parents are determined to send them to a Jewish day school.

Especially away from New York and New Jersey, enrollment of children from non-Orthodox homes in day schools cannot be calculated simply by adding the number of students in schools identified as non-Orthodox. For one thing, the likelihood is that away from New York, there is a greater tendency for non-Orthodox parents to send their children to an Orthodox school, and there obviously is a collateral greater tendency for Orthodox schools to accept such students. Secondly, Chabad school enrollment outside of New York and New Jersey has grown from census to census, and a large number of enrollees in these Chabad schools are from non-Orthodox homes.

NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

The flip side of what may be referred to as stagnant enrollment outside of New York and New Jersey is the spectacular growth in these two states. Between 1998 and 2013, enrollment in New York day schools grew by more than 47,000 or by 45% and, in New Jersey, the number grew by nearly 21,000 or by 116%. Put otherwise, since total enrollment in U.S. day schools has grown by 70,000 over the 15-year period, nearly all of this growth has been in these two states. Furthermore, nearly all of the growth

TABLE 11: NYC ENROLLMENT

	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students
	1998		2003		2008		2013	
Bronx	4	1,039	5	1,347	4	1,608	4	1,805
Brooklyn	160	61,967	179	67,777	180	76,840	196	87,707
Manhattan	15	3,881	14	4,326	13	4,354	13	4,733
Queens	30	7,725	31	8,285	32	9,618	30	10,964
Staten Island	5	926	6	828	6	854	7	1,027
Total	214	75,538	235	82,563	235	93,274	250	106,236

in these two states is attributable to increased enrollment in Chassidic and Yeshiva World schools.

In raw numbers, New York and New Jersey had 190,000 dayschoolers in 2013. As this report is being issued early in the 2014-15 school year, the figure has already grown by at least 6,000, so that in another blink of the eye, these two states will account for 200,000 students. By 2018, when hopefully another day school census will be conducted, enrollment in these two states is likely to reach 225,000 students. The financial challenges facing the geographic communities and also the religious communities that sustain these institutions is enormous, and the challenge is made even greater by the necessity to create additional facilities to accommodate the remarkable growth.

Nearly all of the additional students over the past five years in New Jersey schools are attributable to the sensational growth of yeshivas and day schools in Lakewood, New Jersey, a relatively small municipality that is home to Beth Medrash Govoha, the largest advanced yeshiva in the world, with an enrollment of 7,000 seminary students. As Table 10 on page 28 shows, in 2008 there were nearly 15,000 students in Lakewood schools, while in 2013 there were more than 23,600 students. Over the 15-year span of these censuses, Lakewood day school enrollment has risen from 5,300 to 23,600, a growth rate of 344%.

Put otherwise, enrollment in Lakewood Jewish elementary schools and high schools now grows by about 1,800 students a year. Each year, that number of additional seats must be created, and each year it is necessary to sustain on an

operating basis a growing number of schools. In the 2013 school year, there were 83 schools operating at these levels. The number grows by between five and ten schools each year.

In the 2014-15 school year, the Jewish elementary schools and high schools in Lakewood will enroll more students than are enrolled in all of the Jewish day schools in Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania combined, states with major cities and suburban areas that have large Jewish communities and a significant Orthodox Jewish presence.²⁷

Although New York City schools have not grown in enrollment anywhere close to the Lakewood experience, their statistics are quite impressive. As Table 11 (above) shows, between 1998 and 2013 there was an increase of about 30,000 students. This growth rate of nearly 40% came during a period of significant movement out of the city of mainly young Orthodox families, many to the Five Towns area in Nassau County or to Rockland County. Another migration resulted from the development and growth of Kiryas Joel, the large Satmar community in Orange County, New York. As already described, a perhaps even greater number of young

²⁷ The Lakewood story is even more remarkable when we consider two additional factors. The first is enrollment in post-high school institutions or seminaries. Mention has been made in the text of Beth Medrash Govoha. In addition to that very large institution, there are nearly 50 schools for male students operating at the post-high school level in Lakewood. There are, of course, a number of post-high school seminaries for girls.

A perhaps even more remarkable statistic is that Lakewood itself is a small community. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Lakewood's population was 54,000, of whom 48.4% were under the age of 18. Is there another locality in the country with such a statistic?

TABLE 12: NYC BY CATEGORY, 1998-2013

Classification	1998			2003		
	Schools	Students	% of Total	Schools	Students	% of Total
Orthodox						
Centrist Orthodox	25	6,313	8.36%	21	4,763	5.77%
Chabad	6	3,609	4.78%	11	4,225	5.12%
Chassidic	61	27,983	37.04%	70	32,909	39.86%
Immigrant/Outreach	22	4,130	5.47%	24	3,993	4.84%
Modern Orthodox	11	6,694	8.86%	11	8,052	9.75%
Special Education	8	276	0.37%	19	668	0.81%
Yeshiva	71	24,584	32.55%	70	25,686	31.11%
Orthodox Total	204	73,589	97.45%	226	80,296	97.25%
Non-Orthodox						
Community	4	785	1.04%	4	949	1.15%
Reform	1	357	0.47%	1	506	0.61%
Solomon Schechter	5	807	1.07%	4	812	0.98%
Non-Orthodox Total	10	1,949	2.55%	9	2,267	2.75%
NYC Total	214	75,538		235	82,563	

Orthodox families have settled in Lakewood, New Jersey. Overwhelmingly, this movement away from the city came from families that previously lived in Brooklyn, which makes even more impressive the growth in enrollment in that part of New York City. Between 1998 and 2014, Brooklyn enrollment grew by 26,000 students, so that about 80% of all New York City Jewish day school enrollment growth is attributable to Brooklyn. Interestingly, the increase in the number of Jewish day schools in Brooklyn has not mirrored the enrollment increase. The obvious explanation is that in the aggregate, Brooklyn schools are larger today than they were in 1998.²⁸

Table 12 provides New York City enrollment by school category for each of the censuses. Only one in 40 Jewish dayschoolers in the city is in a non-Orthodox school. Presently, there are only nine such schools in New York City. Of note, the non-Orthodox school share of day school enrollment in the city has been constant. In 1998, it was 2.55%; in 2013, it was 2.52%. As there has been a constant

²⁸ Enrollment in Kiryas Joel schools amounts to about 11,000. Each of the students can be said to be in families that moved from Brooklyn.

increase in the number of students in Jewish day schools in the city, obviously there has been a commensurate increase in non-Orthodox school enrollment. All of this increase – and then some – has been in the Community school sector.

As for the Orthodox, nearly half of the enrollment is in Chassidic schools and more than a quarter is in Yeshiva World institutions. By far the lion's share of the growth in New York City day school enrollment has been in Chassidic schools. There has been a nearly 90% increase since 1998. In the same period, the Yeshiva World enrollment grew by 16%.

Unlike Lakewood, which has significant tracts of land that can readily be developed for school use, Brooklyn is densely populated, especially in the neighborhoods with large concentrations of Orthodox Jews. It is a constant challenge to find space to accommodate enrollment growth. Whereas Yeshiva World schools in Brooklyn tend to be in the heart of the neighborhoods where their families live, Chassidic groups are willing to build facilities at the edge of their neighborhoods and even in neighborhoods that have few or no Chassidim. For instance, there are now Satmar schools in Brooklyn in Bedford Stuyvesant. What often happens is that after a Chassidic

2008			2013		
Schools	Students	% of Total	Schools	Students	% of Total
19	4,727	5.07%	18	4,901	4.61%
17	6,345	6.80%	18	5,680	5.35%
72	40,239	43.14%	83	52,063	49.01%
18	2,781	2.98%	13	1,853	1.74%
13	9,255	9.92%	13	9,465	8.91%
14	849	0.91%	17	1,051	0.99%
75	26,711	28.64%	79	28,541	26.87%
228	90,907	97.46%	241	103,554	97.48%
4	1,240	1.33%	5	1,454	1.37%
1	567	0.61%	1	516	0.49%
2	560	0.60%	3	712	0.67%
7	2,367	2.54%	9	2,682	2.52%
235	93,274		250	106,236	

school is planted in a non-Chassidic neighborhood, Chassidic families begin to move in. This has already happened in a significant portion of Bedford Stuyvesant.

Table 12 (above) shows that Modern Orthodox and Chabad schools have more than held their own over the 15-year period. Centrist Orthodox and Immigrant/Outreach schools have not. The enrollment decline in Immigrant/Outreach schools reflects the declining interest in educational institutions with an outreach mission. As for Centrist Orthodox schools, their enrollment decline likely arises from a shift to the suburbs of Centrist Orthodox families, as well as a greater tendency to enroll their children in Yeshiva World schools.

Table 13 on pages 32-33 provides data for what is commonly referred to as the nine-county New York Metropolitan area, plus Orange County, which is a bit further north and includes Kiryas Joel, the large and rapidly-expanding Satmar community. The four additional counties outside of New York City have 32,500 Jewish dayschoolers, the large majority coming from Rockland County, which has for decades been a primary place of Charedi settlement. If we add enrollment in Kiryas Joel schools,

the total comes to about 150,000 students, or nearly 60% of all day school enrollment in the United States.

Demography is a tricky field, and many predictions about population patterns have turned out to be mistaken. But there are reasons to believe that the population trends indicated in Tables 10-13 on pages 28 to 33 are almost certain to continue, which is to say that in five years, not only will there be more students in Lakewood schools, New York City schools and in the counties near New York City than there are now, but also that there will be a further significant increase in the proportion of all U.S. Jewish day-schoolers being educated in these localities.

The financial implications for schools in the New York Metropolitan area and Lakewood are obvious. There will be capital needs in the tens of millions of dollars over the next decade, and the operating deficits of many schools will increase. The implications away from New York and New Jersey are more serious because they concern not only what may happen to the schools themselves, some of which will close because of declining enrollment, but at least as importantly, the impact on the communities where these schools are located.

TABLE 13: NYC, NASSAU, SUFFOLK, WESTCHESTER, ROCKLAND & ORANGE COUNTY ENROLLMENT, 1998-2013

Classification	1998					
	NYC		Suburban NYC		Total	
	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students
Centrist Orthodox	25	6,313	10	3,034	35	9,347
Chabad	6	3,609	2	73	8	3,682
Chassidic	61	27,983	17	10,357	78	38,340
Community	4	785	0	0	4	785
Immigrant/Outreach	22	4,130	1	40	23	4,170
Modern Orthodox	11	6,694	9	4,369	20	11,063
Reform	1	357	0	0	1	357
Solomon Schechter	5	807	7	2,248	12	3,055
Special Education	8	276	4	150	12	426
Yeshiva	71	24,584	27	6,477	98	31,061
Total	214	75,538	77	26,748	291	102,286

Classification	2008					
	NYC		Suburban NYC		Total	
	Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students
Centrist Orthodox	19	4,727	6	3,108	25	7,835
Chabad	17	6,345	10	753	27	7,098
Chassidic	72	40,239	26	18,891	98	59,130
Community	4	1,240	0	0	4	1,240
Immigrant/Outreach	18	2,781	0	0	18	2,781
Modern Orthodox	13	9,255	7	3,709	20	12,964
Reform	1	567	0	0	1	567
Solomon Schechter	2	560	4	2,097	6	2,657
Special Education	14	849	6	373	20	1,222
Yeshiva	75	26,711	34	8,066	109	34,777
Total	235	93,274	93	36,997	328	130,271

2003					
NYC		Suburban NYC		Total	
Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students
21	4,763	12	3,350	33	8,113
11	4,225	5	273	16	4,498
70	32,909	25	15,024	95	47,933
4	949	0	0	4	949
24	3,993	0	0	24	3,993
11	8,052	7	4,342	18	12,394
1	506	0	0	1	506
4	812	5	2,350	9	3,162
19	668	9	562	28	1,230
70	25,686	27	6,785	97	32,471
235	82,563	90	32,686	325	115,249

2013					
NYC		Suburban NYC		Total	
Schools	Students	Schools	Students	Schools	Students
18	4,901	9	3,669	27	8,570
18	5,680	8	717	26	6,397
83	52,063	38	26,446	121	78,509
5	1,454	2	134	7	1,588
13	1,853	0	0	13	1,853
13	9,465	6	3,203	19	12,668
1	516	0	0	1	516
3	712	2	1,053	5	1,765
17	1,051	5	368	22	1,419
79	28,541	34	7,524	113	36,065
250	106,236	104	43,114	347	149,350

What emerges from this report is that there are two enormous challenges now confronting our most vital educational institutions. The first challenge is whether day school education will continue to be a principal instrumentality for Judaic strengthening among those segments of American Jewish life for whom day school education is a critical determinant of whether Judaic commitment will remain alive.

The second challenge is whether there will be sufficient communal resources to provide adequately for the continuing growth in enrollment in the Yeshiva World and Chassidic sectors. That there will be a greater number of students in yeshivas and day schools is assured. What isn't assured is whether the facilities will be adequate, whether teachers will be adequately trained and prepared and whether there will be resources to assure that the curriculum serves students across the educational spectrum. While the community will need to provide seats for every student who applies, this alone will be insufficient. What is needed are programs and teachers that can address the needs of students of diverse intellectual capabilities and diverse educational interests.

The research reported here was completed as I completed my 80th year. It is a blessing that I have been granted the years as well as the capacity to continue to be active in our communal life, especially in the yeshiva and day school world. It is also a blessing that The AVI CHAI Foundation has provided me with the opportunity to make an additional contribution to our community through its formidable philanthropic activity. My involvement with this outstanding foundation began in the mid-1980s.

I am now in my 63rd year of communal activity. My hope is that there will be a fifth day school census in the 2018-19 school year and also that as The AVI CHAI Foundation ceases its operations in North America, somehow the research that I have undertaken will be extended by others.

I conclude with gratitude to my long-term associate, Karen Hirsch, who has worked with me on each census; Joyann Erez, another associate, who shouldered much of the burden for this census; and Mayer Fogel, who has with great ability assisted in the critical statistical work for each of these censuses.



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