

FALL 2020 ENROLLMENT SURVEY RESULTS

**Admissions Professionals Expanded Report
November 2020**



PRIZMAH

Center for Jewish Day Schools

Prizmah is dedicated to creating a strategic and systematic approach to research, data collection and knowledge sharing. We work to collect learning and insights from the field of Jewish day schools and yeshivas in order to inform, inspire and empower each individual school and community.

This third pulse survey report seeks to provide a profile of Jewish day school enrollment in the 2020-2021 school year and understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

The survey was fielded from November 2 to November 20, 2020. The following is a report and analysis of the findings developed by Odelia Epstein, Director, Knowledge Center and Amy Adler, Director, Catalyzing Resources.

*** Prizmah conducted two previous pulse surveys during the COVID-19 pandemic to understand its affects on Jewish day school and yeshiva finances and operations. Previous pulse surveys can be found on the [Prizmah Knowledge Center](#).**

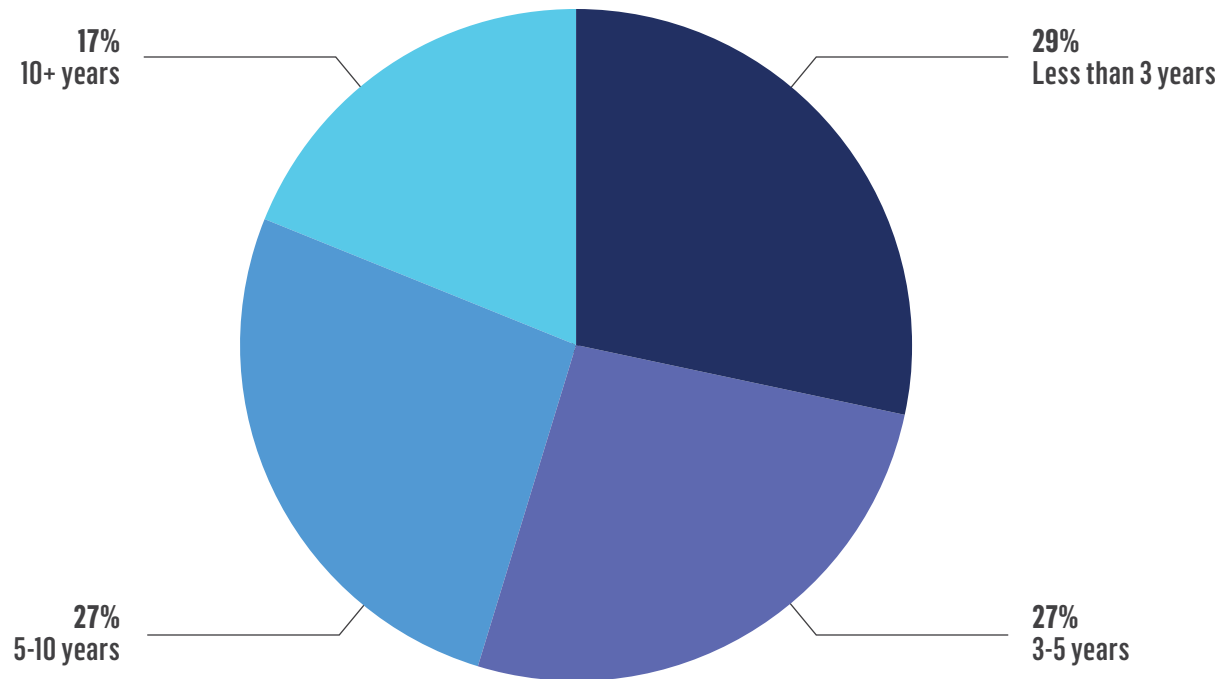
Enrollment is at the core of school operations. The 2020-2021 school year and the COVID-19 pandemic brought unanticipated changes to the landscape of Jewish day schools and yeshivas, including upending the admissions cycles in March 2020. School leaders faced increased demand for tuition-assistance and anticipated enrollment decreases. At the same time, schools saw increased interest from potential new students.

Throughout the summer and fall, non-Orthodox schools, in particular, had been anecdotally reporting an uptick in enrollment due to a number of COVID-19 related factors. This pulse survey was created in part to test this hypothesis and understand how the pandemic has affected enrollment related trends in both preschool and grades K-12 during the 2020-2021 school year.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

We greatly appreciate the dedicated admission professionals representing 78 schools who took the time to participate in this survey. More than 70% of respondents have been admission professionals at their current school for over 3 years.

How many years have you been an admission professional at your school?



PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Responding schools span North America and have various enrollment sizes. The respondents vary in size, geography and denominational identity. Community, Conservative, Pluralistic and Reform schools compose 70% of the respondents, with the remainder identifying as Orthodox or Modern Orthodox. Orthodox respondents are largely from outside of the Northeast.

Religious Affiliation	% of Respondents
Community/ Non-denominational	45%
Conservative	9%
Modern Orthodox	6%
Orthodox	23%
Pluralistic	10%
Reform	6%
Total	100%

Region	% of Respondents
Canada	8%
Mid-Atlantic	6%
Midwest	21%
Northeast	23%
Southern	22%
Western	21%
Total	100%

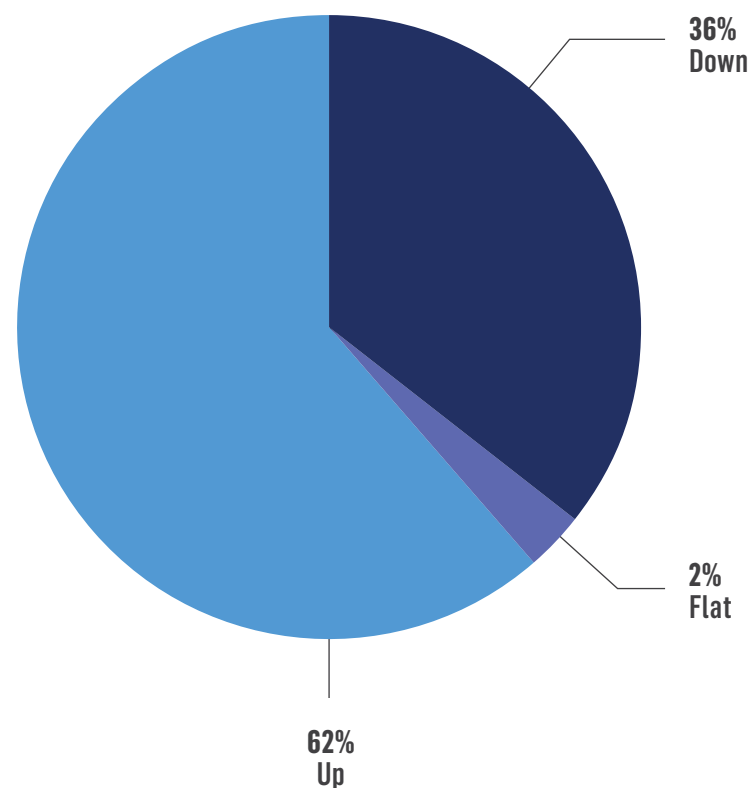
Enrollment	% of Respondents
1-99	22%
100-199	26%
200-299	14%
300-399	18%
400-499	6%
500-599	5%
600+	9%
Total	100%

K – 12

ENROLLMENT TRENDS: K-12

Sixty-two percent of respondents reported an increase in enrollment, while 36% of respondents reported a decrease in enrollment. Of the schools reporting decreases the average was an 8% decrease in enrollment. Of the schools reporting increases, the average increase was 11%. Canadian respondents had an average increase of 7%. US respondents had an average 4% increase. No Canadian schools reported a decrease.

Enrollment	Average Enrollment % Change
1-99	9%
100-199	8%
200-299	1%
300-399	-2%
400-499	2%
500-599	2%
600+	3%



ENROLLMENT TRENDS: K-12

Non-Orthodox respondents increased enrollment by 4.3% and Orthodox respondents decreased enrollment by 1.8% from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021. The total change in enrollment from all respondents was 1.8%

Total Respondent Enrollment Change

	Total 2019-2020 Enrollment	Total 2020-2021 Enrollment	Difference	% of Change
Total	21,827	22,230	403	1.8%

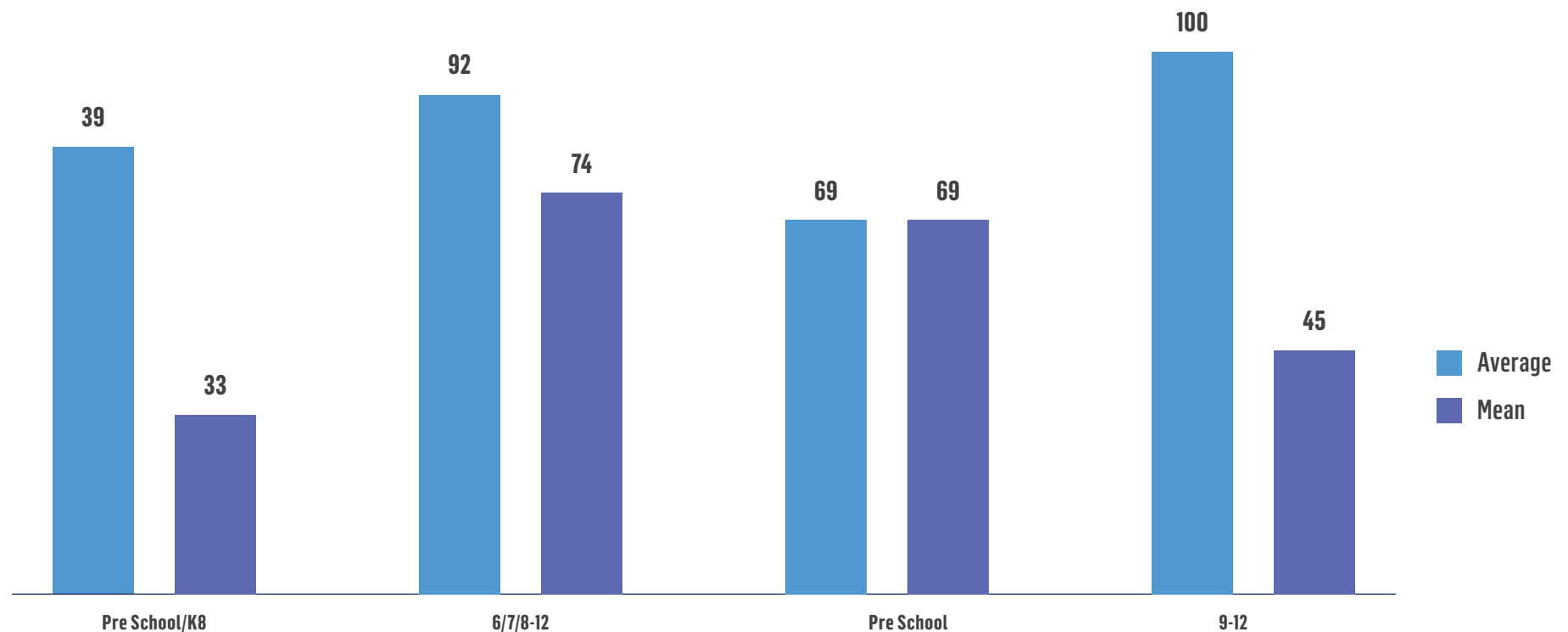
Enrollment Change

School Type	% of Change
Non-Orthodox schools	4.3%
Orthodox schools	-1.8%
All schools	1.8%

NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT: K-12

We asked schools to report the total number of new students enrolled for the 2020-2021 school year for grades K-12. The average number of new students was 51. Below is a breakdown of average and mean by grades the schools served.

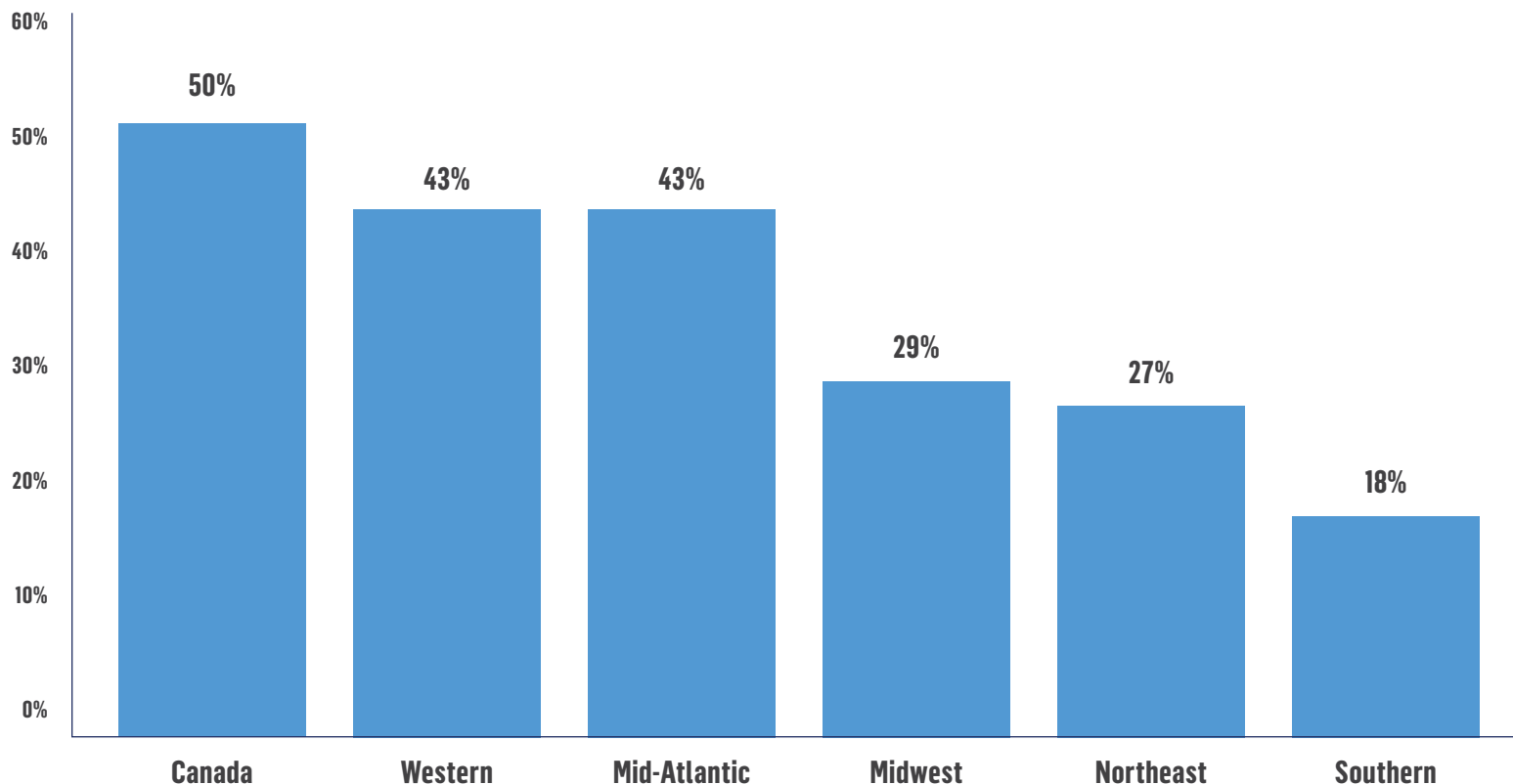
How many new students enrolled for the 2020-2021 school year? (K-12 only)



PUBLIC SCHOOL CONTRIBUTION TO ENROLLMENT INCREASE: K-12

Among all respondents, an average of 31% of new student enrollment came from public schools. In the Mid-Atlantic and Western regions, new student enrollment from public schools averaged over 40%. Canadian schools experienced the greatest average enrollment increase from public school families.

Percentage of new student enrollment that came from public schools (avg.)



ENROLLMENT INQUIRIES: K-12

Many schools reported an increase in inquiries. An average of 40% of new inquiries came from students who had not inquired before and were not known by the school. Twenty-three percent of schools reported that of the new inquiries, over 75% were not previously known by the school. Ninety-four percent of responding schools reported receiving inquiries after the first day of school.

Average number of inquiries received after the first day of school: 10



ADMISSION TRENDS: K-12

Inquiry, application and acceptance conversion rates deepens a school's understanding of how large their inquiry pool needs to be to yield an enrolled student.

44%

**Inquiry to application
conversion rate**

71%

**Application to accept
conversion rate**

93%

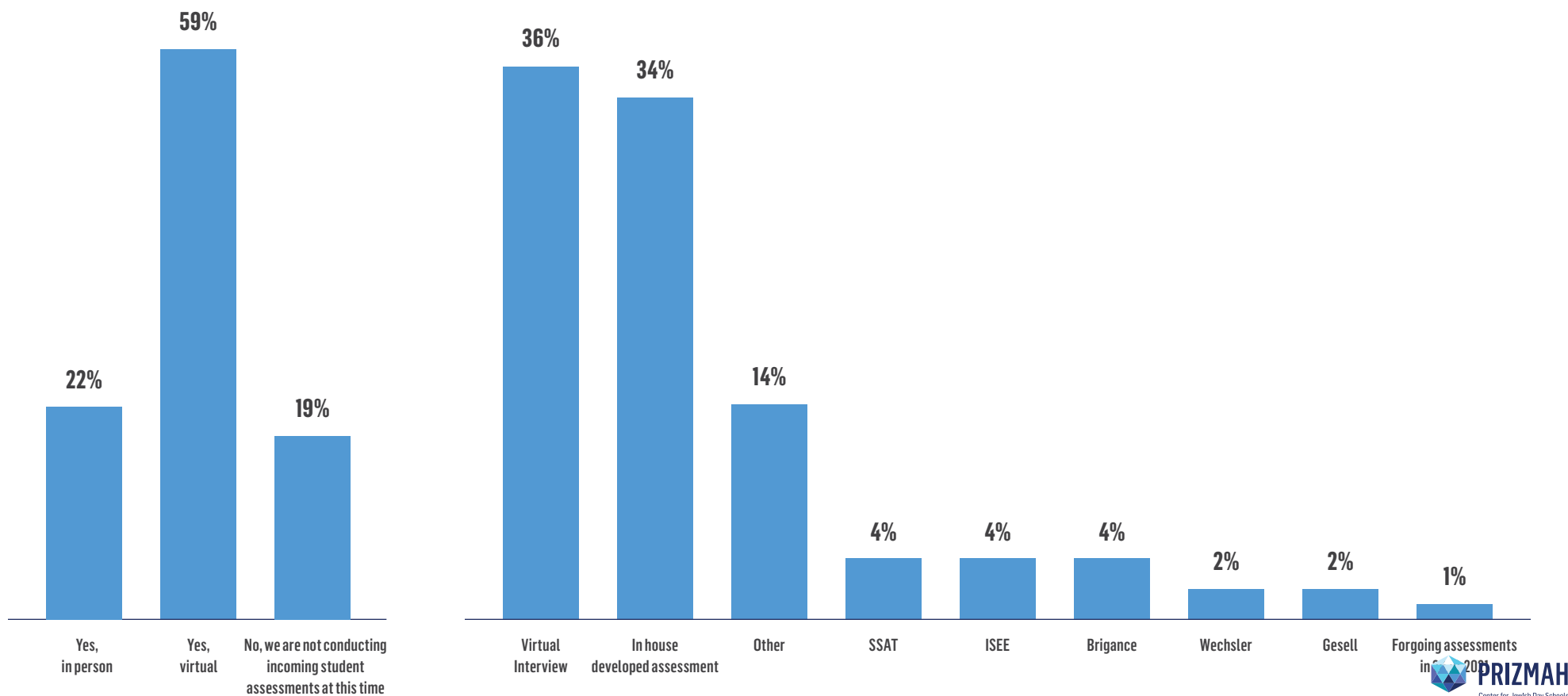
**Accept to enroll
conversion rate**

ADMISSION ASSESSMENT TOOLS

More than half of schools reported they are conducting in-person or virtual assessments. Virtual interviews and in-house developmental assessments are the most commonly used tools. Other assessment tools schools indicated they are using are MAP, DIAL, KDI, JSAT, Bracken, YCAT and Woodcock Johnson. MAP, DIAL, KDI, JSAT, Bracken, YCAT, and Woodcock Johnson.

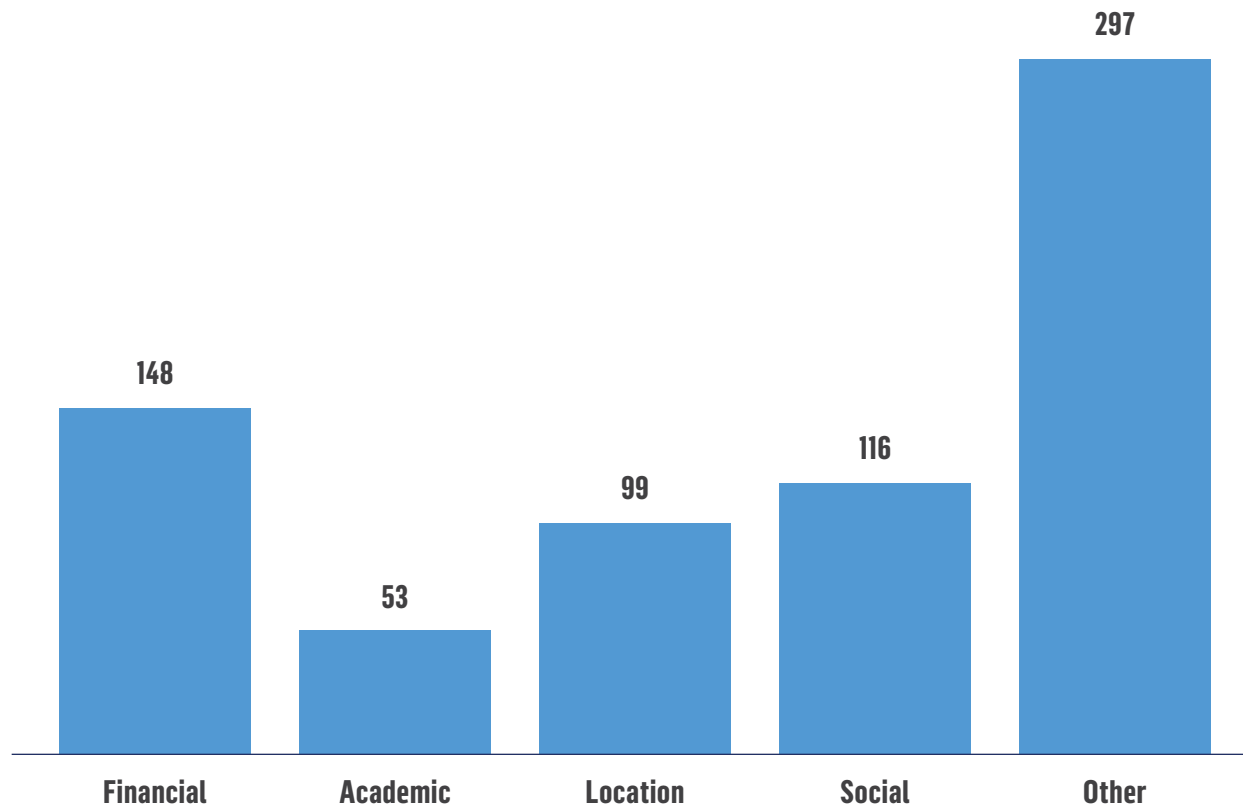
Are you conducting in-person or virtual assessments for new applicants?

Which assessment tools do you use? (Check all that apply)



ACCEPTED APPLICANTS WHO DECLINED TO ENROLL: K-12

Number of accepted students (K-12) who declined to enroll for the 2020-2021 school year due to the following reasons:



Common “Other” reasons include: safety in the school, health, parent job uncertainty, opting for local learning pods, and online gifted program.

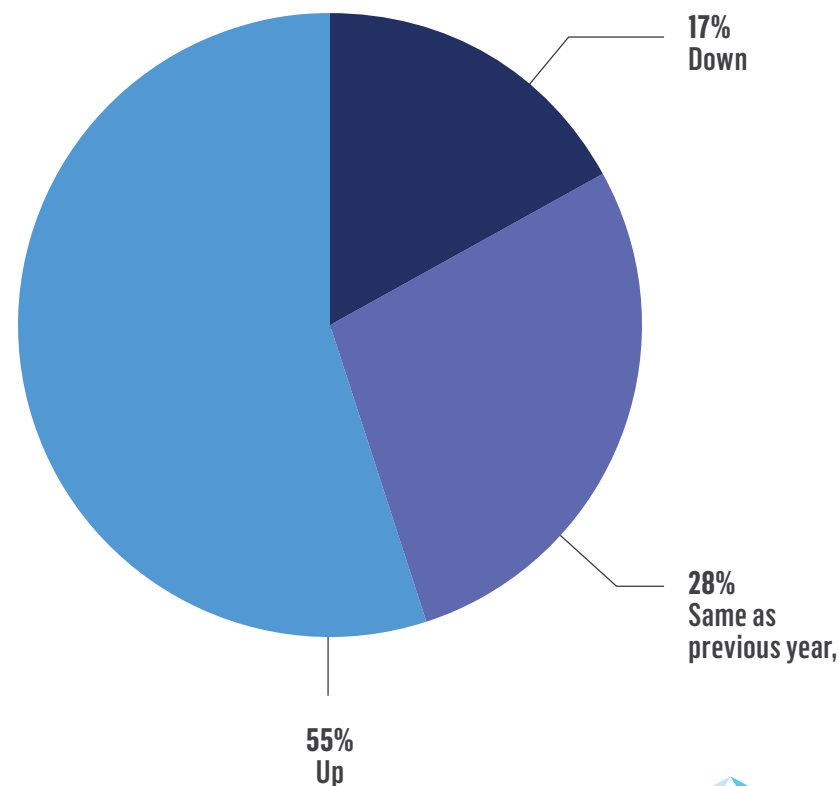
NEW STUDENT TUITION-ASSISTANCE REQUESTS: K-12

More than half of schools reported that tuition-assistance inquiries from new students are up from the previous year, including 74% of Orthodox respondents and 47% of Community, Conservative, Reform and Pluralistic respondents. Twenty percent of the non-Orthodox schools reported a decrease.

Among the pool of new students, are tuition-assistance inquiries up or down this year?

Non-Orthodox Schools	Up	47%
	Same as previous year	33%
	Down	20%
<i>Subtotal</i>		100%
Orthodox Schools	Up	74%
	Same as previous year	17%
	Down	9%
<i>Subtotal</i>		100%

Among the pool of new students, are tuition-assistance inquiries up or down?



RETENTION RATE: K-12

The overall average retention rate from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 is 87%. Average retention rates vary by region.

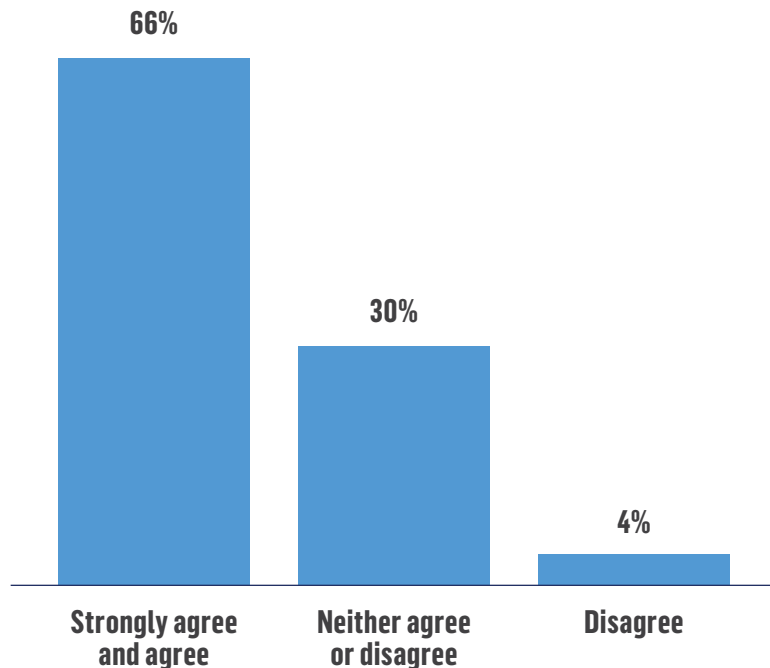
Region	Total
Canada	79%
Mid-Atlantic	82%
Midwest	91%
Northeast	90%
Southern	89%
Western	84%
Total	87%



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community-engagement programs are effective tools to recruit new families. During the pandemic, schools reported planning an average of six community engagement activities for the school year. More than half of admission professionals agree that community engagement programs have helped enroll new families.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
“Community-engagement programs have helped our school to recruit new families for enrollment”?



PRESCHOOL: EARLY CHILDHOOD – PRE-K

ENROLLMENT TRENDS: PRESCHOOL

Preschool enrollment presents a significantly different picture than K-12 enrollment. Total preschool enrollment declined 18% from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

	2019-2020 Enrollment	2020-2021 Enrollment	Difference	% Change
Total	3,658	2,963	-695	-18%



APPLICATION TRENDS: PRESCHOOL

Among new students, 41% of schools reported tuition-assistance inquiries were up. Forty-three percent of schools reported tuition-assistance inquiries are the same as last year, and sixteen percent reported tuition-assistance inquiries were down. After the first day of school, preschools reported receiving an average of 10 inquiries, the identical number reported for K-12 schools. The highest number of inquiries received after the first day of school reported was 20.

59%

**Inquiry to application
conversion rate**

88%

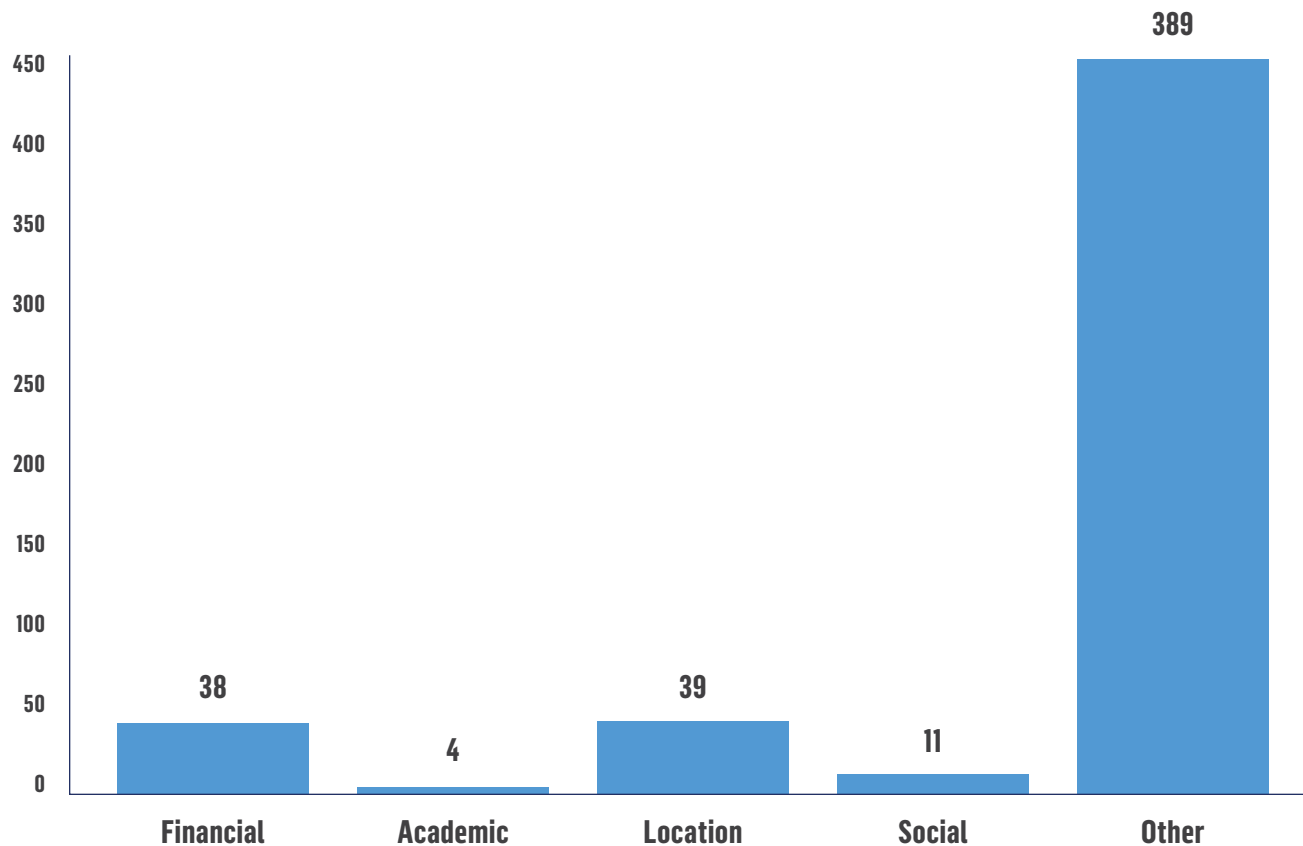
**Application to acceptance
conversion rate**

95%

**Accept to enroll
conversion rate**

ENROLLMENT TRENDS: PRESCHOOL

Number of accepted students that declined to enroll for the 2020-2021 school year due to each of the following reasons:



For “Other,” common reasons include: safety in the school, health, parent job uncertainty, and opting for local learning pods.

Visit the Prizmah Knowledge Center for resources to support schools:

[Recruitment and Retention Resources](#)

[COVID-19 Resources](#)

[2020 Pulse Surveys](#)

[Webinars and Meet Ups for Admission Professional](#)