

June 2014

# JData Revealed

JEWISH EDUCATION DATA WHEN YOU WANT IT

## Note from the Director

Longitudinal data are precious. This issue of *JData Revealed* explains this assertion using congregational and other part-time schools as a case example.

In a previous issue we laid out the status of part-time schools in 2011-12—how many of these schools exist and how many children they are serving, for how many hours a week, at what cost. A status report has value for a field with little systematic public data. It gives a sense of the size and shape of the field and helps individual schools see their place in the larger picture.

But single point in time data are difficult to assess. Does the current number represent growth? decline? stasis? The only way to answer is with longitudinal data that reveal trends over time.

JData also gathered census data from part-time schools in 2012-13, giving us a first hint of trend data. Note that it is but a hint. If this year's number is lower than last year's, it might represent decline. But it is also possible that either year's number is a "blip on the screen"—an unusual year in the overall trajectory of the field.

Also note that the analysis must be based on the exact same schools and these schools need to have entered data for each year of the analysis. This requirement explains why the number of schools in this issue is smaller than the number included in our original report. Any schools that participated in one year but not the other cannot be included in a trend analysis.

We are currently gathering 2013-14 information from part-time schools. Results will provide the third data point over time and give a truer sense of how the field is trending. If you are involved with one of these schools, [click here to participate](#). As you will see below, the answers to important questions hang in the balance.

With best wishes to our partners, colleagues, and users for a strong ending to the school year and a great beginning to summer programs,

Amy

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.  
Project Director  
Senior Research Scientist  
Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies



## Part-time Schools Over Time

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, part-time schools maintained a consistent pattern and also showed hints of change in enrollment, hours of instruction, and tuition.

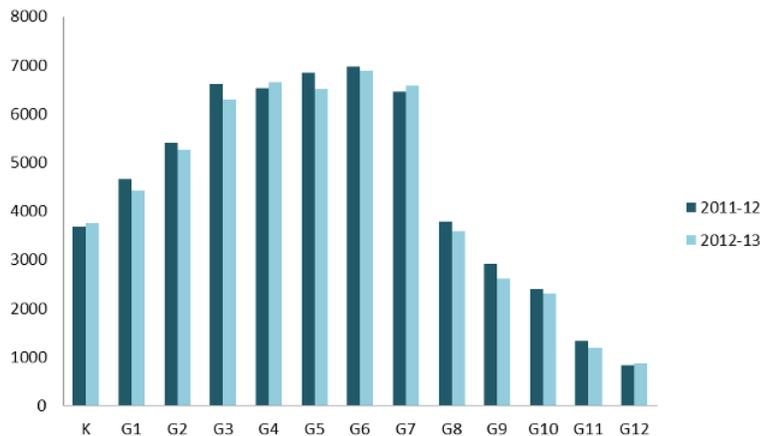
### ***Enrollment***

Overall enrollment in part-time schools declined by 3% between 2011-12 and 2012-13. Data from the 513 schools providing information for both years shows a decline from 73,050 students to 70,852, a loss of over 2,000 students.

Although this trend affected both Reform and Conservative schools, the rate of decline was somewhat steeper in the Conservative schools. Conservative schools lost about 6% of their students as compared with just over 2% loss in Reform schools.[1]

As seen in Figure 1, the familiar pattern of peak enrollment in the mid-grades with a sharp and continuous decline in the post-bar/t mitzvah years holds for 2011-12 and 2012-13. Within this generally stable pattern, we can also see a decline in enrollment in most grades, with the largest loss in Grades 3, 5, and 9.

**Figure 1. Grade by Grade Enrollment (2011-12 and 2012-13)**



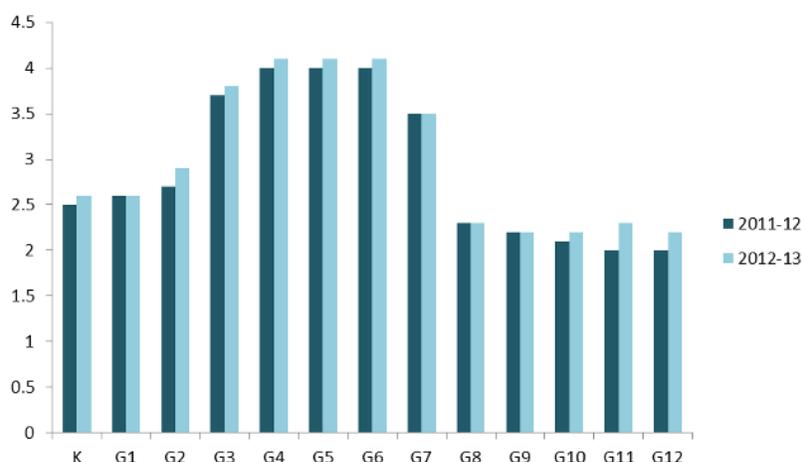
n=246 schools

[1]Based on data from 147 Conservative schools and 223 Reform schools providing data in both 2011-12 and 2012-13.

### ***Hours of Instruction***

JData also tracks the number of hours per week offered by the congregational and other part-time schools. There have been concerns in some quarters that the number of hours is declining (often in response to parental preferences). The data, however, show that between 2011-12 and 2012-13, the average number of hours has at least held steady and at best increased marginally (Figure 2).

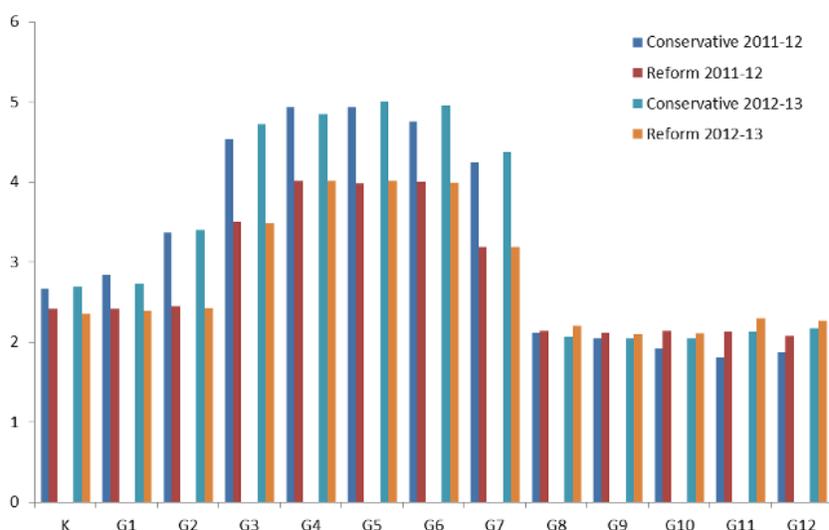
**Figure 2. Average Weekly Hours by Grade (2011-12 and 2012-13)**



n=246 schools

In general, time requirements have been higher in Conservative settings than in Reform settings. As seen in Figure 3, this pattern persists. For each grade, the first two bars show the Conservative-Reform differential in 2011-12; the next two bars show the differential in 2012-13. From kindergarten through the bar/t mitzvah year, Conservative schools consistently meet more hours per week. The difference essentially disappears in 8th grade. Within each movement, there is little change in hours of education from one year to the next.

**Figure 3. Average Weekly Hours by Grade by Denomination (2011-12 and 2012-13)**

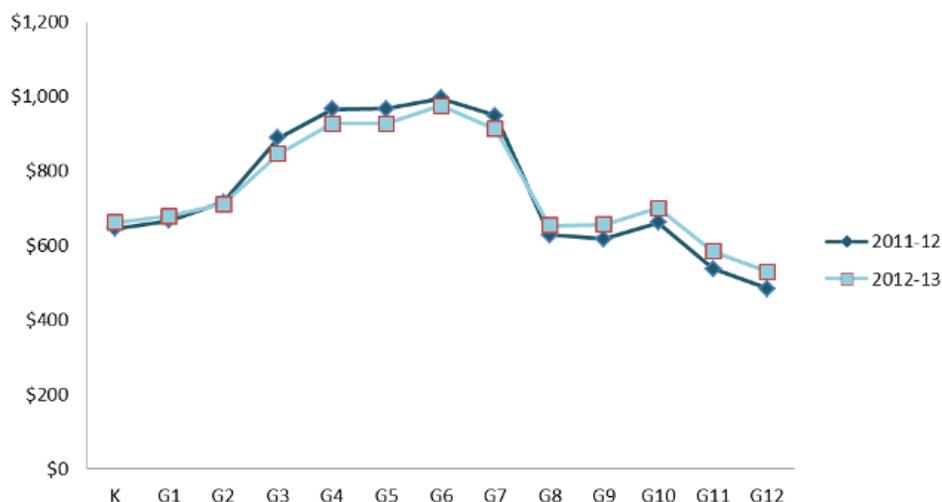


n=94 schools (32 Conservative and 62 Reform)

## ***Tuition***

Another key variable is tuition by grade. As seen in Figure 4, the pattern of tuition cost has remained the same over the past two years. Noticeable, however, is a marginal decrease in the mid-grades, and a slight increase in the upper grades.

**Figure 4. Average Tuition by Grade (2011-12 and 2012-13)**



n=94 schools (32 Conservative and 62 Reform)

## ***Stay Tuned***

JData is in the midst of a campaign to add 2013-14 data to the part-time school sector of the database. These data will help answer the following questions:

- Will enrollment continue its slow decline or are the 2012-13 figures a "blip on the screen"?
- Will average hours per week hold steady or will the hint of possible increase (particularly in high school) become more apparent?
- Albeit small changes, it appears that weekly hours in high school are increasing at the same time that high school tuition, on average, is decreasing. Will this continue as a trend and, if so, will we see a positive impact on enrollment numbers in the upper grades?

Answers will be posted in the fall, so stay tuned!

## News from JData

### ***JData's reports have become more functional.***

New functions have been added to all self-generated reports on JData. Schools, camps, Jewish federations and agencies can access their reports from their JData hub page by clicking on the selected report. New icons at the top of the report now enable you to email, print, or save the report as a PDF. These functions will make it easier for users to share information with their boards of trustees, grantors and funders, and other stakeholders with a vested interest in the organization.

### ***JData continues its work with Jewish day camps.***

UJA-Federation of New York has renewed its grant to JData to further develop an information system for Jewish day camps, with a focus on the JCC day camps affiliated with the Federation. Last year's pilot test revealed a great deal about the structure and informational needs of day camps. The grant is a valuable opportunity to use lessons learned to build a robust system for this emerging field.

### ***JData welcomes its summer interns.***

Each year JData hires interns who assist with our data collection campaigns, update the JData Directory, and take part in other essential work that fills the JData summer calendar. We are pleased to welcome Haley Neil and Rachael Diament. Haley is a rising junior at NYU majoring in English. Rachael recently graduated from Brandeis with a B.A. in philosophy and history. She will be attending Boston University Law School in the fall.

JData is operated by Brandeis University with support from the Jim Joseph Foundation and JData's stakeholders.