JData Revealed
JEWISH EDUCATION DATA WHEN YOU WANT IT

Note from the Director

As summer slides into autumn and Elul calls us into Tishrei, Jewish camps close their books on Summer 2015 and schools open their doors to new and returning students. At JData we review last year's findings and launch a new year of data collection, once more extending our longitudinal view of the field.

This back-to-school issue of *JData Revealed* offers two reports on Jewish day schools. ***Financial Sustainability*** presents data from a national sample of 152 day schools on key metrics such as capacity utilization, cost per student, and endowment per student. School leaders can use this information to assess where their school stands in terms of its financial performance. Those working with schools on capacity building need these data to judge the performance of their schools against national averages. For example, over time ***PEJE*** can evaluate whether the schools in its ***Atidenu*** program outperform non-participating schools in terms of enrollment growth and capacity utilization. ***UJA-Federation of New York*** has been using JData as its application and tracking system for its ***Day School Challenge Fund*** and can similarly use these benchmarking data for purposes of evaluation.

Day School Executive Salaries presents the results of our first annual gathering of information on salaries for heads of school. The report is available along with a comparable report for ***overnight camps***.

In his ***story*** about a day school and financial aid, Harry Bloom, Vice President of Recruitment and Retention, Annual Campaign, and Governance at PEJE, demonstrates the value of good questions and the possibility of having the data needed to answer them. We hope this model will inspire your own inquiry in the coming year.

May 5776 (School Year 2015-16) be a good and sweet year,

Amy

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Financial Sustainability: A JData Benchmarking Project

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D., JData Project Director

In order to assess their financial strength, schools need to keep track of their own data and to benchmark these data against those of other schools. To this end, JData undertook a financial sustainability benchmarking project in 2014-15.

The results presented below help Jewish day schools see where they stand in the field and rate their own performance against others'. They can see what is possible and desirable. They may find things to celebrate, and they may find areas for improvement.

Read more...

JData in Action: Using JData to Inform Day School Policy

Dr. Harry Bloom contributes the third in an ongoing "JData in Action" series highlighting how JData is being put to good use by our Stakeholders.

I was recently asked by a board-appointed committee of a large, respected day school to help assess the school's financial aid program. The program had been experiencing a consistent increase in the percentage of families requesting and receiving aid. The size of financial aid awards was growing as well.

As I thought about how to help them assess the situation, a number of questions came to mind:

- What are the enrollment and capacity utilization trends at the school?
- How has tuition been trending, and how does it compare to inflation and to trends in peer institutions?
- What have the trends been in terms of percentage of families and students receiving aid, and how do these trends compare to those of peer schools in peer communities?
- What is the income profile of applying and enrolled families, and what trends are occurring in this demographic?
- What policies and processes are followed in assessing and awarding financial aid, and what changes have occurred in these arenas over the past several years?

Having generated a set of questions to help assess a complex and important issue, I now had to find answers. Rather than conduct an extensive, tailored research project, I turned to JData.

JData does not contain the answers to all of these questions (e.g., household income, school policies and practices), and it depends on schools to enter their information. Nonetheless, it is by far the best and most convenient source of answers to many of these questions.

Using JData, I was able to perform an analysis comparing this school's tuition, financial aid, and capacity utilization trends to those of peer institutions I selected in relevant parts of the country—a great help and base of facts to ground the additional work I still had to do.

Dr. Harry Bloom is the Vice President of Recruitment and Retention, Annual Campaign, and Governance at **Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education**.

Day School Executive Salaries

A common question in the Jewish day school world concerns executive compensation. This information is needed by many people, including boards that are hiring new executives, heads of schools who are negotiating their contracts, and financial managers studying their school's personnel costs.

Check out JData's newest report on top professional salaries to see if your school is in line with other Jewish day schools.

Read more...

News from JData

- Nathan Vaughan has joined the JData team as research specialist for JData's community partners. Nate is a recent graduate of the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program with a Masters in Public Policy. He will be working with local communities on data collection, reporting, and usage.
- Amy Sales's article, " **Excellent Questions for Excellent Schools**," appeared in RAVSAK's summer issue of **HaYidion**.
- JData **Help** has been updated with additional information on how to get the most from the JData system.