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JData Revealed

JEWISH EDUCATION DATA WHEN YOU WANT IT



Note from the Director

We are arriving at the season of *cheshbon ha-nefesh*, a time of reflection and accounting. Although intended as a practice of personal and spiritual growth, we have extended it into our work lives: Have we done what we intended to do this year? What have we learned from this? And how do we grow from here? **Ten Lessons from JData** summarizes our reflections.

As noted in the lessons, JData emerged from a vision of a shared database that would describe and serve the field of Jewish youth education. A shared database offers many benefits above and beyond what a school or camp can derive from its own in-house information system. One of the most valuable of these is the capacity for a school or camp to compare itself against others. Instead of flying blind, as the saying goes, comparison or contextual data gives users a map of the landscape and a GPS locator for their organization.

The Fall issue of *JData Revealed* is dedicated to comparison data in the day school world. **Day School Vitality** presents two years' of findings from our financial benchmarking project. Schools can see where they stood vis-à-vis other schools in 2015-2016. And, for the first time, they can see how their rate of growth—whether in enrollment, fundraising, endowment, or cost per student—compares with that of their peer schools. The day school **executive salary report** also provides useful comparison data. In a competitive arena, knowledge of what is normative and what is possible is highly valuable for assessing a school or camp's performance and actions.

In School Year 2016-17 (corresponding to 5777), we will continue to develop reports from JData's rich trove of data. We look forward to sharing our thoughts and analyses with you via *JData Revealed* and online at www.jdata.com.

With best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year,

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.
JData Director

Day School Vitality: Winners and Losers

Last year at this time, JData produced the **Year 1** report of its day school financial sustainability project. Perhaps we were chutzpadik to suggest that this would be an annual event. However, given the lure of longitudinal data and our desire to know how the field was trending, we pushed ahead into 2015-16. We are now pleased to be presenting the results of that effort. The good news is that overall change in the day school world is in the direction of growth. On average, schools increased their capacity utilization, total revenue, financial aid, fundraising dollars, and endowment fund valuation. The bad news is that not all schools enjoyed such growth. **Read more.**

Lessons from JData

There is much to be learned from the extraordinary invention that was JData. JData accomplished a great deal and made its imprint on the field of Jewish education. Among its achievements are lessons learned about schools and camps and the infrastructure that is intended to support them. **Click here** to read our top ten lessons learned.

Jewish Day School Executive Salary Report

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 school who are negotiating their contracts, and financial managers studying their school's personnel costs. All totaled, 134 schools provided information for this report in 2015-16, a 40% increase over the previous year's participation rate.

Click here to access the full report.

JData is a project of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University.



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