School Voucher 101: Indianapolis Is Opening Doors to Jewish Education

By Judith and Allon Friedman and Rabbi Aryeh Birnhack





Cost of living ranks as a great concern these days for many Jewish families, with private Jewish school tuition being a major contributing factor. Jewish day schools in places like New York, Chicago or Los Angeles can cost tens of thousands of dollars per child annually, and even with scholarships, the financial pressure can be intense. This is not the case in Indianapolis, where Indiana's school voucher system makes Jewish day school education much more affordable.

Indiana's voucher program, known as the Choice Scholarship Program, is one of the largest in the nation. The basic idea is simple: Instead of all education funding going only to public schools, the state allows a portion of that money to follow students to approved private schools, including religious ones. For families who value faith-based education, this can open doors that might otherwise feel financially out of reach.

For the 2026-2027 school year, Indiana has transitioned to a universal school choice program, effectively eliminating income limits for the voucher program. Any Indiana family, regardless of income, can apply for a voucher. To qualify, students must be aged 5-22, have legal residence in Indiana, and be enrolled in a participating Choice school. The program provides a voucher that covers tuition and fees for private schools, averaging over $6,200 annually.

For families moving from expensive cities, this is a huge advantage as they no longer need to worry that their higher salaries will disqualify them from receiving



help. The combination of the already lower Jewish day school tuition in Indianapolis and vouchers make private Jewish education very manageable for most families.

Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis (HHAI) offers a dynamic dual curriculum that seamlessly blends rigorous Judaic studies with an exceptional general studies program. Their Judaic Studies is guided by the acclaimed L'havin U'lehaskel curriculum, which fosters a deep connection to Torah, mitzvot and Jewish identity through immersive, skills-based learning in Chumash, tefillah, Mishna and yediot klaliyot from grades 1-8. Hebrew language fluency is cultivated through the innovative I-Talam digital platform, which personalizes instruction and builds strong decoding, reading and comprehension skills in the Hebrew language.

Complementing this robust foundation, the general studies program delivers a comprehensive, standards-aligned education in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies—and consistently places HHAI among the top-performing schools in the state on standardized assessments. Together, these disciplines cultivate well-rounded students who excel both as knowledgeable, committed Jews




and as thoughtful, high-achieving citizens of the wider world.

Learn more about the Indianapolis voucher system and HHAI at our booth at the (virtual) OU Savitsky Home Relocation Fair on Sunday, Feb. 22 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST or email youcanjewishindy@gmail.com.

Over 20 years ago, Judith and Allon Friedman moved from the East Coast to Indianapolis where they raised three sons.
Rabbi Aryeh Birnhack is the head of Judaics at Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis. Rabbi Birnhack and his wife, Adina, are blessed with four children.

Places to go and things to do?

Indianapolis is a family friendly city with multiple libraries, play places, the largest children's museum in the world, a zoo, art and history museums, and parks and playgrounds. Looking for cultural events? Watch an Off-Broadway show, listen to live music, or attend sporting events.



Orthodox Centers of Jewish life?

Congregation B'nai Torah (Orthodox Ashkenaz) and Etz Chaim (Sephardi), Indy Kollel, JCC, Indianapolis Jewish Discovery Center, Chabad of Indiana. Amenities include: Kosher Mikvah, Keli Mikvah, Large Eruv.

Looking to live in a warm Jewish community with a Midwest attitude and an affordable price tag? Move to Indianapolis!

To learn more about the Jewish Community in Indianapolis,
visit https://www.btorahindy.org or email youcanjewishindy@gmail.com.