JBlend Miami Drives Learning Across Four Miami Jewish Day Schools

May 4, 2018 – Greater Miami Jewish Federation

Supported in part by your donations to Federation’s Annual Campaign, JBlend Miami, an innovative education initiative, is celebrating its third anniversary. Designed by Federation subsidiary agency the Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), in collaboration with the Avi Chai Foundation, JBlend combines traditional instruction with digital tools to provide highly personalized student experiences and introduce new models for lifelong learning in four of Miami’s Jewish day schools.

As a result of JBlend, students at the Gordon School of Beth David Congregation, Hebrew Academy (RASG), Lehrman Community Day School and Scheck Hillel Community School have become more self-motivated and empowered to pursue things that matter to them, all within a broad curriculum set by the school and teachers. Students use multiple strategies as they access human and digital resources to drive their own learning. They might contemplate questions alone or brainstorm within a group. Valerie Mitrani, Director of Day School Strategy & Initiatives at CAJE, said, “Through JBlend, learning extends beyond the classroom walls, and students are exchanging, discussing, questioning, reflecting and making connections — anywhere, anytime. Most importantly, students are inspired and empowered to act, rather than sit passively and let the knowledge be brought to them.”

Schools also have been able to personalize learning to each student’s needs, blending the best of what teachers have to offer with the technology available. When presented with choices in how to pursue their studies, students become more inspired and engaged to learn.

Since the launch of JBlend Miami three years ago, there has been a dramatic shift in teachers’ professional practice, student learning and school culture. To date, an average of 50 percent of students in the participating schools are engaged in the initiative. In the next two years, CAJE plans to reach 100 percent of students and teachers in the four schools, and to ensure the changes the schools are experiencing are deeply rooted and lasting.