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August 29, 2019

New York State Education Department

89 Washington Avenue

Board of Regents, Room 110 EB

Albany, New York 12234

*via email*

Comment Regarding Rule **ID# EDU-27-19-00010-P**

Dear Sirs and Mesdames,

The Coalition for Jewish Values represents the voice of over 1000 traditional rabbis across the United States in matters of public policy. We are extremely troubled by the proposed regulations for nonpublic schools in New York.

In Judaism, the education of children is a Biblical obligation: "and you shall teach it to your children." That tradition has lived in our community for thousands of years. It should be obvious that parents must provide their children with a well-rounded education, both to enable them to be productive in society as well as to maximize their understanding of our Torah. But that obligation rests specifically upon a child's parents, to the exclusion of others – including government.

This obligation is met in practice. Parental involvement in childhood education in Jewish parochial schools is similar to that found among parents of those attending elite preparatory schools. Despite an intense dual curriculum, students in those Jewish schools which administer the NYS Regents' examinations outperform those in the public school system – and dominate the top-scoring private schools in English, Algebra 2/Trigonometry, and Global History.

Our disagreement with the proposed regulations is not limited to the number of hours which the new regulations would require be devoted to each subject – but to the basic notion of government control. There were numerous efforts to impose government guidelines upon Jewish schools in the past; none of these delivered good results. The idea that the parents, teachers and school administrators of our community are unable to properly set curricula, requiring outside oversight and enforcement, expresses profound disregard of our long legacy of pursuit of knowledge.

The parents of our community do not all agree in the number of hours that our children should invest in secular studies, but we certainly agree that they should be taught to love the learning process itself, in an educational system that ties itself to our millennia-long tradition of intellectual pursuits. We urge you to leave this process undisturbed.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yaakov Menken".

Rabbi Yaakov Menken

Managing Director