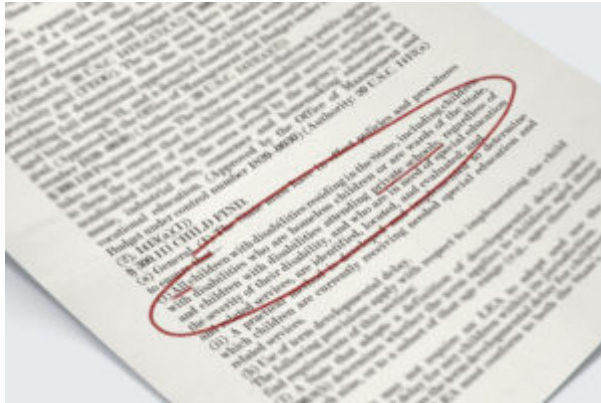


An Idea for IDEA: Project LEARN Submits Comments to the US Department of Education

January 26, 2021



Do you have a child, grandchild, sibling, neighbor, or cousin with disabilities? If you do, you probably know of the difficulties of going through evaluations and getting funding for services in private schools. You also know the importance of sending each child, including one with a developmental disability, to Jewish day schools and yeshivos.

Mrs. Leah Steinberg, director of Project LEARN, has been working on the issue of equity in funding for students with disabilities in private schools for over twenty years.

In a recent memo to the US Department of Education when they solicited feedback on a proposed policy document, Agudah's Project LEARN brought attention to problems in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). One of the most significant problems with IDEA is the way funding is handled once a child is deemed eligible for funds. Rather than the funds being earmarked for an individual student, the funds are put into a pool with all the other funds for eligible nonpublic school students, and then given to the local education agency who decide how the money will be spent. This process often results in children in private schools not receiving the services they really would benefit from the most.

“The issue that we must address is that the children in our schools throughout USA should get what they deserve. Children in public schools are entitled to all the services that they need to succeed. Students in our yeshivos as well as all private schools have no such entitlement. They are at the mercy of their local education agency (LEA) and that must change,” says Mrs. Steinberg, who asked the department in her memo to correct this inequity.

Click [here](#) to see the comments submitted by Project LEARN.