

# **New York Jewish Schools to Receive Millions of Dollars in Next Two Years**

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The New York State Education Department recently announced its plans for the disbursement of the \$250 million in mandated services and Comprehensive Attendance Program (CAP) reimbursement the legislature appropriated at the close of this year's session in June.

At a meeting of the New York State Commissioner of Education's Nonpublic School Advisory Council, State Education Department officials announced that the \$250 million would be paid out over a two-year period, with \$125 million disbursed in each of the two years. These payments are set to begin in September 2015.

Mrs. Deborah Zachai, Agudath Israel of America's director of education affairs, who was one of the meeting participants, explained that these monies have been owed to nonpublic schools for more than a decade. Due to budget shortfalls and the use of a flawed formula to calculate the actual reimbursement owed to nonpublic schools, the debt accumulated and became substantial over a more than ten-year period.

It has been a long-standing legislative priority for Agudath Israel of America - whose late president Rabbi Moshe Sherer was instrumental in getting the mandated services law enacted over 40 years ago - to obtain payment on the debt. With the state's allocation of \$250 million for this purpose, that priority has now been accomplished.

“We are absolutely thrilled that, at long last, the state will be making good on the debt it has owed Jewish and other nonpublic schools for so many years. We anticipate that the Jewish schools’ share of these funds should be approximately \$80 million over the next two years, in addition to the regular mandated and CAP payments. This infusion of substantial funding is wonderful news for Jewish schools and should significantly help ease their cash flow over the next two years,” said Mrs. Zachai.

“We thank Governor Cuomo and the members of the Legislature for addressing this important issue. This development is long overdue, but nonetheless extremely welcome,” said Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel, Agudath Israel’s executive vice president.