

We won't have it

December 14, 2018



“We won’t have it.” That was the message of Rabbi Elya Brundy and Rabbi Yisroel Reisman, deans of two large and prestigious yeshivas, in an unprecedented op-ed in the Wall Street Journal this morning (see [here](#)). Their strongly worded piece was a response to the attempt of the New York State Education Department “to commandeer” the curricula of private schools.

Mishpacha magazine interviewed our own Avrohom Weinstock, and asked him if the issue was being overblown and to explain what it all means. I encourage you to read his clear and candid assessment of the new guidelines by clicking [here](#).

For those looking for a more comprehensive understanding of the issue, our executive vice president Rabbi Zwiebel was interviewed by Rabbis Avi Schnall and Shai Markowitz in the latest edition of Agudah Live. The video will be posted to the [Agudah Live website](#) on Saturday night. Please check back then to watch the full interview.

As the WSJ op-ed mentions, this issue affects all nonpublic schools. The New York Catholic schools have publicly [rejected](#) the Commissioner of Education’s guidelines (to read the new “substantial equivalency” guidelines click [here](#)) and promised to boycott the new private school inspection program, as they “simply cannot accept a competing school having authority

over whether [their] schools can operate.”

While this may seem like a New York-specific issue, it has far reaching ramifications across the country and for schools of all faiths. That is why Torah Umesorah has asked all of its schools to encourage their parents to sign the petition below and deliver the message to the New York State Commissioner of Education that her guidelines are unacceptable. Please note that any money raised on [Change.org](#) is kept by the website not by anyone affiliated with the petition. To join more than 30,000 people who have already signed the petition, click [here](#).

For a more comprehensive overview of some of the religious freedom issues in the courts including a mention of the New York equivalency issues I encourage you to [watch](#) the Convention session titled “Protecting Jewish Values When Society’s Values Change,” featuring Rabbi Abba Cohen, Mr. Avi Schick, and moderated by our Ohio director Rabbi Yitz Frank.

In other national news, Rabbi Abba Cohen was [interviewed](#) about a clause in last year’s federal tax overhaul which could result in a new tax on nonprofits.

A positive result of the tax overhaul was the expansion of [529 plans](#). Many Marylanders have a reason to celebrate this week thanks to their governor’s extra support for the state’s 529 program.

In Montana, the Supreme Court ruled that the state’s school choice program was unconstitutional. Agudath Israel had filed a [brief](#) in that case and is disappointed at that [ruling](#).

Agudath Israel’s Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah (Council of Torah Sages) has called for a day of prayer on Asara B’teves, Tuesday, December 18th. To read the full proclamation. click [here](#).

To end off on a spiritual note, the New York Times published an op-ed last week on the [spiritual dimensions of Chanukah](#) penned by my colleague Rabbi Avi Shafran.