



CATHOLIC LEAGUE

*For Religious
and
Civil Rights*

April 5, 2018

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MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner of Education
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Commissioner Elia:

The New York State budget that was recently passed has a provision regarding state oversight of private schools. It is unclear whether the degree of scrutiny of religious schools by state officials applies equally to all religious schools, or whether there are exceptions.

If the latter were true, it would in effect allow for a two-tiered system, awarding more scrutiny to some religious schools than others. This, of course, would be objectionable on several levels. To be explicit, Catholic schools and yeshivas should be treated equally.

To be sure, there are legitimate educational matters that should concern the state, regardless of whether a school is private non-sectarian, religious, or public. There are also legitimate church and state issues involved when it comes to the public policing of religious education. My twin interests are limiting the scope of public oversight of religious schools and treating all religious schools equally.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

cc: Cardinal Timothy Dolan