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**Ari Brown
Assemblyman 20th District
Nassau County**

Betty A. Rosa, Commissioner
New York State Department of Education
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

June, 7, 2022

Dear Commissioner Rosa,

I write to you today to express my concerns regarding the proposed changes to the oversight of religious and private schools. The proposed changes outlined in the State Education Department's rule I.D. No. EDU-13-22-00025-P would require 'substantial equivalence' amongst public and private school curriculum in New York. While I respect the State Education Department for maintaining a vested interest in the quality of education for all students residing in New York, I am deeply concerned that this rule, if enacted, would directly impact the independence and sanctity of religious and private schools across New York.

As Assemblyman to the 20th district of New York, I have the distinct honor of serving a piece of Nassau County that encompasses the towns of Lawrence, Cedarhurst, Atlantic Beach, Long Beach, Island Park, Hewlett Neck, and Hewlett Bay Park. This small corner of Long Island is home to many private schools that are pillars in our community, schools that produce more high school graduates and more so, Ivy League graduates than most other areas of the state, if not, the nation.

The proposed changes outlined in the State Education Department's pending rule mentioned above, although well intended, are poorly conceptualized and contradictory to the mission of the New York State Education Department, which is to provide quality and fair education to all New York Students. By creating a direct oversight of the curriculum of private/religious schools, the State Education Department will have an unprecedented and controlling 'final say' as to the education of their students. From my understanding, much of this proposed oversight and curriculum may be at odds with many of the religious and ideological beliefs of the private schools, its parents and students. These institutions provide more than standard public-school education, they provide religious values, teachings and guidance that are the cornerstone of our American way of life; something that cannot and should not be dictated by the "public school system. For these reasons, I ask you to withdraw this proposal and work with me, the father of seven successful adults that thrived in the private parochial school system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ari Brown".

Ari Brown
New York State Assemblyman
20th District