



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Commissioner of Education
President of the University of the State of New York
89 Washington Avenue, Room 111
Albany, New York 12234

E-mail: commissioner@nysed.gov
Twitter: @NYSEDNews
Tel: (518) 474-5844
Fax: (518) 473-4909

April 5, 2017

Mr. Gary P. Saltzman, President
Mr. Daniel S. Mariaschin, Vice President
B'nai B'rith International
1120 20th Street, NW, Suite 300 N
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Saltzman and Mr. Mariaschin:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding a classroom assignment on the Holocaust. I appreciate the time you have taken to convey your thoughts on this critically important issue.

The assignment was wrong. It crosses a line that should never be crossed. I spoke with district officials about this serious matter. The teacher apologized and the assignment will not be used in the future.

We are working to make sure this type of incident is not repeated in future. We have partnered with the BOCES and Alan Goldberg, Professor Emeritus at Syracuse University's School of Education, who with community input, will develop materials to help educators teach students about the Holocaust in a respectful manner. Once the materials are ready, NYSED will share the resources with school districts and teachers across the state.

As the head of New York State's Education Department, I want to reiterate my commitment to you and all New Yorkers to ensure that students learn about the horrors of the Holocaust in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Sincerely,

MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner