

Diane Ravitch Reports on the Failure of New York Hasidic Private School, Even Though Flush with Tax Funds

The American common school is incrementally being replaced with private schools (and charters) that operate on the very tax funds to which common schools are entitled. Every state has a requirement to provide for a tax-supported public school system. However, public officials throughout the nation are throwing tax money at private schools, while neglecting the public system.

In a September blog, Diane Ravitch, quoting a New York Times investigation, shows how some private schools amass huge sums of tax money, while failing students.

New York: Hasidic Private Schools Are Failing But Flush with Public Funds

By dianeravitch

September 12, 2022 //

33

The New York Times conducted an investigation of Hasidic religious schools and reported that they are failing schools but have received more than **\$1 Billion** in government funds in public funds in the past four years.

The Hasidic Jewish community has long operated one of New York's largest private schools on its own terms, resisting any outside scrutiny of how its students are faring.

But in 2019, the school, the Central United Talmudical Academy, agreed to give state standardized tests in reading and math to more than 1,000 students.

Every one of them failed.

Students at nearly a dozen other schools run by the Hasidic community recorded similarly dismal outcomes that year, a pattern that under ordinary circumstances would signal an education system in crisis. But where other schools might be struggling because of underfunding or mismanagement, these schools are different. They are failing by design.

The leaders of New York's Hasidic community have built scores of private schools to educate children in Jewish law, prayer and tradition — and to wall them off from the secular world. Offering little English and math, and virtually no science or history, they drill students relentlessly, sometimes brutally, during hours of religious lessons conducted in Yiddish.

The result, a New York Times investigation has found, is that generations of children have been systematically denied a basic education, trapping many of them in a cycle of joblessness and dependency.

Segregated by gender, the Hasidic system fails most starkly in its more than 100 schools for boys. Spread across Brooklyn and the lower Hudson Valley, the schools turn out thousands of students each year who

are unprepared to navigate the outside world, helping to push poverty rates in Hasidic neighborhoods to some of the highest in New York.

The schools appear to be operating in violation of state laws that guarantee children an adequate education. Even so, The Times found, the Hasidic boys' schools have found ways of tapping into enormous sums of government money, collecting more than \$1 billion in the past four years alone.

City and state officials have failed to enforce laws requiring religious schools to offer a curriculum that is substantially equivalent to those in public schools. The politicians defer to Hasidim because they vote as a bloc.

Their graduates are ill-prepared to enter society. Their knowledge of math, science, history, and basic grammar is meager.

The students in the boys' schools are not simply falling behind. They are suffering from levels of educational deprivation not seen anywhere else in New York, The Times found. Only nine schools in the state had less than 1 percent of students testing at grade level in 2019, the last year for which full data was available. All of them were Hasidic boys' schools.

<http://dianeravitch.net/2022/09/12/new-york-hasidic-private-schools-are-failing-but-flush-with-public-funds/>