



# RSA Rabbinical Seminary of America

ישיבת רבנו ישראל מאיר הכהן זצוק"ל  
בעל ה"חפץ חיים"

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רב דוד לייבוויץ זצוק"ל  
Founding Rosh HaYeshiva 1933-1941

רב א. הנח לייבוויץ זצוק"ל  
Rosh HaYeshiva 1941-2008

רב דוד האריס שליט"א  
Rosh Yeshiva

רב אקיבא גרונבלט שליט"א  
Rosh Yeshiva

ד"ר אירא קוקין  
Chairman Emeritus

ד"ר אלן יעקב  
Chairman of the Board

September 19, 2019

Dear *Mr. Seltzer,*

I hope that this finds you and your family well.

I want to take the opportunity to clarify, in writing, my understanding of the issue that is dividing us.

I see you as a parent whose primary interest is in being מחנך your son properly. Your basic intentions are pure. Your position is that since your intentions are sincere and your goal is a proper and holy one, it does not make sense that the Yeshiva be involved in limiting the proper fulfilment of אב כיבוד. You therefore are amazed and shocked by the Yeshiva's attitude.

Our position is, that despite your pure intentions, the methods are entirely inappropriate and not productive to produce the results we all seek. It can perhaps be compared to a very sincere מחנך whose goal is to produce students who serve ה' on the highest level; yet, for one reason or another, is totally ineffective and whose behavior is counter-productive to achieving his goal.

We feel that the various ways of pressuring and controlling your son, etc. have a negative impact on his proper emotional development. We feel it is important for him to "stand up for himself" in order to properly develop and become a productive member of ישראל, כלל, and to create his own home. We feel that this need is so paramount for his proper development that it is דוחה the חיוב of אב כיבוד.

Despite our encouragement that he resist many of your demands and "stand up for himself", we also encourage him (and he ב"ה follows this very carefully) to be very respectful to you and treat you with the dignity that you deserve as his parent.

I can understand your perspective that you think the way you have dealt with him throughout his life is appropriate. On this issue, however, we strongly disagree. Keeping him out of school for several years is an illustration, in our opinion, of very poor judgment in proper חינוך for your son despite your good intentions. The heavy-handed manner in which you attempt to force him to conform to your opinions and perspectives is, in our opinion, another example of very poor judgment.

As a רבי in the Yeshiva, it is my responsibility to guide our תלמיד and direct him as we believe ה' wants him to respond to the situation he finds himself in.