

Manuel Rivera, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary for Education
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

November 28, 2007

Dear Dr. Rivera,

On behalf of the 6.6 million schoolchildren that benefit by the exceptional educational programs provided by the 1,045 New York State museums, such as Yeshiva University Museum, I urge you to include the proposed \$30 million in your Executive Budget to support the *Cultural Education and Museum Act*.

Standards-based educational programming to K-12 schoolchildren has been provided by the highly qualified and motivated museum staff without the benefit of any State Education Department funding support or adequate compensation.

In a time when the school system is pressed hard to improve basic skills performance, museums are ideally suited to give students the visceral experiences that motivate them to learn, and New York State has a wealth of collections to share with them.

A long overdue measure such as the *Cultural Education and Museum Act* would finally provide formula-based funding to museums that offer verifiable, standards-based educational programs and promote science/technology and the arts. These areas have been identified as crucial for the competitiveness of the American work force in the changing global economy.

State funding would free the museum staff's energies to concentrate on the delivery of educational services and retained their best and brightest professionals. The *Cultural Education and Museum Act* would also address much-needed longitudinal evaluation of the educational effectiveness of museum-based educational programming, which may well hold solutions that we are looking for to motivate and educate a competent work force for New York State.

With its support, Yeshiva University Museum could expand the reach of its acclaimed experiential humanities/history programs. Competitive grants made possible with State funding would allow us to form long-term partnerships with a group of NYC principals and their schools (grades 3-12).

For these reasons, I do urge you to support the *Cultural Education and Museum Act*.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Bradt
Curator of Education