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His Excellency Reuven (Ruvli) Rivlin
President of the State of Israel
3 HaNasi Street, Komemiut Neighborhood (Talbiyah)
Jerusalem 92188

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for your letter and your interest in this matter. I have dedicated more than thirty years of philanthropy to supporting Jewish education in central and eastern Europe, and my Foundation has reached close to 40,000 young Jews, including many from Romania. My mission has always been to support the continuity of Jewish life in historic Jewish communities ravaged by the twin evils of Nazism and Communism through funding community day schools for Jewish children. Many of these communities and their schools are not able to draw sufficient numbers of Jewish children without heavily subsidizing school fees. It is this combination of cache and financial capacity that I have supported by providing both my name and my resources to schools across the region.

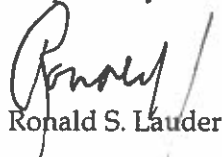
I agree with you that the school in Bucharest does outstanding work educating young Romanians about Israel, the Hebrew language, and Jewish culture and history. It is an excellent school with a sterling academic reputation. This fills me with pride and gratitude. However, it does not deter me from spending my resources on schools in the region that more precisely meet the criteria of my mission to support the continuity of Jewish life in historic Jewish communities. Furthermore, the school in Bucharest has done what few schools in the region have succeeded in doing- through excellent reputation building and development, and the resulting ability to charge competitive school fees, the school has achieved financial self sufficiency.

It is for this reason that I decided several years ago to graduate the school from our network and to retire our financial support and my name, allowing me to bestow those resources on a school in a different community with greater needs. This step was agreed to and publicly celebrated by the school, local Jewish community and municipal and national political leaders. As my family name and the name of my Foundation are synonymous with our mission statement, our policy in Europe has always been to retire usage of those names when we cease to fund.

I remain proud of the Reut School in Bucharest, and wish it much success with its important work. I am grateful for the opportunity to have supported it in its infancy, and equally grateful that it has grown up so effectively, enabling me to invest my cache and financial resources in another, more needy Jewish community.

Thank you again for your letter.

Respectfully,


Ronald S. Lauder