

STATE OF NEW YORK

1160

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sen. COONEY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing Diwali as a statewide school holiday

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 8 of section 3604 of the education law, as
2 amended by chapter 359 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 8. No school shall be in session on a Saturday, the first day of the
5 second lunar month after the winter solstice in the preceding calendar
6 year known as Asian Lunar New Year, the fifteenth day of the month of
7 Kartika on the Hindu calendar in each year, known as Diwali, or a legal
8 holiday, except general election day, Washington's birthday and
9 Lincoln's birthday, and except that driver education classes may be
10 conducted on a Saturday. A deficiency not exceeding four days during any
11 school year caused by teachers' attendance upon conferences held by
12 superintendents of schools of city school districts or other school
13 districts employing superintendents of schools shall be excused by the
14 commissioner, notwithstanding any provision of law, rule or regulation
15 to the contrary, a school district may elect to schedule such conference
16 days in the last two weeks of August, subject to collective bargaining
17 requirements pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law, and
18 such days shall be counted towards the required one hundred eighty days
19 of session, provided however, that such scheduling shall not alter the
20 obligation of the school district to provide transportation to students
21 in non-public elementary and secondary schools or charter schools. At
22 least two such conference days during such school year shall be dedi-
23 cated to staff attendance upon conferences providing staff development
24 relating to implementation of the new high learning standards and
25 assessments, as adopted by the board of regents. Notwithstanding any

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 other provision of law, rule or regulation to the contrary, school
2 districts may elect to use one or more of such allowable conference days
3 in units of not less than one hour each to provide staff development
4 activities relating to implementation of the new high learning standards
5 and assessments. A district making such election may provide such staff
6 development on any day during which sessions are allowed and apply such
7 units to satisfy a deficiency in the length of one or more daily
8 sessions of instruction for pupils as specified in regulations of the
9 commissioner. The commissioner shall assure that such conference days
10 include appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training,
11 and may require that up to one such conference day be dedicated for
12 such purpose.

13 § 2. Section 2586-a of the education law, as added by chapter 629 of
14 the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

15 § 2586-a. Diwali as a holiday in the public schools of the city of New
16 York. The fifteenth day of the [~~eighth~~] month of [~~the Indian~~] Kartika on
17 the Hindu calendar in each year, known as Diwali, is hereby made and
18 declared to be a holiday in all the public schools in the city school
19 district in the city of New York and such public schools shall not be in
20 session on such day.

21 § 3. Subdivision 2-a of section 3635 of the education law, as separately
22 amended by chapters 359 and 629 of the laws of 2023, is amended
23 to read as follows:

24 2-a. The superintendent of each city school district, in a city having
25 a population in excess of one million, shall prepare a public school
26 calendar and shall notify officials of nonpublic schools to which transportation
27 has been requested not later than the first day of June in
28 each year, of the days on which the public schools will be in session in
29 the following school year. Such school district which provides transportation
30 to nonpublic schools shall provide such transportation for the
31 same number of days as the public schools are open but shall not provide
32 transportation services for more than one hundred eighty days. Officials
33 of each nonpublic school to which transportation is provided by a
34 city school district of a city having a population in excess of one
35 million may notify such district, not later than the first day of July
36 of each school year, of a maximum of five days, exclusive of Saturdays,
37 Sundays or legal holidays upon which public schools are required to be
38 closed, on which the public schools are scheduled to be closed, except
39 that in any year in which the first or last day of Passover and Easter
40 Sunday are separated by more than seven days, such officials may notify
41 the district of a maximum of ten days, but such school district will be
42 required to provide for transportation to such nonpublic school provided
43 that such five or ten additional days, whichever is applicable, are
44 limited to the following: the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
45 after Labor Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the week in which public
46 schools are closed for spring recess, December twenty-fourth and the
47 week between Christmas day and New Year's day, the Tuesday, Wednesday,
48 Thursday and Friday after the observance of Washington's birthday, the
49 first day of the second lunar month after the winter solstice in the
50 preceding calendar year, known as Asian Lunar New Year, the fifteenth
51 day of the [~~eighth~~] month of [~~the Indian~~] Kartika on the Hindu calendar
52 in each year, known as Diwali, and, in the boroughs of Brooklyn and
53 Queens only, Anniversary Day as designated in section twenty-five
54 hundred eighty-six of this chapter.

55 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.