S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

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2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

February 5, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. P. RIVERA, McENENY, ESPAILLAT, RAMOS, PERALTA, WEISENBERG, J. RIVERA -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. ABBATE, ALFANO, BARRA, BENEDETTO, BUTLER, CHRISTENSEN, COLTON, COOK, CUSICK, DIAZ, DINOWITZ, FARRELL, HOOPER, JACOBS, JOHN, KOON, V. LOPEZ, MAYERSOHN, McDONOUGH, NOLAN, ORTIZ, N. RIVERA, ROBINSON, SCARBOROUGH, TOWNS, WRIGHT -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to bilingual school safety hotlines

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative findings and declaration. The legislature hereby declares that overwhelming evidence indicates that violent acts performed by schoolchildren are increasing in frequency and intensity. The legislature finds that these incidents result in senseless deaths and injuries and psychological trauma to the students, their families and their communities. The legislature finds that children in school are impressionable and subject to powerful peer pressure, and therefore, might be disinclined to report a problem to teachers or other authorities because of intimidation, fear of retribution or a distorted sense of loyalty to their fellow students. The legislature also finds, however, that students know better than anyone what is really occurring in their fellow students' lives and are our best resources for recognizing the warning signs of potential danger.

The legislature finds and declares it to be its purpose and policy to reduce school violence by teaching children that they have the same responsibility as adults to protect each other. The legislature, therefore, declares it to be its purpose and policy to provide for a bilingual school safety hotline.

S 2. Section 305 of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 42 to read as follows:

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

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42. A. ANY SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATING SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINES AS PART OF A REPORTING MECHANISM OR PROCEDURE FOR THE REPORTING OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH J OF SUBDIVISION TWO OF SECTION TWENTY-EIGHT HUNDRED ONE-A OF THIS CHAPTER SHALL STAFF SUCH HOTLINE BY PERSONNEL FLUENT IN THE TWO LANGUAGES MOST PREVALENT AMONG STUDENTS OF SUCH DISTRICT AS DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSIONER. IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHERE SUCH SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED OR SHALL BE ESTABLISHED, AND WHERE SUCH DISTRICTS BELIEVE THERE TO BE NO SIGNIFICANT POPULATION OF SPEAKERS OF LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH, THE DISTRICT MAY APPLY TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR A WAIVER OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR A BILINGUAL HOTLINE.

B. EACH DISTRICT OPERATING SUCH SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINE SHALL PROVIDE TO EACH STUDENT IN THE DISTRICT A COPY OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY HOTLINE NUMBER AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR.

S 3. This act shall take effect September 1, 2010; provided, however, that effective immediately the commissioner of education is authorized to adopt any rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this act on or before such date.