STATE OF NEW YORK

737

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 9, 2019

Introduced by Sen. MONTGOMERY -- 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 the commission on civics education curriculum

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

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 817 to read as follows:

§ 817. Civics education curriculum. 1. The commission on civics education curriculum; established. (a) The commission on civics education curriculum is hereby created and established. The commission shall consist of eleven members, including the commissioner, or his or her designee, the chancellor of New York city schools, or his or her designee, the chancellor of the state university of New York, or his or her designee, the chancellor of the city university of New York, or his or her designee, and the chancellor of the board of regents, or his or her designee, three members appointed by the chancellor of the board of regents who shall be members of the board of regents, one member appointed by the governor, one member appointed by the temporary president of the senate, and one member appointed by the speaker of the assembly. Appointed members shall represent geographic diversity of the state and shall include but not be limited to teachers, including K-12 educators, historians, and those with a background in civics.

(b) Each member shall serve for a term of one year. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired term.

(c) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

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

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(d) The commissioner, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chair and the chancellor of New York city schools, or his or her designee, shall serve as the vice-chair of the commission. The presence of a majority of the authorized membership of the commission shall be required for the conduct of official business.

(e) The department shall provide technical assistance and data to the commission as may be necessary for the commission to carry out its responsibilities pursuant to this section.

2. Duties and responsibilities of the commission. (a) The commission shall be tasked with developing and recommending instruction that amends the current civics curriculum as part of New York's education curriculum, which shall include but shall not be limited to, the New York state constitution, state and local government, civic literacy, community issues, methods of public participation, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. In furtherance of this goal, the commission shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

(i) To survey and review current elementary and secondary education curriculum as it relates to civics instruction and curriculum;

(ii) To develop recommendations to amend or include additional curriculum and instruction for grades kindergarten through twelve that incorporate civics education curriculum, with a focus on simulation-based approaches, including but not limited to mock trials, moot court, advocating for issues students have studied, simulated legislative hearings, and other role-playing exercises that engage students in the democratic process first hand; and

(iii) To prepare a report for the governor and legislature regarding its findings and recommendations on current curriculum and incorporating additional instruction on civics education curriculum.

(b) The commission shall submit a report within one year of the effective date of this section, to the governor and legislature on its findings and recommendations.

3. Civics education curriculum or instruction. (a) The commissioner, in conjunction with other appropriate agencies, shall amend the current civics education curriculum or instruction for school districts based on the recommendations of the commission. The content shall be age appropriate and shall be developed according to the needs and abilities of pupils at successive grade levels in order to provide materials, and information in civics education.

(b) Schools may include the above materials as a component of its civics curriculum or any other way the school deems appropriate.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.