

# 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 Assem-  
bly, do enact as follows:

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

3 § 817. Civics education curriculum. 1. The commission on civics educa-  
4 tion curriculum; established. (a) The commission on civics education  
5 curriculum is hereby created and established. The commission shall  
6 consist of eleven members, including the commissioner, or his or her  
7 designee, the chancellor of New York city schools, or his or her desig-  
8 nee, the chancellor of the state university of New York, or his or her  
9 designee, the chancellor of the city university of New York, or his or  
10 her designee, and the chancellor of the board of regents, or his or her  
11 designee, three members appointed by the chancellor of the board of  
12 regents who shall be members of the board of regents, one member  
13 appointed by the governor, one member appointed by the temporary presi-  
14 dent of the senate, and one member appointed by the speaker of the  
15 assembly. Appointed members shall represent geographic diversity of the  
16 state and shall include but not be limited to teachers, including K-12  
17 educators, historians, and those with a background in civics.

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

21 (c) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but  
22 shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred  
23 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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1 (d) The commissioner, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chair  
2 and the chancellor of New York city schools, or his or her designee,  
3 shall serve as the vice-chair of the commission. The presence of a  
4 majority of the authorized membership of the commission shall be  
5 required for the conduct of official business.

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

9 2. Duties and responsibilities of the commission. (a) The commission  
10 shall be tasked with developing and recommending instruction that amends  
11 the current civics curriculum as part of New York's education curric-  
12 ulum, which shall include but shall not be limited to, the New York  
13 state constitution, state and local government, civic literacy, communi-  
14 ty issues, methods of public participation, and the rights and responsi-  
15 bilities of citizenship. In furtherance of this goal, the commission  
16 shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

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

19 (ii) To develop recommendations to amend or include additional curric-  
20 ulum and instruction for grades kindergarten through twelve that incor-  
21 porate civics education curriculum, with a focus on simulation-based  
22 approaches, including but not limited to mock trials, moot court, advo-  
23 cating for issues students have studied, simulated legislative hearings,  
24 and other role-playing exercises that engage students in the democratic  
25 process first hand; and

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

29 (b) The commission shall submit a report within one year of the effec-  
30 tive date of this section, to the governor and legislature on its find-  
31 ings and recommendations.

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

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

41 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.