

STATE OF NEW YORK

6513

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 19, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. GALEF, SANTABARBARA, WALLACE, THIELE, B. MILLER, ASHBY, BRABENEC, DeSTEFANO, McDONOUGH, MORINELLO, NORRIS, SMITH -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. ENGLEBRIGHT, WALSH -- read once and referred to the Committee on Election Law

AN ACT to amend the election law and the education law, in relation to providing public school districts the authority to decline or change a school building's designation as a polling location

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision 3 of section 4-104 of the election law, as
2 amended by chapter 694 of the laws of 1989, is amended to read as
3 follows:
4 3. A building exempt from taxation shall be used whenever possible as
5 a polling place if it is situated in the same or a contiguous election
6 district, and may contain as many distinctly separate polling places as
7 public convenience may require. The expense, if any, incidental to its
8 use, shall be paid like the expense of other places of registration and
9 voting. If a board or body empowered to designate polling places chooses
10 a public school building for such purpose, the board or agency which
11 controls such building must make available a room or rooms in such
12 building which are suitable for registration and voting and which are as
13 close as possible to a convenient entrance to such building and must
14 make available any such room or rooms which the board or body designat-
15 ing such building determines are accessible to physically disabled
16 voters as provided in subdivision one-a of this section; provided,
17 however, not later than thirty days after a public school building
18 receives notice of its designation as a polling place, the board or
19 agency controlling such building may file a written request for a
20 cancellation of such designation. Upon receipt of such request, the
21 board or body empowered to so designate shall cancel such designation.
22 Notwithstanding the provisions of any general, special or local law, if

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

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1 a board or body empowered to designate polling places chooses a publicly
2 owned or leased building, other than a public school building, for such
3 purposes the board or body which controls such building must make avail-
4 able a room or rooms in such building which are suitable for registra-
5 tion and voting and which are as close as possible to a convenient
6 entrance to such building, and must make available any such room or
7 rooms which the board or body designating such building determines are
8 accessible to physically disabled voters unless, not later than thirty
9 days after notice of its designation as a polling place, the board or
10 body controlling such building, files a written request for a cancella-
11 tion of such designation with the board or body empowered to designate
12 polling places on such form as shall be provided by the board or body
13 making such designation. The board or body empowered to so designate
14 shall, within twenty days after such request is filed, determine whether
15 the use of such building as a polling place would unreasonably interfere
16 with the usual activities conducted in such building and upon such
17 determination, may cancel such designation.

18 § 2. Subdivision 1 of section 2002 of the education law, as amended by
19 section 5 of part C of chapter 58 of the laws of 1998, is amended to
20 read as follows:

21 1. The annual meeting and election of each school district shall be
22 held on the third Tuesday of May in each year, provided, however that
23 such annual meeting and election shall be held on the second Tuesday in
24 May if the commissioner at the request of a local school board certifies
25 no later than March first that such election would conflict with reli-
26 gious observances. Unless the hour and place thereof shall have been
27 fixed by a vote of a previous district meeting, the same shall be held
28 in the schoolhouse at seven-thirty o'clock in the evening in the case of
29 a school district that is not divided into election districts and
30 conducts its election or vote by recording the ayes or noes of the qual-
31 ified voters attending, or, in the case of all other districts, during
32 at least six consecutive hours after six a.m., two of which hours shall
33 be after six p.m. as determined by resolution of the trustees or board
34 of education, provided, however, that the trustees or board of education
35 of any school district that conducted its annual meeting at seven-thirty
36 p.m. in nineteen hundred ninety-seven may conduct its annual election
37 and budget vote at such time in nineteen hundred ninety-eight. If a
38 district possesses more than one schoolhouse, it shall be held in the
39 one usually employed for that purpose, unless the trustees or board of
40 education designate another, provided that if the school district is
41 divided into election districts such annual meeting and election shall
42 be held at such place in each election district as the board of educa-
43 tion may designate. If by resolution of the trustees or board of educa-
44 tion the district [~~possesses no schoolhouse, or if the schoolhouse shall~~
45 ~~not be accessible or adequate, then the~~] elects to designate a publicly
46 accessible location within district boundaries that is not a school
47 building for purposes of conducting the annual meeting and election,
48 such annual meeting and election shall be held at such place as the
49 trustees or board of education, or the clerk, shall designate in the
50 notice.

51 § 3. Section 2604 of the education law, as amended by chapter 741 of
52 the laws of 1954, is amended to read as follows:

53 § 2604. Division of city school district into school election
54 districts; elections held in schoolhouses. The board of education of
55 each city school district shall adopt a resolution on or before the
56 first day of April, preceding the first annual school election held

1 hereunder, dividing the city school district into school election
2 districts. The city school district shall be so divided that if circum-
3 stances will permit, school election districts will be coterminous with
4 one or more general election districts, and that, if practicable, there
5 shall be a schoolhouse in each election district. The election
6 districts thus formed shall continue in existence until modified by
7 resolution of the board of education. Such resolution shall accurately
8 describe the boundaries of such election districts by streets, alleys
9 and highways, when practicable. School elections shall be held in such
10 school election districts so far as may be possible in the public
11 schoolhouses therein[~~. If there is no public schoolhouse in a school~~
12 ~~election district,~~]; provided, however, the board of education [~~shall~~
13 may by resolution designate [~~the place~~] a publicly accessible alterna-
14 tive location where the election in such district shall be held.
15 Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, the board of
16 education of any city school district of a city of less than ten thou-
17 sand inhabitants may, by resolution, designate the entire city school
18 district as a single school district.
19 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.