

STATE OF NEW YORK

1983

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 16, 2021

Introduced by Sen. JACKSON -- 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 requiring a state standards report to be filed by all non-public schools

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

1 Section 1. Section 3204 of the education law is amended by adding a
2 new subdivision 1-a to read as follows:

3 1-a. Office of non-public school services. (a) The office of non-publ-
4 ic school services within the department shall verify no later than the
5 first of August of each year ending in an even number that every school
6 district has submitted a certified state standards report for the
7 preceding two years. The state standards report shall certify that
8 instruction given to all minors elsewhere than public schools within the
9 school district is at least substantially equivalent to the instruction
10 given to minors of like age and attainments at the public schools of the
11 city or district where the minor resides and shall be signed by the
12 superintendent of schools and approved by majority vote of the board of
13 education.

14 (b) The office of non-public school services shall create and revise a
15 document titled the state standards report. The state standards report,
16 which is to be completed by the superintendent of every school district
17 for each non-public school in such district, will assist and guide the
18 school district in determining that all resident children attending a
19 school other than a public school receive instruction from competent
20 teachers and is at least substantially equivalent to the instruction
21 given to minors of like age and attainments at the public schools where
22 the minor resides.

23 (c) The commissioner shall issue a district compliance report, on or
24 before the first of September of each year ending in an even number, to
25 be posted on the department website, which details the following: (i)

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

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1 which school districts have failed to submit the state standards report;
2 (ii) which school districts have substantially equivalent instruction in
3 all of their non-public schools; (iii) which school districts do not
4 have substantially equivalent instruction in all of their non-public
5 schools; (iv) which school districts were unable to determine the equiv-
6 alency of instruction in all of their non-public schools; (v) which
7 non-public schools are not providing substantially equivalent instruc-
8 tion; (vi) which non-public schools have failed to cooperate in the
9 completion of their school district's state standards report; (vii)
10 which non-public schools are providing substantially equivalent instruc-
11 tion; (viii) the funds allocated to each non-public school; and (ix) any
12 other information the commissioner deems necessary.

13 (d) A school district which does not submit the state standards report
14 within ninety days of the first of August of each year ending in an even
15 number shall require the commissioner to initiate an investigation and
16 make a determination of the substantial equivalency of instruction at
17 all non-public schools within the school district within one hundred
18 eighty days of such date. As a result of the commissioner's investi-
19 gation, non-public schools within such district that are determined by
20 the commissioner to provide substantially equivalent instruction shall
21 have their status updated to reflect such determination by the commis-
22 sioner and non-public schools within such district that do not provide
23 substantially equivalent instruction may be given a reasonable amount of
24 time to remedy any deficiencies identified by the commissioner. The
25 commissioner may order a schedule for such school to remedy such identi-
26 fied deficiencies. Failure of such school to remedy such deficiencies
27 within the ordered schedule will result in a determination that such
28 school does not provide substantially equivalent instruction. Princi-
29 pals and administrators of non-public schools that were closed or
30 defunded for not providing substantially equivalent instruction shall be
31 prohibited from creating, opening or operating a subsequent non-public
32 school. Upon a determination by the commissioner that a non-public
33 school does not provide substantially equivalent instruction, notice in
34 writing shall be provided, within thirty days, to the administrator of
35 the non-public school and the parents or guardians of pupils attending
36 that school and the school district. Children attending a non-public
37 school that does not provide substantially equivalent instruction will
38 be considered truant. Parents and guardians of pupils shall transfer
39 their children to either a public school or a non-public school that has
40 been identified as providing substantially equivalent instruction as of
41 the most recently submitted state standards report, within thirty days
42 of notification of the commissioner's determination. All transportation,
43 textbooks, health services and other services provided by the board of
44 education to a non-public school, that the commissioner determines does
45 not provide substantially equivalent instruction, will be withdrawn no
46 later than forty-five days after notification of such determination but
47 not less than thirty days.

48 (e) The commissioner shall create, maintain and supervise an office of
49 non-public school services within the department and shall allocate
50 sufficient staffing and resources to achieve the requirements of this
51 section.

52 (f) Non-public school administrators shall assist and cooperate with
53 superintendents and boards of education in the completion and submission
54 of the state standards report. Non-public school administrators shall
55 ensure that each teacher in a non-public school possesses sufficient
56 knowledge in the subject matters that are taught by such teacher.

1 (g) School districts shall submit an updated state standards report to
2 the office of non-public schools services every two years. The super-
3 intendent of every school district shall have the duty to submit the
4 state standards report pursuant to this subdivision, provided, however,
5 each superintendent may coordinate and obtain the assistance of others,
6 including but not limited to BOCES in the completion of the state stand-
7 ards report.

8 (h) The state standards report shall, for each non-public school in
9 the district, include, but not be limited to, the following: (i) that
10 each non-public school building in the district is a safe place for
11 children, with the latest fire inspection report for each non-public
12 school in the district or, in New York city, a certificate of occupancy
13 issued by the New York city department of buildings for each non-public
14 school in the district; (ii) a list of names of pupils from the district
15 who are attending non-public schools within the district for the past
16 two years and which non-public schools they are attending; (iii) copies
17 of school calendars for the past two years and the upcoming year for
18 each non-public school in the district; (iv) a list of grade levels and
19 the total enrollment at each grade level for each of the non-public
20 schools in the district over the past two years; (v) a list of courses
21 and subjects which were taught at each grade level at each non-public
22 school over the past two years; (vi) how each non-public school within
23 the district, over the past two years, was able to instruct their pupils
24 in the required subjects of: arithmetic, English language, reading,
25 spelling, writing, music, geography, health education, physical educa-
26 tion, science, United States history, New York State history and visual
27 arts for grades one through six; English, social studies, science, math-
28 ematics, physical education, health education, New York State history,
29 visual arts, music, practical arts, technology education, home and
30 career skills and library and information skills for grades seven
31 through eight; English, social studies including a year of American
32 history, mathematics, science, health, physical education, art and music
33 for grades nine through twelve; (vii) how many times the superintendent
34 visited each of the non-public schools in the district; (viii) how many
35 hours of the day are spent on instruction of each of the required
36 subjects for each grade listed in subparagraph (vi) of this paragraph
37 and which textbooks were utilized in such instruction at each of the
38 non-public schools; and (ix) a list of all non-public schools in the
39 school district.

40 (i) At least twice per year, the commissioner shall initiate an unan-
41 nounced investigation into the substantial equivalency of instruction at
42 every non-public school in the state and make a determination of whether
43 instruction is substantially equivalent based on the findings of such
44 investigation.

45 (j) The commissioner shall initiate an investigation into the substan-
46 tial equivalency of instruction at any non-public school that is identi-
47 fied in the state standards report as: (i) not providing substantially
48 equivalent instruction; and (ii) not cooperating with the completion of
49 their school district's state standards report, within ninety days of
50 submission of the state standards report. The commissioner shall make a
51 determination of whether instruction is substantially equivalent based
52 on the findings of such investigation.

53 § 2. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
54 the date on which it shall have become a law.