STATE OF NEW YORK

10102

IN ASSEMBLY

April 29, 2022

Introduced by M. of A. JACKSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to enacting the "making equitable and alternative lunches (MEAL) act"

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "making equitable and alternative lunches (MEAL) act".

§ 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 915-a to read as follows:

§ 915-a. Alternative school meal and snack options. 1. As used in this section:

(a) "Plant-based food option" means food or beverages that are free of animal products and, as relates to the "protein" portion of a meal, recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture as a meat alternate for purposes of the national school lunch program.

(b) "Animal product" means meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, eggs, honey, and any derivative thereof.

2. Every public school shall offer a plant-based food option, a halal food option and a kosher food option as an alternative to every meal or snack offered in food service to any student who chooses such alternative meal or snack as an option pursuant to subdivision three of this section.

3. A student or person in parental relation to the student shall have the option to select an alternative meal or snack option at the beginning of the school year and two additional times during the school year as determined by such public school district.

4. The alternative food options described in this section shall be offered at no additional cost to the student beyond what would be charged for a comparable non-alternative food option.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to public school food service beginning with the school year, as defined in the education law, beginning one year after it shall have become a law.

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

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