

# STATE OF NEW YORK

4968

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

February 19, 2021

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- 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 public school districts to provide language assistance to limited English proficient parents of students

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

1 Section 1. Section 305 of the education law is amended by adding a new  
2 subdivision 59 to read as follows:

3 59. a. All school districts shall establish a language assistance  
4 program where limited English proficient parents would have effective  
5 access to communicate with teachers and school personnel. This compre-  
6 hensive program shall include, but is not limited to:

7 (1) Providing that all frequently used forms and other written materi-  
8 als that are sent home to limited English proficient parents in their  
9 primary language;

10 (2) Providing language assistance to limited English proficient  
11 parents in their primary language who call or come into school with  
12 concerns related to their child's schooling;

13 (3) Providing language assistance services to limited English profi-  
14 cient parents in their primary language to facilitate parent attendance  
15 at school-sponsored programs designed for communication with parents  
16 including, but not limited to, parent-teacher conferences, workshops and  
17 school fairs.

18 b. A notice of the availability of the language assistance programs  
19 for limited English proficient parents established pursuant to paragraph  
20 a of this subdivision shall be mailed to the homes of such limited  
21 English proficient parents in a notice written in their primary  
22 language.

23 c. Each school district shall keep a record documenting its language  
24 assistance program and shall submit a summary report annually to the

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

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1 commissioner. Such record and report shall include, but not be limited  
2 to:

3 (1) The number of limited English proficient parents who receive such  
4 assistance;

5 (2) The number of limited English proficient households where one  
6 parent is English language proficient; and

7 (3) The number of complaints filed by limited English proficient  
8 parents; and

9 (4) The number of bilingual personnel used to assist in the language  
10 assistance and translation services.

11 d. The commissioner shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may  
12 be necessary and proper to implement the provisions of this subdivision,  
13 including but not limited to, the methodology to be used by each school  
14 district to determine or assess the primary languages, the number of  
15 limited English proficient parents, the percentage of limited English  
16 proficient parents to students and the native language of such limited  
17 English proficient parents, and a complaint procedure for any parent who  
18 alleges a school's non-compliance with the provisions of this subdivi-  
19 sion.

20 e. For purposes of this subdivision:

21 (1) "Primary language" means one of the five most common languages in  
22 a school district, other than English, (i) spoken and used to communi-  
23 cate, by limited English proficient parents and (ii) non-English speak-  
24 ing residents or limited English proficient parents constitutes more  
25 than five percent of the residents of a school district, as determined  
26 by data from the two most recent federal decennial censuses.

27 (2) "Limited English proficient parents" means parents or parent of a  
28 minor child who attends public school and such parents or parent is  
29 unable to communicate effectively in English with teachers and school  
30 personnel at the school attended by his or her child.

31 f. Nothing in this subdivision shall prohibit a school district from  
32 entering into a cooperative agreement with other school districts to  
33 jointly establish such a language assistance program.

34 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after  
35 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-  
36 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-  
37 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and  
38 completed on or before such effective date.