STATE OF NEW YORK

8108

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

October 13, 2023

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing a workplace readiness week for secondary school students

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

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 818 to read as follows:

§ 818. Workplace readiness week. 1. The week of each year that includes April twenty-eighth shall be known as "workplace readiness week". All public high schools, including charter schools, shall annually observe that week by providing information to students on their rights as workers. The topics covered shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(a) local, state, and federal laws regarding each of the following issues:

(i) prohibitions against misclassification of employees as independent contractors;

(ii) child labor;

(iii) wage and hour protections;

(iv) worker safety;

(v) workers' compensation;

(vi) unemployment insurance;

(vii) paid sick leave, paid family leave, and state disability insurance;

(viii) the right to organize a union in the workplace; and

(ix) prohibitions against retaliation by employers when workers exercise these or any other rights guaranteed by law;

(b) the labor movement's role in winning the protections and benefits described in paragraph (a) of this subdivision; and

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

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(c) an introduction to state-approved apprenticeship programs in New York, how to access them, the variety of programs available, and how they can provide an alternative career path for those who do not attend university or college.

2. For students in grades eleven and twelve, the observances required by subdivision one of this section shall be integrated into the regular school program, consistent with the history/social science curriculum, but may also include special events after regular school hours. This integration is encouraged, but not required, to occur during workplace readiness week.

3. (a) Beginning August first, two thousand twenty-four, any minor seeking working papers in order to be employed in the state shall be issued, before or at the time of receiving such working papers, a document clearly explaining basic labor rights extended to workers.

(b) Topics covered in this document shall include, but not be limited to, those topics identified in paragraph (a) of subdivision one of this section.

(c) The New York state school of industrial and labor relations at Cornell university is encouraged to produce, with input from bona fide labor organizations, a draft template for the document to be provided to minors, including translations into other languages, including, but not limited to, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean.

(d) Such document shall express these labor rights in plain, natural terminology easily understood by the student.

(e) The document shall be in a physical form in English and shall include both a Uniform Resource Locator for, and a quick response code linked to, an internet website with electronic versions of the document, and any translated versions of the document, produced by the New York state school of industrial and labor relations at Cornell university pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subdivision.

4. The commissioner shall annually send a written notice, detailing the requirements of workplace readiness week and how teachers may access related instructional materials and other resources, to every public high school, including charter schools, in the state, at least one month before workplace readiness week.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.