STATE OF NEW YORK

8514

IN SENATE

February 7, 2024

Introduced by Sens. COONEY, CHU, MANNION -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Libraries

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to creating the Dolly Parton's statewide library system of New York; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the imagination library of New York fund

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 249-b to read as follows:

§ 249-b. Dolly Parton's statewide library system of New York. 1. For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

a. "program" shall mean the statewide imagination library program, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of New York;

b. "fund" shall mean the imagination library of New York fund established by section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law; and

c. "qualified local entity" shall mean any existing or new local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library affiliate.

2. There is hereby established under the administration of the state librarian a Dolly Patron's statewide library system of New York for purposes of developing, implementing, promoting, and fostering a comprehensive statewide initiative for encouraging children from birth to five years of age to develop a love of reading and learning.

3. a. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the state librarian shall allocate moneys as grants to provide age-appropriate books on a monthly basis, at home, to each child registered in the program, from birth to their fifth birthday at no cost to families, through Dolly Parton's Statewide Library System of New York.

b. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the state librarian shall allocate moneys from the fund as grants to qualified local entities that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the program.

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

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c. Notwithstanding paragraph b of this subdivision, the state librarian may waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement for a qualified local entity on a case-by-case basis to prevent undue financial hardship.

4. The state librarian shall coordinate with a nonprofit entity, qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and organized solely to promote and encourage reading by the children of the state, for the purpose of implementing this section.

5. The state librarian shall provide oversight and manage the daily operations of the program, which shall include, but not be limited to:

a. promoting the statewide development of local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

b. advancing and strengthening local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs with the goal of increasing enrollment;

c. recruiting volunteers to assist in the development, promotion, and coordination of local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

d. soliciting donations, gifts, and other funding to financially support local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

e. developing community engagement;

f. developing, promoting, and coordinating a public awareness campaign to make donors aware of the opportunity to donate to the affiliate programs and make the public aware of the opportunity to register eligible children to receive books through the program;

g. administering the local match requirement and coordinate the collection and remittance of local program costs for books and mailing;

h. developing statewide marketing and communication plans; and

i. establishing, in partnership with the department, a system for parent and community feedback to show impact and effectiveness of the program.

6. On or after January first, two thousand twenty-nine, and annually thereafter, the state librarian shall submit a report to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly. Such report shall include, but not be limited to:

a. the deposits made to, and expenditures made from the fund;

b. whether any local match requirements were waived;

c. the number of local programs that exist, their location, and which entity or organization serves as the local partner; and

d. the number of children that are enrolled and the number of books that have been sent to such enrolled children.

7. The regents may promulgate regulations as may be needed for the administration of the program.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-bbbbb to read as follows:

§ 97-bbbbb. Imagination library of New York fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of education an account of the miscellaneous special revenue account to be known as the "Imagination Library of New York fund".

2. Moneys in this fund shall be kept separate and shall not be commingled with any other moneys in the custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of education.

3. The imagination library of New York fund shall consist of moneys appropriated for the purpose of such account, moneys transferred to such account pursuant to law, contributions consisting of promises or grants of any money or property of any kind or value, or any other thing of value, including grants or other financial assistance from any agency of

government and moneys required by the provisions of this section or any other law to be paid into or credited to this account.

4. Moneys of the imagination library of New York fund, when allocated, shall be available, subject to the approval of the director of the budget, to provide age-appropriate books on a monthly basis, at home, to each child registered in the program, from birth to their fifth birthday at no cost to families, through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.