STATE OF NEW YORK

9647

IN SENATE

May 16, 2024

Introduced by Sen. CHU -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT in relation to conducting a study to evaluate the services provided by public libraries, how the demand for services vary across library systems, and to evaluate if current funding standards equitably meet community needs across the state; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

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

Section 1. 1. There shall be a study conducted by the education department to evaluate the services provided by public library systems across the state.

2. Such department, in consultation with the public library systems of the state, shall assess and report on the services provided in public libraries and the variation in demand of services within library systems, and to determine if the current funding standards defined in section 254 of the education law adequately and equitably enable libraries to meet community needs across the state. Such study shall assess the types and frequency of services provided at public libraries, including but not limited to: digital technology, workforce readiness and career services, life skills and adult educational programs, children and adolescent programs, and community events. Additionally, the study shall assess the quality and capability of available library resources, including both printed and digital materials, computers and other technological tools, equipment and/or machinery.

3. For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "public library" shall mean any public or association library, other than a professional, technical or public school library, established for free public purposes by official action of a municipality or district or the legislature, where the whole interests belong to the public;

(b) "public library system" shall mean:

(i) A library established by one or more counties;

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

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(ii) A group of libraries serving an area including one or more counties in whole or in part;

(iii) A library of a city containing one or more counties; and

(iv) A cooperative library system established pursuant to section 255 of the education law, the plan of library service of any of which shall have been approved by the commissioner of education.

4. The study required by this act shall be completed by January 1, 2026. The findings of such study shall be provided to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, the temporary president of the senate, the chair of the assembly libraries and education technology committee, and the chair of the senate committee on libraries. The findings of such study shall also be posted on the New York state library's website.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be deemed repealed January 1, 2026.