

STATE OF NEW YORK

9944

IN SENATE

October 30, 2024

Introduced by Sens. MARTINS, RHOADS -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to enacting the "our
schools our rules act"

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "our schools our rules act".

3 § 2. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that local
4 school districts in the state, particularly those on Long Island, have
5 historically maintained high standards of education through locally
6 controlled governance and decision-making processes. The recent proposal
7 by the education department and the board of regents to mandate the
8 development and implementation of regionalization plans, as outlined in
9 part one hundred twenty-four of the commissioner of education's regu-
10 lations, threatens to undermine local control, dilute the quality of
11 education, and impose significant administrative burdens on local school
12 districts. The intent of this act is to preserve the autonomy of local
13 school districts by prohibiting any state-mandated regionalization of
14 local school districts.

15 § 3. The education law is amended by adding a new section 1527-b to
16 read as follows:

17 § 1527-b. Mandatory regionalization plans prohibited. 1. For the
18 purposes of this section, the term "mandatory regionalization plan"
19 shall mean any rule or policy that requires the sharing of resources,
20 administrative operations, or instructional services among two or more
21 school districts, boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES),
22 charter schools, private schools, or any combination thereof, pursuant
23 to a regulation, order, or directive issued by the commissioner, the
24 department, or the board of regents.

25 2. (a) No local school district shall be required by any regulation,
26 rule, or policy of the commissioner, the department, or the board of
27 regents to develop, implement, or participate in a mandatory regionali-
28 zation plan, including but not limited to mandatory regionalization

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

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1 plans related to shared resources, operational efficiencies, or joint
2 educational programs.

3 (b) The department and the board of regents shall not enact, imple-
4 ment, or enforce any regulation, rule, or policy that requires local
5 school districts to develop, implement, or participate in a mandatory
6 regionalization plan.

7 3. Any regulation enacted or proposed by the commissioner that relates
8 to boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) and requires the
9 development of regionalization plans by local school districts shall be
10 deemed null and void. The department and the board of regents shall not
11 make any effort to implement any such regulation.

12 4. Nothing in this section shall prohibit local school districts from
13 voluntarily entering into agreements or partnerships related to shared
14 services with other school districts, boards of cooperative educational
15 services (BOCES), charter schools, and private schools.

16 5. Local school districts shall retain full autonomy over such school
17 district's governance, budgeting, and operational decisions without
18 interference by the department pursuant to this section.

19 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.