STATE OF NEW YORK

3255

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 2, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. CUNNINGHAM -- read once and referred to the Committee on Children and Families

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing the youth in progress advisory board and regional teams for adolescents in foster care for the state

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

Section 1. Article 6 of the social services law is amended by adding a new title 1-A to read as follows:

TITLE 1-A
YOUTH IN PROGRESS

Section 394. Youth in progress.

§ 394. Youth in progress. 1. The youth in progress statewide advisory board is hereby established for the purposes of bringing together youth age fourteen and older who are or have been in foster care in order to discuss common experiences, ideas and concerns. The local social services departments, authorized agencies serving adolescents in foster care, the office of children and family services, and contractors of the office may recruit appropriate youth to participate in the youth in progress advisory board and regional teams on a voluntary basis.

2. The office of children and family services shall facilitate the formation of regional youth in progress teams and assist in identifying an adult mentor for each youth team member. The regional youth in progress teams and adult mentors shall meet on a regular basis and shall conduct periodic regional forums for foster care youth to speak out on issues of interest to adolescents in foster care.

3. The youth in progress statewide advisory board, shall include a representative from the regional teams that will advise the office of children and family services and the council on children and families on

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

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issues relating to foster care. In each of the six office of children and family services regions the youth in progress regional team or teams shall nominate up to four youth members and their adult mentors to participate in the statewide youth in progress advisory board. In addition, four youth currently or formerly placed with the office of children and family services' division of juvenile justice and opportunities for youth shall be selected by the members of the statewide youth in progress advisory board, to be members of the advisory board's membership. The statewide youth in progress advisory board shall have up to twenty-eight youth participants and shall meet at least three times each year.

4. (a) The statewide youth in progress board may issue an annual report with its recommendations on issues of interest to adolescents in foster care. The report may include other information on the activities of the youth in progress board. The office of children and family services shall provide technical assistance to the statewide youth in progress board, including distribution of the annual report. Such reports shall be made available to the public and shall be submitted to: the governor, the legislature, the director of the council on children and families, and the member agencies of the council on children and families. The contents of the youth in progress annual report shall be solely the work product of the youth in progress board and its members, and shall not be revised or edited by the office of children and family services.

(b) At least sixty days prior to the commissioner of the office of children and family services final approval of rules and regulations pertaining to foster care or services for adolescents who are or have been in foster care, other than emergency rules and regulations, the commissioner shall submit the proposed rules and regulations to the statewide youth in progress advisory board for review. The statewide youth in progress board may report its recommendations thereon to the commissioner of the office of children and family services within sixty days.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall have become a law.