STATE OF NEW YORK

4136

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 10, 2023

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

AN ACT to amend the public health law and the education law, in relation to establishing a statewide youth mental health and social media campaign to promote public awareness of the impacts of social media usage on mental health

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

Section 1. Article 25 of the public health law is amended by adding a new title 7-A to read as follows:

TITLE VII-A
SOCIAL MEDIA

Section 2596. Statewide youth mental health and social media campaign.

§ 2596. Statewide youth mental health and social media campaign. 1. The commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of education, the commissioner of mental health, and the director of the office of information technology services, shall establish a statewide youth mental health and social media campaign to promote public awareness of the impacts of social media usage on mental health. Such program shall be directed at children and young adults, their parents, and educators.

2. Such program shall include, but not be limited to:

a. educating people on the negative impacts social media can have on young people's mental health;

b. promoting public awareness of existing research and statistics regarding youth mental health and social media use;

c. educating people on techniques to reduce feelings of isolation and anxiety, increase sleep quality, and reduce the effects on mental health caused by cyberbullying;

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

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d. promoting healthy behaviors related to young people's use of social media;

e. increasing awareness of and access to youth mental health resources; and

f. promoting alternative methods of self-expression.

3. On or before July first of each year, the commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of education, the commissioner of mental health, and the director of the office of information technology services, shall submit a report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, and the temporary president of the senate on the effectiveness of the statewide youth mental health and social media campaign and recommendations on changes which should be made to any laws, rules, or regulations relating thereto.

§ 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 805 to read as follows:

§ 805. Courses of study on social media usage. 1. The regents shall ensure that the course of instruction in grades kindergarten through twelve includes a component on social media usage. Such component shall instruct students on:

(a) the negative impacts social media can have on mental health;

(b) research and statistics regarding youth mental health and social media use;

(c) techniques to reduce feelings of isolation and anxiety, increase sleep quality, and reduce the effects on mental health caused by cyber-bullying;

(d) healthy social media use behaviors;

(e) mental health resources available to students; and

(f) methods of self-expression other than social media.

2. The commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of health, the commissioner of mental health, and the director of the office of information technology services, shall provide technical assistance to assist in the development of curricula for such courses of study which shall be age appropriate and developed according to the needs and abilities of pupils at successive grade levels.

3. The board of education or trustees of every school district shall provide appropriate training and curriculum materials for the regular teachers who provide such instruction.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.