

STATE OF NEW YORK

7459

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

May 23, 2023

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing a task force on safety in school transportation

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

1 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 3639
2 to read as follows:

3 § 3639. Task force on safety in school transportation. 1. There is
4 hereby created a task force on safety in school transportation with the
5 purpose of reviewing and promoting safety in school transportation.

6 2. The task force shall consist of eighteen members appointed as
7 follows: five members appointed by the governor, five members appointed
8 by the temporary president of the senate, and five members appointed by
9 the speaker of the assembly. The task force shall also include the
10 commissioner or his or her designee; the commissioner of transportation
11 or his or her designee; and the commissioner of the department of motor
12 vehicles or his or her designee. The members appointed to the task
13 force shall include, but not be limited to: education and community
14 stakeholders; parents; teachers; administrators; and school bus drivers
15 and other school bus personnel who are members of a labor union.

16 3. It shall be the duty of the task force to study and issue recommen-
17 dations related to student safety in school transportation. The task
18 force shall review and make recommendations on:

19 a. existing state laws, regulations, and programs that address school
20 bus safety, and make recommendations for their improvement, including
21 any recommendations necessary to ensure pedestrian safety and the safety
22 of students;

23 b. examining the possibility of requiring a state department or office
24 to conduct a biannual review of all aspects of school bus safety and to

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

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1 issue recommendations for additional action or oversight, as appropri-
2 ate;

3 c. developing a plan to phase in any school bus safety measures recom-
4 ended by the task force through retrofitting and prospective vehicle
5 purchases, and identify the potential application of vehicle sensor
6 technology to improve school bus safety;

7 d. identifying best practices for the designation of school bus stops;

8 e. the current safety status of students who walk to and from school
9 and identify strategies that support safe pedestrian behavior by
10 students between their homes and schools, including as they walk to and
11 from bus stops and board and exit buses;

12 f. identifying safety protocols to be followed by school bus drivers
13 and school bus aides, including safeguards to ensure that protocols are
14 followed when a substitute driver or school bus aide is assigned to a
15 school bus;

16 g. developing recommendations to curb illegal passing of school buses;
17 and

18 h. determining if there is a need for additional public education
19 programs that promote school bus safety.

20 4. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in
21 the same manner as the original appointments were made. The members of
22 the task force shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed
23 for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

24 5. The task force shall organize as soon as is practical upon the
25 appointment of a majority of its members. The chair of the task force
26 shall be designated by a simple majority vote of all members of the task
27 force.

28 6. The department shall provide staff and related support services to
29 the task force. The task force shall also be entitled to call upon the
30 services of any state, county, or municipal department, board, commis-
31 sion or agency, as may be available to it for these purposes, and to
32 incur such traveling and other miscellaneous expenses as it may deem
33 necessary for the proper execution of its duties and as may be within
34 the limit of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for
35 these purposes. The task force may meet and hold hearings at such places
36 as it shall designate.

37 7. The task force shall create a final report regarding all findings
38 and recommendations to be delivered on or before December thirty-first,
39 two thousand twenty-four to the governor, the temporary president of the
40 senate, the speaker of the assembly, the chair of the senate education
41 committee, the chair of the assembly education committee, the chair of
42 the senate transportation committee and the chair of the assembly trans-
43 portation committee.

44 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.