STATE OF NEW YORK

8359

IN SENATE

January 22, 2024

Introduced by Sen. BROUK -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing a statewide youth mental health advisory board

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

Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby finds and declares that poor mental health outcomes for youth is a public health crisis that poses a threat to the health, wellbeing, and quality of life for youth now and in the future. The legislature acknowledges the need for youth voice and youth leadership in advocating for themselves and others regarding mental and behavioral needs. Amongst the shortage of behavioral and mental specialists, lack of representation within marginalized communities, and insufficient funding infrastructure and opportunities for appropriate school-based services, the legislature hereby finds the importance in establishing a dedicated board to support youth in their mental and behavioral needs by increasing youth participation in state government. A dedicated board would provide advancement in creating policies that aid in improving youth outcomes in an effort to address and resolve the youth mental health crisis in New York.

§ 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new article 19-E to read as follows:

ARTICLE 19-E

NEW YORK YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Section 461. New York youth mental health advisory board.
462. Organization and membership.
463. Powers and duties.
464. Report.

§ 461. New York youth mental health advisory board. There is hereby established a New York youth mental health advisory board (advisory board) to examine, evaluate, confer and provide recommendations for the needs and concerns related to the mental health of youth now and in the future. The New York youth mental health advisory board shall formally

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

LBD13968-02-4

advise and make recommendations regarding the issues enumerated in section four hundred sixty-three of this article.

§ 462. Organization and membership. 1. There shall be an oversight committee to the advisory board established by this article which shall be composed of the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the chair of the senate mental health committee, and the chair of the assembly mental health committee, or their designees. The oversight committee shall be responsible for appointing members to the advisory board and overseeing their activities, functions and duties.

2. The youth mental health advisory board shall consist of seventy-two members as follows:

(a) sixty-two members representing the diverse racial, ethnic, geographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and religious backgrounds of the state; and

(b) ten at large members representing New York city.

3. Members shall:

(a) be at least sixteen years of age, but no older than twenty years of age;

(b) be enrolled in and attending a public, online or home-based educational program in New York state; and

(c) have resided in this state for at least one year.

4. The application process and appointment of members to the advisory board shall be made by the oversight committee no later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Appointments of youth representatives shall be diverse, equitable, and inclusive of youths from various racial, ethnic, geographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. The advisory committee shall make a best possible effort to include youth mental health consumers who are receiving, or have received, mental health services, or have siblings or immediate family members who are mental health consumers. Members shall be appointed for terms of two years. The advisory committee will be responsible for creating the process to fill vacancies.

§ 463. Powers and duties. 1. The oversight committee shall develop rules, procedures, and a leadership structure for the advisory board. The advisory board shall meet as frequently as its business may require, but no less frequently than four times per year. Meetings may be held virtually, provided that the oversight committee may provide for in-person meetings as they determine as necessary or desirable. The advisory board members shall be reimbursed for any relevant fees and expenses incurred when attending in-person meetings. The advisory board shall have the following duties which shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Making recommendations to the oversight committee regarding:

(i) the betterment of mental, behavioral, and physical health of youth;

(ii) initiatives for suicide prevention and supports;

(iii) implications of social media on mental health and protective factors;

(iv) advancements in mental health wellness;

(v) access to state and local government services;

(vi) educational development within schools;

(vii) bullying prevention;

(viii) substance abuse and misuse in relation to mental health;

(ix) poverty in relation to mental health;

(x) implications of trauma informed care;

(xi) inclusion of youth participation in state and local governments; and

(xii) any other topics related to youth mental health that the board considers relevant.

(b) Proposing ideas for legislation to the oversight committee and commenting on pending legislation dealing with issues related to youth mental health.

(c) Working with any existing and appropriate local, state, or national organizations and groups, including youth groups, to collect and analyze information on issues related to youth mental health.

(d) At the discretion of the oversight committee, providing testimony to any legislative committees, commissions, task forces, or state agencies and departments, as appropriate.

(e) Setting priorities and establishing any subcommittees that may be necessary to achieve the goals of the advisory board.

2. The oversight committee, subject to appropriation, may contract with a mental health professional and other appropriate staff members to assist the advisory board and facilitate its powers and duties.

§ 464. Report. The advisory board, in cooperation with the oversight committee, shall develop and submit a joint report to the speaker of the assembly, the temporary president of the senate, the chair of the senate mental health committee, and the chair of the assembly mental health committee no later than December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-four and annually thereafter regarding the recommendations, findings and other activities of the advisory board. Additionally, the report shall indicate recommendations for the implementation of any initiatives developed by the advisory board or other appropriate recommendations of the oversight committee.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after 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.