STATE OF NEW YORK

1061

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 8, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the education law and the state finance law, in relation to establishing the community literacy fund

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

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new article 102 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 102

COMMUNITY LITERACY PROGRAMS

Section 5050. Definitions.
5051. Grants.
5052. Report.

§ 5050. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Eligible agency" means:

(a) an organization having tax exempt status under section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code which provides adult education and literacy services to residents of the state of New York and which utilizes volunteers to directly provide such services; or

(b) an organization having tax exempt status under section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code whose primary purpose is providing adult education and literacy services which provides other adult literacy organizations with technical assistance, including training, data reporting, or operational assistance.

2. "Adult education and literacy services" means services which assist adults in acquiring the necessary basic skills needed to be productive workers, family members, and citizens, including but not limited to, reading, writing, math, English language proficiency, and problem-solving skills.

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

LBD01370-01-5

§ 5051. Grants. 1. The commissioner shall be authorized to make grants to eligible agencies that conduct community literacy programs from funds held within the community literacy fund pursuant to section ninety-nine-ss of the state finance law in accordance with the procedures set forth by this section. No for-profit agency or institution may act as the fiscal agent of any grant receivable under the provisions of this section.

2. Eligible agencies shall submit proposals to the commissioner to fund authorized expenditures in support of community literacy programs. Such proposals shall be in a form and shall be submitted on a schedule prescribed by the commissioner.

3. The commissioner shall adopt rules and regulations to establish eligibility criteria and procedures for the award of such grants and to otherwise implement the provisions of this section. The commissioner shall award grants using the eligibility criteria established in regulation and shall determine the amount of each grant award.

4. Subject to the availability of funds for such purpose, upon approval of a proposal by the commissioner, the commissioner shall distribute the grant allocation according to a schedule prescribed by the commissioner.

5. The commissioner shall adopt rules and regulations to create a reporting schedule for the agencies who receive grants pursuant to this section. Data to be reported by agencies who are eligible pursuant to paragraph (a) of subdivision one of section five thousand fifty of this article shall allow recipients to show the impact of their work on individuals, based upon their needs and goals, and may include educational gain, civic participation, digital literacy skills mastery, improved health literacy, improved financial literacy, and engagement in children's schooling. Agencies who are eligible pursuant to paragraph (a) of subdivision one of section five thousand fifty of this article shall report impact data.

§ 5052. Report. On or before January first, two thousand twenty-six and by January first of each year thereafter, the commissioner shall submit to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly a report describing and evaluating the community literacy programs funded pursuant to this article.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-ss to read as follows:

§ 99-ss. Community literacy fund. 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, rule, regulation or practice to the contrary, there is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of education a community literacy fund, which shall consist of all moneys appropriated to the fund by the department of education and all moneys collected from individuals for the implementation of community literacy programs as specified in article one hundred two of the education law.

2. Moneys within the community literacy fund shall be made available to the commissioner of education to provide grants to eligible agencies, as such term is defined pursuant to subdivision one of section five thousand fifty of the education law, in accordance with the regulations set forth in article one hundred two of the education law.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.