STATE OF NEW YORK

5532--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. REYES, SHRESTHA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Libraries and Education Technology -- recommitted to the Committee on Libraries and Education Technology in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to creating the Dolly Parton's statewide imagination library of New York; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the imagination library of New York fund

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

Section 1. The social services law is amended by adding a new section 361 to read as follows:

§ 361. Dolly Parton's statewide imagination library of New York. 1. For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

a. "program" shall mean the statewide imagination library program, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of New York;

b. "fund" shall mean the imagination library of New York fund established by section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law; and

c. "qualified local entity" shall mean any existing or new local Dolly Parton's imagination library local program partner.

2. There is hereby established under the administration of the office of children and family services a Dolly Parton's statewide imagination library of New York for purposes of developing, implementing, promoting, and fostering a comprehensive statewide initiative for encouraging children from birth to five years of age to develop a love of reading and learning.

3. a. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the office of children and family services shall allocate moneys as grants to provide age-appropriate books on a monthly basis, at home, to each child regis-

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

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tered in the program, from birth to their fifth birthday, inclusive, at no cost to families, through Dolly Parton's imagination library.

b. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the office of children and family services shall allocate moneys from the fund as grants to qualified local entities that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the program.

c. Notwithstanding paragraph b of this subdivision, the office of children and family services may waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement for a qualified local entity on a case-by-case basis to prevent undue financial hardship.

4. The office of children and family services shall coordinate with a nonprofit entity, qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and organized solely to promote and encourage reading for children of the state from birth to their fifth birthday, inclusive, for the purpose of implementing this section.

5. The office of children and family services shall provide oversight to such nonprofit entity to fiscally manage the imagination library of New York fund, including, but not limited to:

a. promoting the statewide development of local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

b. advancing and strengthening local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs with the goal of increasing enrollment;

c. managing the daily operations of the program;

d. soliciting donations, gifts, and other funding to financially support local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

e. developing community engagement;

f. developing, promoting, and coordinating a public awareness campaign to make donors aware of the opportunity to donate to the affiliate programs and make the public aware of the opportunity to register eligible children to receive books through the program;

g. administering the local match requirement and coordinating the collection and remittance of local program costs for books and mailing;

h. developing statewide marketing and communication plans; and

i. collecting parent and community feedback to show impact and effectiveness of the program.

6. On or after January first, two thousand thirty, and annually thereafter, the office of children and family services shall submit a report to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly on all the following:

a. the deposits made to, and expenditures made from the imagination library of New York fund;

b. whether any local match requirements were waived;

c. the number of local programs that exist, their location, and which entity or organization serves as the local partner; and

d. the number of children that are enrolled and the number of books that have been sent to such enrolled children.

7. The office of children and family services may promulgate regulations as may be needed for the administration of the program.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-bbbbb to read as follows:

§ 97-bbbbb. Imagination library of New York fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of children and family services an account of the miscellaneous special revenue account to be known as the "Imagination Library of New York fund".

2. Moneys in this fund shall be kept separate and shall not be commingled with any other moneys in the custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of children and family services.

3. The imagination library of New York fund shall consist of moneys appropriated for the purpose of such account, moneys transferred to such account pursuant to law, contributions consisting of promises or grants of any money or property of any kind or value, or any other thing of value, including grants or other financial assistance from any agency of government and moneys required by the provisions of this section or any other law to be paid into or credited to this account.

4. Moneys of the imagination library of New York fund, when allocated, shall be available, subject to the approval of the director of the budget, to provide age-appropriate books on a monthly basis, at home, to each child registered in the program, from birth to their fifth birthday, inclusive, at no cost to families, through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.