

STATE OF NEW YORK

687

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sen. MARTINEZ -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the transitional pathway program for students in higher education with autism spectrum disorder

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 355-f
2 to read as follows:

3 § 355-f. Establishment of a transitional pathway program. A transi-
4 tionnal pathway program may be created to encourage accessibility and
5 inclusivity in higher education for students with autism spectrum disor-
6 der. The state university may establish such program through the state
7 university office of disabilities, the office of university life and
8 other relevant departments. Such transitional pathway program may
9 include but not be limited to:

10 (a) the creation of a peer-support program with the special education,
11 psychology, social work, or other relevant department that would assign
12 a peer or trained mentor to a student with autism spectrum disorder to
13 provide academic support, social guidance and assistance with accommo-
14 dations. Such peer-support program may further include a plan to gradu-
15 ally increase independence as the student matriculates;

16 (b) the provision of accommodation policies and resources for students
17 with disabilities, particularly students with autism spectrum disorder,
18 via the school website and within application and orientation materials
19 for all current and prospective students;

20 (c) a separate orientation held for students with autism spectrum
21 disorder;

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

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1 (d) the training of faculty and staff on school accommodation poli-
2 cies, procedures and best practices to assist students with autism spec-
3 trum disorder;

4 (e) an evaluation of current accommodation policies and procedures to
5 ensure legal compliance and assess if such considers the abilities and
6 limitations of students with autism spectrum disorder and modify if
7 needed. This may further include the establishment of protocol for the
8 parents and guardians of students with autism spectrum disorder to
9 provide assistance to the student as such student matriculates; and

10 (f) a mechanism for students with autism spectrum disorder to build
11 community and support each other which may include the provision of
12 quiet, low-stimulating areas on campus.

13 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6235 to read
14 as follows:

15 § 6235. Establishment of a transitional pathway program. A transi-
16 tional pathway program may be created to encourage accessibility and
17 inclusivity in higher education for students with autism spectrum disor-
18 der. The city university may establish such program through the city
19 university office of disabilities, the office of university life and
20 other relevant departments. Such transitional pathway program may
21 include but not be limited to:

22 (a) the creation of a peer-support program with the special education,
23 psychology, social work, or other relevant department that would assign
24 a peer or trained mentor to a student with autism spectrum disorder to
25 provide academic support, social guidance and assistance with accommo-
26 datations. Such peer-support program may further include a plan to gradu-
27 ally increase independence as the student matriculates;

28 (b) the provision of accommodation policies and resources for students
29 with disabilities, particularly students with autism spectrum disorder,
30 via the school website and within application and orientation materials
31 for all current and prospective students;

32 (c) a separate orientation held for students with autism spectrum
33 disorder;

34 (d) the training of faculty and staff on school accommodation poli-
35 cies, procedures and best practices to assist students with autism spec-
36 trum disorder;

37 (e) an evaluation of current accommodation policies and procedures to
38 ensure legal compliance and assess if such considers the abilities and
39 limitations of students with autism spectrum disorder and modify if
40 needed. This may further include the establishment of protocol for the
41 parents and guardians of students with autism spectrum disorder to
42 provide assistance to the student as such student matriculates; and

43 (f) a mechanism for students with autism spectrum disorder to build
44 community and support each other which may include the provision of
45 quiet, low-stimulating areas on campus.

46 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
47 the date on which it shall have become a law.