STATE OF NEW YORK

8008

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

May 15, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to encouraging school districts to prioritize civic organizations which encourage community for students in allowing outside groups to use school facilities

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

Section 1. Section 414 of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 3 to read as follows:

3. Local boards which grant access to school facilities by external organizations shall give priority in the use of such facilities to any youth group listed in title 36 of the United States code as a patriotic society, including but not limited to Scouting America, formerly known as Boy Scouts of America, and its affiliated New York groups and councils, and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and its affiliated New York groups and councils, in order to facilitate access for students to participate in activities provided by these groups at times outside of the school day for the purpose of encouraging civic education.

§ 2. Section 2503 of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 8-a to read as follows:

8-a. Local boards which grant access to school facilities by external organizations shall give priority in the use of such facilities to any youth group listed in title 36 of the United States code as a patriotic society, including but not limited to Scouting America, formerly known as Boy Scouts of America, and its affiliated New York groups and councils, and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and its affiliated New York groups and councils, in order to facilitate access for students to participate in activities provided by these groups at times outside of the school day for the purpose of encouraging civic education.

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

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§ 3. Section 2554 of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 6-a to read as follows:

6-a. Local boards which grant access to school facilities by external organizations shall give priority in the use of such facilities to any youth group listed in title 36 of the United States code as a patriotic society, including but not limited to Scouting America, formerly known as Boy Scouts of America, and its affiliated New York groups and councils, and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and its affiliated New York groups and councils, in order to facilitate access for students to participate in activities provided by these groups at times outside of the school day for the purpose of encouraging civic education.

§ 4. Paragraph (a-1) of subdivision 3 of section 2853 of the education law is amended by adding a new subparagraph (iii) to read as follows:

(iii) Charter schools which grant access to school facilities by external organizations shall give priority in the use of such facilities to any youth group listed in title 36 of the United States code as a patriotic society, including but not limited to Scouting America, formerly known as Boy Scouts of America, and its affiliated New York groups and councils, and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America and its affiliated New York groups and councils, in order to facilitate access for students to participate in activities provided by these groups at times outside of the school day for the purpose of encouraging civic education.

§ 5. This act shall take effect immediately.