

STATE OF NEW YORK

9684

IN SENATE

April 1, 2026

Introduced by Sen. FAHY -- 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 requiring the board of trustees of The State University of New York to develop a SUNY-wide zero waste action plan

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. SUNY-wide zero waste action plan. 1. The board of trustees in
4 consultation with faculty, staff, students, the student assembly, any
5 labor organization which has been selected by members of faculty, staff,
6 or students to represent their interests, and any designated sustaina-
7 bility staff member shall issue a report on or before one year after the
8 effective date of this section creating a comprehensive SUNY-wide zero
9 waste action plan including but not limited to the following focus
10 areas:

11 a. source reduction also known as waste minimization, including but
12 not limited to:

13 (i) single use plastics elimination and reduction; and

14 (ii) reforms to procurement resulting in waste minimization;

15 b. materials reuse, including surplus property management and facility
16 deconstruction;

17 c. comprehensive recycling, including construction and demolition
18 materials;

19 d. comprehensive composting or organics recycling;

20 e. student, faculty, and staff engagement; and

21 f. vendor and contractor requirements and engagement.

22 2. The plan shall include metrics for tracking waste reduction and
23 diversion across the system, establishing a baseline, interim targets
24 for goals and actions that will lead to zero waste, and publicly report-
25 ing this information. Zero waste goals must include both diversion
26 through recycling and composting and reduction through waste minimiza-
27 tion goals. The zero waste action plan must prioritize durable and reus-

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

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1 able materials over single use materials, even if those materials are
2 recyclable and/or compostable.

3 3. The plan shall set a detailed project timeline for the system to
4 become zero waste by two thousand thirty-three.

5 4. Within one hundred eighty days of the issuance of a system wide
6 plan, each SUNY campus shall be required to create a detailed action
7 plan, in consultation with faculty, staff, students, student government
8 associations, any labor organization which has been selected by members
9 of faculty, staff, or students to represent their interests, and any
10 designated sustainability staff member.

11 5. The board of trustees shall be responsible for monitoring the
12 effectiveness and implementation of such program in consultation with
13 faculty, staff, students, the student assembly, and any labor organiza-
14 tion which has been selected by members of faculty, staff, or students
15 to represent their interests, and shall annually report to the legisla-
16 ture on the progress of the plan and post such report on the university
17 website. Such report shall include a comprehensive audit of all waste
18 and materials diverted and updates on inventory and shall review each
19 campus action plan and include intermediate measures should a campus not
20 be on track to meet the two thousand thirty-three deadline.

21 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.