

STATE OF NEW YORK

9946

IN SENATE

April 16, 2026

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the New York state transportation modernization grant program and the transportation modernization advisory committee; and making an appropriation therefor

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

1 Section 1. Article 73 of the education law is amended by adding a new
2 part 3-A to read as follows:

3 PART III-A

4 NEW YORK STATE TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION GRANT PROGRAM

5 Section 3639. Definitions.

6 3639-a. New York state transportation modernization grant
7 program.

8 3639-b. Transportation modernization advisory committee.

9 3639-c. Application process.

10 3639-d. Reporting requirements.

11 § 3639. Definitions. For the purposes of this part, the following
12 terms shall have the following meanings:

13 1. "Charter school" shall mean a charter school established pursuant
14 to article fifty-six of this chapter.

15 2. "Eligible entity" shall mean a county, city, town, public school
16 district, charter school, child day care as such term is defined by
17 section three hundred ninety of the social services law, board of coop-
18 erative educational services, non-profit organization, or any other
19 entity deemed eligible by the advisory committee.

20 3. "New York state transportation modernization grant program" or
21 "grant program" shall mean the New York state transportation moderniza-
22 tion grant program established in section thirty-six hundred thirty-
23 nine-a of this part.

24 4. "Parent" shall mean a person in parental relation to a child, as
25 that term is defined by subdivision ten of section two of this chapter.

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

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1 5. "Transportation modernization advisory committee" or "advisory
2 committee" shall mean the transportation modernization advisory commit-
3 tee established in section thirty-six hundred thirty-nine-b of this
4 part.

5 6. "Upstate New York" shall mean all counties within the state other
6 than Bronx, Queens, Kings, New York, Richmond, Nassau, Suffolk and West-
7 chester.

8 § 3639-a. New York state transportation modernization grant program.

9 1. There is hereby established in the department, the New York state
10 transportation modernization grant program to improve the efficiency,
11 accessibility and reliability of student transportation services in
12 upstate New York.

13 2. (a) The parent of a student in upstate New York may apply to the
14 advisory committee to participate in the grant program for monthly
15 transportation grants not to exceed eighty dollars a month, except as
16 otherwise provided by paragraph (b) of this subdivision, if the follow-
17 ing conditions are met:

18 (i) The parent's child or children attend either:

19 (A) a public school; or

20 (B) a charter school; and

21 (ii) The parent either:

22 (A) has an annual household income equal to or less than three hundred
23 percent of the federal poverty level, as adjusted annually for household
24 size and expressed in equivalent annual salary thresholds; or

25 (B) lives within fifteen miles of the school district boundary of the
26 selected school in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph, but transporta-
27 tion is not available to such parent's child pursuant to section thir-
28 ty-six hundred thirty-five of this article.

29 (b) Subject to review and determination by the advisory committee, a
30 parent transporting more than one student to a public school or charter
31 school may apply for a monthly transportation grant in excess of eighty
32 dollars.

33 3. An eligible entity located in upstate New York may apply to the
34 advisory committee to participate in the grant program. Such eligible
35 entities may use grant program awards to support the development and
36 implementation of innovations in public school transportation, includ-
37 ing, but not limited to, any of the following:

38 (a) transportation resource sharing with neighboring public school
39 districts or charter schools, including through the use of coordinated
40 routing, shared services, and joint transportation agreements;

41 (b) developing or contracting with transportation network companies,
42 as such term is defined by section sixteen hundred ninety-one of the
43 vehicle and traffic law;

44 (c) developing options for reducing costs and improving efficiencies
45 while enhancing access to transportation for families, including explor-
46 ing the use of fleet vehicles instead of buses and engaging neighborhood
47 carpool strategies;

48 (d) developing and implementing alternative solutions to address
49 transportation personnel shortages or related workforce challenges; and

50 (e) creating partnerships with other eligible entities to optimize
51 transportation routes to reduce student ride times and ensure the safe
52 and effective transportation of students to and from school.

53 4. Grants awarded pursuant to this section shall not be used to reim-
54 burse or support existing transportation programs, contracts or other
55 agreements between public schools, charter schools and public transpor-
56 tation entities.

1 5. Any recipient of a grant awarded pursuant to this section that is
2 found to have misappropriated funds shall be terminated from the grant
3 program.

4 § 3639-b. Transportation modernization advisory committee. 1. There is
5 hereby established, in the department, the transportation modernization
6 advisory committee to provide guidance, oversight and recommendations
7 regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the grant program.
8 Such advisory committee shall consist of fourteen members appointed by
9 the governor as follows: (a) the commissioner, or their designee, who
10 shall serve as chair; (b) the commissioner of transportation, or their
11 designee; (c) two representatives of public school districts; (d) two
12 representatives of charter schools; (e) two representatives of licensed
13 childcare providers serving publicly funded students; (f) two represen-
14 tatives with expertise in transportation planning or logistics; (g) two
15 parents of students eligible under the grant program; and (h) two repre-
16 sentatives from a community-based organization with experience in
17 student transportation access.

18 2. The advisory committee shall:

19 (a) review and evaluate grant program applications and grant program
20 outcomes;

21 (b) develop recommendations to improve transportation efficiency,
22 reduce costs and address workforce shortages;

23 (c) identify best practices in student transportation, including
24 through the use of technology and alternative service models;

25 (d) ensure that grant program implementation prioritizes households
26 earning at or below three hundred percent of the federal poverty level;
27 and

28 (e) approve additional transportation-related activities consistent
29 with the purposes of section thirty-six hundred thirty-nine-a of this
30 part.

31 3. The advisory committee shall establish and maintain an administra-
32 tive office to review and approve or deny grant program applications,
33 disburse award funds to grant program recipients, and ensure that grant
34 program awards are used for authorized purposes in accordance with
35 section thirty-six hundred thirty-nine-a of this part.

36 4. The advisory committee shall submit an annual report by August
37 first of each year to the governor, the temporary president of the
38 senate, the speaker of the assembly, and the state comptroller detailing
39 grant program performance, expenditures, and recommendations for
40 improvement. Such annual report shall contain:

41 (a) practices used by grant program recipients to transport students
42 to public schools and charter schools;

43 (b) a list of grant program recipients containing the awarded grant
44 amount and a description of the purpose of the grant; and

45 (c) the number of students served by each grant program recipient.

46 5. The department, in consultation with the department of transporta-
47 tion and the advisory committee, shall promulgate any rules and regu-
48 lations necessary to implement the provisions of this part.

49 6. The department, in consultation with the department of transporta-
50 tion and the advisory committee, shall ensure transparency in the admin-
51 istration of the grant program by publicly reporting grant program
52 awards, participating entities, and any outcomes related to cost
53 savings, efficiency improvements, and student access.

54 § 3639-c. Application process. 1. Any parent or eligible entity seek-
55 ing to participate in the grant program shall submit an application to
56 the advisory committee in a form and manner designated by such commit-

1 tee. Each application shall contain an explanation of how the applicant
2 proposes to use the awarded grant to:

3 (a) improve access to transportation for students attending a public
4 school district or charter school; and

5 (b) support transportation innovations and efficiency solutions.

6 2. The committee shall rank applications for grant program awards
7 based upon cost effectiveness, student safety, innovation, and the
8 demonstrated need of an applicant.

9 § 3639-d. Reporting requirements. A recipient of a grant award made
10 pursuant to section thirty-six hundred thirty-nine-a of this part shall
11 submit a report to the advisory committee in a form and manner desig-
12 nated by such committee. Such report shall include the following infor-
13 mation:

14 1. the number of students served by the grant program award and the
15 expenditure per student;

16 2. the geographic area served by the grant program award, including
17 the geographic distance covered in total mileage;

18 3. an accounting of the use of grant program awards;

19 4. the involvement by stakeholders, if applicable; and

20 5. any other information as the advisory committee deems necessary.

21 § 2. The sum of fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000), or so much
22 thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the department of
23 education out of any moneys in the state treasury in the general fund to
24 the credit of the local assistance account, not otherwise appropriated,
25 and made immediately available for the sole purpose of administering the
26 transportation modernization grant program to assist public school
27 districts, charter schools and certain eligible entities with moderniz-
28 ing transportation services, pursuant to part 3-A of article 73 of the
29 education law, as added by section one of this act. Such moneys shall be
30 payable on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certi-
31 fied or approved by the commissioner of education in the manner
32 prescribed by law.

33 § 3. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
34 have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or
35 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of
36 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed
37 on or before such effective date.