STATE OF NEW YORK

7777

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 10, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SIMONE, OTIS, LEVENBERG, LAVINE, McMAHON, CLARK, SLATER, MORINELLO, SHRESTHA, STIRPE, BURDICK, MEEKS, SHIMSKY -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to enacting the "freedom to read act"

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "freedom to read act".

§ 2. Section 276 of the education law is amended to read as follows:

§ 276. Existing rules continued in force. All existing provisions of law and rules established by the commissioner of education for the management of public school libraries shall hold good as to the management of such school libraries until altered by or in pursuance of law. **Such laws and rules established by the commissioner shall include policies to ensure that school libraries and library staff, including but not limited to certified library media specialists, are empowered to curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available to school districts.**

§ 3. Section 283 of the education law, as added by chapter 348 of the laws of 1984, is amended to read as follows:

§ 283. Functions of school library systems. The functions of school library systems shall include but not be limited to: (a) creating and developing a union catalog of materials listing the resources of each participating school library; (b) developing a plan which will aid each participating school library in cooperative collection development; (c) adopting and implementing an interlibrary loan policy and program among participating school libraries; (d) assuring a method of effective delivery of library materials within the system; (e) promoting development programs and continuing education for staff of participating

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

LBD03534-01-5

schools; (f) encouraging awareness of the resources and services available in participating school libraries; [~~and~~] (g) cooperating with other library systems in resource sharing and other activities[~~.~~]**; and (h) ensuring that school libraries and library staff, including but not limited to certified library media specialists, are empowered to curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available to participating schools.**

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.