

STATE OF NEW YORK

1099

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sens. MAY, COMRIE, HARCKHAM, HINCHEY, WEBB -- read twice
and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee
on Libraries

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 Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

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

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

4 § 276. Existing rules continued in force. All existing provisions of
5 law and rules established by the commissioner of education for the
6 management of public school libraries shall hold good as to the manage-
7 ment of such school libraries until altered by or in pursuance of law.
8 Such laws and rules established by the commissioner shall include poli-
9 cies to ensure that school libraries and library staff, including but
10 not limited to certified library media specialists, are empowered to
11 curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the
12 widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available to
13 school districts.

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

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

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

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

9 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.