STATE OF NEW YORK

1160

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 8, 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 establishing Diwali as a statewide school holiday

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

Section 1. Subdivision 8 of section 3604 of the education law, as amended by chapter 359 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

8. No school shall be in session on a Saturday, the first day of the second lunar month after the winter solstice in the preceding calendar year known as Asian Lunar New Year, **the fifteenth day of the month of Kartika on the Hindu calendar in each year, known as Diwali,** or a legal holiday, except general election day, Washington's birthday and Lincoln's birthday, and except that driver education classes may be conducted on a Saturday. A deficiency not exceeding four days during any school year caused by teachers' attendance upon conferences held by superintendents of schools of city school districts or other school districts employing superintendents of schools shall be excused by the commissioner, notwithstanding any provision of law, rule or regulation to the contrary, a school district may elect to schedule such conference days in the last two weeks of August, subject to collective bargaining requirements pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law, and such days shall be counted towards the required one hundred eighty days of session, provided however, that such scheduling shall not alter the obligation of the school district to provide transportation to students in non-public elementary and secondary schools or charter schools. At least two such conference days during such school year shall be dedicated to staff attendance upon conferences providing staff development relating to implementation of the new high learning standards and assessments, as adopted by the board of regents. Notwithstanding any

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

LBD01032-01-5

other provision of law, rule or regulation to the contrary, school districts may elect to use one or more of such allowable conference days in units of not less than one hour each to provide staff development activities relating to implementation of the new high learning standards and assessments. A district making such election may provide such staff development on any day during which sessions are allowed and apply such units to satisfy a deficiency in the length of one or more daily sessions of instruction for pupils as specified in regulations of the commissioner. The commissioner shall assure that such conference days include appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training, and may require that up to one such conference day be dedicated for such purpose.

§ 2. Section 2586-a of the education law, as added by chapter 629 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

§ 2586-a. Diwali as a holiday in the public schools of the city of New York. The fifteenth day of the [~~eighth~~] month of [~~the Indian~~] **Kartika on the Hindu** calendar in each year, known as Diwali, is hereby made and declared to be a holiday in all the public schools in the city school district in the city of New York and such public schools shall not be in session on such day.

§ 3. Subdivision 2-a of section 3635 of the education law, as separately amended by chapters 359 and 629 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

2-a. The superintendent of each city school district, in a city having a population in excess of one million, shall prepare a public school calendar and shall notify officials of nonpublic schools to which transportation has been requested not later than the first day of June in each year, of the days on which the public schools will be in session in the following school year. Such school district which provides transportation to nonpublic schools shall provide such transportation for the same number of days as the public schools are open but shall not provide transportation services for more than one hundred eighty days. Officials of each nonpublic school to which transportation is provided by a city school district of a city having a population in excess of one million may notify such district, not later than the first day of July of each school year, of a maximum of five days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays or legal holidays upon which public schools are required to be closed, on which the public schools are scheduled to be closed, except that in any year in which the first or last day of Passover and Easter Sunday are separated by more than seven days, such officials may notify the district of a maximum of ten days, but such school district will be required to provide for transportation to such nonpublic school provided that such five or ten additional days, whichever is applicable, are limited to the following: the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after Labor Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the week in which public schools are closed for spring recess, December twenty-fourth and the week between Christmas day and New Year's day, the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after the observance of Washington's birthday, the first day of the second lunar month after the winter solstice in the preceding calendar year, known as Asian Lunar New Year, the fifteenth day of the [~~eighth~~] month of [~~the Indian~~] **Kartika on the Hindu** calendar in each year, known as Diwali, and, in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens only, Anniversary Day as designated in section twenty-five hundred eighty-six of this chapter.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.