

STATE OF NEW YORK

3154

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 23, 2025

Introduced by Sens. COONEY, MAY, 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 creating the Dolly Parton's statewide library system of New York; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the imagination library of New York fund

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 249-b
2 to read as follows:

3 § 249-b. Dolly Parton's statewide library system of New York. 1. For
4 purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following
5 meanings:

6 a. "program" shall mean the statewide imagination library program,
7 Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of New York;

8 b. "fund" shall mean the imagination library of New York fund estab-
9 lished by section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law; and

10 c. "qualified local entity" shall mean any existing or new local Dolly
11 Parton's Imagination Library affiliate.

12 2. There is hereby established under the administration of the state
13 librarian a Dolly Parton's statewide library system of New York for
14 purposes of developing, implementing, promoting, and fostering a compre-
15 hensive statewide initiative for encouraging children from birth to five
16 years of age to develop a love of reading and learning.

17 3. a. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the state librar-
18 ian shall allocate moneys as grants to provide age-appropriate books on
19 a monthly basis, at home, to each child registered in the program, from
20 birth to their fifth birthday at no cost to families, through Dolly
21 Parton's Statewide Library System of New York.

22 b. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the state librarian
23 shall allocate moneys from the fund as grants to qualified local enti-

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

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1 ties that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the
2 program.

3 c. Notwithstanding paragraph b of this subdivision, the state librar-
4 ian may waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement for a qualified
5 local entity on a case-by-case basis to prevent undue financial hard-
6 ship.

7 4. The state librarian shall coordinate with a nonprofit entity, qual-
8 ified under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and organ-
9 ized solely to promote and encourage reading by the children of the
10 state, for the purpose of implementing this section.

11 5. The state librarian shall provide oversight and manage the daily
12 operations of the program, which shall include, but not be limited to:

13 a. promoting the statewide development of local Dolly Parton's Imag-
14 ination Library programs;

15 b. advancing and strengthening local Dolly Parton's Imagination
16 Library programs with the goal of increasing enrollment;

17 c. recruiting volunteers to assist in the development, promotion, and
18 coordination of local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

19 d. soliciting donations, gifts, and other funding to financially
20 support local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs;

21 e. developing community engagement;

22 f. developing, promoting, and coordinating a public awareness campaign
23 to make donors aware of the opportunity to donate to the affiliate
24 programs and make the public aware of the opportunity to register eligi-
25 ble children to receive books through the program;

26 g. administering the local match requirement and coordinate the
27 collection and remittance of local program costs for books and mailing;

28 h. developing statewide marketing and communication plans; and

29 i. establishing, in partnership with the department, a system for
30 parent and community feedback to show impact and effectiveness of the
31 program.

32 6. On or after January first, two thousand thirty, and annually there-
33 after, the state librarian shall submit a report to the governor, the
34 temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly.
35 Such report shall include, but not be limited to:

36 a. the deposits made to, and expenditures made from the fund;

37 b. whether any local match requirements were waived;

38 c. the number of local programs that exist, their location, and which
39 entity or organization serves as the local partner; and

40 d. the number of children that are enrolled and the number of books
41 that have been sent to such enrolled children.

42 7. The regents may promulgate regulations as may be needed for the
43 administration of the program.

44 § 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-bbbbbb
45 to read as follows:

46 § 97-bbbbbb. Imagination library of New York fund. 1. There is hereby
47 established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the
48 commissioner of education an account of the miscellaneous special reven-
49 ue account to be known as the "Imagination Library of New York fund".

50 2. Moneys in this fund shall be kept separate and shall not be commin-
51 gled with any other moneys in the custody of the state comptroller and
52 the commissioner of education.

53 3. The imagination library of New York fund shall consist of moneys
54 appropriated for the purpose of such account, moneys transferred to such
55 account pursuant to law, contributions consisting of promises or grants
56 of any money or property of any kind or value, or any other thing of

1 value, including grants or other financial assistance from any agency of
2 government and moneys required by the provisions of this section or any
3 other law to be paid into or credited to this account.

4 4. Moneys of the imagination library of New York fund, when allocated,
5 shall be available, subject to the approval of the director of the budg-
6 et, to provide age-appropriate books on a monthly basis, at home, to
7 each child registered in the program, from birth to their fifth birthday
8 at no cost to families, through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

9 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.