

STATE OF NEW YORK

9780

IN SENATE

April 6, 2026

Introduced by Sens. SEPULVEDA, BROUK, COMRIE, JACKSON, KAVANAGH, PARKER, WEBB -- 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 providing for absence from school for the mental or behavioral health of the minor

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

1 Section 1. Section 3210 of the education law, subdivision 1 as amended
2 by chapter 821 of the laws of 1947, paragraph b of subdivision 1 as
3 amended by chapter 491 of the laws of 2014 and paragraph c of subdivi-
4 sion 1 as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 1986, is amended to read
5 as follows:

6 § 3210. Amount and character of required attendance. 1. Regularity and
7 conduct. a. A minor required by the provisions of this part [~~one of this~~
8 ~~article~~] to attend upon instruction shall attend regularly as prescribed
9 where [~~he~~] such minor resides or is employed, for the entire time the
10 appropriate public schools or classes are in session and shall be subor-
11 dinate and orderly while so attending.

12 b. (i) Absence for religious observance and education shall be permit-
13 ted under rules that the commissioner shall establish.

14 (ii) In addition, the board of education or trustees shall determine
15 whether school session should not be held at an individual public
16 school, or district-wide, on a day where, if school were in session,
17 absenteeism may result in the waste of educational resources because a
18 considerable proportion of the student population is unlikely to attend
19 because of a religious or cultural day of observance.

20 (iii) Absence due to the mental or behavioral health of the minor
21 shall be permitted under rules that the commissioner shall establish.

22 c. In the event that a person requests the release of a minor required
23 by the provisions of this part [~~one of this article~~] to attend upon
24 instruction, the identity of such person shall be verified against a
25 list of names provided by the person or persons in parental relation to
26 the minor, as defined in section two of this chapter, at the time of
27 such minor's enrollment. The school district may adopt appropriate

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

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1 procedures for the purpose of submitting a list of names at a later date
2 or updating the list of names provided by the person or persons in
3 parental relation. If such person is identified as one of those persons
4 included on such list, such minor may be released from attendance. If
5 such person is identified as a person not included on such list, such
6 minor may not be released except in the event of an emergency as deter-
7 mined in the sole discretion of the principal of the school, or ~~[his]~~
8 such principal's designee, provided that the person or persons in
9 parental relation to the minor have been contacted and have agreed to
10 such release. A school district may presume that either parent of the
11 student has authority to obtain the release of said minor unless the
12 school district has been provided with a certified copy of the legally
13 binding instrument such as the court order or decree of divorce, sepa-
14 ration or custody which provides evidence to the contrary. No situation
15 shall be deemed an emergency until the facts of such situation have been
16 verified by such principal or ~~[his]~~ such principal's designee. No civil
17 or criminal liability shall arise or attach to any school district or
18 employee thereof for any act or omission to act as a result of, or in
19 connection with, the duties or activities authorized or directed by this
20 paragraph. The foregoing procedure shall not apply to release of a minor
21 pursuant to the protective custody provisions of the social services law
22 and the family court act.

23 2. Attendance elsewhere than at a public school. a. Hours of attend-
24 ance. If a minor included by the provisions of this part ~~[one of this~~
25 ~~article]~~ attends upon instruction elsewhere than at a public school,
26 ~~[he]~~ such minor shall attend for at least as many hours, and within the
27 hours specified therefor.

28 b. Absence. Absence from required attendance shall be permitted only
29 for causes allowed by the general rules and practices of the public
30 schools. Absence for religious observance and education shall be
31 permitted under rules that the commissioner shall establish. Absence
32 due to the mental or behavioral health of the minor shall be permitted
33 under rules that the commissioner shall establish.

34 c. Holidays and vacations. Holidays and vacations shall not exceed in
35 total amount and number those allowed by the public schools.

36 d. Exception. In applying the foregoing requirements a minor required
37 to attend upon full time day instruction by the provisions of this part
38 ~~[one of this article]~~ may be permitted to attend for a shorter school
39 day or for a shorter school year or for both, provided, in accordance
40 with the regulations of the state education department, the instruction
41 ~~[he]~~ such minor receives has been approved by the school authorities as
42 being substantially equivalent in amount and quality to that required by
43 the provisions of this part ~~[one of this article]~~.

44 § 2. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
45 the date on which it shall have become a law. Effective immediately the
46 addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary
47 for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized
48 to be made and completed on or before such date.