

2007-08 Executive Budget
21-Day Amendments
February 21, 2007

Amendments to Senate 2107, Assembly 4307 (Education, Labor and Family Assistance Article VII Bill)

Part A, relating to strengthening educational accountability by establishing measurable performance targets, promoting strong educational leadership, and raising standards is amended to:

- Require that school districts identified as deficient consider adopting the strategies of smaller class size, increased time on task, restructuring of middle and high schools, teacher quality initiatives and full-day prekindergarten in their action plans.
- Expand the number of school districts that will be required to hold public hearings and submit a transcript of public testimony with their contract for excellence for the 2008-09 school year.
- Require that public input be sought on contracts for excellence for the 2007-08 school year.
- Require certification to ensure that increased Foundation Aid is being used predominantly to benefit students whose needs are recognized in the foundation formula.

Part B, relating to textbook aid and hardware aid to nonpublic schools and charter schools is amended to:

- Make technical corrections.

Textbook Aid

- Correct the per pupil amount for textbook aid. The Article VII language inadvertently provided for the total per pupil amount of textbook aid, rather than excluding the portion that is provided for elsewhere in Education Law.

Hardware Aid

- Modify the existing computer hardware aid formula to include nonpublic students and to raise the per pupil amount to ensure that there are no losses from current aid levels for school districts due to the new formula.

Charter Schools

- Make a technical correction to allow charter schools that are approved after March 15 to begin operation July 1 of the following school year.

Part D, relating to the establishment of a "Middle Class STAR" program is amended to:

- Make certain changes to the confidentiality provisions to avoid potential disruption of local school tax collection.
- Make minor corrections for clarity of language.

Part E, relating to eligibility requirements and conditions governing awards and loans:

- Clarify that to first receive TAP in 2006-07 students must have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have passed an independently administered and evaluated Ability to Benefit (ATB) test.

Part J, relating to the Office for the Blind is amended to:

- Make a technical correction to remove unnecessary language relating to the leasing of space in public buildings.