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Committee Assignment: Senate Freedom 4

Bill #:SF-26

Sponsors: Alanah Fitzgerald and Colleen Griffin-Turk

An Act To Amend Education Law § 804-A to include sexual assault education in high school health classes.

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

Purpose This bill aims to add to the existing health education law and add education about sexual consent, assault, and rape.

Summary of Provisions

Section 1

Consent- To permit, approve, or agree

Rape - Unlawful sexual intercourse or any other sexual penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person, with or without force, by a sex organ, other body part, or foreign object, without the consent of the victim.

Sexual Assault - Illegal sexual contact that usually involves force upon a person without consent or is inflicted upon a person who is incapable of giving consent (as because of age or physical or mental incapacity) or who places the assailant (such as a doctor) in a position of trust or authority

Section 2

§ 804 All schools shall ensure that their health education programs recognize the multiple dimensions of health by including mental health and the relation of physical and mental health so as to enhance student understanding, attitudes and behaviors that promote health, well-being and human dignity, and educates on sexual assault prevention.

1.a

Instruction regarding sexual consent, rape and sexual assault shall be included in the health education for high school students. Students shall be required to demonstrate knowledge in the subject area through the use of a test, graded



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project or report, or any other means prescribed by the school authorities. Any such courses shall be taught by teachers holding a certificate to teach health education.

Justification

If students are not educated about sexual assault and how cases of sexual assault arise, they will have not have the proper knowledge to help prevent sexual assault situations from arising. It is also essential that high school students receive this education before going to college where rape and sexual assault cases are high in number. Cases of sexual assault plague the youth of our state. According to the CDC's Risk Behaviors Study, 10% of high school students were sexually assaulted in 2017. In addition, only 12% of sexual abuse for people under 18 is ever reported to the authorities. With education of the resources available for victims of sexual abuse, students are more likely to report instances of sexual abuse. Also, with proper education students can understand how many sexual assault situations arise which will allow them to recognize the warning signs

Fiscal Implications

This bill has minimal fiscal implications. Schools are already allocated funds from the state to effectively teach mandated curriculum; since this would now be apart of the mandated health class curriculum, this would fall within this category. Most of the educational material can be provided via technology. If exams or lessons can not be completed online paper can be used which would have minimal costs.

Environmental Implications This bill will have no environmental implications.

Effective Date This bill will go into effect one year after its passage.