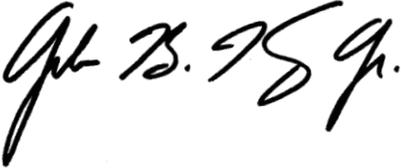




TO: Higher Education Committee
FROM: John L. D'Agati 
SUBJECT: Educator Diversity
DATE: March 3, 2014
AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

In February 2014, the Board of Regents considered the question: Should the Board of Regents develop a comprehensive strategy for the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds to work in New York State? A panel consisting of members of the P-12 and higher education community has been convened to further discuss this topic with the Board.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Discussion.

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the Higher Education Committee for discussion at the March 2014 meeting.

Background Information

At the February 2014 Board of Regents meeting, the Office of Higher Education presented a discussion item regarding Educator Diversity. The presentation included information regarding the current demographics of teachers and leaders in New York State. Research shows that educator diversity can support the goals of schools and districts to increase student achievement. A 2013 study by the Illinois Education Research Foundation (IERF) cited several sources of current research from 2003 to 2010 concluding that teachers with strong academic skills boost student performance. In addition, IERF also cited research noting when the racial/ethnic diversity of the

teacher and the student are the same, there are positive student achievement gains (White, DeAngelis & Lichtenberger, 2013, p. 5).

After its review of multiple studies, including a randomized experiment by Thomas Dee (2004), the Center for American Progress (2011) reports that increasing the current number of teachers of color “may be instrumental to increasing the number of future teachers of color. And while there are effective teachers of many races, teachers of color have demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement for engaging students of similar backgrounds” (Bireda, S. & Chait, R., 2011, p. 2).

Research shows that there are many other benefits to increasing educator diversity. Teachers of color:

- are likely to provide positive role models to children of color (Clewell & Villegas, 1998);
- empower children of color to succeed in school (Cummins, 2001; Nieto, 1999);
- build bridges and a cultural match between the students’ homes and the schools (Garcia 1995; Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 1995; Tyrone, 2001); and
- are more likely to be willing to work in urban settings than white teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996).” (Ayalon, 2004)

Panel Members

Connie Evelyn

Superintendent, Auburn City Enlarged School District

Constance D. Evelyn was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Schools, effective August 1, 2012. Before coming to Auburn, Ms. Evelyn held various instructional and leadership positions. She was the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the Ithaca City School District, Middle School Principal in Oswego City Schools, Middle School Principal in Rome City Schools; Assistant Principal at Rome Free Academy; and a Learning Specialist and Special Education teacher in the Bedford Central School District. Ms. Evelyn has a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology from the College of Staten Island, a Masters of Science degree in Special Education PreK- 12, and Supervision and Administrative degree from Long Island University.

Under Ms. Evelyn’s leadership, the Auburn Enlarged City School District is engaged in a number of initiatives including a focus on high quality curriculum and instruction aligned with the Common Core; increasing inclusive practices; the implementation of leadership and innovation zones focused on improving curriculum and instruction; building cultural competency; and job embedded professional development.

Ms. Evelyn currently serves in a leadership role for a number of boards including: the New York State Council of School Superintendents Legislative Committee; Auburn Education Foundation Board of Directors; New York State Association of Small City Schools Board of Directors; Partnership for Results; and Cayuga Centers. She also

supports a number of initiatives including the Wednesday Morning Roundtable, the Cayuga-Onondaga School Boards Association, and the Rotary Club.

Dr. Daryl Gordon, Associate Professor

Adelphi University

Dr. Daryl Gordon is an associate professor at Adelphi University's Ruth S. Ammon School of Education. She teaches courses in second language acquisition, content-based TESOL methodology, and action research for bilingual and ESL pre-service teachers. She is a co-Principal Investigator, with Dr. Tracy Hogan on the *Project BEST: Bilingual Educators of Science and Technology* grant supported by the New York State Education Department. Her research interests include content-based instruction for English Language Learners, the design of action research courses for pre-service ESL and bilingual teachers, and citizenship education for new immigrants and refugees. Dr. Gordon's research has been published in *TESOL Quarterly* and *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*.

Garencha Altidor, Graduate Student

Adelphi University

Garencha Altidor is currently a resident teacher with Adelphi University's clinically rich teacher preparation program, *Project BEST: Bilingual Educators of Science and Technology*. Garencha is a Haitian native who immigrated to this country when he was 14 years old. He graduated from Westbury High School and went on to receive a Bachelor's Degree from Queens College/CUNY in Applied Physics. Throughout his undergraduate studies, Mr. Altidor worked in the Westbury community as mentor to high school students in an afterschool program. This experience gave him great satisfaction and influenced his decision to pursue a teaching degree upon graduation. He was accepted into the clinically rich teacher preparation program at Adelphi University in July 2013 and has once again returned to the Westbury community working with both high school and middle school students as a teacher resident within this partner school district. He will graduate with his 7-12 initial certification in physics with a bilingual extension this coming August. Mr. Altidor looks forward to helping students in his own community, particularly by influencing the lives of students who may be struggling through similar situations as he once did himself.