



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,  
NY 12234

**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** Douglas E. Lentivech  
**SUBJECT:** Master Plan Amendment: Briarcliffe College, Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) Degree in Dental Hygiene  
**DATE:** September 2, 2011  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

### Summary

#### Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve an amendment to the master plan of Briarcliffe College that authorizes the college to offer the Associate in Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene?

#### Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

#### Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its September 2011 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

#### Procedural History

Master plan amendment is required because this would be the College's first associate degree program in the discipline of health professions.

#### Background Information

Briarcliffe College seeks to amend its master plan to authorize its branch campus in Patchogue, New York to offer instruction leading to the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in Dental Hygiene in the disciplinary area of Health Professions. A master plan amendment is necessary as the proposed program will be the Patchogue Campus' first associate degree program in the health professions discipline. Briarcliffe College offers associate and baccalaureate programs in business, physical sciences, social sciences, fine arts, engineering (diploma-level only), and health professions (baccalaureate-level only).

**Purpose:** The proposed program is designed to prepare students to become licensed dental hygienists and to gain entry level positions in private dental practices, clinics, or related health care settings. The program is consistent with the College's mission to offer career-oriented programs to a diverse population. Graduates of the proposed A.A.S. program will be well versed in both clinical and didactic dental hygiene knowledge and techniques, and will be qualified to apply for industry-required examinations and licensure.

**Curriculum and Academic Resources:** The 78-credit hour program requires 27 credits in the liberal arts and sciences and 51 credits in dental hygiene content, which includes theoretical, laboratory and clinical components. The program is designed to meet New York State licensure requirements and the standards of the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association; the program was granted initial CODA Accreditation in August 2011. General education content includes oral and written communications, psychology, sociology, ethics and cultural diversity. Biomedical content includes anatomy, physiology, chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, immunology, general pathology and oral pathology, nutrition and pharmacology. Dental and hygiene sciences content includes tooth morphology; head, neck and oral anatomy; oral embryology and histology; radiology; periodontology; pain management; dental materials; and oral health education, prevention and promotion. The program is designed to develop clinical dental hygiene skills with a strong emphasis on patients with special needs, community dental health, medical and dental emergencies, law and ethics, infection and hazard control management, and the provision of oral health care services, including the management of patients with blood borne infectious diseases.

The College has budgeted sufficient resources to implement and support the program and has allocated 15,000 sq. ft. of dedicated space for the Dental Hygiene program, where a new dental hygiene clinic with 15 fully equipped operatories will be constructed. The College has identified seven current faculty members to teach the foundational, liberal arts, and dental hygiene courses and laboratories associated with the program, and has appointed a Registered Dental Hygienist as Program Director. Upon maturation, the College projects six full-time and four adjunct faculty members dedicated to the program, with a faculty to student ratio of 1:5 for preclinical, clinical and radiographic sessions.

**Students:** Candidates will be required to meet the admission standards of the College, which include a high school diploma or its equivalent, and a number of additional criteria, such as the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS), written interest survey, and personal interview. The College projects enrollment of 30 new students per each eight-month admissions cohort for the proposed program, with a maximum of 60 students in the clinical environment at any given time.

**Rationale, Need, and Canvass Results:** The College conducted a market analysis of local and national occupational trends and demand, and determined that there was a need for the new program. There is currently one college in Suffolk County offering a licensure-qualifying Dental Hygiene program and ten colleges offering licensure-qualifying programs statewide; most of the programs in New York State were registered in the 1970's. A recent study by the Community Health Foundation of Western & Central NY (CHFWCNY) indicated that New York State has not kept pace with the

nationwide trend of growing Dental Hygiene academic programs, and that the state's capacity to replace current practitioners is below the national average. Another recent study by the Center for Health Workforce Studies at SUNY Albany noted that the local and regional dental hygienists to dentists ratio was much lower than the typical nationwide average, with 0.48 dental hygienists for every dentist in the Long Island region and 0.25 dental hygienists to dentists in the NYC metro area; nationally, dental hygienists outnumber dentists.

The New York State Department of Labor projects a 24% growth rate for this profession for both the Long Island region and statewide through 2018. In addition, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates a 36% increase nationwide in the number of dental hygienist jobs through 2018, which is considered "much faster than the average" for all occupations. Statewide median annual salary for dental hygienists is \$65,740 and for Long Island \$74,010.

A canvass was conducted of all degree-granting institutions in the Long Island Region and all degree-granting institutions offering Dental Hygiene programs statewide. Responses were received from 5 institutions; 4 indicated no objections to the proposed program, while the State University of New York College of Technology at Farmingdale objected, citing potential issues related to a limited number of service learning opportunities in the immediate area, lack of regional job opportunities for graduates in the field, and potential programmatic duplication. Farmingdale also forwarded its concerns to the Long Island Dental Hygiene Association (LIDHA), and invited members of the Association to sign and forward a letter if they agreed that the new program would contribute to an oversaturated job market in the region; the Department received the aforementioned, signed form letter from 30 area Registered Dental Hygienists. The Department reaffirmed with Briarcliffe that no more than 30 students will be admitted to the proposed program every eight months. The Department has considered SUNY Farmingdale's objections, the letters submitted by the concerned dental hygienists, the projected number of students in the proposed program, and Briarcliffe's response and rationale, and has determined that Briarcliffe has taken the appropriate steps to establish a rationale for their offering a dental hygiene program in the region. Further, the Department has determined that the proposed program, if approved, would meet the standards for registration set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, including adequate full-time qualified faculty, appropriate curriculum, and sufficient resources.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve the amendment to the master plan of Briarcliffe College authorizing its Patchogue Campus to offer the Associate in Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene. This amendment would be effective until September 13, 2012, unless the program is registered by the Department prior to that date, in which case master plan amendment shall be without term.