



TO: Higher Education Committee
FROM: Elizabeth R. Berlin
SUBJECT: Educator Diversity Report
DATE: October 24, 2019
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SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Department staff will present findings and recommendations from a draft report to be submitted to the Legislature. The presentation will include data on the race, ethnicity, gender, and age of New York educators; key findings from state and national research on barriers to achieving diversity at each step along with pathway; an overview of current efforts to recruit and retain diverse candidates into educator preparation programs, schools, and districts; and draft recommendations regarding programs, practices, and policies that could improve educator diversity in New York.

Reason for Consideration

For discussion.

Background Information

Research shows that teachers of color have significant long-term effects on the academic success of students of color, including improved test scores, higher graduation rates, greater college aspirations, and lower absenteeism.¹ The presence of teachers of

¹ Anna Egalite, Brian Kisida, and Marcus Winters, "Representation in the Classroom: The Effect of Own-Race/Ethnicity Teacher Assignment on Student Achievement," (Economics of Education Review, April 2015, Vol. 45, pp. 45-52), https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/Egalite-et-al-2015-FLTM_EER.pdf; Seth Gershenson, Cassandra M. D. Hart, Constance A. Lindsay, and Nicholas W. Papageorge, "The Long-run Impacts of Same-race teachers," (IZA Institute of Labor Economics, March 2017), <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf>.

color in schools has also been shown to reduce suspension rates for students of color and result in the identification of more Black students as gifted and talented.²

Amid growing recognition of the importance of this issue, last year the Legislature tasked the Department with preparing a report providing “an overview of teacher diversity throughout the state” (Ed. Law §305 (58)). In developing the draft report, the Department conducted new analysis from our student, teacher and leader data collections; consulted with partners to review relevant literature on educator diversity both statewide and nationally; and reached out to education leaders throughout our P-20 system for their expertise and insights. The Department’s goal was to advance this issue by pulling together relevant information in a single document and identifying promising next steps toward a more diverse workforce and a more equitable education system, while at the same time recognizing there is much we still need to learn.

² Jason Grissom and Christopher Redding, “Discretion and Disproportionality: Explaining the Underrepresentation of High Achieving Students of Color in Gifted Programs,” (AERA Open, January-March 2016, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-25), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2332858415622175>; Constance A. Lindsay and Cassandra M. D. Hart, “Exposure to Same-race Teachers and Student Disciplinary Outcomes for Black Students in North Carolina,” (Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, September 2017, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 485-510).