



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: MaryEllen Elia

SUBJECT: Proposed recommendations from the Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color and Blue Ribbon Committee.

DATE: December 7, 2015

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board approve the recommendations from the Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color and Blue Ribbon Committee?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Approval of recommendations.

Background Information

Over the past several years, diverse groups representing foundations, think tanks, and national/local leaders from a variety of arenas have emphasized an aggressive agenda dedicated to improving college readiness rates of our nation's students. However, the goals expressed by these and other stakeholders are unlikely to be achieved in the absence of a greater policy and action emphasis that supports all students, especially students who are victims of the access and opportunity gap. These disparities are most apparent for boys and young men of color.

Throughout the educational pipeline, both nationally and locally, too many males of color do not realize their full potential in our nation's schools and school systems. Numerous reports and studies have indicated that too often our schools have not served these students well. In many cases, in fact, we have simply failed them.¹

Boys of color graduate at lower rates; drop out at higher rates; participate less in Advanced Placement courses and preparatory tests, such as the PSAT; and are suspended from school at dramatically higher rates than their white counterparts.² There is broad consensus that the nation's public schools need to vastly improve the quality of education these students receive in order to succeed in college and careers.

In February 2014, as part of his plan to make 2014 a year of action focused on expanding opportunities for all Americans, President Obama unveiled the "My Brother's Keeper" initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

My Brother's Keeper is focused on six milestones:

- Getting a Healthy Start and Entering School Ready to Learn – All children should have a healthy start and enter school ready – cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally.
- Reading at Grade Level by Third Grade – All children should be reading at grade level by age 8 – the age at which reading to learn becomes essential.
- Graduating from High School Ready for College and Career – All youth should receive a quality high school education and graduate with the skills and tools needed to advance to postsecondary education or training.
- Completing Postsecondary Education or Training – Every American should have the option to attend postsecondary education and receive the education and training needed for the quality jobs of today and tomorrow.

¹ Call for Change: A Preliminary Blueprint to Improve Educational Excellence and Opportunity for African American Males in Urban Public Schools, August 27, 2012, <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/88/Blueprint%2082312.pdf>; Call for Change Providing Solutions for Black Male Achievement, December 2012, http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/88/A%20Call%20For%20Change_FinaleBook.pdf; and Saving black and Latino boys: What schools can do to make a difference, February 2012, <http://www.americanreading.com/documents/saving-black-and-latino-boys.pdf>

² Black Lives Matter: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males, 2012, <http://www.blackboysreport.org/2015-black-boys-report.pdf>

- Successfully Entering the Workforce – Anyone who wants a job should be able to get a job that allows them to support themselves and their families.
- Keeping Kids on Track and Giving Them Second Chances – All youth and young adults should be safe from violent crime; and individuals who are confined should receive the education, training, and treatment they need for a second chance.

Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color

New York has not proven to be an exception in failing to provide males of color with the necessary tools to realize their full potential in our school systems. Male students of color are falling behind early in their educational careers. The opportunity gap that persists in the state is particularly evident when looking at state test results in elementary school. The percentage of African-American and Latino male students performing at proficiency is more than half that of their white male counterparts on 3-8 English Language Arts and Math state tests.

This trend continues into high school and beyond. Male students of color in New York drop out of high school at a rate that is more than double that of white male students, and of those who remain in school, less than 60 percent are graduating from high school. This is compared with 85 percent graduation rate for white male students. Of students who graduated in 2014, just 15 percent of African-American and 19 percent of Latino students were deemed ready to do college-level coursework compared to nearly 51 percent of White students.

In light of these staggering statistics (which demonstrate only a fraction of the ways in which boys and young men of color are disadvantaged in New York's school system) and to address the goals of My Brother's Keeper in New York, the Board of Regents established the Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color. Providing boys and young men of color with sustainable educational advancement opportunities is a matter of both social justice and economic importance. Providing boys and young men of color with greater access to the opportunities to earn a college degree or specialized postsecondary training can change the course of their lives and the lives of generations that follow.

The Workgroup was charged with developing a series of educational policy, budget and legislative recommendations that reflect informed judgment, innovative "best" practices and collaborative efforts that must be taken across the Pre K- 20 pipeline to right the inequities that have impeded access to educational opportunities, and ultimately life opportunities for boys and young men of color in New York State. The Workgroup

began its deliberations by identifying ten priority areas for action that was later refined to the following six:

1. Ensuring equitable access to quality schools, programs, curriculum, and opportunities during Pre K through Grade 12 and Postsecondary Education;
2. Establishing prevention, early warning, and intervention services;
3. Executing differentiated approaches based on need and culture that are racially, ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically appropriate;
4. Responding to structural and institutional racism;
5. Providing access to comprehensive and coordinated support services; and
6. Engaging families and communities.

Blue Ribbon Committee

The Workgroup convened a Blue Ribbon Committee (See attachment for member bios) consisting of state, regional and national experts including practitioners representing education Pre K—20, community based organizations, youth development, health, elected officials, and state-wide professional organizations (New York State United Teachers, United Federation of Teachers, Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, New York State Council of School Superintendents, New York State School Boards Association). The committee was charged with examining the educational challenges and opportunities boys and young men of color face on a daily basis and to recommend strategies to address the challenges and expand opportunities to increase their educational successes. The Blue Ribbon Committee held two full day work sessions; one at Medgar Evers College, CUNY in Brooklyn on September 29, 2015 in which 120 people participated; and one at Nazareth College in Rochester on November 9, 2015 in which 114 people participated. Participants included Blue Ribbon Committee members; Regents; Youth Panelists; Superintendents; members of the NYS legislature; College Presidents; the City of Rochester's Mayor; members of the business community; community-based organizations; and Department staff.

Both Blue Ribbon Committee meetings included a morning Young People's Panel which provided the panelists, based on their backgrounds and individual journeys, an opportunity to share their experiences, opinions, and recommendations on how schools can improve. A video of the meetings including interviews with the students was

developed by SED Communication Office. The morning panels were followed by six breakout sessions focused on each of the six priority areas. Blue Ribbon Committee members were asked to focus on recommendations that will help the Workgroup meet its charge of advancing a policy agenda for New York State on improving outcomes for boys and young men of color. Members were asked to categorize their recommendations into the areas of Educational Policy, Legislative Policy, and Budget Proposals.

Workgroup and Blue Ribbon Committee Recommendations to the Board of Regents

This is not the first time that we have had this kind of conversation in this country and state, but we are at a critical historical point in New York State to aggressively move beyond conversation to concrete action and policy change focused on: the recruitment, development, preparation and retention of professional staff with the necessary knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color; the importance of stakeholder relationships; the need to involve multiple institutions and agencies around a developmental/holistic approach; providing greater clarity on the roadmap leading to college and career success; and building equitable school systems. The Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color and the Blue Ribbon Committee submit the following set of recommendations to the Board of Regents with the goal of making New York State the first state in the nation to develop a statewide policy specifically addressing the goals of My Brother's Keeper:

Educational Policy

1. Challenge school districts to support teachers, administrators, and pupil personnel services staff in ongoing professional development; and encourage college and universities offering teacher preparation programs to incorporate training that supports the expansion of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to provide competent educational approaches and practices to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color.
2. Expand the definition of college and career readiness in order to establish a clear/discernable path to college and career success which addresses milestones for kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, middle grade math, high school graduation, post-secondary enrollment, and post-secondary degree completion.

3. Convene a statewide council to review and analyze New York State data and identify critical data elements the Board of Regents need to collect to assess and address issues related to the impact of racial disparities in service delivery. The council would present a written report on findings and recommended actions to the Board of Regents.
4. Create a Pre K–12 Statewide Office of Family and Community Engagement within the Department to create a statewide policy with best practices and guidance for school districts related to providing families, community-based organizations, and local associations with necessary information about the Pre K –12 educational process. This new Office would encourage their participation in improving outcomes for all students, with an emphasis on improving outcomes for boys and young men of color. The Office would support the development of training programs for parents, students and personnel on how to engage, interact, and sustain relationships. This office will also advocate services to educate parents and communities on how to navigate the educational system and query how they can support their child.
5. Encourage all school districts to offer boys and young men of color high-quality coursework such as Advanced Placement courses; Honors Programs; Science, Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) programs; Arts and Fine Arts Programs, among others. Research has shown that higher expectations result in higher performance; simply, students with high expectations perform at a higher level than those with low expectations.
6. Develop and implement a plan that would accelerate the rate of individuals of color, including a targeted emphasis on men of color, entering the teaching profession in New York State school systems, including creating pathways for school personnel to become teachers. The teaching force in the State should be as diverse as the student population being served by our schools.
7. Serve as a resource to school districts that accept the My Brother's Keeper Challenge and implement a coherent cradle-to-college and career strategy aimed at improving life outcomes for boys and young men of color. Support their local planning process, assist them in developing successful strategies for action, and track their progress.

Legislative Policy and Budget Proposal

1. Create a New York State Interagency Joint Council to provide coordination among State Departments of Health, Education, the Office of Mental Health as

well as other State agencies to develop and monitor current and future policy, plans, and partnerships among schools, community-based organizations, and businesses to address important health and educational outcomes of students across the continuum of Pre K-16. Particular focus should be on schools and districts with greatest inequities and highest population of boys and young men of color. A singular person would lead the Joint Council, and be directly responsible to each agency head to ensure the goals of the Joint Council are met.

2. Provide \$12.5 million for expanding family and community engagement programs, with a significant portion of the funding directed to school districts targeted at improving outcomes for boys and young men of color. Funds would also be needed for the Department to support the newly formed Office of Family and Community Engagement. (*State Aid and Budget Proposal*)
3. Create a set aside of \$6.5 million in Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding for expanding participation rates of boys and young men of color in these types of programs. High quality CTE programs provide opportunities for students to demonstrate and reinforce both academic and technical skills as well as experiences in work-based learning where on the job mentoring can play a critical role in developing life-long, transferable employability skills for a constantly changing global economy. More examples of the NYS P-TECH³ model need to be implemented in our large cities to provide targeted populations with the opportunities to experience academic and career-focused success at an early grade level. Outreach in middle schools for such programs helps students and families make decisions on education, and careers that can transform lives. They provide work-based learning opportunities that enable students to connect what they are learning to real-life career scenarios and choices. Redefining college readiness to include these components will also help lead our students to successful rewarding employment and success in life. (*State Aid Proposal*)
4. Invest \$5.5 million in funding the expansion and development of exemplary school models and practices that demonstrate cultural and linguistic responsiveness to the needs of boys and young men of color, e.g. schools that create a 9-16 continuum for the eventual placement of college graduates into teaching and other educational professions. Direct a majority of the requested

³ NYS Pathways in Technology Early College High School (NYS P-TECH) partnerships provide nearly 6,000 students with a high school diploma, college degree and pathway to a job. Students earn an associate degree at no cost to their families and will be first in line for jobs with participating companies when they graduate.

\$5.5 million to the big four city school districts outside of New York City with a portion available through an RFP process to other districts. (*Budget Proposal*)

5. Dedicate an additional \$5 million⁴ in Teacher Opportunity Corps funding to support the recruitment and retention of teachers of color by providing incentives such as tuition, fees, stipends, program development costs, faculty staff time, as well as creating pathways for school personnel to become teachers in high concentration of disadvantaged people. (*Budget Proposal*)
6. Provide \$7 million as an incentive for school districts to accept the My Brother's Keeper Challenge to encourage school districts to implement a coherent cradle-to-college and career strategy aimed at improving life outcomes for boys and young men of color. (*Budget Proposal*)
7. Provide \$10 million for supporting school professional development programs that expand knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to provide competent educational approaches and practices to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color. (*State Aid Proposal*)

Next Steps

If the Board of Regents approves these recommendations, the Department will:

- Advocate for the inclusion of these recommendations during the upcoming State Budget process and Legislative Session;
- Advance the implementation of the Education policy recommendations, including conducting an assessment of tasks to be completed, establishing timelines, and identifying and securing any additional needed resources; and
- Continue to gather information from other areas across the State related to improving outcomes for boys and young men of color.

⁴ The 2016-17 Regents Budget Priority for Supporting NYS Access & Opportunity Programs discussed at the November 2015 Regents meeting requested \$3 million for Teacher Opportunity Corps, this proposal would add an addition \$5 million for a total requested increase of \$8 million.

*New York State Board of Regents
Workgroup on Improving Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color
Blue Ribbon Committee*

Participant Biographies

Mr. Antonio Aponte

Antonio Aponte was born on the Lower East Side of New York City and attended boarding school at Moses Brown Prep in Providence, Rhode Island through the Boys' Club of New York Scholarship program. Aponte went on to graduate from Syracuse University in 1979 with a dual major in Psychology/Theater.

In 1990, Antonio founded the Latino College Expo Inc. (www.latinocollege-expo.org), whose mission is to elevate the educational aspirations of the Latino community by offering an array of specialized services sensitive to their needs. This organization, now in its 26th year, has become one of the most anticipated educational events in the Northeast having administered over \$100,000 in grants to deserving H.S. students of Latino decent. In 2007, the Latino College Expo along with the NY Knickerbockers partnered to administer an academic grant to 5 deserving Latino high school seniors.

He came to the Boys' Club of New York in 2001 as Director of Educational & Career Services for The Boy's Club of New York responsible for the various programs offered, such as the Independent School Placement program; the Parents Advisory Board, the Independent Boarding School Fair, now in its 13th year to promote boarding school as an option; the ISP Prep program, which targets "boys of promise", in the 7th to 9th grade, providing them with academic, athletic, and cultural enrichment activities in preparation for competitive high school placement, college guidance and family engagement, Future Stars basketball tournament, and work force preparation.

Honorable Jeffrion Aubry

Jeffrion Aubry was elected to New York State Assembly in 1992 to represent the 35th Assembly District in Queens. He currently serves as Assembly Speaker pro tempore and is a member of the Ways and Means, Rules, Social Services and Governmental Employees committees, as well as the NYS Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators, the NYS Assembly and Senate Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force and the NYS Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus. Assemblymember Aubry also serves as a chairman of the Board of the national Council of State Governments' Justice Center.

For 15 years, Assemblymember Aubry was the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Correction. As Chair, Assemblymember Aubry was a champion of progressive criminal justice reform, successfully shepherding through numerous pieces of critical legislation. His impressive record includes significant reforms to New York's Rockefeller Drug Laws which returned sentencing discretion to judges in many drug cases and opened up alternatives-to-incarceration for people with substance abuse problems, prohibiting incarcerated people with serious mental illness from the devastation of solitary confinement, protecting the parental rights of incarcerated mothers and fathers with children in foster care, and reducing the once-exorbitant cost of collect telephone calls from prison.

Mr. David C. Banks

David C. Banks is the President/CEO of The Eagle Academy Foundation. He was the Founding Principal of The Eagle Academy for Young Men, the first school in a network of innovative all-boys public school in New York City.

The Eagle Academy for Young Men, the first all-boys public high school in New York City in over thirty years, is a nurturing institution which believes that excellence, both in character and scholarship, opens doors and provides a bridge to equality. The first Eagle Academy for Young Men was established as part of New York City's twenty-first century high school reform initiative, an accomplishment achieved through a unique partnership with One Hundred Black Men, Inc. After five years of sharing space with the Bronx School for Law, Government & Justice, it has since moved into its own, state of the art facility. Prior to becoming principal of Eagle, David served as the Founding Principal of The Bronx School for Law, Government & Justice.

David is a graduate of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey and received his Juris Doctorate from St. John's University. He earned his Educational Administration and Supervision certification in only one semester by attending three colleges: Brooklyn College, City College and Baruch College. Further, David Banks has also been chosen as one of seven Black Male Achievement Social Innovators nationwide by the Leadership and Sustainability Institute, for demonstrating tangible results in improving the life outcomes of African American men and boys. David Banks has joined the Board of Directors for the International Boys' Schools Coalition. In May 2014, David Banks was awarded an honorary Doctorate degree from Wheelock College.

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Mr. LeRoy Barr

LeRoy Barr is the UFT's assistant secretary and also serves as co-staff director, overseeing the daily operation of the union's extensive field organization and both the pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff at its central office. He received his bachelor's degree in finance from Howard University and his master's in education from Hunter College. As staff director, LeRoy plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the union operates at the highest caliber and that its chapter leaders, Executive Board members and delegates to the conventions of the union's state and national affiliates have the resources and training necessary to advocate successfully for the union's members. LeRoy began his teaching career in 1992 as a 5th-grade teacher and math specialist at PS 154 in Harlem. The school, struggling to meet state standards, was placed on a watch list and selected for inclusion in the Chancellor's District to receive intensive academic intervention and supports. LeRoy was PS 154's chapter leader and in that role worked with school leaders and staff to orchestrate an impressive turnaround. PS 154 was ultimately removed from the watch list and became a national model for successful schools. LeRoy was tapped to become a regional representative for the Chancellor's District, serving as the union's point person for the district citywide. He currently serves on the NYSUT Board of Directors, is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated and has served as the Polemarch (president) of the fraternity's New York Alumni Chapter.

Dr. Luis Barrios

Dr. Luis Barrios, Ph.D., is a professor of Psychology, Criminal Justice, Latin American & Latina/o Studies and Ethnic Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice-City University of New York. He is also a member of Ph.D. faculties in social/personality psychology at the Graduate Center-City University of New York. Dr. Barrios is co-editor of *Otras naciones: Jóvenes, Transnacionalismo y Exclusión* (2008-FLACSO); co-editor of *Gangs and Society: Alternative Perspective* (2003-Columbia University); co-author of the *Almighty Latin King & Queen Nation: Street Politics and the Transformation of a New York City Gang* (2004-Columbia University), and co-author of *Banished to the Homeland: Dominican Deportees and Their Stories of Exile* (2011-Columbia University Press). Dr. Barrios is also the author of *Josconiando: Dimensiones Sociales y políticas de la espiritualidad* (2000-Editorial Aguilar), *Pitirreando: De la desesperanza a la esperanza* (2004-Editorial Edil) and *Coquiando: Meditaciones subversivas para un mundo mejor* (2008-Editorial Búho), and other numerous articles. He is a former prisoner of conscience from the School of the America Watch (SOAW) movement. Dr. Barrios is a community activist, a priest activist, and a faculty activist.

Ms. Crystal Barton

Ms. Crystal Barton attended the State University of New York at Buffalo and is a graduate of Niagara University where she received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Education, a Master Degree in Educational Administration, a Master Degree in Counseling Education, a Post Master Professional Diploma in Counseling Education and a Certificate of Specialization in Minority Group Studies. She was one of the first African American females to enlist in the ROTC at Niagara University and received an honorable discharge. President Barton's professional education career spans from grades kindergarten through twelve as a Teacher and Counselor and grades four to twelve as an Assistant Principal and Principal. As a Teacher, she taught English and was an Inter-Group Relations Specialist for the Niagara Falls School District, prior to joining the Buffalo Public School District. As a Counselor, she worked in the Career Exploration Program. Currently and for the past twenty eight years, she has been the Principal of McKinley High School. A pioneer in education, she was appointed as Principal in 1987. She is the first female to be appointed as a Principal of a Career and Technical School in Buffalo Public Schools' then one hundred and forty nine year history.

Assemblyman Michael Blake

Michael Blake is the Assemblymember of the 79th District in New York State, representing parts of Concourse Village, Morrisania, Melrose, Belmont, Claremont and East Tremont. Blake is also the Founding Principal of Atlas Strategy Group, which focuses on political and economic empowerment for communities of color. Michael recently served as the Director of Public Policy & External Affairs for Green For All, a national organization working to build an inclusive green economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty. The Bronx, New York native is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. He is also an Exhorter in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a Certified Lay Speaker in the United Methodist Church. Assemblymember Blake currently sits on the Banks, Correction, Election Law, Governmental Operations, Housing and Veterans Affairs Committees, as well as being the Chair of the Subcommittee on Mitchell-Lama. He also has the distinction of serving as the 2nd Vice-Chair of the Black, Puerto Rican Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus and is an active member of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Taskforce. Michael Blake holds membership at numerous distinguished organizations including; Board membership of iVOTE, advisory board membership of SiX (State Innovation Exchange), My Brother's Keeper Alliance, Universal Hip Hop Museum as well as being a member of the American State Legislators for Gun Violence Prevention.

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Blue Ribbon Committee

Mr. Héctor Calderón

For over 20 years, Héctor Calderón has been a respected leader at El Puente, a community-based, holistic learning and development organization in Brooklyn. He is a co-founder and former principal of El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, the human rights public high school in the nation established in 1993. Thanks in large part to Mr. Calderón's vision, the Academy has received national recognition as a community-school model, dedicated to nurturing leadership for peace and justice through culturally responsive practices. His leadership as a Principal has made the Academy one of the highest achieving schools in the City of New York.

He served as the Director of Organizational Learning for the Expanded Success Initiative, which uses creative approaches to close the achievement gap for Black and Latino young men. He is the recipient of EL DIARIO's "EL" award, which recognizes the 25 most influential Latinos in the tristate area. He has supported over 100 new Principals through the New School Intensive at the Leadership Academy.

Dr. Suzanne C. Carothers

Dr. Suzanne C. Carothers is a Professor of Education at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development in Department of Teaching and Learning. There she has served as Director of the Undergraduate Childhood/Childhood Special Education Program and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Prior to assuming her position at NYU, she was a Professor of Elementary Education at The City College of The City University of New York in Department of Education.

Formerly, as the Adult Literacy Program Director in the Office of the Mayor of the City of New York during the Ed Koch Administration, Dr. Carothers coordinated the New York City Adult Literacy Initiative. At that time, it was a ground breaking effort which was in the forefront of the movement to provide literacy instruction and services for adults with limited reading, writing, and English speaking skills. Having been an early childhood teacher, Dr. Carothers was the teacher of three-year-olds at the Bank Street School for Children. A graduate of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, she received her Master's Degree from Bank Street College of Education, and her Ph.D. from New York University. In 2001, Bank Street College of Education awarded her an honorary doctorate for outstanding achievement as a teacher, leader in education, and mentor.

Mr. Kevin S. Casey

Kevin Casey currently serves as executive director of the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS), a position he has held since September 2006.

As executive director, Casey leads the largest association for school administrators in New York. He oversees all association services and operations, which include legal and labor relations services, professional development opportunities, communications and legislative and regulatory advocacy. He also acts as the primary liaison between SAANYS and other educational advocacy groups at both the state and national levels.

SAANYS represents approximately 7,000 school administrators, including principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and coordinators, among other titles. As a professional association, SAANYS provides direction, service, and support to its membership in its efforts to improve the quality of education and leadership in New York State schools. SAANYS is affiliated with the New York State Educational Conference Board, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Casey is a graduate of the State University of New York at Brockport and the George Mason University School of Law in Virginia.

Dr. Kriner Cash

Dr. Kriner Cash is superintendent of the Buffalo Public Schools. A lifelong change agent and advocate for high quality education for all children, Dr. Cash comes to Buffalo with 20 years of executive leadership experience in education, and successful outcomes for children as past superintendent in Memphis, Tennessee; and Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

Dr. Cash points to the importance of releasing the potential in each child, and encourages administrators to set their own high goals and standards for student achievement, to be caring, and to use data as a powerful tool in intervention and guidance.

New York State Board of Regents

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Mr. Michael Casserly

Michael Casserly has served as Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools since January 1992. Casserly also served as the organization's Director of Legislation and Research for 15 years before assuming his current position. As head of the urban school group, Casserly unified big city schools nationwide around a vision of reform and improvement; launched an aggressive research program on trends in urban education; convened the first Education Summit of Big City Mayors and Superintendents; led the nation's largest urban school districts to volunteer for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); led the first national study of common practices among the nation's fastest improving urban school districts, and launched national task forces on achievement gaps, leadership and governance, finance, professional development, and bilingual education. He is currently spearheading efforts to boost academic performance in the nation's big city schools; strengthening management and operations; challenging inequitable state financing systems; and improving the public's image of urban education. He is a U.S. Army veteran, and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and B.A. from Villanova University.

Dr. Sharon L. Contreras

An advocate for providing high quality education to all children, Sharon Contreras began her career as a high school English teacher in Rockford, Illinois, then went on to serve as a principal, area superintendent, assistant superintendent, and chief academic officer.

After holding senior leadership positions in large, urban school districts in Georgia and Rhode Island, Sharon became superintendent of the Syracuse City School District (SCSD) on July 1, 2011. Not only is she the first female superintendent of the SCSD, but she is also the first woman of color in the history of New York State to serve as superintendent of one of the Big 5 districts.

Sharon has degrees from the SUNY Binghamton and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Sharon serves on numerous Boards and Councils, and is a well-regarded and sought after speaker at the state and national level and has won several awards for her civic and professional leadership.

Assemblymember Marcos A. Crespo

Marcos was elected to the New York State Assembly at the age of 28 and his hard work and outcome proven approach has allowed him to quickly move into a leadership positions. In April of 2013 he was appointed to the Chairmanship of the Assembly Task Force on New Americans. In March of 2015, he was appointed by Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie to the Chairmanship of the Assembly Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force and the Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment. In addition to his statewide official responsibilities, he has worked to ensure that the Bronx finally has Metro North train service that will cut commuting time into Manhattan by an hour for working families. He is one of the youngest members of the New York State Legislature and in his relatively short 4.5 years as a State legislator, Marcos has authored major pieces of legislation now law. Most recently, he has authored a new law to incorporate youth financial literacy training in the Summer Jobs program, authorizes insurance companies to offer rate discounts for homeowners who actively make their homes or property more resistant to natural disasters, provide tax incentives to families looking to adopt children in Foster Care, and to combat rising rates of obesity and asthma a new law he authored will require the NYS Department of Health to focus on these two chronic diseases via all its public health programs. He is a prolific bill drafter with dozens of bills passing one or both houses of the legislature during his tenure. Marcos is a graduate of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, is married and has two young daughters.

Dr. Rudy Crew

Rudy Crew is President of Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, NY. A lifelong educator and author, Dr. Crew's career has spanned from the classroom to the chancellorship of the nation's largest school district, New York City Public Schools. In 2012, Dr. Crew was selected to serve as Oregon's first Chief Education Officer. Dr. Crew is a renowned leader and reformer who has made it a mission to improve student achievement, especially for poor and minority students. The Chancellor's District, The Parent Academy and the School Improvement Zone are among Dr. Crew's innovations that are considered national models for reform. These successful strategies have engaged parents, business and political leaders, and the community, ensuring students achieve higher levels of success and are prepared for the global challenges ahead. Dr. Crew has served on numerous boards, including the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Communities in Schools, Al Shanker Institute, and the Public Education Network. He is the recipient of many awards, including the NAACP Educational Leadership Award, the Arthur Ashe Leadership Award, and the AASA National Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Crew's acclaimed book, *Only Connect: The Way to Save Our Schools*, continues to guide a vital public discussion.

New York State Board of Regents

Workgroup on Improving Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color

Blue Ribbon Committee

Rev. Shawn Dove

Shawn Dove serves as the CEO of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA), a national membership organization dedicated to ensuring the growth, sustainability and impact of leaders and organizations focused on improving the life outcomes of America's Black men and boys. Dove launched CBMA at the Open Society Foundations in 2008 as the nation's largest philanthropic initiative on this issue and has propelled CBMA into an independent entity, growing its membership to more than 5,000 leaders representing more than 2,000 organizations nation-wide. Over his career, Dove has demonstrated catalytic leadership in helping to establish and develop the field of Black Male Achievement. He served as a lead organizer of the Executives' Alliance to Expand Opportunities for Boys & Young Men of Color; helped broker a partnership between Open Society Foundations, Bloomberg Philanthropies and the City of New York to launch the Young Men's Initiative; and helped seed the launch of the White House's My Brother's Keeper Initiative. Under Dove's direction, CBMA's efforts led to the creation of the nation's first-ever Black Male Achievement fellowship for social entrepreneurs, and played a key role in the formation of Cities United, a national strategy that facilitates partnerships between mayors, municipal leaders and community-based organizations to eliminate violent deaths of Black men and boys in over 50 cities. Prior to heading up the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, Dove held over 20 years of leadership experience as a youth development professional, community-builder and advocate for children and families. A graduate of Wesleyan University and Columbia University Institute for Non-Profit Management., he was a recipient of the Charles H. Revson Fellowship at Columbia University and awarded a 2014 Prime Movers Fellowship for social movement leaders.

Chancellor Carmen Fariña

Carmen Fariña is Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, the largest school district in the United States, serving 1.1 million students in over 1,800 schools. During her five-decade career, she has distinguished herself as an innovative teacher, principal, district superintendent, and deputy chancellor. As Chancellor—a role she assumed in January 2014—her priorities include meeting the needs of the whole child; engaging parents and families; ensuring collaboration, trust, and accountability within the system; and supporting rigorous Common-Core based standards to raise student achievement. During her first full year as Chancellor, Fariña oversaw the historic expansion of pre-kindergarten to more than 53,000 four-year-olds; expanded the Community School model to provide more wrap-around services to students and families; created a stand-alone, cabinet-level department to support English Language Learners; and increased funding for arts education and after-school programs for middle school students. She also developed new leadership models, transforming the role of superintendents to better support principals; launched the *Framework for Great Schools*, a holistic research-based approach to school improvement; and created Learning Partners and Showcase Schools, demonstration sites of excellence that allow schools and educators to work collaboratively to strengthen their practices. Fariña holds a Bachelor of Science from New York University and master's degrees from Brooklyn College (Bilingual Education), Fordham University (Gifted/Arts Education), and Pace University (Administration and Supervision). She is co-author of *A School Leader's Guide to Excellence: Collaborating Our Way to Better Schools* (Heinemann, 2008). Her honors include the Sloan Public Service Award (1989), presented annually to exemplary civil servants. In 2015, *Crain's New York Business* selected Fariña as one of the 50 most powerful women in New York City and *People en Español* named her one of its 25 most powerful women. Also in 2015, Manhattanville College awarded her an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Dr. Edward Fergus

Dr. Edward Fergus is Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development at New York University. Dr. Fergus current work is on the educational outcomes of boys of color, disproportionality in special education and suspensions, and school climate conditions for low-income and marginalized populations. Most recently served as Deputy Director of the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education (2004-2013) and during this time he directed the state contract with the New York State Department of Education on disproportionality in special education and suspension, and conducted numerous research studies on educational equity pertinent to boys of color, school practices, and evaluations of school programs. Fergus was also appointed in 2011 to the Yonkers Public Schools Board of Education (2011-2013), and currently serves on the Governor's New York State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (2010 – present), member of the PASE board (2013-present), and is an expert consultant for the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division on Educational Opportunities (2014-present). He has published numerous articles on disproportionality in special education, race/ethnicity in schools, and is the author of *Skin Color and Identity Formation: Perceptions of Opportunity and Academic Orientation among Mexican and Puerto Rican Youth*. Dr. Fergus received a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Education from Beloit College and a Doctorate in Educational Policy and Social Foundations from the University of Michigan.

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Dr. Ronald Ferguson

Ronald Ferguson is an MIT-trained economist who has taught at Harvard University since 1983. His teaching and publications cover a variety of issues in education and economic development. In addition to teaching and writing, Dr. Ferguson consults actively with school departments and agencies at all levels of government on efforts to raise achievement levels and close achievement gaps. He is the creator of the Tripod Project for School Improvement, including the widely used Tripod Student Survey Assessments, the faculty co-chair and director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University. He was also recently a faculty co-chair of the Pathways to Prosperity Initiative on adolescent-to-adult transitions at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. After 31 years as full-time faculty, he has recently moved into an adjunct position.

Most of his research since the mid-1990s has focused on racial achievement gaps, appearing in publications of the National Research Council, the Brookings Institution, and the US Department of Education, in addition to various books and journals. His most recent book is *Toward Excellence with Equity: An emerging vision for closing the achievement gap*, published by Harvard Education Press. Dr. Ferguson earned an undergraduate degree from Cornell University and Ph.D. from MIT, both in economics.

Ms. Catalina R. Fortino

Catalina R. Fortino is a nationally recognized expert in professional development, curriculum, assessments and program development in the teaching profession and has distinguished herself among the educators who specialize in school reform for high-needs schools.

A NYSUT vice president since April 2014, Fortino was the vice president for education and the director of the United Federation of Teachers' Teacher Center.

Before turning her focus to professional development and the Teacher Center, Fortino was an early childhood teacher, a teacher of bilingual early childhood special education and a bilingual educational evaluator.

She has been the chair of the NYSUT Bilingual Committee of Practitioners, the co-chair of the New York State Professional Standards and Practices Board for Teaching, a member of the New York State Committee of Title I Practitioners and a member of the American Federation of Teachers English Language Learners Taskforce.

Fortino has a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education and a master's degree in special education and bilingual education Queens College. She also studied curriculum development at Teachers College.

Mr. Kesi Foster

Kesi Foster coordinates the work of the Urban Youth Collaborative. For the past three years, he has worked with parents and youth in communities of color, building campaigns to fight for educational justice in our public school systems. He has provided research, facilitation, outreach and organizing assistance for the New York City A+ Coalition and the P.S. 2013 campaign. Both campaigns were designed to challenge education policies that were negatively impacting students and families in New York City, and to shape New York City's 2013 Mayoral election around an education vision shared by the community.

As Coordinator for the Annenberg Institute for School Reform's Community Organizing and Engagement department, he supported the work of community organizations across the country working on equitable solutions for improving schools, such as Sustainable Community Schools and Ending the School-to-Prison pipeline.

Previously, he has held positions as the Project Coordinator for the Right to Vote Campaign housed at New York University's Brennan Center for Justice, and in workforce development, facilitating skill building workshops for formerly incarcerated individuals and residents of New York City's Public Housing.

Urban Youth Collaborative Founded in 2004, the Urban Youth Collaborative (UYC) is a coalition of base-building youth organizing groups who work in some of NYC's most marginalized neighborhoods and who come together to carry out strategic citywide campaigns for education reform. We fight for reforms that put youth first and are based in racial justice and equity in the public education system.

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Mr. W. Cyrus Garrett

W. Cyrus Garrett currently serves as the Director of New York City's Young Men's Initiative in the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Garrett served as a political analyst for Everytown for Gun Safety, which is funded by former Mayor Michael Bloomberg. He arrived at Everytown for Gun Safety after he served as the Deputy Director of Cabinet Planning for President

Obama's 2013 Inauguration. Mr. Garrett earned that honor after serving as a Deputy Field Director in Ohio for President Obama's 2012 re-election campaign. Prior to the 2012 Presidential Election, Mr. Garrett served as a speechwriter to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) for the U.S. Department of Education. From 2009-2011, Mr. Garrett served as the special advisor to Director, Grayling Williams at the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement (CNE), and was the lead staffer on Western Hemisphere international affairs, congressional relations and conducting assessments on the flow of bulk cash and weapons from the U.S. into Mexico, Central and South America.

Prior to his appointment at Homeland Security, Mr. Garrett helped implement the inaugural White House Internship program during the spring of 2009. Mr. Garrett holds the distinctions as being one of the first 100 staffers to serve on President Barack Obama's 2008 general campaign as a regional political director state of Indiana. Prior to joining the campaign, Cyrus Garrett worked as a gang and drug counselor at the Eldora State Training School for Boys in Iowa.

Mr. Garrett attended both the University of Illinois and University of Northern Iowa (UNI) and received his Bachelor's degree in criminology from UNI. He is a native of Chicago, where he grew up with two older sisters.

Dr. Dorita P. Gibson

Dr. Dorita P. Gibson is the Senior Deputy Chancellor and Chancellor Fariña's second in command at the New York City Department of Education (DOE). With more than 30 years' experience in the public school system, Dr. Gibson has served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, regional and supervising superintendent, and deputy chancellor. As Senior Deputy Chancellor for the largest school system in the country, Dr. Gibson oversees all aspects of the DOE's cluster and network system for schools, superintendents, support for struggling schools, District 79 programs, and school communications. Prior to this role, Dr. Gibson served as Deputy Chancellor for Equity and Access where she worked to eliminate racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities, and continued the DOE's efforts to provide every child from all neighborhoods and communities across New York City with equal opportunity and access to high-quality programs.

Dr. Gibson holds a doctoral degree from New York University (NYU), and currently is an adjunct professor at the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. Dr. Gibson has a Master's Degree in Special Education from NYU and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Albertus Magnus College, and received a license in Montessori Education from DePaul University. As a Dansforth Scholar, she received a professional diploma in Administration and Supervision from The City College of New York.

Dr. Gibson and her husband are proud parents of daughters Caitlin and Kelsey.

Honorable Deborah Glick

Deborah Glick has served as the Assemblymember representing the Village-East and West, SoHo, Tribeca and north Battery Park City for 25 years. Deborah is serving her 12th term in the Assembly. Deborah has always been a strong proponent of the arts and has consistently advocated for increases in funding statewide because of her conviction that the arts play a crucial role in the economic and cultural life of New York City and New York State. Currently, she is the sponsor of several measures to protect the rights of tenants, as well as legislation to provide a tax credit to renters.

In February 2007, Deborah was appointed Chair of the Assembly's Higher Education Committee, which oversees all private and public higher education institutions, financial assistance for students, and professional licensing. Deborah also serves on the Ways and Means, Rules, Governmental Operations and Environmental Conservation Committees. Deborah passed a crucial truth in student lending reform. Additionally, in 2013, Deborah was also named Chair of the Assembly's Intern Program. Deborah has also been active in protecting animals. Deborah brought the Humane Society and NRA together to ban internet hunting. Finally, in 2014, Deborah passed a ban on the sale, possession, breeding or transportation of Eurasian boars. Many of these animals, popular in canned hunts, have escaped and propagate in the wild causing extensive damage to agricultural crops, and endanger the quality of our water supply. Deborah attended New York City public schools from K-12, and holds an MBA from Fordham University.

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Ms. Cheryl Hamilton

Cheryl Hamilton is Assistant Provost and Director of the Educational Opportunity Program/ Advancement on Individual Merit at Stony Brook University. The State University of New York's Educational Opportunity Program provides access, academic support and financial aid to students who show promise for succeeding in college but who may not have otherwise been offered admission. Available primarily to full-time, matriculated students, the program supports students throughout their college careers within the University.

Cheryl is also the founding co-director of the University's Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools Program. Cheryl serves as Affirmative Action Chairperson for the Stony Brook University Chapter of United University Professions, and is the Co-Chair of the statewide UUP Affirmative Action Committee. As president of the Council of EOP Directors in SUNY, she is also on the Board of the Directors of the Tri-State Consortium of Opportunity Programs in Higher Education. Cheryl actively serves on several campus-wide committees, and is on the Board of Directors of Herstory Writers Workshop.

Dr. Ramona Hernández

A native of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Ramona Hernández attended Lehman College until 1979, receiving a B.A. with honors in Latin American History and a minor in Puerto Rican Studies. She then pursued graduate work at New York University, earning an M.A. in 1982 in the Department of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, an M. Phil in 1995, and a Ph.D. in 1997, both in the Department of Sociology at the Graduate School of The City University of New York. Currently, Dr. Hernández is at The City College of New York where she holds the positions of Director of the CUNY Dominican Studies Institute, Professor of Sociology at the City College of New York and Doctoral Faculty at the Graduate Center of CUNY. Her research interests include the mobility of workers from Latin America and the Caribbean, the socioeconomic conditions of Dominicans in the diaspora, particularly in the United States, and the restructuring of the world economy and its effects on working-class people.

Dr. Hernández is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Latino Studies Journal* and *Camino Real: Estudios de las Hispanidades Norteamericanas*. Among her forthcoming publications are *Classic Knowledge in Dominican Studies*, Book Series Editor (Routledge); "Manuela Aybar o Rodríguez, 'La Deana,'" in *Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr., Franklin W. Knight, and Steven J. Niven (Oxford University Press); and "Perspectives on Dominicans in New York City," in *Latinos/as in New York: Communities in Transition*, 2nd Edition, edited by Angelo Falcón, Gabriel Haslip-Viera & Sherrie L. Baver (University of Notre Dame; with Silvio Torres Saillant).

At the moment, Dr. Hernández is writing a book about Dominican immigrants who came through the famous port of Ellis Island between 1892 and 1924; and editing the volume *Narratives of Dominican Entrepreneurs in the U.S.*, with María Elizabeth Rodríguez and foreword by Alejandra Castillo.

Dr. Gerry House

Dr. Gerry House is president of the Institute for Student Achievement (ISA), a division of ETS, whose mission is to partner with schools and districts to transform public high schools so that students who are traditionally underserved and underperforming graduate prepared for success in college. Independent studies validate the positive effects of ISA's model, including high college enrollment and persistence rates. In addition, the evaluation studies show that African American males in ISA schools outperform matched comparison students on key high school outcome measures, including attendance and graduation.

Prior to joining ISA, Dr. House was a teacher, counselor, principal and assistant superintendent and spent 15 years as school superintendent in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and Memphis, Tennessee. In both districts, Dr. House's leadership resulted in greater equity and excellence for all students.

Dr. House is on the boards of the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Foundation and Adelphi University. She was recognized as the National Superintendent of the Year by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), was a recipient of the Harold J. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education and was presented with the first Alumni Leadership Award by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Education. In 2015 Dr. House was recognized by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* as one of 25 Outstanding Women in Higher Education.

Dr. House holds an Ed.D. in Education Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, an M.A. in Counseling from Southern Illinois University, and a B.A. in English Education from North Carolina A.&T. State University.

Mr. Roderick Jenkins

Roderick Jenkins is a senior program officer with The New York Community Trust, managing over \$3 million in youth development and workforce development grant making annually in New York City. Before joining The Trust, Jenkins was a social worker with the Harlem Children's Zone's Community Pride Project. Roderick holds an M.S.W. from the Silberman School of Social Work and a B.A. from the Friends World program at Long Island University Brooklyn.

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Honorable Judith S. Kaye

Judith S. Kaye joined Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP as Of Counsel in 2009, and focuses on litigation, arbitration and her "passion project": keeping kids in school and out of court. Before joining the firm, she served as Chief Judge of the State of New York and Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for 15 years, until her retirement in 2008. She was appointed to the Court in 1983 by Governor Mario Cuomo, becoming the first woman ever to serve on New York's highest court. Her judicial service thus spanned more than 25 years – from September 17, 1983 to December 31, 2008. Before her appointment to the bench, she practiced law at Sullivan & Cromwell, IBM and Olwine, Connelly, Chase, O'Donnell & Weyher, where she became that firm's first female partner. She is a graduate of Barnard College (class of 1958) and New York University School of Law (*cum laude*, class of 1962). She has received numerous awards recognizing her judicial and scholarly accomplishments. She was also selected for inclusion in Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business 2015.

Dr. David E. Kirkland

David E. Kirkland, J.D., Ph.D. is an associate professor of English and Urban Education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at New York University's (NYU) Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. He also serves as Executive Director of The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and The Transformation of Schools. His transdisciplinary scholarship explores intersections among race, gender, and education. In so doing, he analyzes culture, language, and texts, and uses critical literary, ethnographic, and sociolinguistic research methods to answer complex questions at the center of equity in education. Dr. Kirkland taught middle and high school for several years in Michigan. He's also organized youth empowerment and youth mentoring programs for over a decade. Dr. Kirkland has received many awards for his groundbreaking work in urban education, including the 2008 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Division G Outstanding Dissertation Award. He was a 2009-10 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, a 2011-12 NAEed/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, and is a former fellow of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Research Foundation's "Cultivating New Voices among Scholars of Color" program. Dr. Kirkland has published widely. His most recent publications include: *Black Skin, White Masks: Normalizing Whiteness and the Trouble with the Achievement Gap*, *English(es) in Urban Contexts: Politics, Pluralism, and Possibilities*, and *We Real Cool: Examining Black Males and Literacy*. A Search Past Silence: *The Literacy of Black Males*, the fifth book that Dr. Kirkland has authored, co-authored, edited, or co-edited, is a TC Press bestseller and winner of the 2014 AESA Critics Choice Award and the 2014 NCTE David H. Russell Award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English. He is also co-editor of the newly released *Students Right to Their Own Language*, a critical sourcebook published by Bedford/St. Martins Press.

Mr. Timothy Kremer

Tim Kremer has been the executive director of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) since 1998. Before joining the NYSSBA, Mr. Kremer was employed by the Ohio School Boards Association for nearly 20 years.

Mr. Kremer leads the NYSSBA staff in fulfilling its mission of providing advocacy, information, leadership development programs and customized consulting services for the state's nearly 700 school boards. He is a frequent spokesman for NYSSBA in addressing the membership, media, legislative bodies and other related organizations.

Mr. Kremer's areas of expertise include association leadership, legislative advocacy, school board governance, executive recruitment and development, organizational change and employee relations. Mr. Kremer has co-authored three handbooks: one on the school board presidency, a second on the school board/superintendent relationship and a third regarding school district management team operations. Mr. Kremer has a master's degree in public administration from Ohio State University, where he specialized in human resource administration and labor relations. He also earned a bachelor's degree from Kent State University, majoring in political science.

Mr. Khary Lazarre-White

Khary is a social entrepreneur, educator, non-profit executive, writer and attorney. In 1995 he co-founded The Brotherhood/Sister Sol, a nationally renowned, comprehensive youth development and educational organization that provides rites of passage programming, after school care, counseling, summer camps, job training, college preparation and scholarship, employment opportunities, community organizing training, legal representation, and month long international study programs to Africa and Latin America. Khary has extensive experience as a public speaker across the country, writes regular opinion pieces for The Huffington Post, and essays for publications that have included NYU Press, Nation Books, and MSNBC.com. He has appeared as a regular guest contributor on MSNBC, on CNN, and widely on other media sites as well. Khary has been recognized with an array of awards including from Oprah Winfrey, Ford Foundation, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Black Girls Rock, Andrew Goodman Foundation, Union Square Awards and Brown University and the Robert Crawford Achievement Prize. Khary received his Bachelors in Arts, with honors, from Brown University, and his Juris Doctorate from the Yale Law School where his focus was international human rights law and constitutional law.

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Dr. Andrew Livanis

Andrew Livanis is a NYS certified school psychologist, a NYS licensed psychologist, a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, and NYS licensed Behavior Analyst. Dr. Livanis has worked in a variety of settings and has founded large scale behavioral programs in public and private schools to include children with autism spectrum disorder as well as emotional and behavioral issues. He has worked with other schools to: implement curricula to improve the language functioning of children with autism; implement school-wide positive behavioral supports for all children; and engage in program review and analysis. Dr. Livanis is the Co-chair of the Department of Counseling and School Psychology at LIU in Downtown Brooklyn, and serves as the founder and director of the Applied Behavior Analysis program. Dr. Livanis has spent a great deal of time developing the combined Behavior Analysis in School Psychology program at LIU-Brooklyn (BASP), which focuses on preparing school psychologists who are behavior analysts. Dr. Livanis is the founder and chief psychologist of the Astoria Behavioral Clinic (www.astoriabehavior.com) which provides direct psychological services for children with developmental and emotional disabilities, parent and school consultation, as well as supervision of BCBA candidates.

Mr. Ernest Logan

Ernest Logan worked for nearly 25 years in the NYC public schools. He began teaching English at PS 224, D-19, Brooklyn soon after graduating from SUNY Cortland and within five years he was a curriculum writer for the Office of Curriculum and Development. In 1983, he became the Assistant Principal at JHS 263, D-23, Brooklyn, and in 1991, he was appointed as Principal of I.S. 55, D-23. In 1997 he took a leave of absence to join CSA's staff as a Field Service representative. Rising through the ranks, he was elected President in November 2006 by acclamation and again in November 2009 and 2012. He began his third term as CSA's President on Feb. 1, 2013.

In addition to his responsibilities at the union, Mr. Logan is a board member for New Visions for Public Schools, the Research Alliance for New York City Schools, the NYC Independent Budget Office and the Council for Unity.

Mr. Logan is also the Executive Vice President of CSA's national union, The American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) AFL-CIO and, as a member of the General Executive Board, Chairs its Legislative Committee.

Ernest and his wife, Beatrice, a retired high school guidance counselor, have established the Ernest A. Logan Scholarship at SUNY Cortland, which provides tuition assistance for NYC public school students.

Ernest is a Deacon at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Harlem, where he also serves as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Barbara Martin

Barbara Martin is the Director of the COPE Program at Bronx Community College. College Opportunity to Prepare for Employment Program (COPE) is a collaboration between The City University of New York (CUNY) and The City of New York Human Resources Administration (HRA) that provides supportive services to CUNY students receiving public assistance.

Ms. Martin previously worked in the Department of Social Work at Harlem Hospital Center as well as in the Departments of Pediatrics, Obstetrics, Gynecology and Adolescent Family Planning. She received her Master's in Social Work from Atlanta University and completed post graduate work at the Columbia University School of Social Work. Ms Martin has received numerous awards and recognitions for her work from a variety of organizations including the Coalition of 100 Black Women, the Jack and Jill Foundation, and the Bronx Community College Black Male Initiative project.

Dr. Félix V. Matos Rodríguez

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, the tenth president of Queens College of the City University of New York, has a career spanning academia and the public sector.

A cum laude graduate in Latin American Studies from Yale University, Matos Rodríguez received his PhD in history from Columbia University. He taught at Yale, Northeastern University, Boston College, the Universidad Interamericana-Recinto Metro, City College, and Hunter College, where he also directed the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, one of the largest and most important Latino research centers in the United States.

Subsequently, Matos Rodríguez was appointed senior social welfare and health advisor to the governor of Puerto Rico. From 2006 to 2008, Matos Rodríguez served as the Commonwealth's cabinet secretary of the Department of Family Services. Matos Rodríguez returned to higher education in 2009 as president of Eugenio María de Hostos Community College/CUNY. Matos Rodríguez has an extensive publication record in the fields of Women's, Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Latino Studies and Migration.

A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Matos Rodríguez is also an Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow. He also serves on the boards of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and Phipps Houses.

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Dr. Aletha Maybank

Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH is highly proficient physician with demonstrated excellence in public health, health communications/media, preventive medicine, and leadership. Currently, Dr. Maybank is an Associate Commissioner at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and serves as the Founding Director of the Center for Health Equity. The newly created Center for Health Equity aligns efforts in advancing health equity across the City and ensures the deployment of resources to reduce health and mental hygiene disparities across all neighborhoods in NYC. The Center focuses on these key areas: leveraging community assets to better integrate primary care and public health to serve the health needs of communities; building inter-agency collaboration to implement multi-sectorial approach to addressing the root causes of health disparities; and increasing organizational capacity that strengthens the agency's lens of addressing health equity.

Previously she led the Brooklyn District Public Health Office as Assistant Commissioner in the NYC Health Department. Prior to her tenure at the NYC Health Department, Dr. Maybank successfully launched the Office of Minority Health as its Founding Director in the Suffolk County Department of Health Services in Long Island NY.

Dr. Maybanks is an Assistant Professor in the Masters in Public Health Program at Long Island University Brooklyn Campus teaching on topics related to health inequities, health communications, public health leadership and management, and community organizing in health.

Dr. Carlos N. Medina

Carlos N. Medina is the Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at SUNY. He is one of only a handful to hold the position within higher education systems nationally. Since August 2011, Medina has led SUNY's efforts in promoting and advancing the University's diversity goals and ensuring that they are properly captured within all university policies and procedures. He provides leadership and strategic direction to SUNY campuses in connection with the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and administrators who come from groups within our society that are underrepresented in higher education and in SUNY.

He currently serves as co-chair of the SUNY-wide Diversity Task Force leading the charge of identifying new ways in which the System's diversity can be increased to better reflect and be aligned with that of New York State. He is also a member of the Chancellor's cabinet assisting with strategic planning leading to implementation of SUNY-wide policies and initiatives.

Honorable Velmanette Montgomery

Velmanette Montgomery is recognized for her effective leadership and steadfast commitment to her constituents of north and central Brooklyn as well as to New Yorkers statewide.

In her role as the Ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Children and Families, Senator Montgomery is committed to helping young people achieve positive outcomes through reform of the State's juvenile justice, foster care and adoptive care systems.

Senator Montgomery continues to be one of New York's leading proponents of school-based health care as a model system for delivering comprehensive primary and mental health services to children of all ages, in the school setting where youth spend most of their day. The Senator's Teen Health Agenda includes legislation that requires, among other things, the teaching of age appropriate, medically accurate sexuality education in kindergarten through 12th grade. Senator Montgomery is the co-sponsor of the law that allows for the certification of nurse practitioners, and she spearheaded the campaign to stem the spread of AIDS among intravenous drug users through legalized needle exchange programs. As a respected advocate for criminal justice reform and a member of the Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction, Senator Montgomery sponsored a law that prevents New Yorkers from being arbitrarily denied a license to barber or practice cosmetology just because they spent time in prison. She also authored a law that prohibits the shackling of a pregnant woman in prison while being transported to the hospital to deliver her baby.

Other recent Montgomery laws include a measure that prevent the NYS Office of Children and Families from posting the home address or personal information of day care providers on the Internet; a proposal that provided over \$400 million in federal funding for the repair of NYCHA buildings, and a law that prohibits employers from discriminating in the granting of funeral or bereavement leave to its employees who are in a committed same-sex relationship.

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Honorable Walter T. Mosely

Walter T. Mosley was elected in November 2012 to represent Brooklyn's 57th district in the New York State Assembly. As former Second Vice Chair of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus and a member of the committees on Housing, Codes, Corrections, Banks, and Education, Assemblyman Mosley is dedicated to helping struggling working families and giving his community a powerful voice in Albany. Assemblyman Mosley was recently appointed chair of the sub-committee on Regulated Mortgage Lenders. Assemblyman Mosley is also a proud member of the New York State Caucus of Environmental Legislators, State Legislators Against Illegal Guns (SLAIG), the American State Legislators For Gun Violence Prevention (ASLGVP), and the bi-partisan coalition, Leaders Eradicating All Poverty (LEAP).

In addition to serving as a member of the Assembly, Mosley is also the District Leader and New York State Committeeman for the 57th district. Prior to being elected, Assemblyman Mosley served as the Special Assistant & External Relations Specialist to the NYS Senate Minority Leader, where he facilitated internal and external governmental affairs matters on behalf of the Senate Minority Conference.

Assemblyman Mosley received his bachelor's degree in Criminology, with a minor in African Studies and American History, from The Pennsylvania State University at University Park, graduating with honors for his exceptional academic performance. In 1998, he then received his law degree from the historic Howard University in Washington D.C. Currently, Assemblyman Mosley serves as an adjunct professor at Berkeley College, teaching courses in criminal justice, government, and media relations.

Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad

Khalil Gibran Muhammad is a Visiting Professor at the CUNY Graduate Center and the Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research division of the New York Public Library and one of the world's leading research facilities dedicated to the history of the African diaspora. Khalil holds a doctorate in US history from Rutgers University (2004) and is a former associate professor of history at Indiana University. He is the author of *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Harvard), which won the 2011 John Hope Franklin Best Book award in American Studies. He is a contributing author of a 2014 National Research Council study, *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences* (National Academies Press). His research focuses on racial criminalization in modern U.S. History.

Khalil's scholarship has been featured in a number of national print and broadcast media outlets, including the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, *NPR* and *MSNBC*. Muhammad is a former associate editor of *The Journal of American History* and prior Andrew W. Mellon fellow at the Vera Institute of Justice.

He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for his commitment to public engagement, including Crain Business Magazine's 40 under 40 (2011), *Ebony* Power 100 (2013) and *The Root* 100 of Black Influencers (2012 and 2013). He also holds two honorary doctorates from The New School (2013) and Bloomfield College (2014). He serves on the board of The Barnes Foundation, and the editorial boards of *Transition* magazine and the North Star Series of John Hopkins Press.

Mr. Jai Nanda

Jai Nanda is the Founder and Executive Director of the Urban Dove and Urban Dove Team Charter School. Urban Dove, founded in 1998, is an award winning non-profit organization that provides positive, educational programs to New York City's at-risk youth. Urban Dove serves hundreds of children each year, using a unique combination of peer mentoring, recreation and education.

Jai founded Urban Dove TEAM Charter School in 2012. Located in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Urban Dove TEAM is an incredibly unique and innovative alternative high school for Overage/Under-credited students who are at high-risk of dropping out. UD Team is the only school of its kind – serving exclusively OA/UC students under the age of 16. UD Team uses a unique Sports-based Youth Development framework to re-engage students and put them back on track to graduation and post-secondary education. Jai was born and raised in New York City. After completing a public school education, he graduated from the University of Michigan. Before founding Urban Dove, Jai worked as a teacher in the New York City school system both at the high school level and at the City University of New York.

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Mr. Michael T. Nettles

Michael T. Nettles is Senior Vice President and the Edmund W. Gordon Chair of ETS's Policy Evaluation & Research Center (PERC), and heads up the Early Childhood Research Center. Nettles has a national reputation as a policy researcher on educational assessment, student performance and achievement, educational equity, and higher education finance policy. His publications reflect his broad interest in public policy, student and faculty access, opportunity, achievement and assessment at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels.

His current professional activities include serving as a member of the National Research Council Board on Testing and Assessment (BOTA). Nettles is a member of the Bank Street College of Education Board of Trustees. He also serves on the Board of the National Science Foundation-sponsored Center on Research on Teaching and Learning (CRTL); the Joint Advisory Board for Education Research Centers in the state of Texas; the Board of the Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice (CERPP) at the University of Southern California; the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), Inc.; the Harvard University Medical School's Office of Diversity and Community Partnership Research Council; and the Advisory Board of the Community Links Foundation. Nettles also served for a decade on the National Assessment Governing Board, which oversees and develops policies for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Nettles earned a B.A. in political science from the University of Tennessee. He received a master's degree in political science and higher education, and a Ph.D. in education from Iowa State University.

Honorable Catherine Nolan

Catherine Nolan represents the 37th Assembly District in Queens County, which includes the historic New York City neighborhoods of Sunnyside, Ridgewood, Long Island City, Queensbridge, Ravenswood, Astoria, Woodside, Maspeth, Dutch Kills and Blissville. She was first elected to the Assembly in 1984.

A resident of the district for most of her life, she is a graduate of St. Aloysius R.C. School and Grover Cleveland High School. Ms. Nolan graduated from New York University cum laude with a B.A. degree in Political Science.

Speaker Sheldon Silver appointed Ms. Nolan to Chair the Assembly's Committee on Education in 2006. Prior to Chairing the Education Committee, Ms. Nolan Chaired the Assembly's Committee on Banks from 2003.

Ms. Nolan also Chaired the Committee on Labor. In addition, she serves on the Ways and Means Committee, the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee. She also serves on the Assembly Majority Steering Committee, and the Rules Committee. Prior to that, she chaired the NYS Assembly Commission on State-Federal Relations, where she focused on fighting for more federal aid for public transportation. Assemblywoman Nolan is also a proud past Chair of the Legislative Women's Caucus. Assemblywoman Nolan is active in many civic associations in her district where she has been the recipient of numerous awards.

Mr. Gregory Owens

Gregory Owens is a licensed master social, and has worked for the NY State Division for Youth/Office for Children and Family Services for 28 years. He is currently the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations in the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services.

Mr. Owens worked as a treating clinician for the National Football League, is a trainer and consultant in leadership development, mentoring, and effective approaches for working with young Black males. He has consulted on racial disproportionality in the juvenile justice systems in Ohio, Michigan and Hawaii.

He has participated as a member of the Open Society Foundation Campaign for Black Male Achievement, the national advisory board on Improving Outcomes for African American Males in the Child Welfare System: Identifying Effective Programs and Services, and the Alliance Network of Social Service Administrators Committed to Racial Equity, and is an advisory board member of the Child Welfare Adoption Leadership Institute (CWALI): Developing and Supporting Emerging Leaders of Color.

Mr. Owens received his BA in Sociology from Rider University and a master's degree in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania. He is married, has a daughter in college, and is a Deacon at the Macedonia Baptist Church in Colonie, NY.

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Dr. Roberto Padilla

Roberto Padilla is the Superintendent of the Newburgh Enlarged City School District in Newburgh, New York. From humble beginnings as a child, Padilla learned early on in his life the true meaning of resiliency and grit. He is a life-long educator having been a teacher, assistant principal, principal, coach, and leadership consultant. Even today, he considers himself a teacher who just happens to be a superintendent. Padilla was a teacher and principal in New York City. He is widely recognized for his leadership in turning around failing schools and supporting school district leaders both nationally and internationally on change leadership. He considers himself to be an equity warrior whose purpose is to give all children a fighting chance at having a productive life. He is committed to placing effective teachers and school leaders in every school. Dr. Padilla was appointed to Harvard University's Principal Center's advisory board where he also has served as a group leader and moderator. He received his doctorate from Fordham University. Padilla is a graduate of the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents Academy and the AASA Superintendent National Certification program. He has served on many non-profit Boards and leadership panels throughout his career.

Honorable Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes

Assembly Member Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes, has faithfully served New York State's 141st Assembly district since 2003. An advocate with clear and principled service, she has always put policy before politics. In February 2015, she was appointed as Chair of the Assembly's Committee on Governmental Operations. From 2013 to 2015, she was elected as Chair of the New York State Association of Black & Puerto Rican Legislators, with the responsibility of organizing the annual conference weekend to raise college scholarship funds for students of color.

As a graduate of Buffalo Public Schools including Buffalo State College, she earned a Master's Degree in Student Personnel Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes attributes her achievements and abilities to her strong faith and family. She is a member of both True Bethel Baptist Church and St. Lukes AME Zion Church and currently resides in Buffalo, New York with her husband.

Dr. Robert Reidy, Jr.

Dr. Robert Reidy, Jr., is the Executive Director of the New York State Council of School Superintendents, a statewide professional association for chief school officers. THE COUNCIL develops excellence in educational leadership, advocates for high quality services to children and promotes the importance of leadership in improving public education.

Prior to his work at The Council, Dr. Reidy served as a Chief School Administrator for 32 years in Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and New York State. His service in New York included assignments in the Capital, Southern Tier and Lower Hudson regions. Dr. Reidy received his Ph. D. from the University of Connecticut, his M. A. from Central Michigan University and his Bachelor's degree from Worcester State College. He is a former adjunct professor at the College of Saint Rose and Fordham University. He is also a former Charles Stewart Mott Foundation fellow. He and his wife, Michelle, have two children – Christopher and Danielle. Chris and his wife, Molly, have a four year old daughter.

Dr. Luis O. Reyes

Luis O. Reyes, Ph.D., was appointed as a Research Associate at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY, in 2010. He serves as Centro's Director of Education. Dr. Reyes has served as Assistant Professor in various education departments, including Lehman, Hunter, Brooklyn and Baruch Colleges, CUNY, and at Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus. Dr. Reyes received his Ph.D. in Social Sciences in Education from Stanford University in California. Dr. Reyes was Aspira of New York's Director of Research and Advocacy in the 1980s. He served as a Member of the New York City Board of Education in the 1990s. He coordinated the Coalition for Educational Excellence for English Language Learners (CEEELL) between 2002 and 2009, and is a founding member of the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE).

Dr. Frank D. Sanchez

In January 2011, Dr. Frank D. Sanchez was appointed as the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the City University of New York (CUNY). Today, CUNY is the largest urban, public university in America serving over 500,000 students across 24 colleges. For over 20 years Dr. Frank D. Sanchez has worked to advance campus student services, programs and policies aimed at increasing student success and degree completion.

Dr. Sanchez has presented at numerous national conferences and consulted on an assortment of content areas including student recruitment, retention, policy, evidence-based practice and diversity with a devoted emphasis on serving low income and first-generation students.

Dr. Sanchez holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with minors in Communication and Chicano Studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a Master of Science degree in Student Affairs and Higher Education from Colorado State University and a Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education Administration with a minor in Learning, Cognition and Instruction from Indiana University-Bloomington.

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Mr. Jabali Sawicki

Jabali Sawicki is an Instructional Designer at [Zearn](#), a non-profit digital learning organization. Prior to joining Zearn, Jabali served as the founding principal and Head of School of [Excellence Boys Charter School](#), of Bedford Stuyvesant located in Brooklyn, NY. As a member of Uncommon Schools, Excellence prepares its young boys to enter, succeed in, and graduate from outstanding college preparatory high schools and colleges. Prior to founding Excellence, Mr. Sawicki taught Science in Boston, MA at Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, one of the state's most successful urban charter schools.

Jabali serves on the National Board of Summer Search (a leadership development program focused on low-income youth) and the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy in South Africa.

Jabali is the founder and author of [Black.Man.Teach.](#), a blog celebrating the work of Black male teachers.

Jabali is a graduate of Oberlin College where he received a dual degree in Biology and Philosophy. He received his Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Teachers College, Columbia University

Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz

Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz is an Associate Professor of English Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, Yolanda earned her Master's degree from Teachers College, Columbia University, and her Ph.D. from New York University. Concerned with Equity Pedagogy, her work specifically examines the racial literacy knowledge of teachers, the development of culturally responsive pedagogy, and the literate identities of Black and Latino male secondary students. Dr. Sealey-Ruiz is co-founder of UMOJA Readers and Writers at a New York City high school, where she facilitates a critical thinking and writing course for adolescent males of color. She provides professional development on culturally responsive education for teachers and administrators around the country. Prior to joining the faculty at Teachers College, Dr. Sealey-Ruiz was a Research Associate with New York University's Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, and she worked in Corporate America for 13 years. She is founder of Racial Literacy Roundtables Series at Teachers College, an informal discussion group where graduate students and national scholars engage the Teachers College, Columbia University community on issues of race and diversity in education.

Ms. Iesha Sekou

Iesha Sekou, a South Bronx native, is the founder and CEO of Street Corner Resources Inc., a not for profit 501(c)(3), founded in 2007. Its mission is to bring education, employment, training and other resources to the community.

"We must give young people an outlet to redirect their energy," is what you can hear her say on any given day. In conjunction with Harlem Renaissance High School, the Street Corner Resources I AM Peace studio was erected. It has become a safe-haven where young people go to discuss everyday issues that constantly plague inner-city youth. The studio also serves as a place for youth to safely gather and create positive-driven music through self-expression. Iesha works tirelessly to help today's youth believe in their own greatness, despite the negative images they are bombarded with on a daily basis. As founder of Street Corner Resources, Inc., Iesha encourages the use of innovative methods to challenge youth to improve their lives. "Rekindling the inner spirit to succeed" and "To be or not to be," are some of Street Corner Resources' flagship workshops.

Iesha is documented in Columbia University's Activist Women Voices, highlighting her work with young women and her efforts to assist them in avoiding teen pregnancy while acquiring a better self-image. She is also the host of Street Corner Resources LIVE, a community affairs radio show which airs every Monday from 8-9 a.m. on WHCR 90.3 FM.

Mr. Diallo Shabazz

Diallo Shabazz is a global education advisor and sustainability expert who has worked with government agencies and NGOs in North America, Asia, and Africa. He is currently Executive Director of One Hundred Black Men, an organization in New York committed to transforming economic and social policy, and launching independent programs and organizations that serve low-income communities. He previously served as Senior Director of Sustainability Education at the NYC Department of Education to support the nation's largest school system on structuring public/private partnerships to improve career and technical education. From 2011 - 2013, Diallo was appointed as a North American Civil Society Representative for the United Nations Environment Programme, which he represented at ministerial-level meetings on the Post-2015 Agenda and sustainable development goals. Diallo formerly worked for the environmental organization Solar One on green workforce development, and also previously worked for the NAACP where he specialized in youth development and civil rights. An avid speaker and moderator, Diallo has hosted numerous forums and appeared on various media outlets including UN Web TV, New York Public Radio, and ABC's 20/20.

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Dr. Deborah Shanley

For the last 20 years, Deb Shanley served as a Dean at both Brooklyn College (School of Education) and Medgar Evers College (School of Liberal Arts and Education). This year she returned to teaching in the Secondary Education Dept. at BC after spending a year with the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to strengthen the relationships between K-12 membership districts and higher education. Deb is most proud of her team work with the Brooklyn College Academy's Early College and BC's Urban Community Teachers Project that has documented success with 100% graduation rates, 100% job placements in schools, the Peace Corps or related educational settings and more young men completing Masters degrees with four moving on to PhD programs. She served on the National Parks 21st Commission and continues to volunteer chairing committees including a National Park System Learning Summit in spring 2016 in DC. In her spare time, she serves on three Boards (CGSC, the National Network for Educational Renewal and the Middle College National Consortium) and is the Chairwoman of the Achievement First Brooklyn schools. She is currently co-editing a book on best practices of school-university partnerships within the CGCS and was invited to join the new Regulatory Task Force on Academic Policy in the NYC DOE.

Dr. Warren Simmons

Warren Simmons directs the work of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform (AISR) at Brown University and team-teaches a course in Urban Systems and Structure in Brown University's Urban Education Policy Master's Program. AISR's mission is to improve outcomes and practices in urban schools, especially those attended by traditionally underserved students. Before joining AISR in 1998, he was founding director of the Philadelphia Education Fund, a reform support organization that helped the School District of Philadelphia to fund, develop, and implement new academic standards, content-based professional development, standards-based curriculum resources, and comprehensive school reform.

Dr. Simmons received a B.A. in psychology from Macalester College and a Ph.D. in psychology from Cornell University. He is a recent recipient of the Distinguished Citizens Award from the National Governors Association and has served on the advisory groups and boards of several prominent national organizations. He currently co-chairs the Aspen Urban Superintendents Network and he was recently appointed by the National Research Council (NRC) to serve on the NRC's Committee on Strengthening Science Education Through a Teacher Learning Continuum. Dr. Simmons was also recently elected a trustee at Roger Williams University and a member of the board of directors of the Nellie Mae Education Fund.

Mr. Glenn Eric Singleton

Glenn hails from Baltimore, Maryland and earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and his master's degree from the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University. In 1992, he founded Pacific Educational Group, Inc. (PEG). Singleton and his PEG associates deliver comprehensive training and coaching for leaders throughout the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. His team guides leaders in all sectors to heighten their awareness of race and implement effective strategies for eliminating racial disparities. He is author of *Courageous Conversations About Race*, which earned "Book of the Year" recognition from both the National Staff Development Council and ForeWord Magazine in 2006. His third and most recent book, *Courageous Conversations About Race, 2nd Edition*, was published in 2015. Singleton served as adjunct professor of Educational Leadership at San José State University from 2004–2012. In 2009, Singleton was elected to serve as a commissioner on the California State Board of Education African American Commission. He is founder of Foundation for a College Education of East Palo Alto, California, where he currently serves on the board of advisors. In 2014, Singleton was inducted into the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated. Singleton resides in San Francisco, California.

Ms. Michèle Stephenson

Award-winning filmmaker, artist and author, Michèle Stephenson, pulls from her Caribbean roots and international experience as a human rights attorney to tackle documentaries on communities of color related to race, equity and inclusion. Her work has appeared on a variety of broadcast and web platforms, including PBS, Showtime and MTV. Her most recent film, *American Promise*, was nominated for three Emmys including Best Documentary and Best News Coverage of a Contemporary Issue; the film also won honors at the Sundance and New York Film Festivals, the African American Film Critic's Association and was awarded the PUMA BritDoc Impact Award. Stephenson's recent book, *Promises Kept*, written along with co-authors Joe Brewster and Hilary Beard, won an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work.

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Ms. Vanessa Threatte

Vanessa Threatte has spent more than 10 years working to pursue positive outcomes for the most vulnerable populations in New York State. She currently is the Executive Director of SUNY's Cradle to Career Alliance, which was launched by Chancellor Nancy Zimpher in February of 2013. SUNY C2C or Alliance serves as a statewide intermediary of the StriveTogether National Network. SUNY C2C helps cradle-to-career partnerships adapt the StriveTogether framework and implement the StriveTogether Theory of Action. She is currently working with 8 communities across the State of New York strengthening collective impact in education partnerships.

Vanessa brings to this position her leadership and education experience helping to found a charter middle school for girls and her work as a classroom teacher, administrator, and principal, where she worked to ensure the quality of educational experiences for high-risk, high-need urban populations. Additionally, Vanessa brings her understanding of social, emotional, and mental health needs from her clinical training as an art therapist and work with geriatric and special needs adults. Vanessa earned a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, a master's degree in Art Therapy from The School of Art Institute of Chicago, and dual master's degrees in Literacy and Special Education from SUNY Albany.

Dr. Ivory A. Toldson

Dr. Ivory A. Toldson was appointed by President Barack Obama to devise national strategies to sustain and expand federal support to HBCUs, as the acting executive director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. He is currently on leave from his position as full professor at Howard University. He has also served as senior research analyst for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, and editor-in-chief of The Journal of Negro Education.

Dr. Toldson conceptualized the White House Initiative on HBCUs All-Stars program, which identifies and engages the top HBCU scholars. Dr. Toldson has more than 65 publications, including 4 books, and more than 150 research presentations in 36 US states, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Scotland, South Africa, Paris, and Barcelona. He has been featured on MSNBC, C-SPAN2 Books, NPR News, POTUS on XM Satellite Radio, and numerous local radio stations. Dubbed a leader "who could conceivably navigate the path to the White House" by the Washington Post, one of "30 leaders in the fight for Black men," by Newsweek Magazine, and the "Problem Solver" by Diverse: Issues In Higher Education, Dr. Toldson, according to U.S. Secretary Arne Duncan, is "a prolific young scholar and myth buster."

After completing coursework for a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at Temple University, Dr. Toldson became a correctional and forensic psychology resident at the United States Penitentiary. There, he completed his dissertation on Black Men in the Criminal Justice System. He has received formal training in applied statistics from the University of Michigan, and held visiting research and teacher appointments at Emory, Drexel, and Morehouse School of Medicine.

Dr. Bolgen Vargas

Dr. Bolgen Vargas is Superintendent of the Rochester City School District and leads the district's commitment to the goals of My Brother's Keeper. He became Superintendent in July 2012 after 13 months as Interim Superintendent. Dr. Vargas served previously as a Commissioner on the Rochester Board of Education for eight years, including four as president.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Dr. Vargas immigrated to the United States as a high school student who spoke only Spanish. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in international studies and a master's degree in school counseling, both from the State University of New York at Brockport. He received his doctorate in Education Leadership and Organization from the University of Pennsylvania. For his doctoral research, Dr. Vargas analyzed the success and failure rates of students facing multiple risk factors in Rochester's high school graduating class of 2009. He earned the honor of distinction for his dissertation, titled "Educational Success in the Face of Adversity as Measured by High School Graduation."

Dr. Ron Walker

Ron Walker has over 45 years of experience serving as a teacher, principal, staff developer, and consultant in various educational communities. Currently, Ron serves as the Executive Director and is a founding member of the Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color (COSEBOC). The mission of COSEBOC, founded in 2007, is to connect, inspire, support and strengthen school leaders dedicated to the social, emotional and academic development of boys and young men of color. Ron has also grown the visibility of COSEBOC and has made many presentations on the national and state level. He has presented to the U.S. Department of Education, College Board, California Association of African American Administrators and Superintendents, The American Public Health Association, The Council of Urban Boards of Education as well being interviewed by Soledad O'Brien on symposium on Educating Black Males. He was also invited to attend President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Forum held at the White House. Ron has authored two publications on leadership and is featured in numerous education articles.

Ron attributes any success that he has gained to his unrelenting belief in God, the lessons taught by his parents Solomon and Delores Walker and the faith that his wife Toni, children and grandchildren placed in him.

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Mr. Paul Washington

Paul Washington is a longtime community activist who has participated in the movement for Social Justice for over 25 years. Former Chief of Staff to Council member Charles Barron Mr. Washington is a grass roots organizer engaging in Electoral Politics and Union organizing. He has written a number of articles on Black Political Empowerment, Police Mis-Conduct, Economic Justice issues, Black Male Development and Education. He is presently Coordinator of Outreach for the Male Development and Empowerment Center at Medgar Evers College and Vice-Chair for Cross Campus Chapter of HEOs (Higher Education Officers) for the Professional Staff Congress, the faculty and staff of the City University of New York. Mr. Washington has been an educational Counselor for Black Veterans for Social Justice which provided services for Homeless Men in Central Brooklyn. Mr. Washington has stated that working at "Pamoja House was one of the most important and valued positions he has held, for it placed me in the front line on fighting and educating people about the crisis of Black Males in America." Mr. Washington has a B.A. in Social Science from the College of New Rochelle and a M.A. in Political Science and Public Administration from Brooklyn College. He is presently writing a biography on "Morris U. Schappes," a scholar, activist, writer and Union organizer who taught at City College during the 1930s, who was wrongly convicted and sentenced to prison for his political affiliations and Union organizing.

Mr. Jermaine Wright

Jermaine Wright is the University Director of The City University of New York Black Male Initiative (CUNY BMI). A graduate of Binghamton University with a B.A. in Political Science and Sociology, Wright later earned a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) degree with a concentration in Management and Operations from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY. Prior to assuming the role of University Director, Wright served as the first CUNY BMI University Associate Director for six years. As the Associate Director, he developed and implemented structured mentorship programs for nearly 3,000 students CUNY wide within the BMI projects and managed/provided technical assistance to approximately 100 administrators/faculty members throughout CUNY system running BMI projects. Before CUNY, Wright worked at the National Urban League as a Program Manager for the Urban Youth Empowerment Program (UYEP), a comprehensive workforce development model for disconnected and adjudicated youth between the ages of 18 -24. As a Program Manager, Wright managed several National Urban League affiliates across the nation that were operating UYEP. Additionally, he revised program policies/procedures to better serve participants' needs. Wright's other work experience includes monitoring the employment status of clients transitioning from public assistance to the workforce as a Site Supervisor at Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, and developing workshops/special events for low-wage workers as an AmeriCorps member. Wright is also a doctoral student at Rutgers University-Newark in the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA). His research interest includes the use performance information at educational institutions. In his spare time, Wright serves as a mentor to young people through Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc., an international service organization predicated on achievement and the uplifting of under-served low-income communities.

Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt

Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt is on the staff of The Greater Allen Cathedral A.M.E. Cathedral of New York. He provides vital leadership to youth, young adults and professionals in both the sacred and secular communities. He retired as vice president of The Fund for the City of New York after serving over two decades. Dr. Wyatt is founder of Strategic Destiny: Designing Futures Through Faith and Facts. Strategic Destiny collaborates with practitioners motivated by faith and secular practitioners motivated by evidence-based learning. He is an advisor and consultant to government, colleges, civic groups, cbo's, public and charter schools, foundations, and the broader faith community. Dr. Wyatt, is a sought after speaker in his role as youth development practitioner, mentor, role model and public theologian. He attended Howard University, Columbia Teachers College, The Ackerman Institute for Family Therapy, Columbia Institute for Nonprofit Management and NY Theological Seminary. Rev. Dr. Wyatt is a founding Board member of The Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy.

Dr. Michael Yazurlo

Michael Yazurlo, Ed.D. is Superintendent of the Yonkers Public Schools, the fourth largest district in New York State. Dr. Yazurlo was born in Yonkers and was a young student in the Yonkers Public Schools, where he also served as a teacher and administrator. He is the former Superintendent of Tuckahoe Union Free School District, where he served for 13 years, and an Associate Professor of Graduate Education at The College of Saint Rose and State University of New York at Stony Brook. Dr. Yazurlo began his career as a District science teacher, advancing to the position of assistant principal and later principal of PEARLS Hawthorne School and Roosevelt High School, where he led for seven years. A respected and beloved educator, Dr. Yazurlo was named Yonkers Public Schools Administrator of the Year in 1991. Dr. Yazurlo received a Bachelor of Science from New York Institute of Technology and both a Master of Science and Doctor of Education from Fordham University.

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Ms. Irma Zardoya

Irma Zardoya is the President & CEO of the NYC Leadership Academy, a national organization focused on the development of quality school leadership programs. These efforts include: strategic consulting in the development of leadership programs, the development of aspiring principal preparation pipelines, principal mentor development, principal coach development, and principal supervisor training. Prior to the Leadership Academy, Irma had an extensive and successful career as a NYC educator and school leader, having served as teacher, principal, Regional Superintendent (Region One) and District Superintendent (District 10). Under her leadership, Region One was recognized for building an effective leadership continuum from teacher to superintendent, and for the many professional development opportunities and supports it offered teachers and administrators. During her tenure, unsuccessful large middle and high schools were converted to smaller more successful schools. Ms. Zardoya led the citywide implementation of the collaborative inquiry teacher team work in NYC which helped teachers and administrators look at student assessment data and other student work in an effort to improve instruction and increase student learning. Throughout her career, Ms. Zardoya has worked with large populations of ELL students and implemented many effective practices to address their special needs. Most recently, she was appointed to Governor Cuomo's New NY Education Reform Commission, and is currently a participant in the US Department of Education's initiative, "Our Students, Our Leaders: Increasing the Diversity of Education Leadership."