



**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

**SUBJECT:** Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee Workforce Focus Group Update

**DATE:** December 4, 2019

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### SUMMARY

#### Issue for Discussion

Update on the work of the Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee Workforce Focus Group's recommendations to improve teacher and leader preparation programs.

#### Reason(s) for Consideration

For information.

#### Background Information

In July 2017, the New York State Board of Regents established the Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee (ECBRC) comprised of more than 60 State and national early childhood experts. The overarching vision of the ECBRC has been to transform the *Birth to Age 8/Grade 3* early care and education system in the State of New York to one where ALL children thrive from birth, flourish in preschool, enter the school-age program on a trajectory of success, and are academically proficient in third grade by growing up healthy and having opportunities for high-quality early learning experiences that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

The [ECBRC's September 2018 Report of Final Recommendations](#) provides a set of thoughtful researched-based recommendations aligned with the Board of Regents' Birth to Age 8/Grade 3 vision articulated in the 2005 [Regents Policy on Early Education](#)

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<sup>1</sup> [NYS Board of Regents Early Childhood Workgroup's Blue Ribbon Committee's 2018 Report of Final Recommendations, p. 5.](#)

[for Student Achievement in a Global Community](#), that collectively demonstrate a comprehensive strategy to ensure our youngest New Yorkers have entered the school-age program on a trajectory of success in school and in life. All recommendations consider culture, race, ethnicity, language, citizenship status, and socioeconomic status of children and families.

In September 2019, with support from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), the ECBRC formed a focus group of approximately 25 members with expertise and experience in elevating New York State's early childhood workforce. To date, the ECBRC Focus Group: Strengthening Early Childhood Teachers and Leaders, has convened on three occasions:

- September 27, 2019 – WebEx
- October 17, 2019 – Lehman College, CUNY
- October 29, 2019 – United Way of New York City
  - The Co-chairs and New York State Education Department (Department) staff met with ECBRC members who could not attend the in-person meeting on October 17
- November 5, 2019 – New York State Education Department, Albany.

### **Operationalizing ECBRC's Workforce Recommendations**

Priority 4 Recommendations 8-13 of ECBRC's 2018 Report of Final Recommendations advocated that the Department develop cross-system collaborations to create incentives and pathways, starting from high school through postgraduate study, that would effectively recruit, prepare, support, and retain high-quality racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse New York State-certified teachers and leaders in all educational settings, ranging from infant and toddler early childhood education programs to high school.

The charge of the 2019 ECBRC Focus Group: Strengthening Early Childhood Teachers and Leaders, has been to *operationalize* ECBRC's associated 2018 workforce recommendations by developing the framework for the creation of innovative best practices and collaborative initiatives that would result in NYS-certified Birth to Age 8/Grade 3 teachers and Birth to Age 21/Grade 12 leaders who have linguistic competence, know their children and how they learn and develop, and demonstrate developmentally and culturally appropriate practices.

### **Proposed Birth to Grade 3 Teacher Preparation Collaborative (B3TPC) and Birth to Grade 12 Leader Preparation Advanced Certification in Early Learning (B12LPAC) Teacher and Leader Preparation Program Models**

#### **Justification**

Early childhood education is an integral component of child well-being. Viewed through the lens of the whole child as part of a family and community, New York State's diverse young learners have the right to an education that is based on the most current

Birth to Age 8 brain science and research, supports the comprehensive well-being of children and families, and is provided by exceptionally prepared high quality teachers and leaders who reflect the communities, cultures, and languages of the children and families they serve.

As the “[NYSED Educator Diversity](#)” presentation conveyed at the November 5, 2019 Board of Regents meeting, the diversity of New York State’s students continues to be significantly disproportionate to that of their teachers and leaders. Research confirms that being educated by racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse teachers and leaders benefits all students. There is a critical need to effectively remedy this lack of diversity across the State. However, as is the case across the nation, diverse teachers and leaders are in high demand, but short supply.<sup>2</sup> Significant supports are needed to overcome the financial and institutional barriers that have historically deterred all candidates, especially diverse candidates, from considering and/or remaining in the education profession. The most prohibitive barriers have been expensive, yet inadequate, teacher and leader preparation programs.<sup>3</sup>

## Objectives

The ECBRC’s proposed B3TPC and B12LPAC would be model programs based upon research-based practices and policies that have demonstrated success in preparing and retaining diverse teachers and leaders across the nation.<sup>4</sup> The multifaceted and collaborative structure of the proposed B3TPC and B12LPAC model programs would allow for New York State’s historically underrepresented and underserved teachers and leaders to equitably access high-quality, clinically-rich, competency-based preparation programs leading to candidates’ long-term careers in the education profession. The proposed B3TPC and B12LPAC model programs would provide innovative teacher and leader preparation that:

- Alleviates candidates’ financial and scheduling burdens by subsidizing costs toward achieving NYS certification and advanced certification, offsetting course requirements by awarding advanced credit for demonstrated competencies, qualifications, and experience, and providing flexibility in scheduling and logistics for in-person and online coursework.<sup>5</sup>
- Collaborates between institutions of higher education, school districts (including their families), early childhood education providers (including those serving infants and toddlers), community-based organizations (including those serving immigrant children and families), and health/mental health systems.

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<sup>2</sup> Partelow, Lissette, et al. [America Needs More Teachers of Color and a More Selective Teaching Profession](#). Washington, DC. *Center for American Progress*, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Warner, Saroja, et al. [A Vision and Guidance for a Diverse and Learner-Ready Teacher Workforce](#). Washington, DC: *Council of Chief State School Officers*, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Carver-Thomas, D. [Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color](#). Palo Alto, CA: *Learning Policy Institute*, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Gillispie, Carrie. [Young Learners, Missed Opportunities: Ensuring That Black and Latino Children Have Access to High-Quality State-Funded Preschool](#). Washington, DC. *The Education Trust*, 2019.

- Ensures experience serving children of all age and grade levels of diverse abilities, cultures, and languages while acquiring the child development knowledge, skills, and experience to understand, implement, and support whole child teaching practices, strategies, and learning opportunities that facilitate the progression of diverse learners along the continuum of mental and physical health and wellness, as they would be:
  - Research-based, with an emphasis on current Birth to Age 3 brain science, and its impact on Birth to Age 21 principles of child development, instructional practices, and policies,
  - Developmentally appropriate, such as play-based for young learners,
  - Trauma-informed, responsive to toxic stress, adverse childhood experiences, and aware of implicit bias, and
  - Responsive to and sustaining of the diversity of children’s races, cultures, languages, experiences, and abilities, and engaging to their families and communities by being designed to develop cognitive, English language, home language, social-emotional, and physical skills.
  
- Models transformational professional learning for current teachers and leaders.
  
- Leads to enhanced teacher and leader NYS certifications:
  - For B3TPC candidates, multiple NYS teacher certifications expanded to include Grade 3 (Currently Birth to Grade 2):
    - Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3),
    - Childhood Education (Grades 1-6)
    - Students with Disabilities (Birth to Grade 3),
    - English to Speakers of Other Languages (All Grades), and/or
    - Bilingual Education Extension (Birth to Grade 3)
  
  - For B12LPAC candidates, School Building Leader or School District Leader NYS advanced certification acknowledging the successful completion of the enhanced coursework and experiences of the B12LPAC leader preparation program.
  
- Facilitates final steps toward NYS certification, employment search and placement, and mentoring during the first year of employment.

**Related Regents Items**

December 2017: [Board of Regents Early Childhood Workgroup’s Blue Ribbon Committee Full Board Presentation of Budget Recommendations](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/Early%20Childhood_BRCRecsCVR_%20FINAL12_7_2017.pdf)  
 (https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/Early%20Childhood\_BRCRecsCVR\_%20FINAL12\_7\_2017.pdf)

September 2018: [Full Board Presentation on New York State Board of Regents Early Childhood Workgroup's Blue Ribbon Committee Report on Final Recommendations](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/earlylearning/documents/ECBRCFinalReport2018.pdf)  
(<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/earlylearning/documents/ECBRCFinalReport2018.pdf>)

November 2019: – [Educator Diversity Report](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1119hed2.pdf)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1119hed2.pdf>)

### **Next Steps**

Department staff will continue to work with ECBRC's Workforce Focus Group to move forward its remaining recommendations to transform the Early Childhood Education workforce. For example, for in-service teachers and leaders currently serving Birth to Age 8/Grade 3 young learners, ECBRC recommends revising NYSED's Office of Teaching Initiatives' Continuing Teacher and Leader Education requirements to mandate a certain number of hours each year specific to NYSED-developed Birth to Age 8/Grade 3 topics and materials, including, but not limited to:

- Infant/Toddler development,
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice, including play-based learning,
- Special Education and Education for Emergent Multilingual learners,
- Holistic and developmentally appropriate Early Literacy instruction, and
- Culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy.