



Manhattanville COLLEGE

School of Education

Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

A Research Design Prospectus for the Regents' Diploma Project

DRAFT for Discussion

Purpose

This prospectus describes a mixed methods research design that will focus on research questions generated by the Board of Regents (hereinafter referred to as the Diploma Project). The following questions are intended to gather data to inform policy making that addresses these issues.

1. Do current NYS high school graduation requirements develop in all students: a) the capacity to solve complex problems; b) proficiency with critical thinking skills; and, c) an appreciation for creativity?*
2. Given the expectations delineated in the above question, is there a gap in the quality of the curriculum and pedagogy offered to all students within public high schools and across public school districts in the State of New York?
3. If such a gap in quality exists, is there also an attendant gap in opportunity available to students within public high schools and across public school districts in the State of New York?

Research Design

In order to collect data that will inform policy makers on issues relative to these three questions, a mixed methods research design will provide the Regents with defensible data upon which they may structure policy discussions. The proposed mixed methods study consists of the three separate, but inter-connected, data collection methods: 1) a state-wide quantitative survey of stakeholders involved in implementing the current Regents high school graduation requirements; 2) a quantitative analysis of student performance on the Regents examinations required for graduation between 2013 and 2018; and, 3) a qualitative multi-case study of learning in public high schools.

The quantitative survey. The survey would be sent to all public high school principals, school superintendents, high school guidance counselors; school board presidents; community college admissions directors; four year college admissions directors; post-secondary technical

school admissions directors; BOCES district superintendents; and presidents of local chambers of commerce. The final decision about the survey recipients will be made by the Regents. This component of the study will likely have a cost associated with it.

The statistical analysis of Regents examination results from 2013 to 2018. It is recommended that the Commissioner of Education task the Department of Education to conduct this aspect of the research project in order to determine variances in student performance across school districts in the state. A set of research questions and hypotheses yet to be developed would drive this statistical analysis.

The qualitative multiple case studies. A faculty member in The Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at Manhattanville College has committed to conducting four case studies of a range of comprehensive public high schools from among the following counties in New York: Dutchess; Orange; Putnam; Rockland; and Westchester. These case studies will be conducted by Manhattanville doctoral students (trained in qualitative research methodology) at no cost to the Regents.

The qualitative component of the study will be enriched if other schools of education doctoral programs from across the state develop and implement similarly designed case studies in their regions.

Deliverables

On or before January 15, 2020 the results of the research project will be evidence by: 1) written research report of the outcomes of the multi-case study; 2) a written report of the quantitative survey results; 3) a written report integrating the results of both the quantitative and qualitative research data; and, 4) a written report by NYSED of the analysis of 2013-2018 Regents examination student score reports.

Note: This research prospectus was developed by Professor Robert Monson of Manhattanville College.

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* Source: Adapted from the *Future of Jobs Report* (2018), World Economic Forum; Geneva, Switzerland