



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

New York State Board of Regents Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group

September 13, 2021



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative Rationale

Our Why

The NYS Board of Regents believes that every student, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, language spoken, socio-economic status, faith, or place of residence, has the right to a rich, supportive, and engaging educational experience.

- All students must graduate from high school with academic and career options.
- This requires educational opportunities that challenge students to develop and sustain the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to fulfill their responsibilities in life and work.
- Achieving this goal requires equity in the allocation of the resources and supports necessary for development and delivery of high-quality, culturally affirming education.

New York State is one of the most diverse states in the nation and the Board of Regents has long held a commitment to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- It is the policy of the Board of Regents that all NYS education programs, practices, instructional materials, and learning environments are culturally responsive, of high quality, value the inherent strengths of our diversity and advance equity and inclusion.

Our Sense of Urgency

The convergence of long-standing social, cultural, and economic inequities, with the COVID-19 pandemic, and its well documented, disproportionate impact on various communities, brings urgency to our work:

- It has further exposed the deep-rooted disparities and the enduring legacy of barriers to equality faced by so many of our students.
- It has laid bare the moral and economic imperative to remove inequities that stand in the way of success for whole segments of New York's student population.

The NYS Board of Regents expects all school districts to develop and implement strategies, policies and practices that will permanently remove the barriers to student academic achievement, improved school outcomes and student wellbeing that are associated with ethnicity, race, faith, family structure, socio-economic status, sexual orientation / gender identification, ability and mental health.

Our What

Every New York school district will develop and adopt a diversity, equity, and inclusion education policy. These policies will address the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access to educational opportunity in the school community.

- The goal of these locally developed policies is to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.
- These policies will support academic achievement and the adoption of student-centered learning structures and pedagogical practices.
- They will spur innovation in the delivery of educational opportunity for all and build confidence, trust, respect, caring, and relationship-building throughout the school community.

Our Expectations

It is the expectation of the NYS Board of Regents that the Department, schools, and districts will implement DEI policies and practices with urgency and fidelity.

- The NYS Board and Department will create a Workgroup on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and all NYS school districts / superintendents will set up district-based DEI Committees.
- All DEI policies will, at a minimum, address how the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion will be advanced through the following: organizational governance, teaching and learning, culturally responsive and sustaining practices, workforce recruitment and retention, family and community engagement, the value of diverse schools as a source of learning opportunities, strategies that counter the “Single Story Narrative”, creation of civic engagement opportunities for students, student support and wellness, and the role of racism and bigotry in the American story.

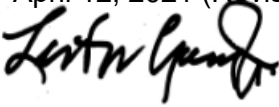


TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr.

SUBJECT: The NYS Board of Regents Framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New York's Schools: A Call to Action - DRAFT

DATE: April 12, 2021 (Revised)

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

The Board of Regents will discuss a framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for New York State Schools which will serve as the basis for adopting a policy statement. It is important for the Board of Regents to establish and communicate to all New Yorkers its beliefs and expectations for all students and all entities under the University of the State of New York umbrella – especially at pivotal moments in history. The nation is at such a moment now. With this framework, the Board is ready to address the long history of racism and bigotry, and the corrosive impact they have had on every facet of American life.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For discussion.

Proposed Handling

The framework will come before the Full Board for discussion at the April 2021 meeting. It is anticipated that a policy statement will come to the Full Board in May 2021 for adoption.

Related Regent's Items

N/A

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents use the framework to develop a policy statement that will advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in New York's schools.

Timetable for Implementation

It is anticipated that a policy statement will be adopted at the May 2021 Board meeting.

The NYS Board of Regents Framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New York's Schools: A Call to Action - DRAFT

April 2021



The NYS Board of Regents Framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New York’s Schools: A Call to Action

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1 **Introduction**
2

3 The New York State Constitution authorizes the Board of Regents to oversee the
4 general supervision of all educational activities within the State. The Regents exercise
5 their authority in various ways, including by promulgating rules and regulations,
6 adopting student learning standards, establishing academic and graduation
7 requirements, and providing guidance and best practices to the field. The Board may
8 also exercise its authority by adopting policy positions on issues of significant
9 educational and societal importance.

10
11 It is important for the Board of Regents to establish and communicate to all New
12 Yorkers its beliefs and expectations for all students – especially at pivotal moments in
13 history. The nation is at such a moment now. Finally, we appear ready to address our
14 long history of racism and bigotry, and the corrosive impact they have had on every
15 facet of American life.

16
17 A confluence of events has brought us to this point of reckoning, including:
18

- 19 • The senseless, brutal killing of Black and Brown men and women at the hands of
20 law enforcement – and the ensuing demands for real and enduring racial justice
21 in the face of this inhumanity;
- 22 • A dangerous spike in violence aimed at Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders –
23 fueled in part by lies that attempt to link the Asian community with the creation
24 and spread of the Coronavirus;
- 25 • A renewed wave of discrimination and hateful rhetoric directed at those thought to
26 be different or somehow “not quite” American, including (but not limited to) Jewish
27 Americans, Muslim Americans, LGBTQ¹ individuals, individuals with disabilities,
28 immigrants and refugees, especially those arriving at the southern border.
- 29 • The terrible toll that COVID-19 has had on all our lives, communities, and school
30 systems. The disproportionate impact of this pandemic has surfaced and further
31 exacerbated long-standing educational inequities, predominantly impacting
32 Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and poor student populations and students with
33 disabilities. Additionally, school closures and the resulting learning loss for our
34 most marginalized students compound existing learning disparities, leading to the
35 potential for poor life outcomes and lingering long-term effects.

36
37 These national tragedies have combined to create a perfect storm – a storm that is
38 powerful enough to propel us beyond the systemic racism that has come to define
39 America’s institutions. This systemic racism pervades all aspects of our lives, including
40 policing, education, healthcare, employment, housing, access to capital, and in almost
41 every other conceivable realm. It limits our potential as individuals, as communities, and
42 as a nation. There is no single, isolated answer that will solve these pervasive
43 problems; rather, the approach must be holistic and inclusive – and the State Education

¹ This initialism stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning.

44 Department and New York's schools will be an integral part of the solution. The way we
45 educate new generations of students will shape our nation's course for years to come.
46

47 **The Danger of a Single Story**

48
49 Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warned of the dangers inherent in telling a
50 story from only one perspective. She explained that "the single story creates
51 stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they
52 are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."
53

54 When one story becomes the only story, it becomes the "definitive" story. But when that
55 happens in school, it cheats students of the opportunity to learn the entirety of the
56 nation's history. And it deprives many of them the chance to see themselves as part of
57 the American story.
58

59 How can students fully comprehend Westward Expansion without knowing what it was
60 like for Native Americans to be violently displaced from their homes and forced to walk
61 the Trail of Tears? How can they understand the full import of America's involvement in
62 World War II without hearing firsthand accounts of Japanese Americans who were
63 interned in concentration camps by their own government?
64

65 We must tell the stories of all those who have contributed to the development of this
66 country and all those who continue to make it the diverse and beautiful tapestry it is
67 today: those who are indigenous to the land; those who were taken from their African
68 homes and brought to America's shores in chains; those who journeyed here as part of
69 the great European migration of the 19th and 20th centuries; those who traveled from
70 Asia and India, the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Central and South America – and
71 those who today seek refuge from poverty, violence, and tyranny.
72

73 As Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson instructs, understanding another's
74 perspective does not happen easily; it requires hard work, particularly on the part of
75 those in the "dominant caste." Ms. Wilkerson writes:
76

77 Radical empathy, on the other hand, means putting in the
78 work to educate oneself and to listen with a humble heart to
79 understand another's experience from their perspective, not
80 as we imagine we would feel. Radical empathy is not about
81 you and what you think you would do in a situation you have
82 never been in and perhaps never will. It is the kindred
83 connection from a place of deep knowing that opens your
84 spirit to the pain of another as they perceive it.
85

86 The nation's founders laid the groundwork that established America as a democratic
87 republic. The founding ideals are democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity, and equality.
88 However, our history courses often fail to underscore our nation's long, often turbulent
89 struggle between the ideals of freedom and equality and, more recently, voting rights.

90 All students deserve to learn about America’s entire, unvarnished history – even when
91 that complete story casts an unflattering light on historical figures who have long been
92 revered.

93
94 Schools must create opportunities for all students to learn from multiple perspectives –
95 perspectives that are just as important and valid as the narrow point of view from which
96 history and other content areas have traditionally been taught. We must always be
97 vigilant to guard against the danger of a single story.

98

99 **Impact of Systemic Racism on New York’s Students**

100

101 Martin Luther King, Jr. famously reminded us that “the arc of the moral universe is long,
102 but it bends toward justice.” Over time, we *have* made substantial progress towards
103 fulfilling America’s creed, which declares that all people are created equal. In 2008, we
104 elected the first African American president; in 2020, we elected the first African
105 American and South Asian American woman vice president.

106

107 Yet, despite these and other historic milestones, true equality of opportunity is not
108 available to many Americans, in no small part because we have not yet found a way to
109 provide all students with an education that prepares them for success in school and in
110 life.

111

112 The statistics are as frightening as they are familiar:

113

- 114 • African American and Latinx students have proficiency rates that range from 16
115 to 23 percentage points lower than their white peers on New York State’s English
116 language arts and math assessments.²
- 117 • While 91 percent of the State’s white students graduate from high school on time,
118 only 78 percent of African American and 77 percent of Latinx students do so.³
- 119 • A [CDC report](#) found mortality rates associated with COVID-19 among American
120 Indian and Alaska Natives to be 1.8 times greater than among non-Hispanic
121 whites while cases among American Indian and Alaska Native persons was 3.5
122 times greater that among White persons.⁴
- 123 • The most underrepresented group receiving in-person instruction in New York
124 City is Asian American students, making up just under 12 percent of students in-
125 person while they represent 18 percent of students overall.⁵

² New York State Education Department, 2019, [State Education Department Releases Spring 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA & Math Assessment Results](http://www.nysed.gov/news/2019/state-education-department-releases-spring-2019-grades-3-8-ela-math-assessment-results), <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2019/state-education-department-releases-spring-2019-grades-3-8-ela-math-assessment-results>

³ New York State Education Department, 2021, [State Education Department Releases 2016 Cohort High School Graduation Rates](http://www.nysed.gov/news/2021/state-education-department-releases-2016-cohort-high-school-graduation-rates), <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2021/state-education-department-releases-2016-cohort-high-school-graduation-rates>

⁴ Arrazola J, Masiello MM, Joshi S, et al., 2020, “[COVID-19 Mortality Among American Indian and Alaska Native Persons — 14 States, January–June 2020](#),” *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020; 69:1853–1856. DOI, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6949a3>

⁵ Balingit, Moriah, Natanson, Hannah and Chen, Yutao, 2021, “[As schools reopen, Asian American students are missing from classrooms](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/asian-american-students-home-school-in-person-pandemic/2021/03/02/eb7056bc-7786-11eb-8115-9ad5e9c02117_story.html),” *The Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/asian-american-students-home-school-in-person-pandemic/2021/03/02/eb7056bc-7786-11eb-8115-9ad5e9c02117_story.html

126 The consequences of these disparities are devastating. For example:
127

- 128 • In 2019, 40 percent of white Americans held a bachelor’s degree, while only 26
129 percent of African Americans and 19 percent of Hispanic Americans did so, as
130 well.⁶
- 131 • While approximately eight percent of white Americans live in poverty, 18 percent
132 of Latinx and 21 percent of African Americans do.⁷
- 133 • Perhaps most troubling, “in 2018 African Americans represented 33 percent of
134 the sentenced prison population, nearly triple their 12 percent share of the U.S.
135 adult population. Whites accounted for 64 percent of adults but 30 percent of
136 prisoners. And while Hispanics represented 16 percent of the adult population,
137 they accounted for 23 percent of inmates.”⁸

138
139 There are individuals behind each of these data points. Some of them were provided
140 with the educational opportunities and supports they needed to thrive in school; many
141 were not. The data are a stark reminder of the difficult work that remains; they can and
142 should be used to expose the inequities that persist throughout the system.
143

144 The Department, and the schools and districts it oversees, must use data to establish
145 clear expectations for students and their families. They must set goals and targets that
146 are connected to academic attainment and growth. *The work we do must always focus*
147 *on outcomes – and the outcome that matters most in our education system is student*
148 *learning.*

149
150 However, merely reporting the numbers can cause us to focus on the symptoms of
151 structural, institutional, and systemic inequities, losing sight of what lies beneath the
152 surface, at the deeper policy level. For example, discussions of New York’s
153 “achievement gap” can be misinterpreted if we fail to account for the lack of student
154 opportunities to learn. As New York’s education policymakers, it is our responsibility to
155 go deeper than the numbers might initially reveal; we must also examine and address
156 the *root causes* of the persistent disparities that impact student and life outcomes. We
157 know that students who attend under-resourced schools do not achieve at the same
158 level as students who attend fully resourced schools. We must stop repeating the same
159 actions that have produced these results.
160

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, 2020, [U.S. Census Bureau Releases New Educational Attainment Data](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/educational-attainment.html),

<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/educational-attainment.html>

⁷ Stebbins, Samuel and Frohlich, Thomas C., 2019, “[The poverty rates for every group in the US: From age and sex to citizenship status](https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/11/06/united-states-poverty-rate-for-every-group/40546247/),” *USA Today*, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/11/06/united-states-poverty-rate-for-every-group/40546247/>

⁸ Gramlich, John, 2019, “[The Gap Between the Number of Blacks and Whites in Prison is Shrinking](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/30/shrinking-gap-between-number-of-blacks-and-whites-in-prison/),” The Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/30/shrinking-gap-between-number-of-blacks-and-whites-in-prison/>

161 **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

162

163 *The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to*
164 *understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved*
165 *unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see*
166 *also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has*
167 *created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children*
168 *thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to*
169 *prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, **but***
170 ***also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways***
171 ***of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of***
172 ***educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.***⁹

173

174 **Definitions**

175

176 The act of defining is often the direct attempt to make something definite, distinct, or
177 clear. Our purpose is not to restrict, but to provide clarity to the concepts of diversity,
178 equity, and inclusion. These definitions are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they
179 are meant to be foundational. The definitions listed below can be credited to the
180 University of California, Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity and the
181 University of Houston’s Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

182 **Diversity:** *Includes but is not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion,*
183 *socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender,*
184 *gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic*
185 *information, and learning styles.*

186 When thinking about diversity, it is important to note that the terminology has broadened
187 over time. For example, ten years ago, diversity was synonymous with racial and ethnic
188 minorities. Today, people we once referred to as “minorities” are now considered part of
189 the global majority. Also, aspects such as socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual
190 orientation, and disability may be considered when referring to diverse populations. With
191 this broadened definition, inclusivity of someone’s varied identities are considered.

192 **Equity:** *The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all*
193 *while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation*
194 *of all groups.*

195 The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically under-served and under-
196 represented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is
197 needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.

198 At its core, equity requires that we *create the opportunity* for all students to succeed and
199 thrive in school no matter who they are, where they live, where they go to school, or
200 where they come from.

⁹ New York State Education Department, 2018, [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf).
<http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf>

201 **Inclusion:** *Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into*
202 *processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power and*
203 *ensures equal access to opportunities and resources.*

204 **Through this Framework, the Board of Regents asserts its expectation that all**
205 **school districts will develop policies that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion**
206 **– and that they will implement such policies with fidelity and urgency.**

207 **Role of the Board of Regents and NYS Education Department**

208
209
210 The benefits that derive from creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments
211 are certainly not limited to the school setting. It is difficult to imagine any institution that
212 would not benefit from greater diversity, equity, and inclusiveness – and that includes
213 the New York State Education Department. The Department has, of course, always
214 adhered strictly to all laws and State policies regarding fairness in the workplace. But
215 we must do more, for the good of the Department and its employees and as a model for
216 schools to emulate. We must lead by example.

217
218 The Board of Regents will establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup of the
219 Board of Regents. The Workgroup will be representative of SED and the University of the
220 State of New York (USNY) and will provide policy direction and recommendations to
221 the full board on matters related to diversity, equity, and inclusion within SED and
222 USNY.

223
224 NYSED’s stated mission is “to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the
225 people in New York.” In most states, the Education Department deals only with P-12
226 education. But in New York, we have a comprehensive system –USNY– to help us
227 achieve this ambitious mission.

228 **The Role of School Districts**

229
230
231 Districts have a critical role in elevating the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion;
232 setting policies; establishing data targets; reviewing and modifying their curricula; and
233 more.¹⁰

234
235 We recognize that much of this work is *already* happening in districts across the State.
236 District and school leaders, teachers, staff, students, and parents are working to create
237 school communities that are more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive than ever
238 before. Many of New York’s education stakeholders and their organizations have elevated
239 this issue to the very top of their agendas. Their efforts must be recognized and
240 applauded.

¹⁰ It is important to remember that in New York State, curricula are adopted locally; they are *not* mandated by the State.

241 At the same time, however, some districts have not yet made diversity, equity, and
242 inclusion a priority in their schools. Others may simply be looking for the State to
243 provide the guidance and tools they need to do so.

244

245 **Suggested Elements of a District’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy**

246

247 This must be a comprehensive approach, taking into account the entirety of the
248 schooling process, including:

249

250 • **Governance:** Establishing a district Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
251 representative of all stakeholders, including students.

252

253 • **Teaching and learning:** Addressing the need for inclusive and culturally
254 responsive teaching and learning, including but not limited to:

255

256 ○ curricula in all content areas;

257 ○ books and instructional materials;

258 ○ pedagogical practices and professional development;

259 ○ classroom grouping policies and practices;

260 ○ student support systems for all developmental pathways;

261 ○ full and equitable opportunities to learn for all students; and

262 ○ multiple assessment measures.

263

264 As part of this work, districts may consider:

265

266 ○ Specifically acknowledging the role that racism and bigotry have played, and
267 continue to play, in the American story.

268 ○ Adopting a Culturally Responsive Sustaining (CR-S) Framework that
269 specifically embeds the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating
270 student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; fosters
271 positive academic outcomes; develops students’ abilities to connect across
272 lines of difference; elevates historically marginalized voices; empowers
273 students as agents of social change; and contributes to individual student
274 engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of
275 critical thinking.

276

277 NYSED's own CR-S framework is grounded in four principles:
278

- 279 1. Welcoming and Affirming Environment
- 280 2. High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction
- 281 3. Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment
- 282 4. Ongoing Professional Learning

283
284 ○ Ensuring coherent opportunities for students to actively participate in
285 experiences that prepare them for a lifetime of civic engagement and social
286 justice activism, including, for example, completing capstone projects. The
287 [materials developed by NYSED's Civic Readiness Task Force](#) provide a
288 helpful foundation for this work.
289

- 290 ● **Family and community engagement:** Ensuring family and community
291 engagement practices are based on mutual trust, confidence and respect.
292
- 293 ● **Workforce Diversity:** Practices and policies for the recruitment and retention of
294 a diverse workforce in all areas and levels. A [recent report](#) released by the Albert
295 Shanker Institute goes so far as to call teacher diversity a civil right for students.
296 This report argues that exposing students to a diverse range of teachers and
297 school leaders reduces stereotypes and prepares students for an increasingly
298 global society. A [2019 NYSED report](#) is a helpful resource on this topic as well.
299
- 300 ● **Diverse schools and learning opportunities:** Take creative steps to enhance
301 the level of socioeconomic and racial diversity within district schools (even if the
302 district's student population is relatively homogeneous). Ensure coursework,
303 programs, and activities are accessible to all students, regardless of their
304 disability status, native language, income level, or any other basis.
305

306 A 2019 [compilation of data and research](#) by The Century Foundation details
307 some of the ways that racial and socioeconomic integration benefits students and
308 the wider community, including:
309

- 310 ○ Academic and Cognitive Benefits
311 *On average, students in socioeconomically and racially diverse*
312 *schools – regardless of a student's own economic status – have*
313 *stronger academic outcomes than students in schools with*
314 *concentrated poverty.*
- 315
- 316 ○ Civic and Social-Emotional Benefits
317 *Racially and socioeconomically diverse schools offer students*
318 *important social-emotional benefits by exposing them to peers of*
319 *different backgrounds. The increased tolerance and cross-cultural*
320 *dialogue that result from these interactions is beneficial for civil society.*
321

322 ○ Economic Benefits
323 *Providing more students with integrated school environments is a cost-*
324 *effective strategy for boosting student achievement and preparing*
325 *students for work in a diverse global economy.*
326

327 ● **Student supports, discipline, and wellness:** Districts should consider:
328

- 329 ○ Programs and practices that enhance all students’ self-identity, self-
330 confidence and self-esteem.
- 331 ○ Implementing non-discriminatory discipline policies and practices.
- 332 ○ Focusing on the well-being of the “whole child” by always considering
333 and addressing the full range of student developmental pathways.

334
335 **Conclusion**

336
337 We are at an inflection point in the nation’s history. With great urgency, we must move
338 beyond the rhetoric of a commitment to educational equity and use this moment of
339 societal unrest to reset and reimagine our system of education. We are morally
340 obligated to seize this moment and redefine what is possible for all of New York’s
341 students.

342
343 New York’s collective response requires a recommitment to public education and a
344 significant investment in teaching and learning to ensure that every neighborhood
345 school is a place we would want our own children to attend.

346
347 The approach we take must always include perspectives that support and build the self-
348 esteem and identity of all children, especially those who have been historically
349 marginalized in school and in society.

350
351 We must create an ecosystem of success built upon a foundation of diversity, equity,
352 inclusion, access, opportunity, innovation, trust, respect, caring, relationship-building,
353 and so much more.

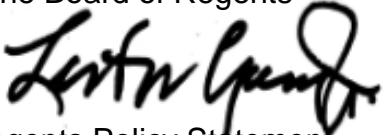
354
355 **This is a call to action.**

356
357 Together, we will interrupt the practices that for too long have harmed New York’s
358 vulnerable, marginalized students.

359
360 Together, we will create environments for learning that reduce the pernicious
361 predictability of who will succeed and who will fail.

362
363 Together, we will lift up and support *all* of New York’s students.



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr. 
SUBJECT: The New York State Board of Regents Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in New York State Schools

DATE: May 6, 2021

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Action

At the Board of Regents meeting in April 2021, the Board discussed a framework on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for New York State Schools which served as the basis for adopting a policy statement. At the May 2021 meeting of the Board, they will discuss and act on the proposed policy statement. The policy of the NYS Board of Regents is to encourage and support efforts at the State and local level to create within every school an ecosystem of success that is built upon a foundation of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, opportunity, innovation, confidence, trust, respect, caring, and relationship-building. All students must feel that they are welcome, they belong, and they are supported in every school.

The Board of Regents recognizes that much of this work is already happening in districts all across the State. School and district leaders, teachers, staff, students, and parents are working to create school communities that are more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive than ever before. Many of New York's education stakeholders and their organizations have prioritized this issue, and their efforts must be recognized and applauded. But more work remains, and the Board of Regents and the State Education Department are committed to supporting schools and districts in their efforts to lift up all students.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For action.

Proposed Handling

The policy statement will come before the Full Board for decision at the May 2021 meeting.

Related Regent's Items

April 2021: [The NYS Board of Regents Framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New York's Schools: A Call to Action - DRAFT](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/421brd1.pdf)
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/421brd1.pdf>)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve the policy statement that will advance diversity, equity and inclusion in New York schools.

VOTED, that The New York State Board of Regents Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in New York Schools be approved.

Timetable for Implementation

Effective May 10, 2021.

The New York State Board of Regents Policy on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

May 2021



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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The New York State Board of Regents Policy Statement on **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in New York State Schools**

The New York State Constitution authorizes the Board of Regents to oversee the general supervision of all educational activities within the State. The Regents exercise their authority in various ways, including by promulgating rules and regulations, adopting student learning standards, establishing academic and graduation requirements, and providing guidance and best practices to the field to ensure academic excellence for all students. The Board may also exercise its authority by adopting policy positions on significant educational and social issues. It is important for the Board of Regents to establish and communicate to all New Yorkers its beliefs and expectations for all schools and students – especially at those pivotal moments in history that we are currently experiencing.

A growing body of research finds that *all* students benefit when their schools implement strong Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policies and practices – including academic, cognitive, civic, social-emotional, and economic benefits. Strong DEI policies, in partnership with parents and families, empower students from all backgrounds to visualize successful futures for themselves and provide them with a sense of belonging and self-worth. These benefits can lead to improved student achievement, which in turn can lead to better outcomes in other areas of their lives, including work and civic engagement. This is true regardless of a school’s geographic location or the demographic composition of its students and faculty.

We recognize that the decision to adopt a DEI policy, as well as the contents of such a policy, are ultimately matters of local discretion. However, the Regents believe strongly that there is a moral and an economic imperative to remove the inequities that stand in the way of success for whole segments of New York’s student population. *Accordingly, the Board expects that all school districts and institutions of higher education will develop and implement policies and practices that advance diversity, equity and inclusion – and that they will implement such policies and practices with fidelity and urgency.*

It shall therefore be the policy of the NYS Board of Regents to encourage and support efforts at the State and local level to create within every school an ecosystem of success that is built upon a foundation of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, opportunity, innovation, confidence, trust, respect, caring, and relationship-building. All students must feel that they are welcome, they belong, and they are supported in every school.

The Board of Regents believes that effective DEI policies must consider the entirety of the schooling process and expects districts to include the following elements in their policies:

- **Governance:** Establish a district Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee that is representative of all stakeholders, including students.

- **Teaching and Learning:** Address the need for *inclusive and culturally responsive teaching and learning*, including but not limited to curricula in all content areas; books and instructional materials; pedagogical practices and professional development; classroom grouping policies and practices; student support systems for all developmental pathways; full and equitable opportunities to learn for all students; and multiple assessment measures.

As part of this work, districts should consider:

- Specifically *acknowledging the role that racism and bigotry have played, and continue to play, in the American story.*
 - Adopting a [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining \(CR-S\) Framework](#) that specifically embeds the ideals of diversity, equity and inclusion by creating student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.
 - Actively avoiding the “danger of the single story.” When one story is the only story, it becomes the definitive story; when that happens in school, students are deprived of the opportunity of seeing themselves as part of the American story. This is not about eliminating or minimizing any of America’s history; it is simply about ensuring that the contributions of *all groups* are included in the telling of the American story.
 - Ensuring coherent opportunities for students to actively participate in experiences that prepare them for a lifetime of civic engagement and contributions to social justice, including, for example, completing projects that enable students to apply the learning they have acquired within and across subject areas.
- **Family and Community Engagement:** Ensure that family and community engagement practices are based on mutual trust, confidence, and respect. Encourage participation in community building conversations, reducing language barriers, and fostering inclusivity through translated communications from our schools.
 - **Workforce Diversity:** Recruit and retain a diverse workforce in all areas and at all levels, thereby reducing stereotypes and preparing students for an increasingly global society.

- **Diverse Schools and Learning Opportunities:** Districts should –
 - Take creative steps to enhance the level of socioeconomic and racial diversity within district schools (even if the district’s student population is relatively homogeneous).
 - Examine the use of language which prevents some students from accessing and fully participating in the district’s classes, programs, and offerings. Language matters, and it is therefore critical that districts eliminate the use of terms and phrases that perpetuate negative stereotypes and minimize student opportunities.
 - Ensure that coursework, programs, and activities are accessible to all students, regardless of their disability status, native language, income level, or any other basis.

- **Student Supports, Discipline, and Wellness:** Districts should –
 - Employ programs and practices that enhance *all* students’ self-identity, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
 - Implement non-discriminatory discipline policies and practices.
 - Focus on the well-being of the “whole child” by always considering and addressing the full range of student developmental pathways.

The Board of Regents acknowledges that much of this work is already happening in districts all across the State. School and district leaders, teachers, staff, students, and parents are working to create school communities that are more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive than ever before. Many of New York’s education stakeholders and their organizations have prioritized this issue, and their efforts must be recognized and applauded. But more work remains, and the Board of Regents and the State Education Department are committed to supporting schools and districts in their efforts to lift up all students.

NYS Board of Regents Initiative on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

We will create and sustain safe, nurturing and engaging learning environments for **ALL** students.

*"Diversity is not our problem. It is our promise."
-- Elijah Cummings*

WELCOMED AND SUPPORTED

- Diversity means a wide range of human qualities and attributes
- Diversity is an educational and social asset for ALL
- Respecting diversity helps us meet the physical, social and emotional needs of ALL

*"Always remember that you are absolutely unique.
Just like everyone else."
-- Margaret Mead*

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED

- Equity means fair treatment and opportunity for ALL
- Equity is fair access to programs, classes and needed supports
- Equity prepares ALL students to be actively engaged citizens

*"There is only one way to see things, until someone shows us
how to look at them with different eyes."
-- Pablo Picasso*

CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND EXPERIENCES

- Inclusion means recognizing, understanding and accepting ALL
- Inclusion teaches and models respect for ALL
- Inclusion makes ALL feel safe, supported and valued

*"Diversity is being invited to the dance. Inclusion is being asked to dance.
Equity is allowing you to choose the music." -- Cynthia Olmedo*



Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework



CULTURALLY

The CR-S framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic

RESPONSIVE-

and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect

SUSTAINING

across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.

EDUCATION



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NYSED would also like to acknowledge members of the Board of Regents-nominated Advisory Panel for their guidance and continued partnership on this initiative.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework is the collective insight of the various stakeholders we engaged with while creating this document from the ground up. We are grateful to the multitude of teachers, students, parents, administrators, community advocates, and higher education faculty who participated.

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Office of Accountability under the direction of Ira Schwartz
Office of Higher Education under the direction of John D'Agati
Office of Assessment under the direction of Steven Katz
Office of Adult Career & Continuing Education Services under the direction of Kevin Smith

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NYSED Advisory Panel: Zakiyah Ansari, Tracey Atkins, Jim Bostic, Barry Derfel, Arnold Dodge, Winsome Gregory, Gilleyan Hargrove, Stanley Harper, Eva Hassett, Ruth Holland Scott, Andrea Honigsfeld, Sonya Horsford, Brian Jones, Marina Marcou-O'Malley, Regent Nan Mead, Fatima Morrell, Roberto Padilla, Joe Rogers, Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Andrea Toussaint, Carmela Thompson, Regent Lester Young, Jr.

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COLLABORATIVE
MEMBERS

For more than a century, education providers throughout the United States have strived and struggled to meet the diverse needs of American children and families. A complex system of biases and

structural inequities is at play, deeply rooted in our country's history, culture, and institutions. This system of inequity — which routinely confers advantage and disadvantage based on linguistic background, gender, skin color, and other characteristics — must be clearly understood, directly challenged, and fundamentally transformed. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved without incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work (see also New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

In January 2018, the New York State Board of Regents directed the Office of P-12 Education and Higher Education to convene a panel of experts, engage with stakeholders, and develop from the ground up a framework for culturally responsive-sustaining education. The New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, under the leadership of Dr. David Kirkland, drafted a robust guidance document that served as a springboard for this initiative. The New York State Education Department presented this guidance document to students, teachers, parents, school and district leaders, higher education faculty, community advocates, and policymakers. The guidelines in this document represent the collective insight of this work.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices;



empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education stakeholders in developing and implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports and services to promote positive student outcomes.

Historically, education debates have been polarized, with difference sometimes being viewed as an individual deficit. The CR-S Framework marks our journey forward and begins the evolution toward leveraging difference as an asset. The framework is grounded in four principles^{*}:

- **Welcoming and Affirming Environment**
- **High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction**
- **Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment**
- **Ongoing Professional Learning**

Each principle is illustrated by a set of features rooted in elements of quality education that illustrate how CR-S might look in practice across a range of domains, from the State Education Department to the classroom. The framework represents an opportunity for stakeholders to continue to work together and plan for the unique needs of their communities.

The New York State Education Department recognizes much of this work is already happening across the state and looks forward to an even deeper understanding of culturally responsive-sustaining education in New York State schools, districts, and communities. This framework reflects the State's commitment to improving learning results for all students by creating well-developed, culturally responsive-sustaining, equitable systems of support for achieving dramatic gains in student outcomes.

^{*} The 4 principles that organize State Education Department's CR-S Framework were inspired by the 4 high leverage strategies that emerged from Buffalo Public School's work on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education.



The New York State guidelines for culturally responsive-sustaining education are grounded in a **VISION** of an education system that creates:

I. Students who experience academic success



Students are prepared for rigor and independent learning. Students understand themselves as contributing members of an academically-rigorous, intellectually-challenging school and classroom community. Students demonstrate an ability to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Students are self-motivated, setting and revising academic personal goals to drive their own learning and growth.

II. Students who are sociopolitically conscious and socioculturally responsive



Students acknowledge the limitations of their own perspectives. They have empathy for others while they appreciate and respect others' differences. They demonstrate cooperation and teamwork, using active listening and communication skills to resolve conflict. They use interpersonal skills to build and maintain strong relationships, including those along lines of difference, in their class and school communities.

All layers of the environment in which students learn (classroom, school, family, and community) affirm and value the various aspects of students' cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic background). Role models in the classroom, school, family, and community recognize student strengths and offer opportunities for students to grow and learn.

III. Students who have a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege.



Students bring a critical lens to the world as they study historical and contemporary conditions of inequity and learn from historically marginalized voices. Students learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and are empowered as agents of positive social change.



VISION

This vision is grounded in Gloria Ladson-Billings’ early work on culturally relevant teaching, specifically the three criteria for culturally relevant pedagogy she puts forth in Ladson-Billings (1995). The New York State Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework includes guidelines for students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty, and Education Department policymakers. For

guidelines to be effective, all stakeholders must work together, prioritize and implement systems and structures that facilitate the scale of culturally responsive-sustaining practices, and hold each other accountable to short- and long-term goals.

When stakeholders work together to implement culturally responsive-sustaining practices, educators will grow in their ability to be:

| SOCIOPOLITICALLY CONSCIOUS | SOCIOCULTURALLY RESPONSIVE |
|--|---|
| Demonstrate excellence by being inclusive-minded and asset-focused | Commit to understanding the role of culture in education as flexible, local, and global |
| Identify and critically examine both historical and contemporary power structures | Act as agents of social change to redress historical and contemporary oppression |
| Reflect, honor, value, and center various identity perspectives as assets in policies and practices (Sue, 2001) | Build alliances across difference to eradicate all forms of discrimination |
| Engage in critical conversations | Engage current and historical issues |
| Recognize that personal, cultural, and institutionalized discrimination creates and sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantage for others | Practice mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from one’s own |



New York State Education Department Definition

Culturally responsive-sustaining (CR-S) education is grounded in a cultural view of learning and human development in which multiple expressions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, ability) are recognized and regarded as assets for teaching and learning.

CR-S education explores the relationship between historical and contemporary conditions of inequality and ideas that shape access, participation, and outcomes for learners.

The goal of the CR-S framework is to help educators design and implement a student-centered learning environment that:

- **affirms racial and cultural identities and fosters positive academic outcomes**
- **develops students' abilities to connect across cultures**
- **empowers students as agents of social change**
- **contributes to an individual's**

engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.

To make this a reality, the Department, under the Board of Regents, has created a framework for CR-S practices. The framework is intended to be used by a variety of education stakeholders, including but not limited to students, teachers, school and district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department policymakers.

This definition was created by the NYSED Expert Committee: Alfredo Artiles, Jeff Duncan-Andrade, David Kirkland, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Joyce Moy, Django Paris, Carla Shedd-Guild, Amy Stuart-Wells, Mariana Souto-Manning, Zoila Morrell.

What is culture?

The New York State Education Department understands culture as the multiple components of one's identity, including but not limited to: race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability. Culture far transcends practices such as cuisines, art, music, and celebrations to also include ways of thinking, values, and forms of expression. These ways and forms are in constant flux, renegotiation, and evolution. Schools then become a meeting point for cultures, containing children and adults who bring with them multiple facets of their identity, along with unique experiences and perspectives.

From this perspective, learning is rooted in the lives and experiences of people and cultivated through activities that people find meaningful. When teaching is not rooted in students' lives, student learning suffers. Perhaps worst, biases take hold and deficit perspectives become normalized throughout our schools and classrooms, structuring entire systems that blame students for failure.

The school community is representative of many cultures, and therefore culture has consequences on how students experience schools. The framework is intentional about the relationship between culture and education, presenting a multi-tiered systems approach for cultural inclusion that broadens what ethnic groups, classes, sexualities, and abilities are privileged in the creation and maintenance of traditional education.

Research suggests that many students whose cultures are more closely aligned with the "cultural fabric" of schools experience praise and are viewed as more dedicated than those whose home cultures differ. Educators committed to understanding both the concept of culture and many different cultures can refocus their lens for viewing students' cultures not as "deficiencies to overcome" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87), but as assets who possess vibrant realities and rich reservoirs of knowledge. By making all cultures matter, our students' cultures can be positioned as strengths and as the foundation of empowering, rigorous, and innovative learning.

The CR-S framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.



Welcoming and Affirming Environment

- Collective responsibility to learn about student cultures and communities.
- Close relationships with Students & Families.
- Social-Emotional Learning Programs.
- Materials that represent and affirm student identities.



High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

- Student-Led Civic Engagement.
- Critical Examination of Power Structures.
- Project-Based Learning on Social Justice Issues.
- Student Leadership Opportunities.



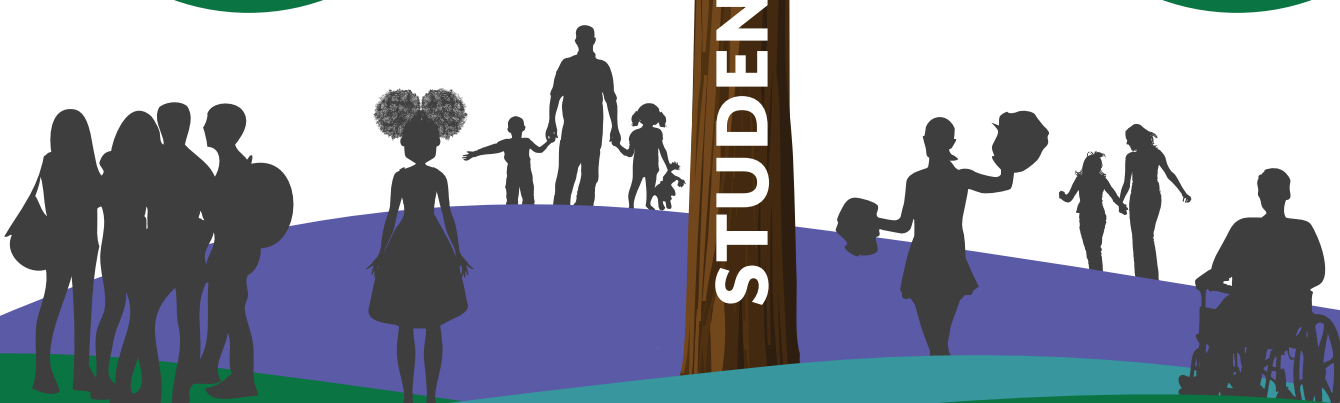
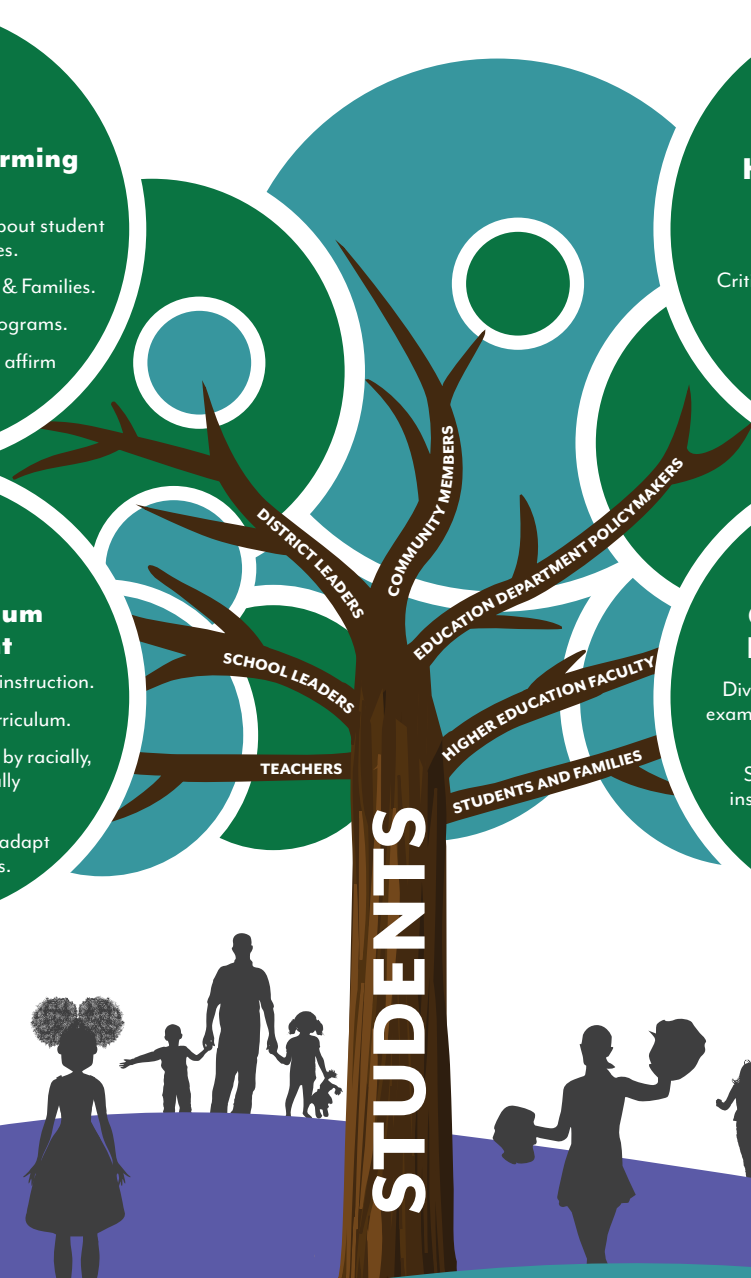
Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

- Current events incorporated into instruction.
- Students as co-designers of curriculum.
- Resources written and developed by racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse perspectives.
- Instructional strategies that adapt to diverse learning styles.



Ongoing Professional Learning and Support

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training, examining implicit bias and interrogation of beliefs and assumptions.
- Support in aligning curriculum and instruction to the histories, languages, and experiences of traditionally marginalized voices.



What is Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education?

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education draws on decades of research in asset-based pedagogies that recognize that cultural difference (including racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, sexuality and ability) should be treated as assets for teaching and learning. This approach to education counters dominant narratives about difference as deficits or as characteristics of students and families that should be remediated or assimilated. Using this approach to education, all families are believed to have cultural capital, or knowledge, abilities, and networks, that can, and should, be leveraged in classrooms. While schooling has traditionally privileged the capital of families from dominant backgrounds, CR-S positions educators to acknowledge, value, and leverage the wealth of knowledge found in communities that have been marginalized.

Culturally responsive education is about teaching the students in front of you. To do this requires that one work to get to know their students and develop meaningful relationships with students while engaging in the students' communities. However, culturally responsive education must also be sustaining, that is it must work to encourage cultural pluralism and not cultural assimilation. Home and youth culture should be welcomed into the classroom as areas ripe for discussion. Differences should not just be seen as strengths, but they should also be maintained because they are what make students and families unique. How educators understand culture has real consequences for our children as a limited understanding of culture has the power to disadvantage some while privileging others (Kirkland, 2012).

What is the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework?

The CR-S framework is an initiative by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that establishes culturally responsive-sustaining guidelines for student, teachers, school and district leadership, families and community advocates, higher education, and the State Education Department. This initiative is both urgent and timely, as it responds to many of the public forum comments about Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), one of which is the necessity of including culturally responsive-sustaining education into all aspects of public education. The State Education Department worked closely with various academic experts, renowned in their respective fields, to draft a NYSED definition of culturally responsive-sustaining education. New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools (Metro Center) used these conversations to draft a robust guidance document from which this framework was created. The framework was then built from the ground up, drawing on feedback from stakeholders across the state who generously gave of their time and insight. After three rounds of feedback, this framework incorporates the collective insight of these stakeholders.

This document is intended for use across stakeholder groups. A guiding principle of asset-based pedagogies is that a culturally responsive-sustaining approach to teaching and learning benefits a broad range of stakeholders. In the design of this framework, we thought about those who work in urban, suburban and rural communities. We considered the unique needs of each of these environments and encourage educators to take up this framework,

recognizing the unique needs of their teaching contexts and the plethora of diversity that exists in all educational environments.

NYSED recognizes that for culturally responsive-sustaining education to thrive, the impetus cannot be placed solely on student, teachers, and school leaders; all stakeholders must work together to create the conditions under which this vision of education can flourish. NYSED believes that we must incorporate an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of the state's work to achieve student success outcomes for all students. Thus, the framework aligns closely with other NYSED policies, including The New York State Board of Regents and the NYSED Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA plan), specifically:

- **Recognize the effect of school environment on student academic performance and support efforts to improve the climate of all schools.**
- **Promote a relationship of trust and respect between schools and families, recognizing that student achievement and school improvement are shared responsibilities.**
- **Provide educators with opportunities for continual professional learning in the areas of equity, anti-bias, multicultural, and culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogies.**
- **Support districts and their communities in engaging in critical conversations about culturally responsive-sustaining educational systems.**



The 4 Principles of Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

The 4 principles that organize the New York State Education Department's CR-S Framework are inspired by the 4 high leverage strategies that emerged from Buffalo Public School's work on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education.



Welcoming and affirming environment



High expectations and rigorous instruction



Inclusive curriculum and assessment



Ongoing professional learning

Welcoming and affirming environment

SYMBOL



DESCRIPTION

A welcoming and affirming environment feels safe. It is a space where people can find themselves represented and reflected, and where they understand that all people are treated with respect and dignity. The environment ensures all cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, religion, socioeconomic background) are affirmed, valued, and used as vehicles for teaching and learning.

RESOURCES

- School Climate and Culture Index
- Mental Health Education Literacy Schools: Linking to a Continuum of Well-Being
- English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Parent Resources
- Social Emotional Learning: Essential for Learning, Essential for Life
- Guidelines and Resources for Social and Emotional Development and Learning (SEDL) in New York State
- NYSED Information and Resources Regarding Restorative Justice and Trauma Sensitivity Training
- The New York State Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)

High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

SYMBOL



DESCRIPTION

High expectations and rigorous instruction prepare the community for rigor and independent learning. The environment is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging, while also considering the different ways students learn. Instruction includes opportunities to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Messages encourage positive self-image and empower others to succeed.

RESOURCES

New York State Board of Regents Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA Plan)

New York State Next Generation English Language Arts and Mathematics Learning Standards

New York State My Brother's Keeper (Initiative)

New York State Early Learning Standards

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

State Systemic Improvement Plan Multi-tiered Systems of Support Model

Blueprint for English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Success

Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks

Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

SYMBOL



DESCRIPTION

Inclusive curriculum and assessment elevate historically marginalized voices. It includes opportunities to learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and empowers learners to be agents of positive social change. It provides the opportunity to learn about perspectives beyond one's own scope. It works toward dismantling systems of biases and inequities, and decentering dominant ideologies in education.

RESOURCES

Teacher Test Development and Participation Opportunities

Civic Readiness Initiative

The New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework and Toolkits

Ongoing Professional Learning

SYMBOL



DESCRIPTION

Ongoing professional learning is rooted in the idea that teaching and learning is an adaptive process needing constant reexamination (Moll, et al., 1992; Gay, 2010). It allows learners to develop and sharpen a critically conscious lens toward instruction, curriculum, assessment, history, culture, and institutions. Learners must be self-directed and take on opportunities that directly impact learning outcomes.

RESOURCES

Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers Initiative

Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)

New York State Teaching Standards

NYU Metro TAC-D 2018-2019 Regional Workshops

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Mindsets

All stakeholders (students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department Policymakers) can adopt these culturally responsive-sustaining aligned mindsets as a lens through which to implement the CR-S guidelines outlined in this framework.

New York State **EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS** can contribute to a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education for students by:

Believing that culture is not an addition but is a critical component of education.

Believing that students and their families are individuals with their own assets, knowledge, and abilities who should be valued and consulted.

- Student and community assets should be sustained and leveraged for academic achievement.
- Consider students as co-designers of curriculum and drivers of instruction (Jenkins & Healey, 2009)
- Embed community input into curriculum to reflect diversity of the local and global community.

Believing that critical and continuous self-reflection is required to dismantle systems of biases and inequities rooted in our country's history, culture, and institutions.

- Employ a critical pedagogy that empowers students to see themselves as agents of social change and architects of their own destinies (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).
- Employ a critical lens (racial, gender, sexual identity, linguistic, religious, ability, socioeconomic, or other salient cultural identities) when developing resources and intervention frameworks to de-center dominant ideologies and pedagogies that ignore or marginalize diverse students.
- Identify and one's own implicit biases, reflecting on how they may shape one's feelings, actions, academic expectations, or behavioral expectations of students based on particular aspects of their identities (race, gender, social class, nationality, language, sexual orientation, ability, etc.)
- Assess and reflect on one's racial literacy skills, "the ability to read, discuss, and write about situations that involve race or racism" (Sealey-Ruiz, 2013), and seek opportunities to practice and develop racial literacy with peers and students.



Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Guidelines

All stakeholders (students, teachers, school leaders, district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department Policymakers) can consider implementing the following CR-S guidelines as a means to achieve a more culturally responsive-sustaining education system.

The following section is organized by stakeholder group. Each stakeholder group is provided with guidelines that serve as

recommendations according to the four principles of culturally responsive-sustaining education.

We recognize that much of this work is already happening across the state. The following guidelines are intended to offer a bank of strategies, with other perspectives for your community to consider. This is in no way meant to be an exhaustive list. Collaborate with stakeholders to prioritize and plan for the local needs of your community.





New York State **STUDENTS** can contribute to a Culturally Responsive- Sustaining educational environment by:



**Creating a
welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**Fostering high
expectations
and rigorous
instruction**



**Identifying
inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Engaging
in ongoing
professional
learning and
support**



Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Maintain knowledge and awareness that everyone reacts to situations differently based on their own experiences, cultural backgrounds, and perspectives.
- Practice empathy during all interactions. Think about others' feelings, taking into account their experiences and imagining what it feels like to be in another person's shoes.
- Respectfully, and with care, engage in difficult conversations, particularly those that challenge power and privilege in our society.
- Choose kind words over put-down language. Strive to accept others rather than impose negative judgment, in order to create a safe and supportive learning environment that allows for other students to think critically, share honestly, and take academic risks.
- Support and accept classmates. Hold peers accountable to following the mutually-agreed upon norms and assume the responsibility of creating an educational environment in which others feel affirmed and valued.
- Express respectful agreement or disagreement with opinions, validating the knowledge of peers, or challenging their viewpoints in constructive ways.
- Acknowledge and try to incorporate the ideas of peers respectfully, recognizing that other students may have vastly different perspectives, experiences, strengths, needs, and opinions.
- Lean into discomfort, taking emotional and academic risks by engaging in critical conversations.
- Support classmates when in need and work to help mediate through discussion and restorative practices.
- Collaborate with teachers and trusted adults to repair harm when harm is caused.
- Take risks and view mistakes as opportunities to grow academically and emotionally.
- Create collective norms about how to take care of the physical space and materials in the classroom and school community.
- Make an effort to build strong relationships across groups, talking to and getting to know a variety of peers and their perspectives.
- Consider the physical environment of the classroom to determine what cultures, languages, and identities are reflected, represented and valued. Collaboratively advocate for the representation of the cultural backgrounds of all students across New York State, ensuring that diverse backgrounds are reflected and valued in the school community throughout the year, not only on designated holidays.
- Advocate for diversity of art, food, and activities in the building that represent the vast diversity of the state and that incorporate relevant cultural and historical context.
- Work with teachers to create an environment that establishes mutually agreed-upon norms. Act out of a sense of personal responsibility to follow these norms, and not from a fear of punishment or desire for a reward.
- Build respect and mutual understanding across the school community, including with teachers, administrators, counselors, school aides, custodial staff, lunch and recess staff, etc.
- Take ownership of the physical space and learning environment in the school community, welcoming others, taking on leadership roles as school ambassadors, and creating and engaging in activities that improve the school climate and culture for students of diverse backgrounds.
- Participate in the creation of, and review of, school codes of conduct. Be a collaborating member of these existing committees.
- Address implicit bias in the school and community environment.
- Take risks and learn from your mistakes, in order to grow academically and emotionally.
- Identify inequity and challenge it when you see it.

Express respectful agreement or disagreement with opinions, validating the knowledge of peers, or challenging their viewpoints in constructive ways.

- Create opportunities for others to join the conversation by asking questions, listening to and acknowledging the opinions of others, and being open-minded to peers.



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Challenge oneself to do more than what feels academically comfortable. Set high goals and continuously revise them to push yourself out of your academic comfort zone.
- Collaborate with teachers to develop tools for persevering in difficult social and academic situations, i.e. growth mindset tools that help students view challenges and failures as opportunities to grow, and view their brain as a muscle that continues to get stronger over time when they take on new challenges and try new things.
- Draw upon your past learning, prior experiences, and the richness of your cultural background to make meaning of new concepts and apply learning on an ongoing basis.
- Strive and take pride in producing high quality work, using feedback to revise work, continuously improve, and set new goals.
- Voice and express the need for challenging work and extension activities after achieving a goal.
- Promote the group's success and support the participation of everyone in the learning task.
- Take responsibility for one's role in group activities, balancing group and individual accountability.
- Work cooperatively toward goals and hold each other accountable in supportive ways.
- Develop or sustain the mindset that having high expectations means caring about more than just a grade, but also personal growth and character development.
- Participate, when possible, in student leadership opportunities, such as student-led workshops, peer-led discussion, and student-run school-wide initiatives.
- Advocate for varied ways of learning (i.e. project-based learning, presentations, station work, small group work) that accommodate the diverse learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Advocate for the physical access of all differently-abled members of the school community.





Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Identify, discuss and dismantle implicit bias in curriculum and assessment.
- Advocate for the opportunity for all students to actively give input and share their opinions on the curriculum (book selection, course offerings, elective offerings).
- Identify gaps where the current curriculum does not address multiple perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Advocate for fair representation of these absent perspectives.
- Challenge power and privilege where present, or absent, in the curriculum by locating other resources or requesting curriculum that is inclusive of multiple perspectives.
- Generate ideas about people or concepts that peers may like to learn about and share these ideas with your teachers and school leaders.
- Ask questions about self, community, and society that may serve as opportunities to connect in-school learning with the world outside the classroom. Share these questions and any related ideas with your teachers and school leaders.
- Collaborate with teachers to connect events deemed relevant by your community to the classroom.
- Actively engage in service learning opportunities, when available, to expand learning beyond the classroom. Encourage peers to collaborate with you in these learning opportunities.
- Collaborate with teachers, peers, and administrators to create opportunities for meaningful long-term projects, project-based learning activities, and field visits that allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time, and align to the varied learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Collaborate with teachers, peers, and administrators to create multiple ways of assessing in-classroom learning that allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time, and align to the varied learning styles and interests of those in the class community.
- Look critically at the course offerings, extracurricular activities, and student-led organizations. Challenge the current system to make changes that ensure equitable access and participation, especially if the environment offers limited options in which the same students participate and hold leadership opportunities.



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Set goals toward future aspirations and collaborate with teachers and families to make plans about achieving them. Work daily toward accomplishing these goals.
- Apply for out-of-school programs and learning opportunities, when possible.
- Seek help and guidance, when needed, from broader support networks such as peers, family, and trusted adults.
- Take ownership and accountability after making mistakes, using your mistake as an opportunity to learn and further academic and emotional growth.
- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and challenging your own biases, and identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Challenge yourself to learn about people, cultures, languages, orientations, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds different than your own.

Develop or sustain the mindset that having high expectations means caring about more than just a grade, but also personal growth and character development.



New York State **TEACHERS** can cultivate a Culturally Responsive- Sustaining education for students by:



**Creating a
welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**Fostering high
expectations
and rigorous
instruction**



**Identifying
inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Engaging
in ongoing
professional
learning and
support**



Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Assess the physical environment of the classroom and school to determine whether a variety of diverse cultures, languages, orientations, and identities are reflected, represented and valued. Promote a variety of perspectives that represent the diversity of the state of New York beyond designated icons, historical figures, months and holidays.
- Build rapport and develop positive relationships with students, and their families, by learning about their interests and inviting them to share their opinions and concerns. Find opportunities to address and incorporate their opinions and concerns.
- Provide multiple opportunities for parents to communicate in their language and method of preference, such as digital and in-person formats, class visits, phone conversations, text message, email, collaborative projects, and impromptu conferences.
- Work with families early and often to gather insight into students' cultures, goals, and learning preferences.
- Enact classroom management strategies that avoid assigning blame or guilt to students based on perceptions about their cultures, differences, or home lives.
- Work toward creating an environment that establishes mutually agreed-upon norms and encourages students to act out of a sense of personal responsibility to follow those norms, not from a fear of punishment or desire for a reward.
- Meet with families to understand and align the recognition, reward, and incentive practices used in the classroom to the values and cultural norms of families.
- Create opportunities to allow different groups and ideas to become part of the fabric of the school community by organizing proactive community-building circles and activities that promote positive relationships among individuals from diverse backgrounds. Include students, teachers, school staff, leaders, families, and community members in these opportunities.
- Use restorative justice circles and structures to welcome students back into learning when harm has occurred.
- Participate in the review of school and district policies (codes of conduct, curriculum reviews, community engagement, etc.).
- Attend or volunteer at community events, when possible, to develop relationships with families and the community outside of the classroom setting.
- Respond to instances of disrespectful speech about student identities by intervening if hurtful speech or slurs are used, addressing the impact of said language, and discussing appropriate and inappropriate responses when instances of bias occur. Use these moments as opportunities to build classroom environments of acceptance.
- Identify and address implicit bias in the school and community environment.
- Encourage students to take academic risks in order to create an environment that capitalizes on student mistakes as learning opportunities that help students grow academically and emotionally.



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- Reflect on your own implicit bias, how that bias might impact your expectations for student achievement or the decisions you make in the classroom, and the steps you can take to address your biases and their impact on students.
- Strive to be culturally sustaining by centering the identities of all students in classroom instruction, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than asking students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.
- Provide parents with information about what their child is expected to learn, know, and do at his/her grade level and ways to reinforce concepts at home (e.g., using the home language; reading with, or monitoring, independent reading).
- Promote alternative achievement metrics that also support academics (e.g., demonstrating growth, leadership, character development, Social Emotional Learning competencies, or school values).
- Invite families and community members to speak or read in the classroom as a means to teach about topics that are culturally specific and aligned to the classroom curriculum and/or content area.
- Provide opportunities for students to critically examine topics of power and privilege. These can be planned project-based learning initiatives, instructional activities embedded into the curriculum, or discussion protocols used in response to inequity that occurs in the school and/or classroom.
- Incorporate current events, even if they are controversial, into instruction. Utilize tools (prompting discussion questions, Socratic seminar, conversation protocols) that encourage students to engage with difficult topics (power, privilege, access, inequity) constructively.
- Be responsive to students' experiences by providing them with a space to process current events.

Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.

- Help students identify their different learning styles in both classwork and homework and incorporate instructional strategies and assignments that are responsive to those learning styles.
- Provide students with opportunities to present to their peers through project-based or stations-based learning to leverage student experience and expertise.
- Co-create explicit classroom expectations that meet the needs of all students.



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Feature and highlight resources written and developed by traditionally marginalized voices that offer diverse perspectives on race, culture, language, gender, sexual identity, ability, religion, nationality, migrant/refugee status, socioeconomic status, housing status, and other identities traditionally silenced or omitted from curriculum.
- Play a role in helping schools to understand and align curriculum to the variety of histories, languages and experiences that reflect the diversity of the State population.
- Pair traditional curricular content with digital and other media platforms that provide current and relevant context from youth culture.
- Provide homework, projects, and other classroom materials in multiple languages.
- Provide regular opportunities for social emotional learning strategies within lessons and as discrete learning activities.
- Utilize student data points and assessment measures that reflect learning spaces, modalities, and demonstration of proficiency that go beyond metrics traditionally associated with standardized testing.
- Engage students in youth participatory action research that empowers youth to be agents of positive change in their community.
- Connect instructional content with the daily lives of students by using culturally-specific examples (e.g., music, movies, text) that tap into their existing interests, knowledge, and youth culture.
- Take field trips to community-learning sites, such as museums, parks, cultural centers, neighborhood recreational centers, and community centers, to foster students' cultural understanding and connection to the surrounding community.
- Incorporate cooperative learning activities to encourage understanding of diverse perspectives; support students in working cooperatively toward goals; and highlight students' unique strengths in the group (e.g., public speaking, note-taking, writing, drawing, etc.).
- Support students in creating and running student-led initiatives.

Encourage students to take academic risks in order to create an environment that capitalizes on student mistakes as learning opportunities that help students grow academically and emotionally.



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Continuously learn about implicit bias, with attention to identifying and challenging your own biases, and identifying and addressing implicit bias in the school community.
- Use professional learning activities as opportunities to better acquaint oneself with the diverse communities in which their students live.
- Set professional goals related to CR-S practices.
- Engage in inquiry groups and professional learning communities with peers and mentors.
- Analyze discipline data to determine any trends across sub-groups or bias toward students.





New York State **SCHOOL LEADERS** can cultivate Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education for students by:



**Creating a
welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**Fostering high
expectations
and rigorous
instruction**



**Identifying
inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Engaging
in ongoing
professional
learning and
support**



Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.
- Assess school climate using a variety of measures (i.e. surveys, interviews, focus groups, informal gatherings) to collect diverse stakeholder impressions and experiences, using questions that consider issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Disaggregate data (i.e. discipline, attendance, enrollment in advanced coursework, special education, and gifted and talented programs) by sub-group, evaluate trends, and create a strategic plan to address disproportionality.
- Provide space for teachers and staff to process and determine how to engage with students and families after social and political events that impact the wider community.
- Support formal and informal structures for families to receive information about grade-level standards and expectations, developmentally appropriate social emotional tools, and strategies to support academic and social growth at home.



- Provide interpretation services at family meetings (i.e. parent organization meetings, community events, during the enrollment process, during the provision of special education services, etc.), to ensure family engagement includes meaningful two-way communication and offers families the opportunity to share (not just receive) in their home language.
- Develop multiple means of ongoing family engagement (i.e. apps and online systems of communication, parent leadership opportunities, parent family liaison positions, opportunities for families to serve as active co-creators of policies and programs, parent organizing bodies, and holding meetings at varied hours, possibly providing transportation and childcare, outreach at community meetings).
- Create advisory groups consisting of various education stakeholders (families, teachers, students, community members) to work collaboratively to set school norms, establish school goals, and build alignment between the families' expectations and values, and the school's expectations and values.
- Work with cultural and community centers to identify needs and provide services to families by offering classes such as parenting, financial literacy, computer literacy, or English language at the school.
- Highlight works of art designed by students and members of the broader community that incorporate relevant cultural and historical context.
- Create a visibly multilingual and multicultural environment by posting signs, banners, and other materials throughout the school that acknowledge and celebrate the identities of students.
- Post high-quality work in the physical environment that is not limited to the display of correct answers, but also demonstrates students' critical thinking, conceptual understanding, reasoning, and application of content to meaningful real-world situations. Work to ensure high-quality work is equitably represented from students across sub-groups.
- Create "listening conferences" or "peacemaking circles" led by a trained facilitator through which all stakeholders can discuss cultural and social values and resolve conflict.
- Develop peer mediation programs where trained student mediators assist their peers in settling disputes.
- Incorporate time in the school day when formal restorative practices can occur.
- Provide the time and resources for students to create cultural clubs to learn more about their culture as well as other students' cultures.

Incorporate parent and community voices into the hiring process.

- Develop interview questions when hiring new staff that provide opportunities for candidates to identify ways they share (or don't share) experiences with the local student populations and to explain the implications of those experiences for their professional practices.
- Incorporate parent and community voices into the hiring process.





Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and ensure rigorous instruction for all students regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- Reflect on your own implicit bias, how that bias might impact your expectations for student achievement or the decisions you make in the school, and the steps you can take to address your biases and their impact on students.
- Develop in-school inquiry-based teams to address instructional rigor, cultural responsiveness, achievement disparities, and student engagement.
- Embed cognitive and instructional strategies into teacher coaching that enables students to strengthen learning capacity.
- Embed cognitive and instructional strategies into the teacher coaching model that pushes teachers to put the cognitive lift on students. Coach teachers to deliver high-quality instruction that enables students to grow as independent learners, think critically, make meaning of new concepts in multiple ways, and apply learning to meaningful, real-world situations.
- Promote alternative achievement metrics that also supports academics (e.g., demonstrating school values, strong attendance, leadership, growth).



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.

- Support staff in embedding grade-level, standards-aligned resources that emphasize cultural pluralism; social justice; and current events into curriculum across content areas.
- Partner with teachers to audit curriculum, materials, and school or classroom libraries to assess: whether they properly represent, value, and develop students' cultures; presence of implicit bias; or omission of cultural (race, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, ability) perspectives.
- Support the design and implementation of multiple forms of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency).
- Invest in curricular resources that reflect diverse cultures and voices of marginalized people.
- Invest in community leaders and family members as contributors to instruction by actively seeking and welcoming their history and knowledge.
- Incorporate social emotional learning (SEL) materials, resources, and strategies into the school day and broader learning environment that consider and plan for topics of equity and inclusion.
- Expose students to the world beyond the home community while affirming their own identities (i.e. community mentor programs, guest speakers, field trips, cross-district partnerships).



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Support teachers in building capacity to leverage community context in curriculum.
- Create learning communities (i.e., professional learning communities, book study, discussion groups, online webinars, digital subscriptions) for teachers and students to engage in topics that directly address educator and student identities and understand and unpack privilege.
- Provide opportunities for teachers and leaders to receive trainings on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as: critical self-reflection, disproportionality, anti-bias, developing racial literacy, combating racism and microaggressions, etc.
- Use data and research to identify teachers with strong culturally responsive-sustaining practices and racial literacy skills and allow time for them to share their practices (i.e. peer observations, professional learning, etc.)
- Support teachers in conducting cross-curricular culturally responsive-sustaining planning sessions by providing forums for collaborative planning, drafting, mapping, and aligning.

New York State **DISTRICT LEADERS** can cultivate Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education for students by:



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Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Create a policy statement about your commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education, and include staff (teachers, school safety officers, counselors, lunch and recess staff) in its creation, development, and ongoing training.
- Conduct periodic review of school policies (i.e. dress code, discipline code, conduct code), by collaborating with parents, teachers, community members and incorporating research-based best practices such as restorative justice, positive behavior interventions and supports.
- Encourage and incentivize school leaders to hold spaces (i.e. community forums, social events) that foster collaboration among teachers, families, and community members that provide insight into the assets that exist among the school community.
- Provide resources to schools (i.e. shared language, online resources, questions for discussion, etc.) for incorporating and responding to current events and events that impact the community.
- Formalize structures for school and district-wide parent collaboration, such as parent-teacher associations/ organizations (PTA/PTO) or academic parent-teacher teams (APTT).
- Assess school climate using a variety of measures (i.e. surveys, interviews, focus groups, informal gatherings) to collect diverse stakeholder impressions and experiences, using questions that consider issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Disaggregate data (i.e. discipline, attendance, enrollment in advanced coursework, special education, and gifted and talented programs) by sub-group, evaluate trends, and create a strategic plan to address disproportionality.
- Make accessible and readable information readily available to families in a variety of modes, including translations and accommodations for those with disabilities.
- Provide interpretation services at family meetings (i.e. parent organization meetings, community events, during the enrollment process, during the provision of special education services, etc.), to ensure family engagement includes meaningful two-way communication and offers families the opportunity to share (not just receive) in their home language.
- Gather family and community feedback on district-wide policies before implementation and provide transparent updates during and after implementation.
- Develop multiple means of ongoing family engagement (i.e. apps and online systems of communication, holding meetings at varied hours, possibly providing transportation and childcare, outreach at community meetings or other places the community gathers).
- Stay current on wider social and political issues that affect communities served by the district (i.e. hold regular meetings with community-based organizations and advocacy groups, create a community liaison role to gather information from the field).
- Work to improve the recruitment and retention of a diverse teacher workforce (i.e. teachers who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled) by strengthening pipelines for teacher education and cultivating relationships with local and national partners (i.e. historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic association of colleges and universities, alliance organizations).
- Identify, cultivate, and support students who are interested in joining the district in the future as a classroom teacher or school professional (school counselor, occupational and speech pathologist, etc.) by partnering with higher education and other professional organizations that could provide scholarships, internships, externships, and mentorship opportunities, as a means to strengthen teacher education pipelines.
- Work with cultural and community centers and organizations to identify needs and provide services to families by offering classes such as parenting, financial literacy, computer literacy, or English language at the school.

Create a policy statement about your commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education, and include staff (teachers, school safety officers, counselors, lunch and recess staff) in its creation, development, and ongoing training



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Strategize instructional methods to disrupt any disparities in student success outcomes that exist across lines of difference, highlighting and sharing best practices from the field.
- Incorporate adaptive learning methods that encourage differentiation, exploration and curiosity as opposed to scripted, one-size-fits-all instructional programs.
- Partner with experts in the field (i.e. professional learning organizations, higher education, consultants) to identify research-based, instructional strategies that are most effective in advancing student academic success.
- Use tools to identify and recognize instructional methods that high-performing, culturally responsive-sustaining teachers are using across content areas.
- Facilitate structures for teacher collaboration across school and district teams, i.e. peer observations, school visits, purposeful partnerships, mentor teachers.



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Adopt curriculum that includes culturally authentic learning experiences that mirror students' ways of learning, understanding, communicating, and demonstrating curiosity and knowledge.
- Adopt curriculum that highlights contributions and includes texts reflective of the diverse identities of students and reframes the monocultural framework that privileges the historically advantaged at the expense of other groups.
- Invest in research to determine assessments geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserved students of diverse identities.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum, instruction, and assessment to stakeholders in the district.
- Partner with higher education institutions on curriculum development, coaching, and consultation around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion (e.g., immigration, integration, diversification of curriculum).
- Create courses district-wide about the diversity of cultures representative of the state of New York (e.g., Native Americans, African Americans, Latinx Studies, Asian American Studies, Gender Studies) in a way that is comprehensive (e.g., across grade levels and not relegated to one specific month) and empowering (e.g., African American history does not begin with slavery, but with African history).



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Train and build the capacity of instructional leaders to support teachers in delivering instruction that is rigorous, student-centered, and promotes students as agents of positive social change.
- Disseminate existing, or develop new, self-assessment tools and resources for educators to assess and reflect on their implicit biases.
- Ensure schools have evidence-based trainings and planning time supportive of CR-S, including space for collaborative curriculum drafting, mapping, and aligning (Carter & Welner, 2013).
- Provide Professional Learning Communities and other professional learning structures to address bias, develop racial literacy skills, etc.
- Use data and research to identify teachers with strong CR-S practices and racial literacy skills and allow time/space for them to share their practices with other district teachers.

New York State **FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can cultivate a Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education for students by:



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Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

Set goals with your children toward their future aspirations and collaborate with teachers to make plans about achieving them.

- Communicate with your child’s teachers using your preferred language and means of communication (e.g., in-person, phone, email, texts, notes) from the variety of methods of participation offered (in-class, in-school, at-home, community-based). When a variety of communication methods is not offered, advocate for increased means of communication.
- Advocate for the right to receive communications in the language and format desired.
- Advocate to ensure that school culture and environment is safe and responsive to children’s needs.
- Partner with teachers and school leaders to inform them of, and assist with, school community needs.



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Be aware of, and collaboratively advocate for, children having access to a wide range of educational coursework and programming.
- Share knowledge about your child’s interests, learning style, learning preferences, and prior educational experiences with trusted teachers and leaders in the school community.
- Share traditions and cultural assets with teachers to support the integration of these values within curriculum.
- Support students in engaging with their local community (i.e. youth participatory action research [Y-PAR] and other community-based inquiry) that encourages student engagement with their local contexts.
- Be open to opportunities for service learning, outreach, field trips, and other educational opportunities in the school community, toward the end of helping students develop a sense of identity and belonging and provide a support system in the school community.
- Ask teacher and school leaders what is being taught in each class, and periodically inquire about children’s progress toward achieving learning goals.
- Support students in achieving progress toward learning goals, to the extent possible. Seek help and guidance from trusted teachers, leaders, and families in the school community, when needed.



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Generate ideas about concepts that your children and their peers may like to learn about.
- Ask questions of your children about self, community, and society that may serve as opportunities to connect in-school learning with the world outside the classroom.
- Collaborate with teachers to connect events deemed relevant by the community to the classroom.
- Actively engage your children in service learning opportunities, when available, to expand learning beyond the classroom.

Share knowledge about your child’s interests, learning style, learning preferences, and prior educational experiences with trusted teachers and leaders in the school community.



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Participate in decision-making around programs, policies, and learning activities that impact the school community.
- Work with parent organizations to ensure that parents are represented in the school across various identities including race, family orientation, social class, profession, religious backgrounds.
- Offer time and talents to school events and trainings, to the extent possible.
- Leverage the knowledge of other parents to create strong parental in-school community.
- Set goals with your children toward their future aspirations and collaborate with teachers to make plans about achieving them.
- Support your children in applying for out-of-school programs and learning opportunities, when possible.



New York State **HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS**

can cultivate a
**Culturally Responsive-
Sustaining Education**
for students by:



**Creating a
welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**Fostering high
expectations
and rigorous
instruction**



**Identifying
inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Engaging
in ongoing
professional
learning and
support**



Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Create a policy statement about your institution's commitment to culturally responsive-sustaining education that includes a definition, shared language, and short and term-long goals. Include administrators, faculty, staff, and students in its creation and ongoing implementation.
- Identify school codes of conduct and discipline policies that disproportionately impact persons of color, students who are English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners, students with disabilities, students of different religions, gender identities, sexual identities, nationalities, socioeconomic backgrounds, housing status, migrant/refugee status, and other diverse identities.
- Collaborate with teacher and leader candidates to address inequitable policies, and expand the development of tools to do so.
- Work to expand the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and staff with identities and experiences that reflect the varied experiences of the student population. (i.e. educators and staff who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled; educators and staff with experience in both rural and urban populations).



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Have high expectations and deliver rigorous instruction for all teacher and leader candidates regardless of identity markers, including race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, and economic background.
- Reflect on your own implicit bias, and how that bias might impact your expectations for teacher and leader candidate achievement, and the decisions you make as a faculty member or administrator.
- Create a course, or embed into existing courses, the opportunity for teacher and leader candidates to identify and address their own implicit bias.
- Train and build the capacity of teacher and leader candidates to deliver instruction that meets the needs of a diverse population; values multiple components of student identity (race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability); counters deficit-based policies; and promotes students as agents of positive social change.
- Review and update faculty pedagogical practices for culturally responsive-sustaining teaching across disciplines and support faculty in implementing said instruction.
- Invest in research to determine the educational policies and reforms geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserved students of diverse identities and support faculty in implementing these practices in their teacher and leader preparation courses.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining instruction to stakeholders in the district.
- Document and share examples from the field of culturally responsive-sustaining instruction and school leadership beyond the academic community to reach all education stakeholders.
- Place teaching candidates in student teaching placements across a range of diverse settings (urban, rural, suburban, small, large, traditional, nontraditional), supporting teachers to work along lines of difference with students of diverse backgrounds (race, language, economic background, ability).

Invest in research to determine the educational policies and reforms geared toward academic achievement for underrepresented and underserved students of diverse identities and support faculty in implementing these practices in their teacher and leader preparation courses.



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Integrate CR-S education into teacher and education leadership preparation programs as both a standalone class and an infused aspect of all teacher preparation classes.
- Prioritize social emotional learning approaches that are culturally responsive-sustaining as essential to quality teaching and learning throughout New York State.
- Partner with districts on curriculum development, coaching, and assessment consultation with regard to issues of diversity, disproportionality, equity, and inclusion.
- Partner with teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to create materials to help in CR-S strategic planning and implementation at the classroom, school, and district level.
- Conduct curriculum audits within teacher and education leadership preparation programs to identify the levels of bias existing in current resource selection and staff capacity. Work with teacher and education leadership to use this data to better inform or advocate for different curricular choices.
- Invest in research to identify culturally responsive-sustaining methods of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency, interests) and allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge and growth over time.
- Formally disseminate existing research on best practices from the field regarding culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum and assessment to stakeholders in the district.
- Support school districts in creating courses about the diversity of cultures representative of the state of New York, (e.g., Native Americans, African Americans, Latinx Studies, Asian American, Gender Studies) in a way that is comprehensive (e.g., across grade levels and not relegated to one specific month) and empowering (e.g., African American history does not begin with slavery, but with African history).



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Prioritize teacher and leader professional learning opportunities that align with New York State Professional Learning Standards and build educators' capacities to deliver CR-S instruction. Work with school leaders and districts to engage teachers and school support staff in these opportunities both as in-school, job-embedded professional development and as out-of-school, college/university-based professional learning. Opportunities might be remote, in-person, short-term, or long-term.
- Create pipelines between the district and college/universities by identifying, cultivating, and supporting high school students of diverse backgrounds from the district who are interested in returning to the district as classroom teachers or school professional personnel (school counselors, occupational and speech pathologists, etc.).
- Disseminate existing, or develop new, self-assessment tools and resources for educators to assess and reflect on their implicit biases.

Create pipelines between the district and college/universities by identifying, cultivating, and supporting high school students of diverse backgrounds from the district who are interested in returning to the district as classroom teachers or school professional personnel (school counselors, occupational and speech pathologists, etc.).



New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICYMAKERS

can cultivate
Culturally Responsive-
Sustaining Education
for students by:



**Creating a
welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**Fostering high
expectations
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instruction**



**Identifying
inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Engaging
in ongoing
professional
learning and
support**



EDUCATION BUILDING



Creating a welcoming and affirming environment

- Strive to be sustaining by centering the identities of all students in our educational policies, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than creating policies that ask students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.
- Strive to be responsive to the needs of students, teachers, school and district leaders, parents, and families.
- Work to expand the recruitment and retention of a diverse staff with identities and experiences that reflect the varied experiences of the student population in New York State (i.e. staff who identify as people of color, LGBTQIA+, differently-abled; staff with experience in both rural and urban populations).
- Make accessible and readable information readily available, in multiple languages, to parents and families.
- Develop guidance on ways schools can respond to local and global events, as well as prominent community concerns.
- Provide resources families need to be engaged advocates for their children's sense of belonging in school, with particular regard to the opportunities and challenges associated with having marginalized identity markers (i.e. race, sexuality, gender identity, ability, language, etc.)
- Recognize the effect of school environment on student achievement and continue to expand the development of tools that assess, address, and support the improvement of school climate.
- Engage families and communities in a respectful way, as outlined in the first commitment of New York State's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative.



Fostering high expectations and rigorous instruction

- Create different pathways for educational success and life readiness, including college, career, technical education, and vocational pathways, etc.
- Create high-quality resources that allow teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to plan and implement culturally responsive-sustaining practices in their respective communities.
- Align existing resources to the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks.
- Align existing state standards to CR-S guidelines.
- Adhere to the six commitments set by the New York State My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Initiative that incorporate strategies to help boys and young men of color—and all students—realize their full potential.



Identifying inclusive curriculum and assessment

- Identify and share resources in every content area that allow teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to embed equitable representations of diverse cultures, celebrate the voices of underrepresented identities, and accurately represent historical events into curriculum.
- Promote the design of multiple forms of assessment that consider personalized student needs (i.e. learning style, learning preferences, language proficiency).
- Promote and utilize asset-based research on the academic achievement of underrepresented and underserved students to determine educational policies and reforms related to standards, curriculum, and assessment.
- Use differentiated approaches to instruction based on need and culture, as outlined in the third commitment of New York State's MBK initiative.

Strive to be sustaining by centering the identities of all students in our educational policies, encouraging cultural pluralism rather than creating policies that ask students to minimize their identities in order to be successful.



Engaging in ongoing professional learning and support

- Build internal staff capacity to engage in continuous professional learning and growth around culturally responsive-sustaining practices that will be reflected in policies.
- Provide supports, opportunities, and resources that build stakeholders' capacity to implement CR-S practices.
- Continuously engage staff members in professional learning about implicit bias, with particular attention to allowing staff members to identify and challenge their own biases, and training them on identifying and addressing implicit bias in the workplace.
- Provide educators with opportunities for professional learning in the areas of equity, anti-bias, multicultural, and culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogies.
- Identify and share research practices proven effective and highlight examples of best practices from the field.



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ASSET-BASED PERSPECTIVE is a transformational perspective that recognizes and values the rich cultural practices embedded in all communities. Asset-based teaching is a strengths-based approach that leverages students' knowledge, experiences, skills, values, and perspectives as assets for learning. Asset-based educators see cultural differences as assets, create caring learning communities in which social, cultural, and linguistic diversities are valued, use the cultural knowledges of diverse cultures, families, and communities to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, instructional strategies, and relationships with students, and challenge racial, linguistic, and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, and oppression.

DEFICIT-BASED PERSPECTIVE implies that students are flawed or deficient and that the role of the school is to fix the student. Deficit-based teaching seeks to teach to students' weaknesses instead of teaching to their strengths. It views students as needed to be fixed or remediated, and often attributes their school failures to perceived deficits that lie within the student, their family, community or culture.

DIVERSITY is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences. These differences can exist along dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, language heritage, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of difference contained within everyone. Finally, we acknowledge that categories of difference are not always fixed but can

be fluid, and we respect individual rights to self-identification, as no one culture is intrinsically superior to another.

EQUITY is the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair. The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. To be achieved and sustained, equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept, and not as idealistic. Equity is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits, and outcomes.

SYSTEMATIC EQUITY is a complex combination of interrelated elements designed to create, support and sustain social justice.

GENDER implies a non-binary association of characteristics within the broad spectrum between masculinities and femininities. In New York State, gender is identified by the student. In the case of very young transgender students not yet able to advocate for themselves, gender may be identified by the parent or guardian.

INCLUSIVE more than simply diversity and numerical representation, being inclusive involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging. In an inclusive school, the social and instructional space is designed such that all students have access to the curriculum and there are many opportunities for students to be successful.

INTERNALIZED RACISM describes the private racial beliefs held by and within individuals. The way we absorb social messages about race and adopt them as personal beliefs, biases, and prejudices are all within the realm of internalized racism. For people of color, internalized oppression can involve believing in negative messages about oneself or one's racial group. For Whites, internalized privilege can involve feeling a sense of

superiority and entitlement or holding negative beliefs about people of color.

INTERPERSONAL RACISM is how our private beliefs about race become public when we interact with others. When we act upon our prejudices or unconscious bias — whether intentionally, visibly, verbally — we engage in interpersonal racism. Interpersonal racism also can be willful and overt, taking the form of bigotry, hate speech or racial violence.

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM is racial inequity baked into our institutions, connoting a system of power that produces racial disparities in domains such as law, health, employment, education, and so on. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. A school system that concentrates people of color in the most overcrowded and under-resourced schools with the least qualified teachers, compared to the educational opportunities of more advantaged students, is an example of institutional racism.

MICROAGGRESSIONS are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of targeted persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate the perception that they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (MLs) are students who, by reason of foreign birth or ancestry, speak or understand languages other than English, speak or

understand little or no English, require support in order to become proficient in English, and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of New York State’s Commissioner’s Regulations.

PLURALISM is a socially constructed system in which members of an identity group maintain participation in this group even as they belong to a larger cultural group. Educational pluralism is when students can leverage aspects of their cultural background as assets for learning and sustain those assets throughout their schooling. They are not required to minimize their unique cultural strengths in order to experience social and academic success or acceptance because no one culture is not valued as standard or dominant.

RACE is a socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features (phenotypes) such as skin color and ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernible distinction between racial categories. The ideology of race has become embedded in our identities, institutions, and culture and is used as a basis for discrimination and domination.

RACIAL JUSTICE is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people are able to achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live. Racial justice — or racial equity — goes beyond “anti-racism.” It’s not just about what we are against, but also what we are for. A CR-S education framework should move us from a reactive posture to a more powerful, proactive and even preventative approach.

The concept of **RACISM** is widely thought of as simply personal prejudice, but, in fact, it is a complex system of racial hierarchies and inequities. At

the micro level of racism, or individual level, are internalized and interpersonal systems of engrained bias. At the macro level of racism, we focus beyond individuals to the broader dynamics, including symbolic, ideological, institutional, and structural systems of racial hierarchies and inequities.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, as well as issues related to privilege, power, and control. In New York State, a student’s socioeconomic status is determined by family participation in economic assistance programs, such as the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Programs; Social Security Insurance (SSI); Food Stamps; Foster Care; Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance); Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP); Safety Net Assistance (SNA); Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified as low income, all students from that household or economic unit may be identified as low income.

SOCIOCULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS involves the active sensitivity to what all students need to be successful academically, psychologically, emotionally, and socially. Such responsiveness recognizes that all students are different and must be uniquely responded to, challenged and stimulated, and strategies must be adapted to meet the needs of individual and groups of students.

SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS involves an awareness to both the social and political factors at play in the workings of complex societal systems. This consciousness is necessary for navigating complex systems based on

a unity of thought and performance, reflective practice and deliberative action, skills that are meaningful and necessary for participation in expanding global economies and democracies.

STRUCTURAL RACISM (or structural racialization) is the operation of racial bias across institutions and society. It describes the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of factors that systematically privilege one group over another. Since the word “racism” often is understood as a conscious belief, “racialization” may be a better way to describe a process that does not require intentionality. Race equity expert John A. Powell writes: “‘Racialization’ connotes a process rather than a static event. It underscores the fluid and dynamic nature of race... ‘Structural racialization’ is a set of processes that may generate disparities or depress life outcomes without any racist actors.”

SYSTEMATIC EQUITY is a complex combination of interrelated elements consciously designed to create, support, and sustain social justice. It is a robust system and dynamic process that reinforces and replicates equitable ideas, power, resources, strategies, conditions, habits, and outcomes.

SYSTEMIC RACIALIZATION describes a dynamic system that produces and replicates racial ideologies, identities, and inequities. Systemic racialization is the deeply-institutionalized pattern of discrimination that cuts across major political, economic and social organizations in a society. Public attention to racism is generally focused on the symptoms (such as a racist slur by an individual) rather than the system of racial inequality. Like two sides of the same coin, racial privilege describes race-based advantages and preferential treatment based on skin color, while racial oppression refers to race-based disadvantages, discrimination and exploitation based on skin color.

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The **CR-S** framework helps educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.



How does implementing the New York Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework improve your school community as a whole?

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education draws on decades of research in asset-based pedagogies that recognize that cultural difference (including racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, sexuality and ability) should be treated as assets for teaching and learning. This approach to education counters dominant narratives about difference as deficits or as characteristics of students and families that should be remediated or assimilated. Using this approach to education, all families are believed to have cultural capital, or knowledge, abilities, and networks, that can, and should, be leveraged in classrooms. While schooling has traditionally privileged the capital of families from dominant backgrounds, CR-S

positions educators to acknowledge, value, and leverage the wealth of knowledge found in communities that have been marginalized.

Culturally responsive education is about teaching the students in front of you. To do this requires that one work to get to know their students and develop meaningful relationships with students while engaging in the students' communities. However, culturally responsive education must also be sustaining, that is it must work to encourage cultural pluralism and not cultural assimilation. Home and youth culture should be welcomed into the classroom as areas ripe for discussion. Differences should not just be seen as strengths, but they

What is culture?

The New York State Education Department understands culture as the multiple components of one's identity, including but not limited to: race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability. Culture far transcends practices such as cuisines, art, music, and celebrations to also include ways of thinking, values, and forms of expression. These ways and forms are in constant flux, renegotiation, and evolution. Schools then become a meeting point for cultures, containing children and adults who bring with them multiple facets of their identity, along with unique experiences and perspectives.



Access the full [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

should also be maintained because they are what make students and families unique. How educators understand culture has real consequences for our children as a limited understanding of culture has the power to disadvantage some while privileging others (Kirkland, 2012). [p. 13]

The school community is representative of many cultures, and therefore culture has consequences on how students experience schools. The framework is intentional about the relationship between culture and education, presenting a multi-tiered systems approach for cultural inclusion that broadens what ethnic groups, classes, sexualities, and

abilities are privileged in the creation and maintenance of traditional education. Research suggests that many students whose cultures are more closely aligned with the “cultural fabric” of schools experience praise and are viewed as more dedicated than those whose home cultures differ. Educators committed to understanding both the concept of culture and many different cultures can refocus their lens for viewing students’ cultures not as “deficiencies to overcome” (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87), but as assets. Students from different cultures possess vibrant realities and rich reservoirs

of knowledge. By making all cultures matter, our students’ cultures can be positioned as strengths and as the foundation of empowering, rigorous, and innovative learning.



Learn more about the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

This brief was developed by the Region 2 Comprehensive Center in partnership with the New York State Education Department. The Region 2 Comprehensive Center is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.



What are the four principles of the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework?

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education stakeholders in developing and implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports.

The framework is grounded in four principles: a welcoming and affirming environment, high expectations and rigorous instruction, inclusive curriculum and assessment, and ongoing professional learning. Each principle is illustrated by a set of features rooted in elements of quality education that illustrate how CR-S might look in practice across a range of domains, from the State Education Department

to the classroom. The framework represents an opportunity for stakeholders to continue to work together and plan for the unique needs of their communities. The principles that organize the New York State Education Department's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework are inspired by the 4 high leverage strategies that emerged from Buffalo Public School's work on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education. Each of the principles is described below.

A welcoming and affirming environment feels safe. It is a space where people can find themselves represented and reflected, and where they understand that all people are

treated with respect and dignity. The environment ensures all cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, religion, socioeconomic background) are affirmed, valued, and used as vehicles for teaching and learning.

High expectations and rigorous instruction prepare the community for rigor and independent learning. The environment is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging, while also considering the different ways students learn. Instruction includes opportunities to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Messages encourage



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positive self-image and empower others to succeed.

Inclusive curriculum and assessment elevate historically marginalized voices. They include opportunities to learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and empower learners to be agents of positive social change. Inclusive curriculum and assessment provide the opportunity to learn about perspectives beyond one's own scope. They work toward dismantling systems of biases and inequities, and decentering dominant ideologies in education.

Ongoing professional learning is rooted in the idea that teaching and learning is an adaptive process needing constant reexamination (Moll, et al., 1992; Gay, 2010). It allows learners to develop and sharpen a critically conscious lens toward instruction, curriculum, assessment, history, culture, and institutions. Learners must be self-directed and take on opportunities that directly impact learning outcomes.

The New York State Education Department recognizes much of this work is already happening across the state and looks forward to an even deeper understanding of culturally responsive- sustaining education in New York State schools, districts, and communities.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Framework outlines four principles and embedded strategies to help educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigorous and independent learning; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change. See the diagram below for strategies that support each of the four principles.



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What do students gain when culturally responsive-sustaining education guides our education system?

The school community is representative of many cultures, and therefore culture has consequences on how students experience schools. The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intentional about the relationship between culture and education, presenting a multi-tiered systems approach for cultural inclusion that broadens what ethnic groups, classes, sexualities, and abilities are privileged in the creation and maintenance of traditional education. Learning is rooted in the lives and experiences of people and cultivated through activities that people find meaningful. When teaching is not rooted in students' lives, student learning suffers. Perhaps worst, biases take hold and deficit

perspectives become normalized throughout our schools and classrooms, structuring entire systems that blame students for failure.

Research suggests that many students whose cultures are more closely aligned with the "cultural fabric" of schools experience praise and are viewed as more dedicated than those whose home cultures differ. Educators committed to understanding both the concept of culture and many different cultures can refocus their lens for viewing students' cultures not as "deficiencies to overcome" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87), but as assets. Students from different cultures possess vibrant realities and rich reservoirs of knowledge. By

making all cultures matter, our students' cultures can be positioned as strengths and as the foundation of empowering, rigorous, and innovative learning.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education



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stakeholders in developing and implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports.

Through implementing classroom practice aligned with these principles, the New York State guidelines for culturally responsive- sustaining education are grounded in a **VISION** of an education system that aims to create:

1. **Students who experience academic success. Students are prepared for rigor and independent learning.** Students understand themselves as contributing members of an academically- rigorous, intellectually-challenging school and classroom community. Students demonstrate an ability to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Students are self-motivated, setting and revising academic personal goals to drive their own learning and growth.
2. **Students who are sociopolitically conscious and socioculturally responsive.** Students acknowledge the limitations of their own perspectives. They have empathy for others while they appreciate and respect others' differences. They demonstrate cooperation and teamwork, using active listening and communication

skills to resolve conflict. They use interpersonal skills to build and maintain strong relationships, including those along lines of difference, in their class and school communities. All layers of the environment in which students learn (classroom, school, family, and community) affirm and value the various aspects of students' cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic background). Role models in the classroom, school, family, and community recognize student strengths and offer opportunities for students to grow and learn.

3. **Students who have a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege.**

Students bring a critical lens to the world as they study historical and contemporary conditions of inequity and learn from historically marginalized voices. Students learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and are empowered as agents of positive social change.



Learn more about the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

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What is Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education?

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved without incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work (see also New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and

imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Culturally responsive education is about teaching the students in front of you. To do this requires that one work to get to know their students and develop meaningful relationships with students while engaging in the students' communities. However, culturally responsive education must also be sustaining, that is it must work to encourage cultural pluralism and not cultural assimilation. Home and youth culture should be welcomed into the classroom as areas ripe for discussion. Differences should not just be seen as strengths, but they should also be maintained because



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they are what make students and families unique. How educators understand culture has real consequences for our children as a limited understanding of culture has the power to disadvantage some while privileging others (Kirkland, 2012).

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The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework aligns closely with other NYSED policies, including The New York State Board of Regents and the NYSED Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA plan), specifically:

- * Recognize the effect of school environment on student academic performance and support efforts to improve the climate of all schools.

- * Promote a relationship of trust and respect between schools and families, recognizing that student achievement and school improvement are shared responsibilities.
- * Provide educators with opportunities for continual professional learning in the areas of equity, anti-bias, multicultural, and culturally responsive-sustaining pedagogies.
- * Support districts and their communities in engaging in critical conversations about culturally responsive-sustaining educational systems.

NYSED recognizes that for culturally responsive-sustaining education to thrive, the impetus cannot be placed solely on students, teachers, and school leaders; all stakeholders must work together to create the conditions under which this vision of education can flourish. NYSED believes that we must incorporate an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of the state's work to achieve student success outcomes for all students.



Learn more about the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

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What is the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework? Why now for New York State?

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved without incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work (see also New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and

imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education stakeholders in developing and

What is culture?

The New York State Education Department understands culture as the multiple components of one's identity, including but not limited to: race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability. Culture far transcends practices such as cuisines, art, music, and celebrations to also include ways of thinking, values, and forms of expression. These ways and forms are in constant flux, renegotiation, and evolution. Schools then become a meeting point for cultures, containing children and adults who bring with them multiple facets of their identity, along with unique experiences and perspectives.



Access the full [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports and services to promote positive student outcomes.

The CR-S Framework marks our journey forward and begins the evolution toward leveraging difference as an asset. The framework is grounded in four principles:

- * Welcoming and affirming environment
- * High expectations and rigorous instruction
- * Inclusive curriculum and assessment
- * Ongoing professional learning

Each principle is illustrated by a set of features rooted in elements of quality education that illustrate how CR-S might look in practice across a range of domains, from the State Education Department to the classroom. The framework represents an opportunity for stakeholders to continue to work together and plan for the unique needs of their communities. The New York State Education Department recognizes much of this work is already happening across the state and looks forward to an even deeper understanding of culturally responsive-sustaining education in New York State schools, districts, and communities.

Who is involved in implementing the CR-S Education Framework?

Everyone! To make the CR-S Framework a reality, the Department, under the Board of Regents, has created a framework for CR-S practices. The framework is intended to be used by a variety of education stakeholders, including but not limited to students, teachers, school and district leaders, families and community members, higher education faculty and administrators, and Education Department policymakers.



**Welcoming
and affirming
environment**



**High
expectations
and rigorous
instruction**



**Inclusive
curriculum and
assessment**



**Ongoing
professional
learning**



Learn more about the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

This brief was developed by the Region 2 Comprehensive Center in partnership with the New York State Education Department. The Region 2 Comprehensive Center is funded by a grant from the Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.



Why should schools focus on the cultures of their students?

The New York State Education Department understands culture as the multiple components of one's identity, including but not limited to: race, economic background, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, and ability. Culture far transcends practices such as cuisines, art, music, and celebrations to also include ways of thinking, values, and forms of expression. These ways and forms are in constant flux, renegotiation, and evolution. Schools then become a meeting point for cultures, containing children and adults who bring with them multiple facets of their identity, along with unique experiences and perspectives.

From this perspective, learning is rooted in the lives and experiences of people and cultivated through activities that people find meaningful. When teaching is not rooted in students' lives, student learning suffers. Perhaps worse, biases take hold and deficit perspectives become normalized throughout our schools and classrooms, structuring entire systems that blame students for failure.

The school community is representative of many cultures, and therefore culture has consequences on how students experience schools. The framework is intentional about the relationship between culture and education, presenting a multi-tiered

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systems approach for cultural inclusion that broadens what ethnic groups, classes, sexualities, and abilities are privileged in the creation and maintenance of traditional education.

Research suggests that many students whose cultures are more closely aligned with the “cultural fabric” of schools experience praise and are viewed as more dedicated than those whose home cultures differ. Educators committed to understanding both the concept of culture and many different cultures

can refocus their lens for viewing students’ cultures not as “deficiencies to overcome” (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87), but as assets. Students from different cultures possess vibrant realities and rich reservoirs of knowledge. By making all cultures matter, our students’ cultures can be positioned as strengths and as the foundation of empowering, rigorous, and innovative learning.



Learn more about the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

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| NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP (K-12) | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Phase I: Raise Awareness and Support for the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework | Responsible for Implementation* | | | | Implementation Notes |
| Key Implementation Activities | NYSED | S/CDN & BOCES | Local Schools and Districts | Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community) | Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local district or organization) |
| 1.1: Publish Framework Briefs and Roadmap of CR-S Education Framework Implementation | ✓ | | | | |
| 1.2: Present virtual and/or face to face sessions that allow participants to unpack the CR-S Framework and share the Framework briefs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 1.3: Establish forums and meetings to build understanding of and support for the Framework | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 1.4: Unpack key vocabulary and concepts from CR-S Framework | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 1.5: Utilize electronic communication and social media to inform stakeholders (students, parents/caregivers, community members, youth organizations, non-profits) of resources/briefs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 1.6: Create stakeholder-specific materials to introduce the CR-S Framework | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

| <p align="center">NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP</p> | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Phase I: Raise Awareness and Support for the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework</p> | <p align="center">Responsible for Implementation*</p> | | | | <p align="center">Implementation Notes</p> |
| <p align="center">Key Implementation Activities</p> | <p align="center">NYSED</p> | <p align="center">S/CDN & BOCES</p> | <p align="center">Local Schools and Districts</p> | <p align="center">Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community)</p> | <p align="center">Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local districts or organization)</p> |
| <p>1.7: Institute a series of community and parent/caregiver forums on culturally responsive-sustaining education (translated and offered in multiple languages and modes of communication)</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>1.8: Provide opportunities to collect input from the community, and to increase stakeholder involvement in supporting implementation statewide</p> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>1.9: Conduct district and school level pre- and post-assessments of CR-S awareness</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| <p>1.10: Examine and explore resources that may be available for implementation of CR-S (both within and outside the district)</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

[Phase I Resources](#)

Measurements: NYSED Phase I survey template, plus other local measures and questionnaires

| <p align="center">NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP</p> | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Phase II: Build Capacity for the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework</p> | <p>Responsible for Implementation*</p> | | | | <p>Implementation Notes</p> |
| <p>Key Implementation Activities</p> | <p>NYSED</p> | <p>S/CDN & BOCES</p> | <p>Local Schools and Districts</p> | <p>Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community)</p> | <p>Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local districts or organization)</p> |
| <p>2.1: Professional development for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers and professionals • School leaders and administrators (board members, superintendents, principals and other administrative officials) • All school staff • Students • PTA/PTSA leadership and other parent/family leaders • Higher education teacher/administration programs • Communities and families | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | ✓ | | | | |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>2.2: Create student-based groups/committee that would lead to student designed and executed professional learning opportunities</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>2.3: Sharing of strategies, practices, and professional learning activities by partners who are implementing the CR-S Education Framework</p> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>2.4: Promote communications to ensure cohesive messaging related to the framework across partners</p> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

| <p align="center">NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP</p> | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Phase II: Build Capacity for the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework</p> | <p>Responsible for Implementation*</p> | | | | <p>Implementation Notes</p> |
| <p>Key Implementation Activities</p> | <p>NYSED</p> | <p>S/CDN & BOCES</p> | <p>Local Schools and Districts</p> | <p>Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community)</p> | <p>Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local districts or organization)</p> |
| <p>2.5: School Districts audit/review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum/instruction and assessment on inclusiveness and implicit biases (including parents, caregivers, students, and community feedback) to the extent practicable. Analyze school data for indicators of biases and gaps in opportunities, such as: student placement to gifted & talented and special education services, course placement (includes access to AP, high school coursework, advanced coursework, IB courses), suspensions, attendance | | <p align="center">✓</p> | <p align="center">✓</p> | | |
| <p>2.6: School or District audit/review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School environment and all district school policies and activities, including interview processes and hiring policies, teacher diversity, and all employee and volunteer training. (including parents, caregivers, students, and community feedback) to the extent practicable. | | <p align="center">✓</p> | <p align="center">✓</p> | | |

[Phase II Resources](#)

| <p style="text-align: center;">NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP</p> | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Phase III: Full Implementation of the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework</p> | <p>Responsible for Implementation*</p> | | | | <p>Implementation Notes</p> |
| <p>Key Implementation Activities</p> | <p>NYSED</p> | <p>S/CDN & BOCES</p> | <p>Local Schools and Districts</p> | <p>Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community)</p> | <p>Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local district or organization)</p> |
| <p>3.1 Ongoing community and professional learning based on identified needs regarding equity. Learning sessions could include, but not be limited to the following (for stakeholders to refine implementation based on identified needs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School infrastructure and systems • How to have tough conversations • Reflecting on yourself, your role, and implicit bias | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| <p>3.2 Ongoing Local and grade/curriculum-based planning opportunities for alignment of CR-S Education Framework</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| <p>3.3 Formative assessment/status check at school level: (Where you are and where you want to be as pursuant to your school/district plan)</p> | | ✓ | ✓ | | |

| NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Phase III: Full Implementation of the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Framework | Responsible for Implementation* | | | | Implementation Notes |
| Key Implementation Activities | NYSED | S/CDN & BOCES | Local Schools and Districts | Other Groups (Parents, caregivers, students, community) | Action Steps Taken (To be completed by local district or organization) |
| 3.4 Ongoing Self-assessment reviews of protocols, policy changes, meetings and written decisions (organizational commitment) related to district-level CR-S goals. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student placement to gifted and talented and special education services as well as other courses • suspensions • attendance • teacher diversity (tracking) • resources | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| 3.5 Continuation of auditing curricula materials to ensure implementation of the updated curriculum, including new materials. Maintain communication as needed. | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| 3.6 Continue community (parents/caregivers, students, and community members) dialogues, gathering feedback to inform and guide-implementation process. Create shared governance structures (advisory committees, policy committees.) that include both school and community participants to assist in the implementation of the CR-S Education Framework. | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

[Phase III Resources](#)

| NYSED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE-SUSTAINING EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP RESOURCES (To the extent possible parent and caregiver resources will be translated) | | |
|--|---|--|
| Raising Awareness-PHASE 1 | Building Capacity-PHASE 2 | Full Implementation-PHASE 3 |
| <p>Resources provided by NYSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website with supporting resources and videos • Framework briefs, Professional Development Toolkits with slides, and Frequently Asked Questions • Communications toolkit for amplifying CR-S messages • District/state survey and public forum opportunities <p>Resources to be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally created professional development focused on educator training and community needs • Pre/post local district survey • List of vocabulary activities and concepts; translations of words and languages available for parents • Toolkit or flyer for parents and videos | <p>Resources provided by NYSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications toolkit (e.g. social media, messaging, etc.) for resources and professional development (asynchronous and synchronous modes) • Learning standards, including any review or updates, will reflect the culturally diverse needs of all students • Curriculum auditing tool for school materials (texts, lessons, etc.) • Auditing tool for local district policies (hiring, school data, student placement) <p>Resources to be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally created professional development focused on educator training and community needs • Examples of printed professional development activities for Phase 2 • A culturally responsive check-up or tool for parent/family leaders • Student clubs and opportunity for feedback from student groups about CR-S • Additional tools for curricular audit resources for instructional audit • Local district and schools will explore ways to share data to support equity and inclusion (includes access to AP, high school coursework, advanced coursework, suspensions, attendance, etc.). | <p>Resources provided by NYSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing updated NYSED website with professional development for CR-S resources and tools. • Communications toolkit containing messaging and updates. • Social Emotional Learning <p>Resources to be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally created professional development focused on educator training and community needs • Ongoing local curricular review of all texts and materials across content areas for bias and cultural responsiveness • Current research on best practices for instruction • Communication tools for sharing updates and feedback between community-based organizations and schools |

Communication Strategies and Building Allies in a Charged Political Environment

Thursday, July 29, 2021 from 10:30am - 12:30pm ET

Facilitated by [Jennifer Kotting, PhD](#), Communications Strategist with the Partnership for the Future of Learning (see the [Truth Bridges Divides](#) guide), and consultant for the Oregon Department of Education, Coalition of Oregon School Administrators, and Alaska Superintendents Association. PR Firm, Berlin Rosen, will be present during the media training to answer questions.

Description: Everyone is getting ready to go back to school, not only while recovering from a difficult year due to the pandemic, but also amidst a conflict over racial equity in schools related to “Critical Race Theory.” This workshop will unpack how to prepare for conversations, interviews, and messaging in a charged media and political environment. Participants will gain access to tools to develop a strong communications and engagement plan with messages tuned for their audience. In the second hour, there will be a brief media training specific to the topic with a PR firm present to field questions. Participants will also receive key talking points for how to bridge divides in order to ensure a calm, equitable, and welcoming school environment so that the practice of culturally responsive, affirming, and sustaining education can grow.

Meeting Logistics

1. Participants are asked to review and follow the attached meeting agreements as we'll be discussing challenging topics.
2. Due to a large number of participants, questions will be fielded during planned Q&A portions of each workshop. In addition to the presenter, Berlin Rosen, a PR firm with team members based in NY, will also be available to field questions during the Media Training portion.
3. Several volunteers may be requested to share thoughts about their experiences or to be a part of a short role-play radio “interview.”
4. The meeting will not be recorded, and a condition for participation is that it is not recorded by any participant. However, neither the facilitator nor NYSED can guarantee that all participants will comply with that request.
5. NYSED will work with groups to continue the dialog, guidance development, and resources following the workshop in order to support districts.
6. A full slide deck and additional resources are attached.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative Rationale

Our Why

The NYS Board of Regents believes that every student, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, language spoken, socio-economic status, faith, or place of residence, has the right to a rich, supportive, and engaging educational experience.

- All students must graduate from high school with academic and career options.
- This requires educational opportunities that challenge students to develop and sustain the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to fulfill their responsibilities in life and work.
- Achieving this goal requires equity in the allocation of the resources and supports necessary for development and delivery of high-quality, culturally affirming education.

New York State is one of the most diverse states in the nation and the Board of Regents has long held a commitment to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- It is the policy of the Board of Regents that all NYS education programs, practices, instructional materials, and learning environments are culturally responsive, of high quality, value the inherent strengths of our diversity and advance equity and inclusion.

Our Sense of Urgency

The convergence of long-standing social, cultural, and economic inequities, with the COVID-19 pandemic, and its well documented, disproportionate impact on various communities, brings urgency to our work:

- It has further exposed the deep-rooted disparities and the enduring legacy of barriers to equality faced by so many of our students.
- It has laid bare the moral and economic imperative to remove inequities that stand in the way of success for whole segments of New York's student population.

The NYS Board of Regents expects all school districts to develop and implement strategies, policies and practices that will permanently remove the barriers to student academic achievement, improved school outcomes and student wellbeing that are associated with ethnicity, race, faith, family structure, socio-economic status, sexual orientation / gender identification, ability and mental health.

Our What

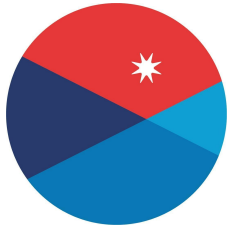
Every New York school district will develop and adopt a diversity, equity, and inclusion education policy. These policies will address the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access to educational opportunity in the school community.

- The goal of these locally developed policies is to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.
- These policies will support academic achievement and the adoption of student-centered learning structures and pedagogical practices.
- They will spur innovation in the delivery of educational opportunity for all and build confidence, trust, respect, caring, and relationship-building throughout the school community.

Our Expectations

It is the expectation of the NYS Board of Regents that the Department, schools, and districts will implement DEI policies and practices with urgency and fidelity.

- The NYS Board and Department will create a Workgroup on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and all NYS school districts / superintendents will set up district-based DEI Committees.
- All DEI policies will, at a minimum, address how the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion will be advanced through the following: organizational governance, teaching and learning, culturally responsive and sustaining practices, workforce recruitment and retention, family and community engagement, the value of diverse schools as a source of learning opportunities, strategies that counter the “Single Story Narrative”, creation of civic engagement opportunities for students, student support and wellness, and the role of racism and bigotry in the American story.



Last updated October 2020

These group agreements were formed and used for meetings over the past several years. When using them, it works best to make them visible at key times when new groups are gathering, and invite the group to add values-aligned agreements that will ensure their productive and collaborative participation!

Partnership Group Agreements

- Trust is earned, *and* let's start from a place of respect and alignment with our shared vision and values, and willingness to build trust together.
- Lead with curious questions instead of critical assumptions. Check in with your familiarity with the topic at hand as you self-moderate.
- Dovetail new ideas into our collaborative network process. We are conversing and building together, not selling or pitching.
- Assume best intent, and attend to impact. We can and should engage tension without fueling drama.
- Share space, and help collectively balance the insights of verbal and quick processors with the wisdom of those who might seem more quiet.
- Create a more inclusive and welcoming experience together by limiting our reliance on acronyms, insider information, and jargon.
- Keep confidentiality sacred. Lessons can be shared, but keep details, people, and plans private.
- Pay attention by looking out for your neighbors, yourself, race, ability, space-taking, group dynamics, tokenization, age, and gender pronouns.
- Take care of your body by making breaks for yourself when needed, including going off screen when in a virtual setting.
- If requesting work to be performed, think about who you're asking to do the work and how others might participate, including you!



PARTNERSHIP
FOR THE
FUTURE of
LEARNING

JKOTTING

Communication Strategies and Building Allies in a Charged Political Environment

Presented to NYSED on July 29, 2021

**PT. 1
COMMUNICATING
WITH YOUR SCHOOL
COMMUNITY**

- Preparing for Challenging Conversations
- Sample Messages for School Communities
- Sharing Knowledge: *What's working?*

10 minute break

**PT. 2
MEDIA
TRAINING**

- Media Training: Top 10 Tips
- Bridging Techniques & Interview Prep
- Anticipate Challenging Questions*
- Podcast Role Play!*
- Q&A with Berlin Rosen, PR Firm



AGENDA

MEETING AGREEMENTS

- Trust is earned, *and* let's start from a place of respect and alignment.
- Lead with curious questions instead of critical assumptions.
- Assume best intent, and attend to impact.
- Share space, and help collectively balance the insights of verbal and quick processors with the wisdom of those who might seem more quiet.
- Keep confidentiality sacred. Lessons can be shared, but keep details, people, and plans private. Please do not record any part of this call without permission.
- Pay attention by looking out for your neighbors, yourself, race, ability, space-taking, group dynamics, tokenization, age, and gender pronouns.
- Take care of your body by making breaks for yourself when needed, including going off screen when in a virtual setting.
- If requesting work to be performed, think about who you're asking to do the work and how others might participate, including you!

These group agreements were formed by the Partnership for the Future of Learning and used for meetings over the past several years. When using them, it works best to make them visible at key times when new groups are gathering, and invite the group to add values-aligned agreements that will ensure their productive and collaborative participation!



What's unfolding in your districts?

Let's hear from 3 volunteers.

PREPARING FOR
CHALLENGING
CONVERSATIONS



Effective approaches to challenging conversations: Start the conversation with boundaries and clarity

- **Invite direct conversation to prevent spread & escalation**

"I'd like to connect with you about your concerns directly. Would you be willing to speak with me one-on-one before you bring your concerns to other groups of people?"

- **Set time, tone, and purpose (in advance if you can).**

"I'm looking forward to a constructive conversation during our 30 minutes together. First, I'd like to hear more about your perspective, and I'll fill you in about how decisions are being made towards the end."

- **Establish connection**

"I want to get to know you better..." and "Let's figure this out together."

- **Ask for clarity**

"Help me understand better why you're saying..." / "Tell me more about your concerns when it comes to..."

- **Use tone and non-verbal cues to your advantage**

★ Effective approaches to challenging conversations



Shared using CC license from NNAF. Presenter, Jenni Kotting, created this graphic.

Spectrum of emotion graphic - useful for goalsetting and prepping for challenging conversations



Effective approaches to challenging conversations: Continuing and ending the conversation

- **Empathize and ask for fair consideration in return**

"I see how much you care about your child. I hope you can understand that it's my responsibility to show the same level of care for all students in our [school/district]... that's why..."

- **Establish expectations and gain consent to offer clarity**

"Based on what you shared earlier, I believe I can alleviate your concerns by providing you with more information. Would you like to learn more?"

- **Support staff with success stories**

Consider sharing a story about that educator in action or about a similar classroom activity and how you've seen it work well.

- **End the conversation with an ask**

"Thank you for your time today. As you continue to think about this issue, I hope you will bring additional questions and concerns to me directly."

★ Effective approaches to challenging conversations: Approaches to consider, depending on the situation

- Describe what really happens in the classroom and alleviating fears of “worst case scenarios.
- Share an end goal that is difficult to disagree with.
- Emphasize efforts & responsibility to bring people together.
- Get real with people about pain points but talking about what is possible now and in the future.
- Emphasize the importance of students feeling connected to the curriculum they are receiving.

- Describing what really happens in the classroom and alleviating fears of “worst case scenarios.” Telling people what’s happening in the classroom and why it’s beneficial to all students helps to set expectations, avoid escalation, and alleviate fears. Sharing what you’ve seen teachers and students accomplishing through storytelling is a powerful way of doing this.
- Describe the end goal that no one can disagree with: *Our district’s goal is to make sure every student has equal opportunities to succeed in school and has access to accurate, comprehensive and relevant curriculum. We are ensuring that each and every student has access to knowledge and skills as well as opportunities to grow, learn and thrive.*
- Bringing communities together - this works well if you have a group who is emphasizing divides: *Being at school should mean being a part of the community while working together to build on our strength and bridge what has divided us in the past.*
 - If needed, reject the bigger political conflict in favor of unity and interdependence in local school community: *Coordinated efforts to control curriculum come from aggressive, politically motivated instigators/politicians who want to stop educators and districts from working toward racial equity. We’re not going to let that happen, and we’re not going to let fear get in the way of a great start to the school year.*

- Being real with people about pain points but talking about what is possible now and in the future: *It's important to acknowledge the long and painful history of race and education in our state. Students are ready for systems and institutions to change for the better, and that's why our district is making sure racial equity is central.*
- Being vocal about the importance of students feeling connected to the curriculum they are receiving: *When educators teach about the cultures and identities of students in the classroom, students start to see themselves as part of a bigger story. They are affirmed and validated by having their unique histories and experiences elevated among their teachers and peers.*

SAMPLE MESSAGES

- As [leadership role], my responsibility is to support our district and bridge divides in order to ensure a calm, coordinated, and welcoming school environment — so that teaching and learning can continue as planned.
- When teachers talk about culture and race, they give students mirrors that reflect their identity and windows into the world to connect with other cultures.
- When students see themselves and each other in the curriculum, they have better relationships with their classmates, the classroom environment is calmer, and the school climate as a whole is improved.
- It's important to acknowledge the long and painful history of race and education in our state. Students are ready for systems and institutions to change for the better — that's why our district is making sure racial equity is central in the work we have ahead.
- Learning about truthful histories can bring up a range of emotions in young people and adults. That's why our learning environments are designed to serve as an intentional space for listening, sharing stories, and deepening relationships across our differences.

- As [leadership role], my responsibility is to support our district and bridge divides in order to ensure a calm, coordinated, and welcoming school environment so that teaching and learning can continue as planned.
- Learning about different histories, races, and cultures helps us build connections across our differences. When teachers talk about culture and race, they give students mirrors that reflect their identity and windows into the world to connect with other cultures.
- When students see themselves and each other in the curriculum, they have better relationships with their classmates, the classroom environment is calmer, and the school climate as a whole is improved.
- It can be daunting to face a big, national debate about race and education that's starting to impact our local schools, but we can move forward as planned with our school year if we commit to building strong relationships in our community and having direct conversations about issues that arise.
- Our work to [describe equity/culturally responsive work] is designed to benefit the specific students in our district. [Tell a short story about how it's working.]
- It's important to acknowledge the long and painful history of race and education in our state. Students are ready for systems and institutions to change for the better, and that's why our district is making sure racial equity is central.
- Learning about truthful histories can bring up a range of emotions in young

- people and adults. That's why our learning environments create intentional space for listening, sharing stories, and deepening relationships across our differences. These are the conditions for genuine belonging.



✦ What's working well in
your districts?

Let's hear from 3 volunteers.

**SHARING
KNOWLEDGE**



10 Minute Break

Next up, media training...

INTERMISSION

PT. 1
COMMUNICATING
WITH YOUR SCHOOL
COMMUNITY

- Preparing for Challenging Conversations
- Sample Messages for School Communities
- Sharing Knowledge: *What's working?*

10 minute break

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MEDIA
TRAINING

- Media Training: Top 10 Tips
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- Anticipate Challenging Questions*
- Podcast Role Play!*
- Q&A with Berlin Rosen, PR Firm



AGENDA

★ TOP 10 TIPS

1. Vet thoroughly before accepting.
2. Set aside time to prepare.
3. The reporter is not your audience.
4. Start from a place of strong values.
5. Decide on a personal story.
6. Don't dwell on details or past mistakes.
7. Know what NOT to say.
8. Avoid repeating what you disagree with.
9. Seek support as needed.
10. Prepare the final thing you'd like to say.

What else do you recommend? Share in chat.

- Vet Thoroughly: Before responding, always vet the person thoroughly. Don't assume they are unbiased or operating in good faith, as there have been many incidents where the reverse has been true.
- If you accept the interview, then it's time to prepare. Before any interview, think about the most important points you want to make. Your goal in any interaction with a reporter should be to convey your key points/messages.
- In an interview, you are not talking to the reporter: you're talking to the audience that media outlet reaches. To reach that audience, you must stick to your messages. Think through your three key talking points and find creative ways to repeat them. Don't feel the need to provide a direct answer to every question a reporter asks. What do you want them/your audience to know? If you feel like you're repeating yourself...you're doing it right!
- Start with values and commitment to making sure all students receive an equitable, high quality education.
- A personal story can help make your messaging memorable, have lasting impact, and demonstrate real-world experience and authority on an issue. Weave yours into your messaging.
- Don't get too caught up in details and past mistakes. Emphasize solutions and future plans. Respond in a way that is supportive to educators and staff, particularly staff of color. Media that sensationalize equity and stir up fear will do so no matter what you say. It's important to stay calm and on message.

- Know what NOT to say. Don't go "off the record" - any part of a conversation, even before or after an interview, can be on the record.
 - Note that we have examples of recorded district activities being brought to the news, or even people recording phone calls. On this topic, you may end up on the record, even outside of an interview setting, without knowing it - in any number of professional situations.
 - Reporters are trained to listen and even take lengthy pauses between questions, so it's important to stop talking when you have delivered your message.
 - Never say "no comment." - It doesn't advance your messages and can make you look deceptive/like you're hiding something.
 - If you don't know the answer to a question, it's okay to say, "Let me get back to you on that."
- Avoid traps: Don't adopt your frames you are not in agreement with. Try not to repeat back language from the reporter's question, especially when answering in the negative (ie. "No, accepting this funding doesn't signal our approval of...")
- Seek support as needed, such as further media training, digital privacy support, PR support, and messaging guidance as needed.
- Prepare the final thing you'd like to say. Even if you repeat yourself, the audience will remember the last thing you said better than something in the middle of a segment.

BRIDGING TECHNIQUES

1. Let me tell you what the real issue is...
2. I don't know about that, but what I can say is...
3. That may be up for debate right now, but what isn't up for debate is...
4. I can tell you from my own experience...
5. I can't speak to that, but I can tell you that...
6. I've been [teaching/working in education] for X years and what I've seen is...
7. That's not quite right. The fact of the matter is...
8. That's not what the pushback around Critical Race Theory is truly about. It's about...
9. Our only agenda is improving education and equity for each and every student.
10. It's important to understand that at the *heart* of the issue is...

If a question takes you off your chosen message, bridge back to it with phrases like:

- a. Let me tell you what the real issue is...
- b. I don't know about that, but what I can say is...
- c. That may be up for debate right now, but what isn't up for debate is...
- d. I can tell you from my own experience...
- e. I can't speak to that, but I can tell you that...
- f. I've been [teaching/working in education] for X years and what I've seen is...
- g. That's not quite right. The fact of the matter is...
- h. That's not what the pushback around Critical Race Theory is truly about. It's about...
- i. Our only agenda is improving education and equity for each and every student.
- j. It's important to understand that at the heart of the issue is...

★ HOW TO PREPARE THOROUGHLY

1. Who am I talking to (Who is my real audience)?
2. What do I want to say (What are my top three messages)? A good message is a short, compelling roadmap that does three things:
 - a. Defines the problem you're trying to solve
 - b. Outlines your broad vision for a solution
 - c. Offers specific actions your audiences can take to solve the problem
3. **What's the toughest question I might be asked? How do I want to respond?** *Share in chat.*

- Who am I talking to (Who is my real audience)?
- What do I want to say (What are my top three messages)? A good message is a short, compelling roadmap that does three things:
 - Defines the problem you're trying to solve
 - Outlines your broad vision for a solution
 - Offers specific actions your audiences can take to solve the problem
- **What's the toughest question I might be asked? How do I want to respond?**

SAMPLE MESSAGES

- As [leadership role], my responsibility is to support our district and bridge divides in order to ensure a calm, coordinated, and welcoming school environment — so that teaching and learning can continue as planned.
- When teachers talk about culture and race, they give students mirrors that reflect their identity and windows into the world to connect with other cultures.
- When students see themselves and each other in the curriculum, they have better relationships with their classmates, the classroom environment is calmer, and the school climate as a whole is improved.
- It's important to acknowledge the long and painful history of race and education in our state. Students are ready for systems and institutions to change for the better — that's why our district is making sure racial equity is central in the work we have ahead.
- Learning about truthful histories can bring up a range of emotions in young people and adults. That's why our learning environments are designed to serve as an intentional space for listening, sharing stories, and deepening relationships across our differences.

- As [leadership role], my responsibility is to support our district and bridge divides in order to ensure a calm, coordinated, and welcoming school environment so that teaching and learning can continue as planned.
- Learning about different histories, races, and cultures helps us build connections across our differences. When teachers talk about culture and race, they give students mirrors that reflect their identity and windows into the world to connect with other cultures.
- When students see themselves and each other in the curriculum, they have better relationships with their classmates, the classroom environment is calmer, and the school climate as a whole is improved.
- It can be daunting to face a big, national debate about race and education that's starting to impact our local schools, but we can move forward as planned with our school year if we commit to building strong relationships in our community and having direct conversations about issues that arise.
- Our work to [describe equity/culturally responsive work] is designed to benefit the specific students in our district. [Tell a short story about how it's working.]
- It's important to acknowledge the long and painful history of race and education in our state. Students are ready for systems and institutions to change for the better, and that's why our district is making sure racial equity is central.
- Learning about truthful histories can bring up a range of emotions in young

- people and adults. That's why our learning environments create intentional space for listening, sharing stories, and deepening relationships across our differences. These are the conditions for genuine belonging.



PARTNERSHIP
FOR THE
FUTURE of
LEARNING

JKOTTING

Questions?
Share your knowledge.

NYS Board of Regents Initiative on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

We will create and sustain safe, nurturing and engaging learning environments for **ALL** students.

*"Diversity is not our problem. It is our promise."
-- Elijah Cummings*

WELCOMED AND SUPPORTED

- Diversity means a wide range of human qualities and attributes
- Diversity is an educational and social asset for ALL
- Respecting diversity helps us meet the physical, social and emotional needs of ALL

*"Always remember that you are absolutely unique.
Just like everyone else."
-- Margaret Mead*

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED

- Equity means fair treatment and opportunity for ALL
- Equity is fair access to programs, classes and needed supports
- Equity prepares ALL students to be actively engaged citizens

*"There is only one way to see things, until someone shows us
how to look at them with different eyes."
-- Pablo Picasso*

CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND EXPERIENCES

- Inclusion means recognizing, understanding and accepting ALL
- Inclusion teaches and models respect for ALL
- Inclusion makes ALL feel safe, supported and valued

*"Diversity is being invited to the dance. Inclusion is being asked to dance.
Equity is allowing you to choose the music." -- Cynthia Olmedo*

School District Communications & Engagement Planning Worksheet

To use this view-only worksheet, make a copy to your drive or download as a .docx file. Modify to fit your needs and community; keep or delete prompts and example text based on what's most helpful to you; and fill out whatever you can as a starting point for a more detailed plan of action.

Step 1: Assess the Situation

| Consideration | What do you know so far? |
|--|--|
| <i>What do you know about your school community's likely response to this situation? What is the likelihood of escalation?</i> | |
| <i>What is at stake or at risk depending on the approach you take and decisions you make?</i> | |
| <i>How will people be impacted? Who is likely to be affected most based on how your school district reacts to this issue?</i> | Try to break this out for different groups, such as students who are closest to the issue, community relationships, etc. |
| <i>What is there that can be gained or strengthened?</i> | |
| <i>What is in your control?</i> | |
| <i>What is outside of your control?</i> | |

Step 2: List 3 Desired Results

This step helps you work backwards from desired results towards shaping your plan and approach.

| Goals | |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Ex. What will happen with those most affected or at risk? |
| 2 | Ex. What will happen for the school community? |
| 3 | Ex. What would success look, sound, and feel like? |

School District Communications & Engagement Planning Worksheet

Step 3: Plan Engagement

To reach your goals, you'll likely need to engage specific people and groups as part of planning, decision making, and even de-escalation. Who are they, what kind of relationship do you have with them, and what will you ask them to do? Add rows as needed

| Group or person | Relationship status | Request |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| | Ex. strong, tentative, needs building | |
| | | |
| | | |

Step 4: Decide on Approach

Having analyzed risks, strengths, relationships, and what's in your control, what steps can you and your team take to reach the desired results? This can be used to create a more robust work plan.

| What needs to happen? | Who is responsible? | By when? |
|--|---------------------|----------|
| <i>Ex. How will coordination and decision making happen? (Try out Oregon's Decision Making Tool)</i> | | |
| <i>Ex. Who do you need to engage in conversation?</i> | | |
| <i>Ex. What resources or supports need to be in place?</i> | | |
| <i>Add more rows as needed</i> | | |

Step 5: Create Communication Strategy

Who needs what form of communication? What do they need to hear? What action do you want them to take?

| Audience | Communication Method | Call to Action |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Parents, families & caregivers | | |
| School board | | |
| Staff | | |
| Students | | |
| Others? | | |

School District Communications & Engagement Planning Worksheet

Step 6: Refine Key Messages

For each audience, what do you want them to know? This could be a place to write down stories and examples to ground the message as well.

| Audience | Key Message |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Parents, families & caregivers | |
| School board | |
| Staff | |
| Students | |
| Others? | |



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REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO 2021

| |
|---|
| Office: ACCES-VR |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner – Sharon Cates Williams |
| Deputy Commissioner -Ceylane Meyers-Ruff |
| Assistant Commissioner |
| Program Team: <i>At this time Ceylane, Meyers-Ruff is the lead. Additional lead staff will be identified</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: Many state vocational rehabilitation agencies across the country have creative Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committees. ACCES-VR will be developing a DEI committee comprised of staff across the state. The committee will use a DEI lens to explore the delivery of services to diverse individuals with disabilities. The committee will also explore diversity within the ACCES-VR workforce.

Current Status: Twenty staff from across the state have volunteered for the DEI committee. All staff are currently participating in SED Implicit Bias Training which should be completed by December 2020.

Next Steps: In 2022, the DEI Committee will begin meeting. It will engage in further discussion of issues raised in the Implicit Bias Trainings and explore the work of DEI committees in other vocational rehabilitation agencies across the country to prioritize areas of focus for ACCES-VR.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Administrative Support Staff, District Office Managers and Central Office Staff.

Relevant Documents: n/a

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO

2021

| |
|--|
| Office: P-12 Curriculum and Instruction |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>James Baldwin</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner <i>Dr. Kimberly Wilkins</i> |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>Marybeth Casey</i> |
| Program Team: Shannon Logan, Director of Curriculum Services, Erik Sweet, Supervisor of Educational Programs, Catherine Coons Assistant in Instructional Services |
| |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Initiative Overview & Goal: The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education

Framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking. The framework was designed to support education stakeholders in developing and implementing policies that educate all students effectively and equitably, as well as provide appropriate supports and services to promote positive student outcomes. The Curriculum office is engaged in an initiative to assist districts in the Implementation of the Framework in their school communities. Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education pedagogy and curriculum is an essential and necessary element for a school community as they move toward and implement Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

Current Status: Over the past year, the CR-SE work has been informed by the CR-SE Strategy Team, which includes 22 classroom teachers, administrators, the WestEd Comprehensive Center, and partners from across New York State. On the NYSED CR-SE website, we have posted the implementation Roadmap, several summary briefs for training, and have other resources forthcoming, such as a professional development toolkit and an educator blog. Additionally, staff from the Department have presented an overview of CR-SE to educators and groups across New York State. The Strategy Team and the work will continue in 2021-2022.

- ✓ Published the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Roadmap for Implementation, with three phases and activities
- ✓ Presented CR-S Framework to districts, BOCES, teachers, and professional organizations throughout the year
- ✓ Published the CR-S website with easy access to the Framework, Roadmap, and other resources
- ✓ Convened a Statewide Strategy group with 22 members, including teachers, administrators, professional organizations, and partners
- ✓ Published a series of CR-S Summary briefs with a forthcoming Professional Development Toolkit
- ✓ Began planning for CR-S Youth Forums, to gather information on CR-S and necessary resources
- ✓ Created educator series with entries about CR-S in schools

Next Steps:

- ✓ Facilitate more training on the CR-S Framework and Roadmap, including virtual webinars and a professional development toolkit
- ✓ Share stories of CRS/DEI initiatives across the state to encourage communication and collaboration between schools, districts, and BOCES
- ✓ Work with the National Equity Assistance Center to provide expertise to support schools and districts as they implement CRS/DEI
- ✓ Continue Strategy Team meetings to gather stakeholder feedback and review resources
- ✓ Build educator blog and support a community of practice around CRS and DEI
- ✓ Plan for student youth forums; partner with schools, districts, and BOCES for this project
- ✓ Continue to partner with the Comprehensive Center, S/CDN, and districts
- ✓ Listen to our partners to see how we can help them with this work

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: Internal: Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages. External: CRSE Strategy Team: 22 classroom teachers, administrators, BOCES Representatives, Region II Comprehensive Center

Relevant Documents: the CRSE [Website](#), The [Roadmap](#) for implementation of CRSE, and CRSE [Summary Briefs](#)

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO 2021

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|---|
| Office: P-20/Student Support Services |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>Jim Baldwin</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>Kathleen DeCataldo</i> |
| Program Team: <i>In addition to the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, please list the program staff with title who are leading the initiative as well as other team members that should be included. If cross collaboration, please list those staff from other program areas and/or Executive staff ie. Communications, Governmental Relations, CFO.</i> <i>Michele Shahan, Student Support Services</i> <i>Gwyn Marschman, Associate, Student Support Services</i> <i>Yolanda Caldwell, Project Coordinator, Girls of Color Work Group, Student Support Services</i> <i>Abigail Davies, Assistant in Education Improvement Services, Student Support Services</i> <i>Jeff DeCarlo, Assistant in Education Improvement Services, Student Support</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Initiative Overview & Goal: *Please provide a brief overview and goal.*

New York State’s Dignity For All Students Act (DASA) was signed into law in 2012 to provide students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function and was amended in 2013 to include cyberbullying and amended in 2019 with the [passing of the CROWN Act](#) which added natural hair texture and protective hairstyles to the definition of race. DASA requires schools to provide students, persons in parental roles, and staff with information about DASA and to develop policies and procedures that require a safe school environment. Specifically, DASA requires school districts to develop Codes of Conduct that prohibit harassment, bullying

(including cyberbullying), and discrimination against students by other students or school employees, as well as provisions for responding to incidents of discrimination and harassment and reporting such incidents to NYSED.

Current Status: *Please provide a brief summary of the current status of the initiative.*

NYSED Office of Student Support Services and its contracted technical assistance center the [NYS Center for School Safety \(CFSS\)](#) support schools, staff, students and parents with guidance and training. In April 2021 NYSED [amended Commissioner's Regulations](#) 100.2 and 119.6 to add hair texture and protective hairstyles to the definition of race, and illustrative examples. To support these changes NYSED has engaged the NYSED Girls of Color Workgroup (GOCW) to help develop guidance around implementing the Crown Act. The GOCW has met monthly with additional subcommittee groups to develop guidance briefs regarding the Crown Act and DASA, using a prevention frame.

Next Steps: *Please describe the next steps and include a timeline for the initiative in the next six months.*

In the coming months, with the input of the Girls of Color Workgroup, NYSED will be releasing a series of guidance briefs to support the implementation of the Crown Act starting with the release of the *Building an Understanding of the CROWN Act* on October 11, 2021 to coincide with UNICEF's International Day of the Girl. Additional technical guidance briefs on *Identifying and Investigating DASA CROWN Act Incidents* and *Responding to DASA CROWN Act Incidents* will be released this winter.

In addition, the CFSS and NYSED also be disseminating a Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) training designed to assist DACs with preventing incidents through supporting and encouraging equitable, inclusive, supportive school environments, investigating, developing stronger communication between families and the school and how best to respond to incidents in via a restorative approach by supporting both the students involved in DASA incidents to ensure that they do not reoccur.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: *Please list the stakeholders that are interested in this issue.*

Students, Families, Educators, Administrators, BOCES, Charter Schools, Community members

Stakeholders participating in the Girls of Color workgroup include:

| | | |
|----------|----------------|--|
| Kathleen | DeCataldo | Assistant Commissioner, NYSED |
| Yolanda | Caldwell | Program Coordinator, NYSED |
| Kim | Wilkins | Deputy Commissioner, NYSED P12 |
| Marybeth | Casey | Assistant Commissioner |
| Carri | Manchester | Associate, NYSED, Office of Student Support Services |
| Judy | Swierczewski | Attorney, NYSED |
| Gwyn | Marschman | Associate, NYSED Office of Student Support Services |
| Sean | Brown | Associate, NYSED ACCESS, Equity and Community Engagement |
| Sharon | Cates-Williams | Executive Deputy Commissioner, NYSED |

| | | |
|-----------|----------------|---|
| Kaweeda | Adams | Superintendent, Albany CSD |
| Jasmine | Gripper | Executive Director, AQENY |
| Kaliris | Salas-Ramirez | Distinguished Medical Lecturer |
| Tajh | Sutton | Parent Leader |
| Anzala | Alozie | Community Member |
| Shalain | Garcia | Criminal Justice Program Specialist, NYS DCJS |
| Felicia | Reid | Deputy Commissioner, DJJOY, NYS OCFS |
| Joanne | Smith | President and Executive Director, Girls for Gender Equality |
| Quadira | Coles | Policy Manager, Girls for Gender Equality |
| Dr. Debra | Lamb | Senior Director, Co-Chair, My Sister's Keeper NYC |
| Dr. Nyree | Dixon | Executive Director, Co-Chair Mu Sister's Keeper NYC |
| Roshone | Ault Lee | Principal, South Bronx Academy for Applied Media |
| Danielle | Keane | Principal, Port Morris School of Community Leadership |
| Karen | Watts | Executive Superintendent, NYCDOE |
| LeslieAnn | Dunn | Executive Director, NYCDOE Strategic Initiatives |
| Nina | Aledort | Deputy Commissioner, NYS OCFS |
| DShabnam | Javdani | Professor, NYU |
| Ebony | Belmar | Social Worker, Schenectady CSD |
| Mahsa | Jafarian | Senior Program Associate, Vera Institute of Justice |
| Hannah | Green | Program Associate, Vera Institute of Justice |
| Talia | Beaulieu-Hains | Program Associate II, Vera Institute of Justice |
| James | Schuler | Youth Advocate, Wayne County Youth Advocate Program & Chairman of the Board, My Brother's Keeper Wayne County |

Relevant Documents: *Please also include the link(s) to relevant documents in this section.*

- Dignity for All Students Act [Education Law Article 2 Chapter 16, Title 1](#)
- [Amendment to Commissioner's Regulation 100.2 \(jj\) \(kk\)](#)
- The [NYSED Dignity Act webpage](#)
- The NYS Center for School Safety DASA [resources](#) and [professional development](#)
- NYSED [SSEC/DASA reporting page](#)
- DASA [data reporting SY 2012 - 2019](#)

**REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO
2021**

| |
|--|
| Office: P-20/Student Support Services |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>Jim Baldwin</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>Kathleen DeCataldo</i> |
| Program Team: <i>In addition to the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, please list the program staff with title who are leading the initiative as well as other team members that should be included. If cross collaboration, please list those staff from other program areas and/or Executive staff ie. Communications, Governmental Relations, CFO.</i> <i>Maribeth Barney, Supervisor, Student Support Services</i> <i>Carri Manchester, Associate, Student Support Services</i> <i>Catherine Coons, Curriculum & Instruction (Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education)</i> <i>Kimberly Hardaway, Higher Education (Community and Family Engagement)</i> <i>Stephen Marchant, Special Education (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)</i> <i>Christine Radez, Curriculum & Instruction (Social Studies/Civic Readiness)</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *Please provide a brief overview and goal.*

In May, 2018, the New York State Education Department (SED) released [New York State Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks](#) for voluntary implementation and [Social Emotional Learning: Essential for Learning, Essential for Life](#), a framework explaining SEL concepts, and the need for and benefit of social emotional learning (SEL) in NY. This was followed in March, 2019 with [Social Emotional Learning: A Guide to Systemic Whole School Implementation](#), providing strategies and resources for districts and schools, and [Social Emotional Learning Activities and](#)

[Teaching Practices](#), district-developed crosswalks aligning social emotional learning core competencies, subject area standards, sample SEL activities, and general teaching practices.

These resources were developed using the definition of SEL established by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). In addition, the resources rely upon CASEL's definitions of the five core social emotional competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

CASEL recently updated their definition of SEL (below) as well as the [definitions for each of the five core competencies](#) to reflect their work on transformative (equity-focused) SEL.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.¹

These changes make explicit how the competencies are meant to be used for empowerment of young people and adults by centering identity, agency, and belonging.

The Office of Student Support Services shares CASEL's commitment to promoting SEL that furthers educational equity and, "justice-oriented citizenship, with issues of culture, identity, agency, belonging, and engagement explored as relevant expressions of the five core SEL competencies." We are reviewing and updating our [existing benchmarks and guidance](#) and creating supplemental resources to reflect these priorities. We anticipate a series of at least three briefs will be released through the fall of 2021 and winter of 2022. These briefs will provide clear communication to the field on the ways that SEL can be a powerful tool in the development of more equitable school environments. We are partnering with the national Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety in this work, and they will assist in facilitating revisions to NYSED's SEL benchmarks.

Current Status: *Please provide a brief summary of the current status of the initiative.*

¹ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. [What is SEL?](https://casel.org/what-is-sel/) <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>

A stakeholder group consisting of key NYSED program leadership and external partners will meet monthly through at least early winter. Two meetings have already been held.

Next Steps: *Please describe the next steps and include a timeline for the initiative in the next six months.*

A third meeting in September will complete the establishment of foundational shared knowledge in the stakeholder group, and monthly meetings in October – December will concentrate on the work of reviewing NYSED’s SEL benchmarks and making suggestions to make explicit their connection to equity. NYSED staff will complete revisions reflective of stakeholder input between meetings. We anticipate all work being completed by spring.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: *Please list the stakeholders that are interested in this issue.*

BOCES
Administrators
Educators
After school providers
Mental health advocates
Labor leaders
Students
Families
Community members

Stakeholders participating in the workgroup include:

- Carri Manchester, NYSED
- Kathleen DeCataldo, NYSED
- Maribeth Barney, NYSED
- Steve Marchant, NYSED Special Education
- Christy Radez, NYSED C&I
- Catherine Coons, NYSED C&I/CR-S
- Kimberly Hardaway, NYSED Family & Community Engagement
- Elizabeth Devaney, Whole Child Center, Children’s Institute
- Beth Dryer, S/CDN/BOCES
- Pat Conner, CASEL
- Kaliris Salas-Ramirez – NYC Parent/Advocate/Neurobiologist
- Julie Dealing, Youth Power
- Kenyatte Reid, NYCDOE
- Elizabeth Stranzl, NYCDOE
- Selena Carrion, 5th grade teacher, NYC Public Schools
- Regina Butler, early childhood teacher, Albany City School District
- Rachel Posner, high school teacher, NYC public schools
- Marshay Hines, Community School Coordinator, Albany City School District
- Briana Santiago Ravdin, TAP for Equity, Bank Street College of Education

- Amber Stuart, Academy for Software Engineering, NYC

Relevant Documents: *Please also include the link(s) to relevant documents in this section.*

The New York State Education Department offers the following resources:

- [New York State Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks](#) for voluntary implementation;
- [Social Emotional Learning: Essential for Learning, Essential for Life](#), a framework explaining SEL concepts, and the need for and benefit of social emotional learning (SEL) in NY
- [Social Emotional Learning: A Guide to Systemic Whole School Implementation](#), providing strategies and resources for districts and schools
- [Social Emotional Learning Activities and Teaching Practices](#), district-developed crosswalks aligning social emotional learning core competencies, subject area standards, sample SEL activities, and general teaching practices.

The [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#) (CASEL) offers resources for using [Transformative SEL as a Lever for Equity & Social Justice](#) to support our collective work to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools and communities.

The national [Center to Improve Social Emotional Learning and School Safety](#) at WestEd offers [Integrating Social and Emotional Learning throughout the School System: A Compendium of Resources for District Leaders](#).

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO 2021

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| Office: P-20/Student Support Services |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>Jim Baldwin</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>Kathleen DeCataldo</i> |
| Program Team: <i>In addition to the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, please list the program staff with title who are leading the initiative as well as other team members that should be included. If cross collaboration, please list those staff from other program areas and/or Executive staff ie. Communications, Governmental Relations, CFO. Daniel Morton-Bentley, Counsel and Deputy Commissioner Judy Swierczewski, Assistant Counsel Christina Coughlin, Assistant Commissioner, School Governance, Policy and Religious & Independent Schools Christopher Suriano, Assistant Commissioner, Special Education Maribeth Barney, Supervisor, Student Support Services Michele Shahan, Program Research Specialist, Student Support Services Gwyn Marschman, Associate, Student Support Services</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: School Discipline Reform

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *Please provide a brief overview and goal.*

NYSED is actively engaged with the Safe Schools Task Force, which brings together a cross section of Education stakeholders and advocates, as well as the state Department of Health, Office of Mental Health, Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Office of Children and Family Services. First established in 1999, with reconvening in 2012 following the mass shooting tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary, and a subsequent reconvening in 2019 to provide input on incident data collection and NYSED’s implementation of the SAVE legislation, which

resulted in regulatory amendments to CR §100.2 related to violent incident data collection that commence with the 2021-22 reporting year, as well as regulatory amendments to CR §155.17 related to school building-level emergency response plans and district-wide school safety plans. Recent focus of the task force has been related to building a framework for school discipline reform in New York State. The Task Force is currently undertaking a review of existing National Frameworks and NY's current discipline laws and regulations with technical assistance by Kristen Harper, Director for Policy Development at Child Trends and Senior Policy Advisor at the USDE under the Obama administration.

Current Status: *Please provide a brief summary of the current status of the initiative.*

In spring and summer of 2021, SSTF meetings have focused on the need for discipline reform. To frame the need, in April 2021, department staff brought in presenters from Child Trends, as leaders in this area, as well as representatives from NYC Department of Education to report on NYC discipline reforms.

Kristen Harper and Emily Fulks from Child Trends shared information on:

- the prevalence of school discipline disparity and harms for students and school that are associated with exclusionary discipline
- current research on school discipline reform, including the impact on school climate, school safety and inequity
- current trends in school discipline policy
- policy levers to advance reform, including the Every Students Succeeds Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act

Mark Rampersant, Holly Bedwell, and Kenyatte Reid from NYC DOE Office of Safety and Youth Development reported on the NYC Department of Education discipline code reforms, including:

- taking a data driven approach to reform, including understanding the prevalence of suspensions for students in K-2, students of color, LGBTQ students, as well as suspending students for insubordination.
- Implementing change by: ensuring that all students understand behavioral expectations, that supports and interventions are available and used to address student needs before a suspension occurs, and implement policy change gradually over a period of years (from 2015 to present).

Task force members agreed that to make policy recommendations, the group needed to know:

- What is working in discipline reform?
- What are the priority areas of discipline reform that should be addressed?
- What are the elements of school safety and how is discipline reform related?
- What are priority professional development topics for educators and staff?
- How do we change the framework of discipline in a comprehensive yet collaborative way?

Next Steps: *Please describe the next steps and include a timeline for the initiative in the next six months.*

Department staff are working with Child Trends to conduct a NYS specific analysis of federal Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) data to determine what NY's data trends are related to discipline disparity which should be complete by mid-October.

In November-December, task force members will be asked to participate in workgroup(s) to analyze NY data and:

- recommend best practices related to data use in school settings to identify discipline disparities
- develop model code of conduct and discipline code; review of Commissioner's regulations pertaining to discipline
- recommended resources and/or tools to assist in creating supportive schools and positive school climates, thereby reducing school discipline incidents.

It is anticipated that by late winter-early spring resource documents that are reflective of stakeholder input should be available for distribution.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: *Please list the stakeholders that are interested in this issue.*

BOCES, district and school administrators, educators and staff
Students and families
Law enforcement
Criminal justice advocates
Civil rights advocates
Mental health advocates
Labor leaders
Community members

Stakeholders participating in the task force include:

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| Dawn Yuster | Advocates for Children |
| Lori McKenna | Albany City School District |
| Kerri Canzone-Ball | Albany City School District |
| Marina Marcou-O'Malley | Alliance for Quality Education |
| Tyrone O'Meally | Amsterdam High School |
| Jeff Sisson | Association for Educational Safety and Health Professionals |
| Joanne Wagar | Berkshire Union Free School District |
| Michael Vanyo | Berkshire Union Free School District |
| Julia Davis | Children's Defense Fund New York |

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|---------------------|--|
| Katherine Maciol | Commission on Economic Opportunity |
| Jennifer Pyle | Conference of Big 5 School Districts |
| Molly Dillman | Conference of Big 5 School Districts |
| Mark Cannizzaro | Council of School Supervisors & Administrators |
| Rosemarie Sinclair | Council of School Supervisors & Administrators |
| Allison Motta | Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Jeff Simons | East Greenbush Central School District |
| Kristen Nannini | Eastern Suffolk BOCES |
| Eoghann Renfroe | Empire Justice |
| Jonathan Lang | Empire State Pride Agenda |
| Karen Marconi | Empire State School Administrators Association |
| Dennis Kwaczala | Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) |
| Scott Patronik | Erie County Sheriff's Office |
| Brian Pulvino | Fulton Central School District |
| a.t. Furuya | Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) |
| Michael Mastroianni | Governor Cuomo's Office |
| Claire Barnett | Healthy Schools Network, Inc. |
| Dr. Luvelle Brown | Ithaca City School District |
| Michelle Bradley | Lockport Central School District |
| Amy Molloy | Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc. |
| Brandon Beachamp | Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc. |
| Glenn Liebman | Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc. |
| John Byrne | Nassau County Assistant District Attorney Office |
| John Garruto | New York Association of School Psychologists |
| Kelly Caci | New York Association of School Psychologists |
| Holly Bedwell | New York City Department of Education |
| Mark Rampersant | New York City Department of Education |
| Thomas J. Palmer | New York City Police Department |
| Donna Lieberman | New York Civil Liberties Union |
| Johanna Miller | New York Civil Liberties Union |
| Stefanie Coyle | New York Civil Liberties Union |
| John Collazzi | New York State Assembly (Benedetto) |
| Dave Christopher | New York State Association for Pupil Transportation |
| James Cultrara | New York State Catholic Conference |
| Kyle Belokopitsky | New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers |
| Cynthia Walley | New York State Counselor's Association |
| Priti Irani | New York State Department of Health |
| Michael Green | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Ian Grugan | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Johanna Sullivan | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |

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|-------------------------|---|
| Joshua Vinehout | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Michael Wood | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Scott Neff | New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services |
| Barbara Lee Steigerwald | New York State Division of Homeland Security |
| Christina Coughlin | New York State Education Department |
| Christopher Suriano | New York State Education Department |
| Daniel Morton-Bentley | New York State Education Department |
| Ellen Martin | New York State Education Department |
| Gwyn Marschman | New York State Education Department |
| Judy Swierczewski | New York State Education Department |
| Kathleen DeCataldo | New York State Education Department |
| Kim Wilkins | New York State Education Department |
| Maribeth Barney | New York State Education Department |
| Michele Shahan | New York State Education Department |
| Yolanda Caldwell | New York State Education Department |
| Jeff DeCarlo | New York State Education Department |
| Josephine Kamyra | New York State Office of Children and Family Services |
| Tim Bromirski | New York State Office of Children and Family Services |
| Bonnie Catlin | New York State Office of Mental Health |
| Donna Bradbury | New York State Office of Mental Health |
| Jon Rice | New York State Office of Mental Health |
| Brooke M. Byrne, LMSW | <u>New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children</u> |
| Kristen Anne Conklin | <u>New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children</u> |
| Craig Vedder | New York State Police |
| Robert Maccarone | New York State Probation |
| Jay Worona | New York State School Board Association |
| Kate Gaffney | New York State School Board Association |
| Robert Schneider | New York State School Boards Association |
| Kathleen Corbett | New York State School Counselor's Association |
| Melissa Asbell | New York State School Counselor's Association |
| Julie Beatrice | New York State School Social Worker's Association |
| Nina Karbacka | New York State Small Cities School District Association |
| Terry McSweeney | New York State United Teachers' Association |
| Veronica Foley | New York State United Teachers' Association |
| Phyllis Harrington | Oceanside Central School District |
| Patty Cerio | Oneida-BOCES |
| Tom Brindley | Oneonta Central School District |

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| Christopher Todd | Oswego Board Of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) |
| James Ryan | Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES |
| David Little | Rural Schools Association of New York State |
| Heather Zellers | Rural Schools Association of New York State |
| Michael Patton | Saratoga Springs City School District |
| Cindy Gallagher | School Administrators Association of New York State |
| Donald Nickson | School Administrators Association of New York State |
| Kevin Quinn | SUNY Albany School of Education |
| John Carmello | Troy City Schools |

Relevant Documents: *Please also include the link(s) to relevant documents in this section.*

- [Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline, U.S. Department of Education](#)
 - Climate and Prevention: Engage in deliberate efforts to create positive school climates
 - Clear, appropriate and consistent expectations and consequences: Set high expectations for behavior and adopt an instructional approach to school discipline, involve families, students and school personnel in development and implementation of discipline policies, remove students from the classroom only as a last resort.
 - Equity and Continuous Improvement: train all school staff to apply school discipline polices, practices and procedures in a fair and equitable manner that does not disproportionately impact students of color, students with disabilities or other students, including those at risk for dropout, trauma, or social exclusion.
- [Framework for Effective School Discipline](#) (National Association of School Psychologists)
 - Promote a positive school climate
 - Reinforce positive and prosocial behaviors
 - Promote school safety
 - Keep students in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system
 - Address and reduce disproportionality in exclusionary discipline practices
- [Framework for Increasing Equity in School Discipline](#) (Gregory, Skiba, & Mediratta, 2017)
 - Prevention: Supportive Relationships, Bias-Awareness, Academic Rigor, Culturally Relevant and Responsive Teaching, Opportunities to Learn and Correct Behavior

- Intervention: Data-Based Inquiry, Problem-Solving Approaches, Inclusion of Family Voice, Reintegration of Students

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO

2021

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| Office: Higher Education |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner Jim Baldwin |
| Deputy Commissioner William Murphy |
| Assistant Commissioner Anael Alston |
| <p>Program Team: <i>In addition to the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, please list the program staff with title who are leading the initiative as well as other team members that should be included. If cross collaboration, please list those staff from other program areas and/or Executive staff ie. Communications, Governmental Relations, CFO.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Higher Education: Laura Glass, Senior Policy Advisor for Higher Education and Leslie Templeman, Director of the Office of College and University Evaluation• Office of Professions• Office of Information and Reporting Services• Communications• Governmental Relations |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *Please provide a brief overview and goal.*

The Office of Higher Education recently launched the process to develop the Statewide Plan for Higher Education, 2013-21. In past Statewide Plans, the Board of Regents included a set of topics that sectors would address in their master plans. After reviewing the topics from past plans, reflecting on the Regents' and Department's priorities, and considering concerns from

the field, the Department identified five topics as a starting point for further thought and discussion. One of those topics focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- Ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion in the P-20 system, including students in the educator and licensed professional career tracks.

Current Status: *Please provide a brief summary of the current status of the initiative.*

We are currently identifying members for the Advisory Council on Higher Education that must be established per statute. The council will serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Regents and Commissioner on the statewide planning process.

Next Steps: *Please describe the next steps and include a timeline for the initiative in the next six months.*

The next steps include collecting the nominees for the Advisory Council and selecting the members, arranging 1-2 meetings with the council members, updating the draft topics for the Statewide Plan, and presenting the topics to the Board of Regents at one of its monthly meetings.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: *Please list the stakeholders that are interested in this issue.*

All stakeholders who are interested in postsecondary education, including the education, business, healthcare, and other communities related to the professions.

Relevant Documents: *Please also include the link(s) to relevant documents in this section.*

- June 2021 Regents item:
<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/621hed1.pdf>
- June 2021 Regents presentation:
<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/HE%20-%20Development%20of%20the%20Statewide%20Plan%20for%20Higher%20Education%20in%20New%20York%20State.pdf>

**REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO
2021**

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| Office: <i>Office of the Professions</i> |
| Executive Deputy Commissioner <i>Sharon Cates-Williams</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner <i>Sarah Benson</i> |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>n/a</i> |
| Program Team: <i>From the Office of the Professions:</i> State Board Executive Secretaries: Jane Blair, Stephen Boese, Dolores Cottrell, Thania Fernandez, David Hamilton, Dina Jazrawi, Jason Kramer, Robert Lopez, Suzanne Sullivan, and Jennifer Winters; Paul Thompson, Supervisor of Higher Education Programs; Stephanie Maes, Assistant in Higher Education. <i>Collaboration with other SED teams:</i> District superintendents; P-12 staff; Office of Postsecondary Access, Support, & Success (OPASS); and Communications. |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Initiative Overview & Goal:

OP’s “Paths to the Professions” initiative reaches out directly to students and the people who guide them (e.g., parents and educators). “Paths” web pages include a simple profile of each profession and what it takes to prepare for licensure. The profiles help to spotlight professions

that are lesser known but which offer good career opportunities. In addition, users can match their interests—and their desired education level—to the licensed professions.

The “Paths” site also links students to resources for mentoring, scholarships, and other practical supports. We highlight community activities with partners, too, to illustrate how the professions make a difference. The School Vision Health initiative, for example, provides free comprehensive eye exams and eyeglasses to underserved students. We also hosted students who demonstrated projects they completed for the national “Future City” competition. The latter encourages middle school students to work with mentors and apply STEM principles to solve a societal challenge.

These features and activities align with Regents DEI goals for *all* students:

- Provides practical career information to help students visualize successful futures.
- Empowers students as agents of social change, by encouraging them to explore career paths and diversify the professional workforce.
- Links students to practical resources for mentoring, scholarships, experiential programs, and other supports to fuel their engagement, growth, and application of learning.

Current Status:

The features are revised as needed to reflect updates to the professions and “Paths” related activities.

Next Steps:

- Expected updates: we are planning another School Vision Health event for March 2022, subject to any pandemic-related developments. We also expect to debut information about the pharmacy technician profession.
- Continue discussions with OPASS and the Board for Medicine to identify possible opportunities to mentor My Brother’s Keeper participants interested in pursuing careers in medicine.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholders:

Office of Higher Education; Office of P-12 Education; district superintendents; P-12 and college students; educators; guidance counselors; career changers; parents.

Relevant Documents:

- “Paths” landing page: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/careers/>
- Career exploration: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/careers/interests.htm>
- Links to scholarship, mentoring, career exploration, and other programs and supports for students: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/careers/mentoring.htm>
- Making a Difference: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/careers/differenceV2.html>

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO

2021

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| Office: <i>Office of Cultural Education</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner <i>Mark Schaming</i> |
| Program Team: <i>Office of Cultural Education staff</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *Please provide a brief overview and goal.*

The New York State Museum is undertaking its first major renovation since moving to the Cultural Education Center in 1976. This renovation will allow the Museum to tell the story of New York in a fuller, more dynamic way than has as ever been done before, anywhere, ever—from its geological formation billions of years ago up through the most current events and scientific and cultural developments today.

To meet the needs of 21st-century visitors, the renovation will reorganize and redefine 40,000-square feet of the Museum’s first floor. In the new galleries, the Museum will compellingly convey, using interactive technology and a combination of artifacts, art, and documents from our vast collections, that

- **New York is a unique state.** Culturally, politically, and scientifically, New York has made singular contributions that have lasting importance in the state, nation, and world—e.g. human rights; labor and workers’ rights; development of scientific disciplines; birthplace and emergence of activist and political leaders and their causes; and home to and inspiration for entrepreneurs, artists, and performers of vast diversity.
- **New York is diverse.** From its first human inhabitants 13,000 years ago to a state shaped by arriving populations over the last four hundred years, our galleries will demonstrate how our diversity is at the core of New York’s strength and beauty.
- **New York’s history spans billions of years.** New York has been evolving over billions of years and is a living, learning lab for science and natural and human history.

The redesign will form a flow of galleries that will be arranged both chronologically and thematically, and will bring to life the following themes:

- Gallery 1: What Is New York?**
- Gallery 2: State of Change**
- Gallery 3: First Peoples of the Land**
- Gallery 4: Confluence of Cultures – New York in the 17th Century**
- Gallery 5: New York and the Founding of the Republic**
- Gallery 6: The Empire State**
- Gallery 7: New York Now**

Approximately 3/4 of the exhibition space will be devoted to human history with a focus on educating visitors about who has lived in New York and why, and how they came to live here, shining light on their different modes of arrival and lifeways, including First Peoples, Exploration and Colonialism, Enslavement, Displacement Within, Immigration from Abroad, The Great Migration, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, and the Flight from and Return to Cities.

The new galleries and related east and west Collections Corridors will also incorporate many of the Museum’s signature pieces that are beloved by the public: the Cohoes Mastodon, the Native Peoples Longhouse and dioramas, and World Trade Center, to name a few.

Current Status: *Please provide a brief summary of the current status of the initiative.*

The Museum is currently in the Design Development phase, working with both in-house planning, development, and content teams and the design firm Gallagher & Associates.

Next Steps: *Please describe the next steps and include a timeline for the initiative in the next six months.*

Following the completion of the Design Development in 2021, we will enter the Content Development phase. The entire project is projected to take place over the next three to five years.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: *Please list the stakeholders that are interested in this issue.*

Each year the Museum receives approximately 500,000 visitors, about half of which are school children. Every step of the Museum renovation will consider how we can best inform and inspire this and future generations of New Yorkers and visitors, including multi-generation families, school groups, young professional visitors, differently abled visitors, researchers and historians, and new New Yorkers.

All of the exhibitions are being developed with New York State Learning Standards in mind. New York State Museum staff will develop companion education and teacher guides to accompany the new exhibitions.

Relevant Documents: *Please also include the link(s) to relevant documents in this section.*

**REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO
2021**

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| Office: <i>Office of Human Resources Management</i> |
| Executive Deputy Commissioner <i>Sharon Cates-Williams</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner |
| Assistant Commissioner |
| Program Team: <i>OHRM Training Unit</i> <i>Carole Moulton, Director of Training</i> <i>Alicia Adalian, Training Specialist 2</i> <i>Nathan Green, Human Resources Specialist 1</i> <i>Steven Baldwin, Education Program Assistant</i> <i>Tashiana Ryland, Office Assistant 2</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *The goal of this initiative is to provide Implicit Bias training to all NYSED staff members as part of the 2021 portfolio of OHRM Mandated Training. This two-hour, synchronous training session is being offered via WebEx with the training being presented by the Department of Civil Service Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management. Sessions began in April 2021 and are schedule through December 2021.*

Current Status: *To date, all current SED employees have been scheduled for a training session. Ten of the twenty-four sessions have been delivered and 1,334 employees have been trained. Employees who have completed the training have received follow-up resources and an opportunity to provide an evaluation of the training program.*

Next Steps: *In September through December 2021, we will be offering the remaining fourteen sessions, providing follow-up communication with staff members as they attend, and continue to schedule new employees as they come on board. Once training sessions have concluded, evaluation results will be reviewed and disseminated to stakeholders.*

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder:

Internal:

Office of Human Resource Management Training Unit

Program Area Directors of Operations – Assist with communication to ensure staff attendance

External:

Department of Civil Service Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management

Michael Washington, Deputy Commissioner

LaShanna Frasier-King, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

Samad Ratiib, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

Kerry Finley, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

Nichole Harden, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

Relevant Documents: *Please find attached a course description and copy of the follow-up resources provided to employees upon training completion.*

NYS Department of Civil Service
Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management
Implicit Bias Course Description

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion Management (ODIM) is conducting a comprehensive Statewide training on implicit bias and the benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Course Title: Implicit Bias

Time Duration: Approximately two hours

Delivery Method: The training consists of a PowerPoint presentation and facilitated discussion. It is designed to be interactive, engaging the target audience in discussions about implicit bias, and the benefits of promoting an environment that is diverse, and a work culture that is inclusive.

Scope:

The course explores how core beliefs contribute to implicit and explicit biases, and how these biases affect not only the workplace, but also the delivery of customer service to New York State's diverse communities.

Training Components:

Diversity and Inclusion Overview: Provides a working definition of diversity and inclusion along with discussion as to how such attributes result in positive impacts on workplace morale, productivity and service delivery.

Core Beliefs and Circle of Influence: Explores the concept of core beliefs, how core beliefs are formed and how they affect the way we view ourselves, others, and the world around us. This segment also provides a discussion of how core beliefs can become obstacles to diversity and inclusion.

Implicit Bias: Define and discuss "Bias" as beliefs or attitudes that are activated automatically and without an individual's awareness. Following the discussion, trainees participate in a series of exercises designed to underscore how biases are reinforced daily without us knowing or thinking consciously about it. And, that stereotypes reflect what we see and hear every day, not what we consciously believe about what we see and hear – making the point that, it is possible for people to hold unconscious stereotypes that they consciously oppose.

The following message is from Carole Moulton, Director of Training, Office of Human Resources Management.

Thank you for attending the Implicit Bias Training on <INSERT DATE>. We hope you found the training helpful and informative. Please take a moment to fill out the brief and anonymous course survey linked below. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

<INSERT EVALUATION LINK>

During the session some experienced technical difficulties when trying to access the Stroop test. You can follow this link to take that test now if you wish: [The Stroop Effect](#)

As this training was an introduction to an extensive and complex topic, please find below additional resources to reinforce the training content and further your engagement in addressing implicit bias. We encourage you to review the resources below and implement practices for identifying and overcoming your own biases.

We thank you for your time and your active participation!

Resources for understanding and overcoming implicit bias:

- The training included a Proctor and Gamble video, [The Look](#), a story about bias in America. If you would like to learn more about this powerful video, please click here: [The Look](#)
- Harvard University's, Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases. [The Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#).
- The [Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity](#) is an interdisciplinary engaged research institute at The Ohio State University. Their goal is to connect individuals and communities with opportunities needed for thriving by educating the public, building the capacity of allied social justice organizations, and investing in efforts that support equity and inclusion. They offer detailed resources and additional training opportunities.
 - [Implicit Bias Module Series](#) – This course will introduce you to insights about how our minds operate and help you understand the origins of implicit associations. You will also uncover some of your own biases and learn strategies for addressing them. Specifically, Module 4 covers Mitigating Unwanted Biases.
 - An easy to follow description and actionable strategies to [Being an Active Bystander](#).
 - [“Did They Really Just Say That?!” Being an Active Bystander](#) – recording of detailed training session at Loyola University. Presentation runs 12:50 – 1:49:30. (Password: LMUITS)
 - [Mythbusters: Implicit Bias Edition](#) – Clearing up the confusion surrounding implicit bias.

- [How to Reduce Implicit Bias](#) – An excerpt from *How Does Implicit Bias Influence Behavior? Explanations and Impacts of Unconscious Bias*.

Training Unit

Office of Human Resources Management
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue | Room 528 EB
Albany, New York 12234
Phone: (518) 474-5215
Fax: (518) 486-5631

**REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO
2021**

| |
|---|
| Office: <i>Access, Equity, and Community Engagement Services</i> |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>Jim Baldwin</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner <i>William Murphy</i> |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>Anael Alston</i> |
| Program Team: <i>Sean Brown, Kimberly Hardaway, Doris Waiters, and Karen Hymes</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This is particularly true of the programs under the Office of Access, Equity, and Community Engagement Services (OAECES). This framing principle has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages, and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, and economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal: *OAECES was born out the desire and commitment of the New York State Legislature to ensure that all students realize their full potential. This briefing is focused on My Brother’s Keeper because of the importance of its goals, and it is one of the newest initiatives in OAECES.*

My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) - MBK is designed to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for boys and young men of color. OAECES administers this initiative primarily through six grants. They are:

1. **MBK Challenge Grant** - The MBK Challenge Grant Program is designed to encourage regions and school districts to develop and execute coherent cradle-to-career college strategies in schools that need improvement. The goal is to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for boys and young men of color in these schools.
2. **Family and Community Engagement Program (FCEP)** - The purpose of the Family and Community Engagement Program is to increase the academic achievement and

- college and career readiness of boys and young men of color by developing and sustaining effective relationships with families to achieve student success.
3. **MBK Fellows Grant** - The purpose of the MBK Fellows Grant is to provide rising 12th grade high school students, with an emphasis on boys and young men of color, with opportunities to gain authentic leadership experience(s) and develop service projects beneficial to the schools they attend and the communities they live in.
 4. **Teacher Opportunity Corps II (TOC II)** - The purpose of TOC II is to increase the rate of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged individuals in teaching careers. TOC II programs incorporate strategies for teacher retention and best practice, such as mentors for new teachers and differentiated instructional techniques.
 5. **Exemplary School Models and Practices Grant (ESMP)** - The purpose of the ESMP is to develop and/or expand exemplary high-quality college and career readiness school models, programs and practices that demonstrate cultural and linguistic responsiveness, that emphasize the needs of boys and young men of color.
 6. **Native American Program (NAP)** - The purpose of the NAP is to increase the academic achievement and college/career readiness of Native American students, with emphasis on boys and young men.

Other initiatives in OAECS that are part the Department's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work are:

Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) - The purpose of HEOP is to provide supportive services and financial aid to eligible New York State residents attending independent colleges and universities in New York State, who, because of both academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise have been unable to attend a postsecondary educational institution.

Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) - The purpose of STEP is to assist eligible students in acquiring the skills, attitudes, and abilities necessary to pursue professional or pre-professional study in post-secondary degree programs in scientific, technical, and health-related fields.

Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (C STEP) - The purpose of CSTEP is to increase access by minority or disadvantaged students to academic programs that have been registered by the Commissioner and that prepare students either for licensure in the professions or for employment in scientific and technical fields.

Pathways in Technology (PTECH) - New York State P-TECH is a public-private partnership that prepares students for high-skills jobs of the future in technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and engineering.

Smart Scholars Early College High School Program (SS ECHS) -The Smart Scholars Early College High School Program serves students from groups traditionally underrepresented in

postsecondary education with the goal of increasing their high school and college completion rates by improving their readiness for college and reducing the time and cost for college completion.

Foster Youth College Success Initiative (FYCSI) - The purpose of the Foster Youth College Success Initiative is to reduce the financial burden of college attendance among eligible populations and to encourage college completion through the provision of specialized academic support services within existing New York State postsecondary IHEs.

Current Status: We will continue to monitor and support these and the other initiatives in OAECES that give our students access and opportunity to live into their full potential.

For the My Brother's Keeper initiative, MBK is in its fifth year of implementation. It continues to grow in participation, enthusiasm, and provides models for school districts and communities to follow. We continue to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for boys and young men of color. However, the reports for improving outcomes for boys and young men of color are by individual districts and/or anecdotal.

Next Steps: We are in the process of developing a strategy to evaluate MBK statewide. Additionally, we will continue to improve and enhance the DEI training for districts and communities.

Relevant Internal & External Stakeholder: NYCDOE, *Office of P-12*, NYSCOSS, NYSPTA, NYSUT, and NYSED District Superintendents

Relevant Documents:

<http://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services>

<http://www.nysed.gov/mbk>

REGENTS BRIEFING MEMO 2021

| |
|--|
| Office: BOCES District Superintendents of New York State |
| Senior Deputy Commissioner <i>NAME</i> |
| Deputy Commissioner <i>NAME</i> |
| Assistant Commissioner <i>NAME</i> |
| <i>Program Team: In addition to the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, please list the program staff with title who are leading the initiative as well as other team members that should be included. If cross collaboration, please list those staff from other program areas and/or Executive staff i.e. Communications, Governmental Relations, CFO.</i> |

PROGRAM INITIATIVE: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have come to understand that the results we seek for all our children can never be fully achieved unless we re-focus every facet of our work through an equity and inclusion lens (see also New York State’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan). This understanding has created an urgency around promoting equitable opportunities that help all children thrive. New York State understands that the responsibility of education is not only to prevent the exclusion of historically silenced, erased, and disenfranchised groups, but also to assist in the promotion and perpetuation of cultures, languages, and ways of knowing that have been devalued, suppressed, and imperiled by years of educational, social, political, economic neglect and other forms of oppression.

Initiative Overview & Goal:

It is the mission of District Superintendents to be vigorous agents for reform, effectively advocating for educational excellence and equity on behalf of all learners in New York State. Doing this requires collaboration and leadership at the regional and state level in partnership with the Commissioner of Education, the Board of Regents, and local school districts.

BOCES of New York State Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity

As a collective body, the 37 BOCES that partner with and support nearly all of the school districts in the state of New York are committed to embracing diversity and promoting equitable and inclusive practices in our schools. As educational leaders, we are dedicated to identifying and eliminating actions and policies that promote cultural biases, as well as the exclusion of any group or class. This includes practices that promote institutional racism and create barriers that affect student-learning outcomes.

Our educational system is stronger when each individual is embraced for who they are. As such, the BOCES across New York State will work to foster and maintain a safe school environment for students, families, faculty, and staff regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality, ability, religion, national origin, gender identity, and other identities. We will leverage our network of BOCES statewide to ensure equitable access to educational programs and services, and address systemic racism and bias that leads to gaps in opportunity and achievement.

Current Status:

At its April meeting, the New York State Board of Regents released a draft framework on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in our schools. The 37 district superintendents representing BOCES across New York applaud this effort and look forward to collaborating with the Regents, the Commissioner, and school leaders across the state in implementing this framework in our schools.

The framework brings together multiple national tragedies, which highlight the need for this call to action. BOCES of NYS recognizes that the senseless killings of Black and Brown people by law enforcement, violence toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, hateful and racist comments or discrimination of any kind, have no place in our school communities. Further, there is real danger in not having multiple perspectives and points of view represented and taught in our classrooms.

Since last summer, the BOCES district superintendents have been working to collectively, and individually, review and update Police Science and Criminal Justice curriculums and textbooks used in these popular BOCES programs. The purpose of this review is to ensure that systemic racism and implicit bias is addressed in this coursework. Where possible, BOCES educators are working with local, regional, and state police officials to assure alignment to the New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative, which aims to reform police work across the state.

The BOCES statewide leadership also collectively engaged in professional development led by national consultant, Natalie McGee. This work focuses on cultural proficiency and research-based practices aimed at helping school leaders improve student achievement through the adoption of equitable and inclusive teaching practices.

Additional diversity, equity, and inclusion-related work that is ongoing in various BOCES across New York include updating and reviewing hiring practices and recruiting for a diverse workforce, professional development for teachers and professional staff on implicit bias and cultural proficiency, as well as trainings on inclusive communication practices.

BOCES leaders recognize that there is extensive work to be done in our schools and school communities across New York as we strive for more diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational environments. This work will only be done through partnerships and thoughtful collaboration with education entities statewide.

Next Steps:

The BOCES District Superintendents are in the process of developing a Professional Learning Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. The professional learning opportunities embedded in that Plan will continue to focus on personal and professional growth for the BOCES District Superintendents relative to increasing diversity, equity, and inclusivity in their organizations and their regions.

The BOCES of New York State exist to provide services and support to the school districts and students that they serve. Increasing diversity, equity, and inclusivity is no exception. As school districts look to better themselves through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusivity, the BOCES are developing plans to support them in their efforts.

The BOCES District Superintendents have created a District Superintendent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Workgroup. This group has been meeting regularly since last spring and has focused on two items; how can they better support themselves as they support diversity, equity, and inclusivity initiatives in their organizations and their regions, and how can they support the Department and the Board in their efforts to increase this work at the highest levels of P-12 education. This workgroup has been meeting regularly with leadership within the Department.

The BOCES District Superintendents of New York State will continue to stand with the Department to ensure that students across New York State receive equitable access to educational opportunities and outcomes that they deserve.

Relevant Documents:

DEI resources from BOCES across the state

- Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady-Saratoga Counties and BOCES (Capital Region BOCES), Educational Equity Services
<https://www.capitalregionboces.org/programs-services/educational-equity/>
- Dutchess BOCES, Center for Educational Equity & Social Justice
<https://www.dcboces.org/equity>
- Monroe One BOCES, Reimagining Mission and Vision statements
<https://www.monroe.edu/domain/1791>
- Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, Define Implicit Bias
<https://www.wflboces.org/events-and-trainings/defining-implicit-bias>
- PNW BOCES
 - Regional Equity & Diversity Steering Committee
<https://www.pnwboces.org/site/News/PNW-BOCES-Launches-Regional-Equity-Diversity-Steer.aspx>

- Leading for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
<https://www.pnwboces.org/files/guidance/PNW-BOCES-Leading-for-Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusi.aspx>
- Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity
<https://www.esboces.org/Page/2639>



Programs & Services Links:

- [ADDITIONAL SERVICE REQUESTS](#)
- [CROSS CONTRACTS](#)
- [DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT SERVICES](#)
- [HELPFUL DEFINITIONS](#)

[CAPITAL REGION BOCES](#) > [PROGRAMS & SERVICES](#) > [EDUCATIONAL EQUITY](#)

Educational Equity

Training and support to create more equitable school communities where all students can thrive.

As educators, we strive to provide every student the high-quality education they deserve.

Yet we know that inequities that exist across race, social class, income, gender, size, religion, disability, sexual orientation and immigration status, among others, can permeate our schools and educational practices. Without a dedicated effort to counter these influences, their impact can be negative and far-reaching for students and their families, as well as our school communities.

By engaging in the work of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), school communities will look critically at their own practices, and face the historically rooted and systemic issues that create inequity in education.

Recognizing and addressing inequitable treatment and a lack of opportunity, access and resources are the first steps toward supporting all students fairly. Knowing how to get started with this important work, however, can be difficult. **No matter where you are in the process, we're here to help.**

In partnership with outside consultants, educators and other educational staff will learn, grow and work to transform their school communities into empowering spaces where all students can thrive.

The following supports are available and can be customized to meet each district's unique needs.

Equity audits and climate studies to identify areas for improvement.

Experts from [Tangible Development](#) will analyze your district's current state to establish a baseline, measure progress and develop a targeted and actionable strategic plan for the work ahead.



In partnership with consultants, educators will learn, grow and work to transform their school communities into empowering spaces where all students can thrive.

Training and coaching to inspire equitable and inclusive teaching and learning environments.

In partnership with educational specialists in the field of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), such as [Tangible Development](#), [Progression Partners](#) and [Generation Ready](#) we will offer support and training in a variety of areas.

- **Understand and manage implicit bias.** Implicit biases are the unconscious, learned associations about individuals or groups shaped by culture and a person's individual experiences. We can provide training to create an awareness of personal biases, and offer tools and best practices to identify biases in action and mitigate their effects.
- **Creating gender inclusive spaces.** Transgender and gender non-conforming (GNC) youth face challenges at home, at school, in foster care, and in juvenile justice systems that can lead to safety concerns and significantly lower grades. This training will provide a new way of thinking about gender and provide support in meeting state education department guidance to best serve transgender and gender non-conforming (GNC) students.
- **Communications training.** The words and images you use matter. We can work with your staff to develop processes and an awareness of tools and methods that is socially conscious and sensitive to the needs of diverse stakeholders, so that all audiences feel heard and included.

Job-embedded professional development and support.

On-going training and support from our partners will help school leaders, teachers and staff learn how to equitably serve all students and to ensure that the change they put in play is lasting. Topics may include developing culturally-responsive and inclusive leaders.

Contact us today to get started on this important work. **Together, we can create a culture of belonging and inclusiveness for all.**

What to Expect

- **An expert partner.** Our relationships with educational specialists in the field of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) offer customized support and services to meet the specific needs of schools district with measurable outcomes resulting in sustainable change.
- **Dedicated effort and continuous evaluation.** Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is critically important and requires hard work and continuous evaluation to ensure that organizational efforts are timely and relevant.
- **Learning and development.** You will receive ongoing, job-embedded training and supports to help create an equitable environment where everyone belongs.

How it Works

- **Contact Us.** We are here to help, no matter where you are on the path to greater diversity, equity and inclusion. Reach out to us today to discuss your challenges.
- **Get Started.** Our partners are ready to help design customized solutions that meet your needs and will lead to long-lasting change in your school community.
- **Transform.** Be a part of the transformation as you achieve your diversity, equity and inclusion goals so all students can thrive.

CONTACT US TO GET STARTED

INFORMATION

CoSer:

507

Contact:

Kelly Masline, Director of Educational Support Services

518-464-3931

kelly.masline@neric.org

2021-20 Pricing:

Based on service requested.



Reimagining the mission and vision of Monroe One

Monroe One is looking for your input on the reimagined mission and vision.

YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED

A Message from District Superintendent Dan White

We are looking for your input on our new mission and vision statements.

But first, begin by watching the following introductory video. It outlines the work currently underway, and the work that still needs to be done.



The Champions Team, made up of Monroe One colleagues, has been reimagining the mission of Monroe One BOCES as we launch into our work surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This aligns with our values of being a restorative and trauma-responsive organization. It will allow us to dig deeper into identifying and acknowledging the root cause of the challenges facing our students, staff, and overall school community.

We are asking all of you to lend your voice to this work by reviewing the statements below and filling out the electronic form provided.

You will see the draft version of the Mission Statement for Monroe One, followed by the Vision Statement, and the Four Pillars that work will be built upon.

You will then find the link to an electronic form under the section titled 'Your Feedback'. We ask you to fill this out as part of our review process, which begins today and runs until June 30, 2021.



Mission Statement

To cooperatively meet the evolving needs of all learners, educators, and district partners.

Vision Statement

As an educational organization, Monroe One actively engages in fostering an equitable, diverse, and inclusive culture that will empower every student, family, and staff to grow and thrive.

Four Pillars

Community, Compassion, Collaboration, Commitment

Community

We envision a school community where everyone is included. We will actively engage in work around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Compassion

To be a fully inclusive and equitable community, it requires a mindset steeped in compassion and a willingness to connect. To





This will be done by bringing diverse voices from our community into the conversation, so those of all social identities are heard. The commitment to these values is unwavering.

This allows individuals of all backgrounds to share a safe space in understanding and connecting with one another. It aligns with our restorative and trauma-responsive practices which centers around the social-emotional wellness of all staff, students, their families, and the community.

Collaboration

Collaboration is the foundation of a BOCES organization. As part of a cooperative network, we operate within a well-defined structure of accountability for effectiveness and efficiency. We partner with and support school districts and students as educators for all ages and abilities

We will collaborate with our internal and external partners in the leveling of power and privilege so that every voice matters. We understand relationships are at the heart of growth and healing. As leaders in education, we are dedicated to working with our partners in identifying and supporting actions and policies that centers on learning for all.

Commitment

Monroe One is committed to being a champion for diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes identifying and eliminating racism, institutional bias, and inequitable practices that have an adverse impact on those of all social identities. These values are at the core of who we are as we continue to provide the opportunity for all to succeed.

This will be done while remaining committed to the overall mission of a BOCES; to serve our students and school partners while being fiscally responsible and meeting their individualized needs. Monroe One is committed to doing so in a transparent and efficient manner so that all school staff, students, families, and school partners are active participants in the decisions made. By continuously evolving and understanding, we will foster a school community where everyone is included.



Your Feedback

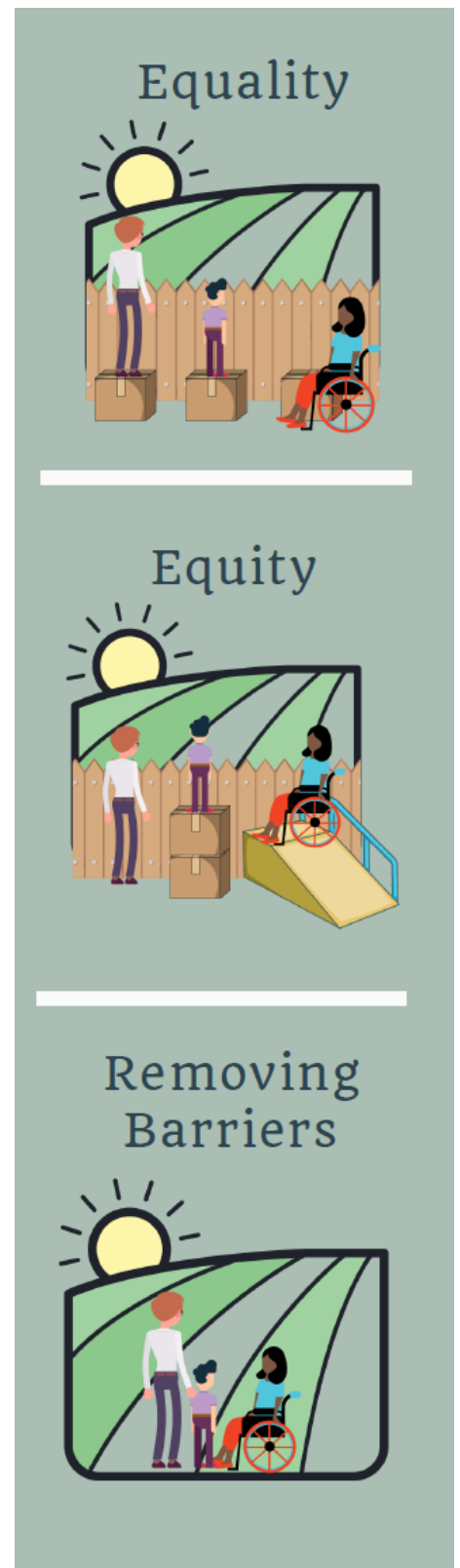
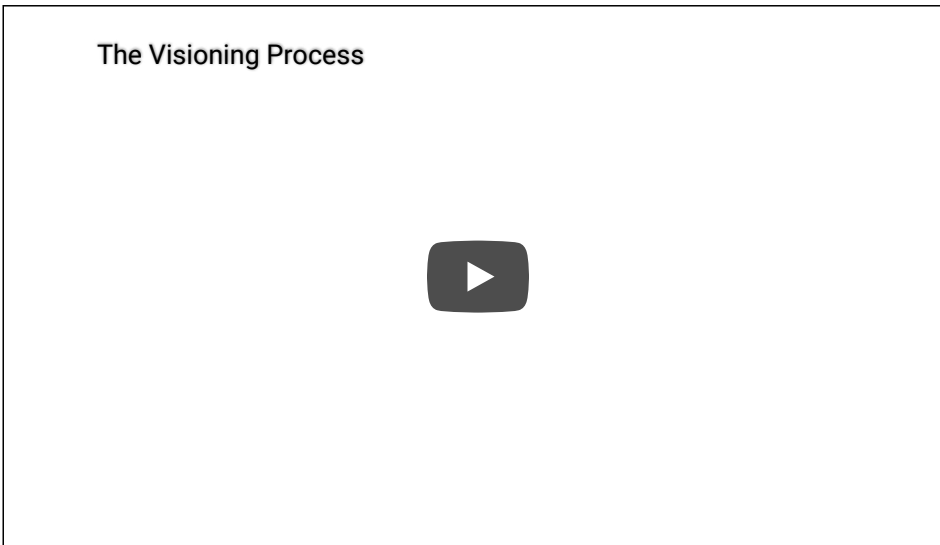
Your feedback is appreciated. Please [Click Here](#) to fill out the electronic form.





Champions Team

The video presentation below provides a glimpse into the work leading up to these draft proposals.



YOUR FEEDBACK

Thank you for reviewing all of the information included. Please remember to fill out this form with your feedback.
[Monroe.edu/ReviewSurvey](https://monroe.edu/reviewsurvey)





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About the Center

Vision: We envision a more just society where schools place humanity at the center of everything they do and their collective actions transform the larger community to eliminate racism, oppression, and bias.

Mission: Through the establishment of youth and adult leadership opportunities, the center amplifies the diverse voices of our students and educators to improve equity in our schools and learning communities throughout Dutchess County and beyond.

Partners



Our Partners

Education Elements

What equity really looks like in schools is still a challenge. To move plans into action, Education Elements believes districts must figure out how to Connect to the challenge, Include the right people at the table, and Create equitable opportunities in order to design better outcomes for kids.

Education Elements, a team of seasoned educators, designers, technologists, and change management experts, has a proven track record in work with districts. The diversity of background of the team has given us insights on what some of the most forward-thinking industries are doing and how these proven strategies are paying off for them and will also pay off for school districts.

Jevon D. Hunter, Ph.D.

Dr. Hunter is the Woods-Beals Endowed Chair for Urban Education in the School of Education and an Associate Professor in the Elementary Education and Reading Department at SUNY Buffalo.



- Jevon D. Hunter Ph. D. -
Associate Professor
Elementary Education and
Reading Department
SUNY Buffalo

[Dutchess County Board of Cooperative Educational Services \(/\)](#) • [5 BOCES Road \(/directions\)](#) • [Poughkeepsie, New York 12601 \(/directions\)](#) • [845.486.4800 \(/programs/directory\)](#) • [\[FAX\] 845.486.4981 \(/programs/directory\)](#)

Collaboration | Innovation | Efficiency | Excellence | Leadership

• [Web Accessibility Statement \(https://dcbooces.org/web-accessibility\)](https://dcbooces.org/web-accessibility) •

[Statement of Non-Discrimination \(http://www.dcbooces.org/non-discrimination\)](http://www.dcbooces.org/non-discrimination) [Dignity for All Students Act \(DASA\) \(http://www.dcbooces.org/non-discrimination\)](#) [Section 504 Title IX \(http://www.dcbooces.org/non-discrimination\)](#) [Equal Opportunity Employer \(http://www.dcbooces.org/non-discrimination\)](#)

• [Log-In \(/user/login\)](#) •

Defining Implicit Bias

[Events & Trainings](#) > Defining Implicit Bias

Advancing Educational Equity

Defining Implicit Bias



The Wayne-Finger Lakes region is committed to student agency and empowerment.

[Register Here!](#)

Directions

[Directions to The Conference Center at W-FL BOCES](#)

Campus Map



Schedule and Information

- 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. - Registration, Light Breakfast & Networking
- 8:30 - 11:00 a.m. - Keynote with Dr. Bryant Marks
- 11:30 - 12:15 - Catered Lunch
- 12:15 - 1:00 p.m. - Breakout Session 1
- 1:15 - 2:00 p.m. - Breakout Session 2
- 2:15-3:00 p.m. - Closure and Next Steps

In support of ESSA, districts are working to create environments in which **all students** can succeed and thrive in school no matter who they are, where they live, where they go to school, or where they come from.

In support of this work, we are inviting educators from across the region to participate in a conversation around educational equity and the role implicit bias has on student agency and empowerment.

Skill Building Stands - Sessions

Administrator
Strand

Teacher Strand

Dr. Bryant Marks



Dr Marks: The Hidden Biases of Good People: Implications for Students, Faculty, and Staff.

[View presentation here.](#)

About Dr. Marks

As the founding Director of the National Training Institute on Race and Equity and a professor in the Department of Psychology at Morehouse College, Dr. Marks' personal and professional mission is to develop the knowledge, wisdom and skills of others that will allow them to reach their full potential and live their lives with purpose and passion.

From Wayne-Finger Lakes Regional Leader, Jay Roscup: " There is no better speaker to provide an engaging, organized presentation that can be brought back to districts in a clearly articulated turnkey presentation. Dr. Marks moves people past misunderstanding and social stigma and builds foundational concepts for equity without shame or guilt. Our students need us to possess and operationalize the concepts Dr. Marks communicates."

Thank you to our sponsors!

This conference is being co-sponsored by **Finger Lakes Community Schools.**



Finger Lakes COMMUNITY SCHOOLS





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Students & Parents



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School Districts



BOCES Board



Employees



BOCES Services Guide

Board Agendas and Minutes



Calendar Events

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Professional Development Catalog

PNW BOCES District Superintendent Dr. James Ryan believes that schools play a critical role in shaping attitudes and promoting a just and equitable society. “BOCES has been a leader in providing programs that embody social justice, tolerance and equity,” he said. “We are looking forward to partnering with local districts to further advance these goals throughout the region.”

The group held its inaugural meeting on July 7, via video conference. Co-chaired by Somers Superintendent Dr. Ray Blanch and Ossining Superintendent Dr. Ray Sanchez, and comprising approximately 20 regional school leaders, the committee will meet throughout the summer and during the academic year to provide support, guidance and information about issues related to equity, diversity and inclusion in schools.

“While districts have been working on creating the most equitable environment for our children, this committee will allow us to leverage our collective resources,” said Dr. Blanch. He said the committee would be guided by the concept of empowering and raising student voices. “We must do this for, and with, the children.”

Calling equity and diversity “some of the most important work we can do as a region,” Dr. Sanchez said, “If we are going to systematically disrupt and dismantle inequity, we must come together to leverage our collective expertise. Together, we will be able to ensure we address curriculum, core beliefs, and provide our young scholars the opportunity to learn and lead together.”

The committee’s goal is to provide regional learning opportunities to educators and clinicians, school leaders, students, families, community members, and school board members. The focus of these programs will be anti-bias and anti-racist curriculum, professional learning opportunities regarding equity, policy and structure.

“The committee’s work will dovetail with BOCES’ ACTION (Acting Conscientiously to Ignite Opportunity Now) Collaborative Network and the many in-district equity teams in place across our region,” said Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lynn Allen, who serves as a committee facilitator. “We anticipate that this initiative will be mutually beneficial to all those participating and will ultimately enhance opportunities for all students through shared expertise and resources.”

Dr. Andrew Ecker, coordinator of the Guidance & Child Study Center, pointed out that, “since 2013, the ACTION Collaborative Network has promoted ‘excellence with equity through partnerships.’ We now have the opportunity to expand our collective equity work through the Regional Equity & Diversity Steering Committee.”

NY Regent and Honorary Ad Hoc committee member Dr. Fran Wills said that school leaders were committed to ensuring that districts are responsive to the issues of systemic racism raised this spring in wrestling to understand the tragic death of George Floyd.

“Some questions we may consider are: how can our schools support students of color whose fears have been intensified as they are isolated in their homes, and how do we assess our curriculum to reflect multiple perspectives in history, arts and humanities?”


The group held its second meeting on July 21, during which members discussed the committee’s mission vision and goals.



CONTACT INFORMATION

 200 BOCES Drive
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

 914.245.2700

 Email us

Anonymous Reporting

BOCES SCHOOLS

- Tech Center
- The Walden School
- Pines Bridge
- Fox Meadow Middle/HS
- In District Programs
- OC21
- Hudson Valley P-Tech

PROGRAMS

- Workshops & Training
- Career & Technical Education
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- Adult Education
- College Partnerships
- Regional Partnership Center

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