

# Center for an Urban Future

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For too many graduates, a high school diploma does not represent adequate preparation for college or work. A growing number of states are responding to this problem by erecting dual enrollment programs that provide connections and pathways between high schools and colleges.

# READY OR NOT

## *Insufficient Collaboration Between Department of Education and CUNY Could Hinder Effectiveness and Future Growth of Programs Designed to Improve Students' College Readiness Levels*

### **ONE OF THE PERSISTENT PROBLEMS CONFRONTING EDUCATION**

officials in New York City today is that too many students who graduate from the city's public high schools are unprepared to succeed in college. While this isn't a new problem, it has taken on more importance in today's knowledge economy, as employers of all types increasingly demand that workers have some level of post-secondary education.

A growing number of educators and policymakers around the country say that the solution lies in creating dual enrollment programs and other collaborative initiatives between secondary and post-secondary schools that give kids a taste of college work while they are still in high school. Dozens of states and cities have created these programs in recent years as a way to ease students' transition from secondary to post-secondary schools.

New York has quietly developed some of the nation's most promising dual enrollment programs that are focused on preparing young people for college, connecting tens of thousands of low-income and "average" students from public schools around the five boroughs with campuses of the City University of New York (CUNY). However, the programs, which are all run by CUNY, have thus far received little institutional

*Continued on page 2*

support from the city's Department of Education (DOE). Unless this changes in the years ahead, education experts say it will be difficult to expand these nascent efforts to raise students' college readiness levels.

It's understandable that Mayor Bloomberg and his schools chancellor, Joel Klein, didn't make dual enrollment programs with CUNY more of a priority during the past four years. After all, the mayor and Chancellor Klein had their hands full making a series of other monumental changes to New York City's public school system, from wresting control of the system and dismantling the old Board of Education bureaucracy to adopting uniform standards and opening more than 150 small high schools.

As impressive as these and other reforms have been, however, the sad reality is that fewer than a third of graduates in New York State leave high school equipped to succeed in college. Experts say the numbers in New York City are particularly low. Meanwhile, the Bloomberg administration has missed opportuni-

ties to bolster the CUNY-led initiatives to improve college readiness levels in the five boroughs. Indeed, five years ago, the Center for an Urban Future published a report concluding that New York City had become the nation's leader in linking high schools and higher education institutions, with a bright future based on a partnership between CUNY and the city's public school system that "allowed them to collaborate on a series of programs built on a common vision and a common goal."

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CUNY has built successful dual enrollment programs and other collaborative initiatives designed to prep young people for college by forging relationships with individual school principals around the city. But education experts say that communication between CUNY and DOE suffered during the past few years, and that challenges ranging from the city's limited institutional support to funding shortfalls will make it difficult for CUNY to take these programs to the next level.

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# School Ties

## Dual Enrollment Programs Seen As One Way to Ensure More Students Succeed in College

**IN TODAY'S KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY, A HIGH** school diploma is no longer sufficient for most people to secure a reasonably well-paying job. Two years of post-secondary education has become the baseline for future success. Yet, the first two years of college have also proven to be the toughest for students, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds.

Nationally, only 7 percent of lower-income students get a B.A. by the age of 26, compared to 60 percent of upper-income students, according to a 2004 report by the Aspen Institute. Overall, approximately 66 percent of graduates in the U.S. enroll in post-secondary education or training directly after high school, but only 25 percent earn a degree. In New York State, while 57 of every 100 ninth graders graduate high school on time, only 41 of them enter college immediately after graduating. Of these, just 31 remain enrolled for a sophomore year and 19 finish college within six years.

In another sign that New York's high school students aren't adequately prepared for college, a recent study by the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation found that the state's "college readiness rate" was a paltry 32 percent in 2002, even below the 34 percent rate for the nation. Meanwhile, the state's college readiness rate improved by just one percent between 1992 and 2002 (from 31 to 32 percent) while nationally it improved by seven percent (from 27 to 34 percent).

The bottom line is that for too many graduates, a high school diploma does not represent adequate preparation for the intellectual demands of college or work. A recent report issued by the American Diploma Project concluded: "In every state today, students can meet the requirements for high school graduation and still be unprepared for success in college or the workplace. Simply put, our standards have not kept pace with the world students are entering after high school."

A growing number of states are responding to these changing demands and longstanding obstacles by tearing down the walls between high school and college. From coast to coast, educators have been erecting dual enrollment programs and other collaborative initiatives that attempt to provide better connections and pathways between high schools and colleges. These joint programs are one part of the P-16 movement in education, which strives to connect the disparate worlds of secondary education (pre-kindergarten, elementary, middle and high schools) with post-secondary

schools and advocates for enhanced teacher training. (See "The Rest of P-16" on page 11)

According to Columbia University's Community College Research Center, an institute that studies higher education and community college issues, 40 states now have dual enrollment policies or legislation on the books. Of these, 18 mandate that students are given the opportunity to enroll in post-secondary education, and 10 provide high schools and colleges with the option of developing dual enrollment programs. Examples of recent state initiatives include:

- In April 2005, California established a P-16 council of representatives of major school systems and post-secondary institutions as well as academics and members of the business community to create a unified system that spans from pre-school to higher education.

- North Carolina revised its Innovative Cooperative High School Programs statute in 2005 to focus on collaborations between local high schools and post-secondary institutions that begin as early as the ninth grade. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has provided funding for high school innovation, which prompted the state to fund and develop a program called "Learn and Earn," in which students receive a high school diploma and either two years of college credit or an associate's degree in five years. The program currently has 15 pilot sites, and officials have plans to expand it statewide.

- In Michigan, all eligible high school students can enroll in post-secondary courses that are fully paid for by their school district. In fiscal year 2002-2003, more than 9,000 11th and 12th graders participated in the program, including 12 percent of all Michigan high school seniors participating.

Nationwide, the Gates Foundation has poured more than a billion dollars into several strategies for redeveloping high schools over the last five years, a big chunk of which is designated for collaborative programs—including in New York—that allow these projects to be refined and expanded, often at a rapid clip. In addition, in early 2005, the National Governors Association and the nonprofit education policy group Achieve hosted a ground-breaking summit devoted entirely to high schools and the gaps in preparedness that today's students must grapple with. One major outcome of the summit was an action agenda to restore value to the high school diploma, redesign high schools, and streamline and improve educational governance. ❖

# Head of the Class

## CUNY Is at the Forefront of National Efforts to Develop Collaborative Programs Aimed at Preparing Young People to Succeed in College

**WHILE OTHER IMPORTANT REFORMS OF THE CITY** school system have taken center stage in recent years, New York City has quietly become a national leader in adopting components of the P-16 educational model. Indeed, the city is now home to three major collaborative programs between CUNY campuses and city schools that education experts say are among the best in the country in preparing a wide range of students for attending and succeeding in college.

All three of these programs—College Now, the Early College Initiative and the Middle Grades Initiative—are run by CUNY, some with significant partnership from individual school principals or administrators at the city’s Department of Education. Each program differs in approach, target audience and structure, but all three draw upon the resources of the CUNY system to improve the preparedness, college attendance and, most importantly, college completion rates of city students.

“They’re getting results,” says Michael Kirst, an education professor at Stanford who has done extensive research on P-16 programs around the country. “I don’t know any commitment to dual enrollment [programs] that is this expansive and with this much vari-

er grade point averages, attendance rates and graduation rates than their peers. Meanwhile, the Early College Initiative gives students the opportunity to earn an associate’s degree or two years of college credit toward a baccalaureate degree by the time they graduate high school.

The three collaborative programs highlighted in this report are important for another reason: like most other initiatives as part of the P-16 movement, CUNY’s programs are largely focused on students who are falling behind or come from backgrounds that make it harder to enroll in college. In the past, most dual enrollment programs around the nation concentrated on the most gifted students, providing opportunities for academically advanced students to get a jump on their upcoming college career.

“[CUNY’s programs are] very intentional about improving the transition, systematically, for New York City kids, which we know are, for the most part, groups that you don’t find succeeding or entering college in large numbers. They are helping to ensure that they enroll at higher numbers in higher education, but also succeed and hit the ground running,” says Joel Vargas, senior project manager of Jobs for the Future, a policy

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ety of institutions [i.e. community colleges and four-year colleges]. It is unprecedented in terms of scope.”

The College Now initiative is the nation’s largest public urban dual enrollment program, serving more than 32,000 students a year. The program, which gives students an opportunity to experience the academic rigors and atmosphere of college while they’re still in high school, is now offered at all 17 CUNY campuses and more than 240 of the city’s 425 public high schools.

New York’s other flagship collaborative initiatives are newer and serve fewer students, but are similarly helping students get a jump-start on college. The Middle Grades Initiative, which aims to help prepare middle-grade students for rigorous high school and college-level work, is the successor to a federally funded CUNY project (CUNY GEAR UP) whose students had notably high-

organization that works closely with early college high schools in New York and around the country.

Norm Fruchter, director of New York University’s Institute for Education and Social Policy, agrees. “I think that the range of students graduating from New York City high schools who could do well in CUNY and for whom CUNY would actually help to change their career trajectories is much greater than what people imagine it is. I think it’s incredibly important not to aim at the AP [Advanced Placement] kids and the kids that are going to go to college anyway, but to aim at the kids who are on the border, who may have never even thought they were going to go to college, and develop transition programs and get those kids to realize they can do it.” The pages that follow include a detailed examination of the city’s three main collaborative programs.

First developed at Kingsborough Community College in 1983 as a partnership with four city high schools, College Now has become CUNY's largest partnership with the New York City secondary school system and the largest public urban dual enrollment program in the United States. Today, all 17 CUNY campuses participate in College Now, partnering with high schools across the five boroughs to create a wide range of workshops and courses for students, including non-credit high school courses (i.e. basic skills and college prep), high school credit courses, college credit courses, Regents and SAT prep and college site visits.

The program aims to improve academic performance for students while they're still in high school and ensure that graduates are prepared for college-level work. A wide range of classes, from science to literature, are taught either before or after school by a mix of college professors and high school teachers who have been certified as college adjuncts. High school students who take college credit classes through the program graduate with those credits, which are transferable to CUNY colleges, and in some cases, to other post-secondary institutions as well. The program also serves as an early warning and support system by evaluating students in their junior year of high school, looking at grades and Regents scores to see if they are eligible for free college courses.

"We are focused on creating a progression of activities. We work to move students from workshops and high school credit courses to college-level cohort courses, which enroll only high school students and, ultimately,

into courses with the regular college student population," says Pedro Baez, College Now director at Lehman College.

The original College Now program at Kingsborough now serves over 6,000 students in 26 high schools. In 1998, the success of that program spurred CUNY to expand College Now to the university's five community colleges, and in 2000, CUNY formally established the CUNY College Now program, which works with all 17 campuses.

College Now is currently offered at more than 240 of New York City's 425 public high schools, and the number of students in the program grew by 50 percent from 2001 to 2005. Nearly 38 percent of CUNY's incoming freshmen in fall 2004 who attended New York City public high school were previously enrolled in College Now, and on some campuses that number is much higher. At Hunter College, half of the students who enrolled in fall 2004 as first-time freshmen were College Now alumni; at the College of Staten Island, the number was over 60 percent.

The campuses are given leeway in designing programs to best suit their own strengths and needs. Each CUNY campus has a College Now coordinator who works with partner high schools to develop the curricula or to offer sections of college credit courses in the undergraduate curricula. Leonard Ciaccio, director of the Discovery Institute, which houses the College Now program at the College of Staten Island, says, "College Now often reflects the special interests and special perspectives of each campus. CUNY is exploring opportunities to expand the number of high schools that offer College Now, and to develop activities for students in earlier grades. ❖

■ **Overview:** College credit and bridge coursework available to high school students, helping them meet graduation requirements and be prepared for success in college

■ **Number of students served annually:** More than 32,400 students took more than 55,600 different courses and activities in the 2004-2005 academic year

■ **Type of students served:** Primarily 11th and 12th graders in college credit courses who meet minimum SAT, PSAT and/or Regents scores; increasingly, 9th & 10th graders in pre-college credit course activities designed to help them meet eligibility standards by 11th grade

■ **Administration:** CUNY Office of Academic Affairs and 17 CUNY colleges

■ **Budget:** Approximately \$10 million

■ **Funding source:** CUNY, through its city and state funding

■ **Outcomes:**

- 11.1 percent of all New York City high school students participated in some College Now activity in the 2004-2005 academic year
- That 11.1 percent represents 32,390 unduplicated students, an increase of 46.5 percent from the 2001-2002 academic year, when 22,106 (8.2 percent) of all city high school students participated
- 16,394 students (80 percent of total) received a grade of a C or higher in College Now credit-bearing courses (2004-2005)
- 37.9 percent of the New York City public school students who enrolled in CUNY in fall 2004 as first-time freshmen had attended College Now
- At CUNY, College Now alumni who entered the university in the fall of 2003 had a one-year retention rate of 82.3 percent, compared with a rate of 72.5 percent for students who did not participate in College Now ❖

CUNY's Middle Grades Initiative (MGI) is a new program that is building upon the success of the university's participation in Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), a federally funded project that existed between 2000 and 2005. The Bush administration opted not to renew funding for CUNY's GEAR UP program last summer, but CUNY quickly identified enough of its own funds to launch a similar, though scaled-down, version of the program in September 2005.

Picking up where CUNY GEAR UP left off, MGI offers the same benefits—academic support services, advisement and mentoring, college awareness, integrated arts programming and parent/family outreach—to a smaller group of students over a multi-year period. MGI is partnered with 13 small secondary schools in the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens, with approximately 1,320 6th and 7th graders served by five CUNY colleges. Like the original CUNY GEAR UP project, MGI focuses on the academic and college readiness needs of low-income students. According to MGI Director Donna Linderman, more than 90 percent of the students enrolled in MGI are black or Hispanic, 74 percent meet the income thresholds to be eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and approximately 65 percent enter middle school below grade level in math and English.

Similar to CUNY's other collaborative programs, one of MGI's main priorities is ensuring that students are adequately prepared for college. It works with the same cohort of students as they progress through their secondary school years, ultimately connecting them with the College Now program early on in high school. MGI is more closely coordinated with the College Now program than its predecessor. Each participating CUNY college has a direc-

tor that is responsible for both programs, which leads to more seamless integration of the two programs and allows MGI to serve as a natural feeder into College Now.

"Our plan is to help students build basic academic skills in middle school, transition into high school, and master their required Regents courses, then move into a sequence of College Now workshops, high school credit and eventually college credit courses," says Linderman. "Our goal is see more students finish high school beyond the basic proficiency level and to be truly ready for the rigors of college. Close partnership between MGI and College Now will ensure this happens."

As currently structured, MGI is funded to follow the current cohort of sixth and seventh graders into high school. Unless there is additional funding, it's doubtful the program will be able to bring in a new set of sixth graders in future school years.

Although CUNY GEAR UP eventually fell prey to the ever-changing shifts in federal funding, the program had a series of strong outcomes that have laid the groundwork for MGI, and administrators are drawing upon lessons learned from CUNY GEAR UP to improve this new initiative. For example, one of CUNY GEAR UP's major obstacles was attrition of students as they scattered from a handful of participating middle schools into more than 140 of the city's high schools. Although all of the CUNY GEAR UP middle grades students were still eligible to participate, the project had a difficult time providing services over such a wide selection of schools. The MGI program is offered only in schools that span the middle to high school continuum (either 6-12 or 7-12 grade schools), thus keeping the majority of students within reach of the program services. ❖

■ **Overview:** Provides a variety of services to specific cohorts of students from 6th grade through high school

■ **Number of students served:** 1,320 in the current cohort

■ **Type of students served:** Attending high-poverty schools

■ **Administration:** CUNY Office of Academic Affairs and 5 CUNY colleges

■ **Budget:** \$800,000 in FY 05/06

■ **Funding source:** CUNY

■ **Outcomes:**

- Middle Grades Initiative (MGI) is modeled on the CUNY GEAR UP consortium project, which was discontinued last fall when the federal government ended its financial support

- While MGI is still in its infancy, students in the CUNY GEAR UP project had GPAs that averaged 7 percent higher than their non-CUNY GEAR UP counterparts (69 percent vs. 62 percent) and their attendance rate was 9 percent higher (82 percent vs. 73 percent)

- 72 percent of the CUNY GEAR UP cohort graduated from high school after four years, compared to the most recent citywide rate of 53 percent

- Nearly all of 2005 CUNY GEAR UP graduates entered college the following year, with a significant portion attending CUNY colleges ❖

In recent years, numerous cities and states around the country have raced to open early college high schools, thanks in large part to an infusion of more than \$120 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support the concept. This new breed of school blurs the line between high school and college by combining the two levels of instruction in one academic setting. Because students are expected to graduate with both a high school diploma and either an associate's degree or enough college credits to enter a four-year college as a junior, college faculty and high school teachers must work together to plan the curriculum and identify the most effective means of ensuring student success. Early college high schools are paired with intermediary partners—universities or nonprofit organizations—and are often located on college campuses. The Gates Foundation hopes to help develop 170 early college schools around the country, including 16 in New York.

CUNY's currently runs three early college high schools: the Hostos Lincoln Academy at Hostos Community College, Queens School of Inquiry at Queens College and The City College Academy of the Arts. CUNY also plans to open three additional early college high schools in 2006 and four more in 2007. The schools adopt a new cohort of students each year, beginning in 6th grade, and each CUNY school will ultimately have about 550 students.

In addition, four early college high schools in New York City have deep connections to CUNY colleges but received initial funding from other Gates intermediary organizations: The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation helped launch the Science, Technology and Research (STAR) High School in partnership with Brooklyn College, and Manhattan Hunter Science High School paired with Hunter College. LaGuardia Community College is working with the Middle College National Consortium to convert the two high schools on its campus (Middle College High School and International High School) into early college schools.

Two early college high schools in the city have no operational connection to CUNY: the Bard High School Early College, and the Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists, which works with Mercy College and the National Council of La Raza.

The Bard High School serves academically advanced students, but the Bronx Studio School and all of the CUNY schools are open to students at any level of achievement. "Typically, there are no specific entry

requirements for our early college schools. Both of our schools that opened this year accepted students on the basis of a lottery," says Cass Conrad, director of the Early College Initiative at CUNY. "We expect that up to 70 percent of the students in the school will be below grade level when they come in."

The early college model is too new to have generated much data on student outcomes. The first group to complete the initiative—eight students who piloted the program at LaGuardia Community College—graduated in September 2005 with a high school diploma and an associate's degree. CUNY officials assert that others in that initial cohort of 33 students are making progress toward completing college degrees as well. ❖

■ **Overview:** Schools designed to enable students to earn an associate's degree or up to two years of college credit toward a baccalaureate degree by the time they graduate from high school

■ **Number of students served annually:** 2,275 students are enrolled in all seven early college schools that are currently affiliated with CUNY colleges

■ **Type of students served:** No academic testing required. The priority is to serve low-income, first-generation college goers, English language learners, and/or students of color, all of whom are statistically underrepresented in higher education

■ **Administration:** New York City Department of Education and CUNY

■ **Budget:** Less than \$3 million

■ **Funding source:** The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provides just under \$7 million over five years, including approximately \$700,000 in 2006. CUNY provides approximately \$2.3 million. (The city's Department of Education provides operating funds to the seven schools, just as they do to all city schools)

■ **Outcomes:** Given the newness of the schools, there are few measurable outcomes thus far ❖

# Double Trouble

## Future Growth of CUNY's Successful College Readiness Programs Remains Uncertain As a Result of Limited Commitment from City's Department of Ed

**AS PROMISING AS THE COLLEGE READINESS PROGRAMS** that CUNY developed with city schools have become, they currently reach only a relatively small proportion of city students. And efforts to expand them in the years ahead are likely to be difficult due to limited funding, a lack of institutional support from the city's Department of Education and recent federal funding cuts.

Currently, even the largest of the collaborative programs—College Now—served only 11.1 percent of all New York City high school students in the 2004-2005 academic year. While this is nothing to scoff at, it has long been a goal of university administrators to expand the program into all city schools and additional grades. However, educators say this will be difficult, if not impossible, without stronger institutional support from the city's Department of Education and additional funds from local or federal partners.

"There is a lot of positive stuff going on, but it's, to an extent, one-sided," says Melinda Mechur Karp, research associate at Columbia University's Community

CUNY is doing is laudable, but it takes two to tango," says Stanford's Kirst. "It seemed like the Department [of Education's] priorities had shifted to other things. They were doing things with higher education, but this particular dual enrollment focus of CUNY's was not their priority."

Expanding New York's existing college readiness programs will also be difficult without more money. Currently, CUNY receives almost no financial support from DOE for College Now and the Middle Grades Initiative (DOE has contributed funds towards the Early College Initiative). And CUNY's budget isn't exactly flush. Mayor Bloomberg's proposed city budget for the upcoming fiscal year calls for modest cuts to the university's budget. Governor Pataki also proposed a tuition increase for CUNY this year, but his plan was rejected by the Legislature.

At least one other CUNY dual enrollment program has already had to be scaled back significantly because of funding cuts. Last August, the federal government discontinued funding for CUNY GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program),

At least one CUNY dual enrollment program has already had to be scaled back significantly because of funding cuts. Last August, the federal government discontinued funding for CUNY GEAR UP, a project that attempted to prepare students in the middle grades for rigorous high school and college-level work.

College Research Center and one of New York's leading experts on dual enrollment programs. "Not that DOE doesn't appreciate this, but the effort is coming from one end and I think it does hinder College Now."

College Now and CUNY's other college readiness programs wouldn't exist without collaboration from school principals around the city, yet these initiatives clearly haven't been a priority for top-level administrators at DOE's central office in recent years. DOE officials aren't involved in the programs' day-to-day operations and often don't seem particularly invested in them. For instance, no administrators from DOE's central office participate in the meetings of the New York City Early College Network, a regular convening of key stakeholders in the program to share best practices and discuss ways to address problems.

In addition, communication between DOE officials and the CUNY administrators who run these initiatives is often spotty. In some cases, it has not been clear who at DOE is the point person for the dual enrollment programs. "What

a project that attempted to prepare students in the middle grades for rigorous high school and college-level work. CUNY GEAR UP, which received federal funding between 2000 and 2005, was in many ways a huge success: Students in the program had grade point averages that were 7 percent higher than those of all other students and attendance rates that were 9 percent higher.

To keep the program from completely disappearing, CUNY pulled together funding from its own coffers and created a new, scaled-back version of GEAR UP. The newly-titled Middle Grades Initiative similarly aims to prepare middle schoolers for college-level classes (it's also now designed to feed students into CUNY's College Now program), but this new program is limited to the current year's cohort of students. Without additional funding, either from government or outside funders, the program will remain at capacity and the next grade of students will not be able to reap the same benefits their peers have enjoyed. ❖

# Held Back

## CUNY and City's School System Had Big Plans for Collaboration on College Prep Programs, But Bloomberg Administration Backed Away from Those Efforts As It Concentrated on Other Critical Education Reforms

**WHILE DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS DESIGNED** to improve college readiness haven't been a particularly high priority for the city's Department of Education in recent years, this wasn't always the case. Six years ago, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein and then-New York City Schools Chancellor Harold Levy joined together to call for a significant expansion in collaborative programs between CUNY campuses and city schools. In what was the first notable attempt to institutionalize the partnership between CUNY and the Board of Education (the precursor to the Department of Education), Goldstein and Levy pledged "a dramatic effort to better prepare New York City high school students for graduation and college-level work."

The two educational leaders proposed key initiatives ranging from expanding the College Now program to all grades in every city high school to aligning the city's English and math high school Regents tests with CUNY's college placement exams. Importantly, the proposal also featured steps to formalize the relationship between the two institutions, including the creation of a position of deputy chancellor for recruitment and college preparation and a mandate for convening regular meetings of CUNY and Board of Education staff to examine and improve communication and procedures between the two institutions.

While hardly revolutionary, the announcement by Goldstein and Levy was a major step forward for the two institutions. Indeed, a 1999 report by the Mayor's Task Force on CUNY had characterized the cooperation between the university and the Board of Ed as "haphazard and unsystematic." The press release announcing the joint initiative in 2000 declared that it was "the first time the leadership of the two public education systems have joined to announce city-wide plans of this magnitude." The city's media was equally impressed, with both the *New York Post* and *The New York Times* writing supportive editorials.

Perhaps the most promising aspect of the joint proposal was the creation of the Deputy Chancellor for Recruitment and College Preparation. In March 2000, Lawrence Edwards, a longtime Board of Ed official, was appointed to the position and charged with ensuring "that there is a coordinated use of resources, active cooperation of the senior professionals in both systems

and development of both CUNY recruiting programs and Board college preparatory classes." The press release announcing Edwards' appointment added: "With this appointment, the two Chancellors recognize that the public education enterprise in this city, properly understood, is a kindergarten through grade 16 system...This appointment recognizes that the future of these institutions are inextricably joined."

Several education critics, including the Center for an Urban Future, hailed the new position as an important step in coordinating programs between CUNY and the Board of Ed. However, the position never reached the potential it could have, and many of the goals went unrealized. For one, the fact that both Edwards and his successor were drawn directly from the Board of Ed never sat well with CUNY officials and made it difficult for the deputy chancellor position to be perceived as a true intermediary between the two systems. Indeed, when Chancellor Klein eliminated the position early on in his term, CUNY officials didn't object to the decision.

The city's commitment to collaborative college readiness programs with CUNY was ultimately scaled back because Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein were decidedly more interested in other educational reforms. Indeed, soon after taking office, Mayor Bloomberg moved forward with an aggressive agenda to reform the city school system. He quickly won support from the State Legislature to eliminate the old Board of Education and create a new education agency under the mayor's control (the Department of Education). After bringing on Klein to run the system, the Bloomberg administration focused on initiatives such as eliminating "social promotion" for elementary and middle school students, standardizing a citywide reading and math curriculum, reorganizing the city's special education system and creating a number of smaller high schools.

These are critical reforms that undoubtedly deserved priority status from DOE. Meanwhile, CUNY was doing an effective job managing these dual enrollment programs on its own. "I think DOE felt like they had on their plate a lot of other initiatives," says one outside education expert who is knowledgeable about dual enrollment programs in New York. "This was something that they thought was really important, but they had to use their

resources for a variety of different things. I think they saw it as something that was up to CUNY. Even though it was with their students and teachers and principals, it was CUNY's deal. They weren't going to throw obstacles in the way, but it wasn't on the front burner. Maybe that's because it was doing really well on its own."

Nevertheless, some education experts say that DOE missed an opportunity to institutionalize the partnership with CUNY and build on the efforts that were underway to expand dual enrollment programs between the two systems. For instance, even though the position of deputy chancellor for recruitment and college preparation may have been riddled with problems, the basic idea of creating a mechanism for regular communication and coordination between the two institutions was a valuable one. Without that estab-

lished connection—which still could take shape as a new joint deputy, independent from either system, or through regular meetings between key administrations of both institutions—expanding dual enrollment programs to serve more of New York's middle and high school students will be difficult.

"What we need is a broader scope initiative and some kind of continuing governance mechanism where people meet on a regular basis to deliberate," adds Kirst. "There wasn't anything of that type in the city. New York has no mechanism to really plan or design or sustain a deep K-16 partnership. The best person to do this would be the mayor, and he has a role at both levels to say, 'I want you guys to get together and figure out how to deal with college readiness in a more comprehensive way, and I'm going to lead it and stick with it.'" ❖

## DATA DOGGED

The communication gaps between CUNY and DOE have created a number of bumps in the road for administrators of the university's dual enrollment programs. One problem is that CUNY officials sometimes find it difficult to access data from DOE on the performance of students participating in the College Now program while they are still in high school, impacting the university's ability to gauge the initiative's effectiveness and determine whether changes need to be made.

CUNY's access to its College Now students' grade point averages, attendance records and test scores is largely available only when students apply for and enter the university. The limited data poses problems for the programs' administrators.

"With the data we presently collect in College Now, we cannot determine with any degree of definitiveness what the graduation rates are for students with College Now experience compared to the overall DOE graduation rates at any particular high school," says Stuart Cochran, director of research and evaluation for collaborative programs at CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs. "Increased access to student high school records would enable us to make comparisons like that. There is also an interest in growing College Now back to 9th and 10th grades, and access to additional DOE student data would assist us in enrolling students in new College Now activities and in assessing their effectiveness."

Gaps in data sharing between pre-kindergarten through 12th grade and post-secondary academic systems aren't unique to New York. The same problems occur in other large dual enrollment programs around

the country. And even while the move to create a seamless P-16 system is underway in many states, underlying systems like databases are typically still separate and often unable to communicate with each other.

In the past, CUNY and the Department of Education have worked together to explore how to share information. For instance, in 2003, CUNY and DOE's Division of Assessment and Accountability forged a data sharing agreement as part of the now-defunct CUNY GEAR UP project. Under the partnership, CUNY was able to electronically obtain student data—including attendance rates and standardized test scores—making it possible to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the project's services. Unfortunately, little progress has been made in recent years with the much larger College Now initiative, though DOE officials are currently considering a request from CUNY to make access to the department's data more routine. "We really need to establish more regular record-linking capabilities between CUNY, College Now, and the New York City DOE, if we're going to continue to do serious, in-depth longitudinal studies," Cochran concludes.

DOE would prosper from better data sharing, as well. It could do what few other school systems do: track its students in large numbers into post-secondary education. Public school systems in Chicago, for example, have begun to judge their success in part on how many of the district's graduates reach college and thrive there. By connecting to CUNY's data systems, the DOE can show a similar commitment to its students after they receive a high school diploma. ❖

# Making the Grade

## The City's Department of Education Is Becoming More Closely Connected to CUNY in Areas Like Teacher Training; Will College Readiness Programs Be Next?

**IN JANUARY, MAYOR BLOOMBERG UNVEILED A NEW** joint initiative in which DOE will work closely with CUNY and New York University to improve upon existing models of teacher education and increase the number of high-caliber, well-trained teachers in the city's public schools. The \$15 million, privately-funded program is guided by a set of principles that the three partners have developed together. Key steps include establishing education courses that are held at public schools as well as universities and taught by representatives of both institutions; providing ongoing support to participants that is designed and implemented by all three partners; and training teachers in areas where the city is desperately short-staffed, such as science, English language instruction, math and special education.

CUNY's main role in the project will be the creation of a Teacher Academy focused on recruiting high-quality math and science teachers, while NYU will expand the curriculum and structure of their graduate-

level teaching programs. DOE will coordinate with the two institutions to develop programs that are reflective of the city's needs, and will develop a group of representative "host schools" to provide hands-on learning opportunities for program participants. Participating students are eligible for scholarships and financial support in exchange for a guarantee that they will teach in city schools for at least two years. Amy McIntosh, a DOE official, has been named the executive director and will report to a governing board comprising leaders and key staff of all three institutions.

The verdict is still out on the teacher training initiative, but CUNY insiders say that New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and CUNY Chancellor Mathew Goldstein have developed a closer personal relationship over the past year. As a result, according to one CUNY official, "the extent of the cooperation between the two systems hasn't ever been better." ❖

## A QUICK STUDY: THE REST OF P-16

*Although this report focuses on programs that are bridging the gap between the city's secondary and post-secondary systems, other projects around the city are underway to link up other parts of the education pipeline and to bring the knowledge and expertise of the city's colleges into public schools classrooms.*

### **Pre-K**

Pre-kindergarten programs are the ever important first rung of the P-16 ladder. Cognitive researchers agree that the majority of brain development occurs between birth and age 5. Consequently, it is critical to enroll children in strong pre-K programs that in turn link appropriately to K-3 grade programming.

New York is home to one of the most ambitious pre-kindergarten programs in the nation. In 1998, the state was only the second state (after Georgia) to establish a universal pre-K program with a goal of serving every eligible child. Implementation has been slow, but by 2003 well over 60,000 children were served statewide, with the majority in New York City.

Unfortunately, the funding and stability of pre-K in New York is acutely precarious. What's needed is a clearer understanding of how such early educational

programming fits squarely into a pipeline that leads to college and beyond.

### **Teacher Education**

The improvement of teacher education and quality with higher standards for traditional teacher education master's programs, as well as professional development courses for existing teachers, is another explicit focus of the P-16 movement. Through a comprehensive and strategic approach to improving teacher education, colleges are able to both affect the overall quality of teacher performance and meet stringent new academic standards set out by government officials.

Fortunately, considerable progress is being made in this area. CUNY announced in 2005 that it will establish a CUNY Teachers Academy, modeled on the structure of their successful Honors College, which will focus on recruiting and training teachers in areas that are particularly in need of new recruits—math, science, special education and foreign language. Most recently, Mayor Bloomberg announced a \$15 million teacher training initiative that will be undertaken jointly by DOE, CUNY and New York University. (See "Making the Grade," above) ❖

# Moving Forward

**With Many of the Bloomberg Administration's Education Reforms Already Launched, It May Be the Perfect Time for the City's Department of Education to Make College Readiness Programs a Higher Priority**

## **ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS,**

from the creation of a joint teacher training initiative between CUNY and the Department of Education to a closer working relationship between Chancellors Klein and Goldstein, signal a new opportunity for collaboration between the two systems on programs that help students' transition from high school to college.

Going forward, the onus is on Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein to make collaborative college readiness programs like College Now, the Early College Initiative and the Middle Grades Initiative a higher priority for DOE. Fortunately, the timing may be ideal for this to occur. After four years of reforms, the infrastructure of DOE is now fairly established and as the mayor embarks on his second term in office, he likely has more leeway to embrace new educational initiatives.

The three collaborative programs profiled in this report have already shown considerable promise, and CUNY officials believe there is ample room for expansion and improvement. But to take these programs to the next level, it will probably require increased support and partnership from leaders at DOE.

The three collaborative programs profiled in this report have already shown considerable promise, and CUNY officials believe there is ample room for expansion and improvement. But to take these programs to the next level, it will probably require increased support and partnership from leaders at DOE. "We find ourselves in some pretty significant ways thinking about things in very different ways than people at DOE," says one CUNY official. "This has mostly been our game, playing on their courts, playing with their players. Hopefully, it will become a game that we're all playing."

This doesn't necessarily mean creating a new office or other large-scale initiative. But there are specific changes that need to happen in each of the main dual enrollment programs. These include:

## **COLLEGE NOW**

Because College Now is almost entirely under the province of CUNY, some of the plans for the program's expansion are hard to prepare without more direct participation from DOE. For example, currently College Now classes are only held before or after the school day. The ability to offer courses during school would be a huge advantage for scheduling and student participation.

The program will also face capacity issues. "One issue we are grappling with as College Now grows is how a program that was designed for the most part as a partnership with large comprehensive high schools can accommodate the increasing proliferation of small schools," says Stuart Cochran, director of research and evaluation for collaborative programs at CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs.

There have also been requests to tailor the curriculum to the focus of the particular schools,

more than CUNY can do now. College Now is also the program that would benefit most from data sharing between CUNY and DOE (see "Data Dogged," page 10).

Finally, more support from DOE's central office could also help focus schools on preparing their students for post-secondary coursework, which is not always a top priority of school principals, who are often preoccupied with meeting performance goals.

## **MIDDLE GRADES INITIATIVE**

CUNY administrators who run its Middle Grades Initiative (MGI) have developed good working relationships with some school leaders and have had some positive interaction with DOE. However, CUNY staff and local schools do most of the strategic and opera-

tional planning. The increased interest DOE has expressed in middle schools fits nicely with the goals of MGI and a stronger collaboration between the two systems might be easy to achieve.

Uncertainty around future funding for MGI will overshadow the program in the near future since CUNY has supplied all the support to replace the loss of federal dollars. Without any financial support from DOE—or any other outside funding source—the program likely will not be able to adopt a new cohort of students next year. DOE’s support and collaboration is important not only as a potential source for funding, but also as a resource and partner to create a program that outside funders will find appealing.

### **EARLY COLLEGE INITIATIVE**

Because early college schools have a specific, unique goal, they don’t always fit into some of the standard procedures and policies designed for New York City high schools. High school principals involved in the program have worked closely with CUNY administrators, but involvement from higher-level DOE staff has been lacking. “Within the Department of Education, they don’t have a champion, per se, of early college. This model is very different and some of the standard policies in the Department of Ed don’t fit very well with what we’re trying to do,” says Cass Conrad, director of CUNY’s Early College Initiative. “Because the principal of the school reports to the superintendent, that’s the relationship that the principal pays the most attention to. If that superintendent isn’t brought into the early college model, then the principal is really torn in different directions and implementation of whatever we’re trying to do can become difficult.” With new schools scheduled to open over the next two years, it will be increasingly important to ensure that early college schools are able to help students earn their college credits while still earning a high school diploma.

### **IMPROVEMENTS AT CUNY**

Despite the success of its three main P-16 programs, CUNY itself can also find room for improvement. Now that College Now, the Early College Initiative and MGI are well established, CUNY officials should be more aggressive in asking DOE for help. True collaboration has been difficult to achieve over the last few years—and means giving up a measure of control—but the programs’ best chance for success lies with a partnership between CUNY and the Department of Education, not just CUNY programs with New York City schools’ students at Department of Education facilities.

### **STATE OF NEW YORK**

It’s important to note that calling on the Department of Education to recommit itself to P-16 programs does not let other potential supporters off the hook. In many states, P-16 programs have become a priority at the highest levels; governors, state departments of education and statewide commissions are focused on connecting higher education institutions with the K-12 system and providing a boost to high school students’ hopes of attending college. In New York, isolation and limited support are issues on a statewide level. New York State’s governance structure for education has both post-secondary and K-12 institutions under one unit, but by and large, it has no impact on creating a true P-16 system.

“The lack of gubernatorial focus is very unique in New York,” says one education expert. “The politics is worse in New York than anywhere else. New York has a governance structure [the state’s Board of Regents] that other states would want badly, but no one is doing anything to take advantage of this. Everyone in New York has their own pet initiative. Everyone has a little piece of the pie, but not a coherent pie.”

For their part, the New York State Department of Education recently held a series of regional P-16 forums around the state, including two in New York City. Still, implementing tougher standards in high school remains the department’s primary vehicle to ensure kids are ready for college. Stringent standards may be critical, but a growing number of education experts say it’s important to also focus on dual enrollment programs that prepare students for college-level work.

To be fair, the State Department of Education takes its cues from state leaders such as Governor Pataki and the Legislature, as does the city’s Department of Education from Mayor Bloomberg. That is why a clear embrace by the city and state’s leadership of the importance of attending and succeeding in college is so important, and why P-16 programs should be examined and improved. “You have to have a leadership team or roundtable that has people from higher ed and K-12 and early childhood and political representatives and has strong representation from the business community,” says Daniel Humphrey of SRI International.

With one institutional champion and lots of grassroots energy, College Now, the Early College Initiative and the Middle Grades Initiative have come far in recent years. Now is the time for true collaboration to take them even further. ❖

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## SYSTEM-WIDE

■ CUNY Chancellor Goldstein and New York City Schools Chancellor Klein should commit the appropriate institutional support and resources to improving and expanding New York City's three main collaborative programs that are geared towards preparing students for college-level work (College Now, the Early College Initiative and the Middle Grades Initiative). While CUNY and the city's Department of Education each have other important educational priorities, a shared commitment to these dual enrollment programs is a win-win for each institution.

■ The two chancellors should quickly establish a mechanism for improved communication and collaboration between the central staffs of each institution around college readiness programs. While this doesn't necessarily mean the re-establishment of a deputy chancellor overseeing the partnership, it would be wise to at least include the formalization of regular, structured meetings—possibly held quarterly—between key officials from CUNY and DOE.

■ Strengthen data sharing efforts between CUNY and DOE, particularly involving College Now, so that program administrators can understand how the dual enrollment programs are working and what enhancements should be made.

## PROGRAM-SPECIFIC

### ■ College Now

- Expand the program to include earlier grades and summer programs.
- Establish College Now in each of the new schools being created around the city.
- Explore wider options for holding College Now courses during school hours, like AP courses.
- Encourage more courses to be taught on the college campuses, both to alleviate the space crunch at high schools and to give students a fuller experience.

### ■ Early College Initiative

- Ensure that there is representation from the DOE central office at meetings of the New York City Early College Network.

### ■ Middle Grades Initiative

- Continue to strengthen connections between College Now and the Middle Grades Initiative to maximize the number of students that are enrolled in both programs.
- CUNY and DOE should work together to secure additional funding for the Middle Grades Initiative and expand beyond the existing cohort.

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## CREDITS

The Center for an Urban Future is a New York City-based think tank dedicated to independent, fact-based research about critical issues affecting New York's future including economic development, workforce development, higher education and the arts. For more information or to sign up for our monthly e-mail bulletin, visit [www.nycfuture.org](http://www.nycfuture.org).

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Center *for an*  
Urban  
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120 Wall Street, 20th Floor  
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