

Building a Highway to Higher Ed How Collaborative Efforts are Changing Education in America

In the industrial age, college was an uncommon dream. By the space age, it had become a common goal. In the information age, it's just common sense.

Employers looking to fill living-wage jobs want applicants with solid skills and college degrees, and Americans know it. Nationally, enrollment in college is at an all-time high and is projected to rise by an additional 4 million over the next 15 years, according to the College Board. Everyone expects high schools to prepare students for college, and most parents believe that's what's happening when they send their kids off to school every day. They don't find out they're wrong until it's too late.

Three-quarters of all high school graduates are now entering a four-year or community college within two years of graduation—and hundreds of thousands are failing out or bailing out because they are utterly unprepared when they arrive. Nationwide, some 30 percent of college students arrive at college campuses in need of remedial classes. And despite the impressive number of students throughout the country who are giving it the old college try, over 50 percent of them fail to earn a degree; one-third of these students never even see their sophomore year, according to the Education Trust. In response to these and other sorry statistics, getting tough with primary and secondary schools has become something of a national pastime:

- Fully 49 of the 50 states (with the lone exception of Iowa) are implementing statewide standardized tests. Twenty-four of those states, including New York, are requiring passage of these exams for a high-school degree.
- President Bush has announced his intention to target education with a focus on more testing and more accountability at the local level.
- Remedial education is being eliminated from major public college systems across the country, including those in California, New York and Georgia.

Higher standards and more rigorous testing may seem like good ways to address the problem, but there is a catch: High schools test for what they think students should have learned, and colleges test for what they think students need to know. But more often than not, these are not the same things.

No matter what other reforms are implemented, until those expectations are aligned, we are setting kids up for failure.

Colleges and universities don't accept high-school exit exams for placement on their campuses, because high schools and colleges have no agreed-upon standard for what should be taught, or at what level. So a student can pass all the standardized tests in high school, and still be unprepared for college by higher ed's standards.

Of all the solutions being bandied about, only one has emanated directly from those who deal with the problem up close, and who have to contend directly with the consequences of a failing system. And there is only

one solution that tackles the issue of college preparedness head-on.

It is the collaboration between public schools and higher education, also known as P-16, which stands for “pre-kindergarten through 16th grade.” The model is aimed at removing obstacles in the education system that prevent students from progressing from one grade level to the next. P-16 is about creating a smooth pathway from pre-kindergarten or pre-school through college, and over the past five years it has become a national movement—one that is being spearheaded by the education community itself.

P-16 isn't just about aligning standards and expectations. It's about pooling the resources of both systems to pursue a common goal, which is to turn out better prepared, better educated students. It's an opportunity to open up the dialogue between colleges and the primary and secondary schools, and to work together to improve teacher training, strengthen curricula and give students the information and support they need to succeed.

And where is some of the greatest progress being made? In that notorious bastion of didactic discord; New York City.

Over the past year, the fireworks that usually dominate educational policy and practice in New York have been replaced with something entirely new—friendship. Schools Chancellor Harold Levy and City University of New York Chancellor Matthew Goldstein have embraced one another like no two chancellors in the city's history. Their shared sense of purpose and mutual admiration has transcended a thoroughly negative history between the two systems and all the usual bluster and ego. It has allowed them to collaborate on a series of programs built on a common vision, and a common goal.

A yearlong investigation of educational programs by the Center for an Urban Future reveals vast amounts of programming and resources being shared between New York City's

P-16 refers to the creation of a smooth pathway from pre-kindergarten through the 16th grade (the end of college). Over the past five years it has become a national movement—one that is being spearheaded by the education community itself.

two public school systems. In fact, New York has begun to pioneer some of the most advanced and sophisticated P-16 programs in the United States. In a survey of major cities, the Center found that New York is leading all others in making public school and college collaboration a priority.

The accomplishments are numerous and still taking shape. They include:

- Expansion of the College Now program, which links City University of New York (CUNY) faculty and administrators to virtually every general high school in the city, in an effort to produce more high-school graduates and better prepare students for college.
- Hiring the first teacher education czar who reports to CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein and will be responsible for coordinating and restructuring teacher training at CUNY, which turns out nearly 40 percent of the Board of Education's teachers.
- Alignment of New York City's English and math high school exit exams—the New York State Regents tests—with CUNY's college placement exams, allowing students to avoid being double tested, and letting them know where they stand as they prepare to step up from 12th to 13th grade.
- Hiring the first joint deputy to the chancellors for collaborative programs, who has offices at both the Board of Ed and CUNY.

There is no question that the pressure for reform is intense in New York City: Businesses are demanding better trained graduates, the Regents exams are among the most rigorous standardized exit exams in the nation, remediation has been eliminated at the four-year CUNY colleges. But much of the progress here is directly attributable to the two chancellors rolling up their sleeves and working together. Without that synergy, the bridges they have begun to build could easily collapse, leaving the system right back where it started.

As of now, none of these programs is supported by much more than the sheer will of a few individuals, and if the history of the New York City education system has taught us one thing, it's that those individuals are unlikely to keep their jobs forever. Given this and many other institutional and political obstacles, the real work in New York is finding a way to sustain any initiative long enough to actually see results. ✨

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KEY FINDINGS

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH, BUT NATIONALLY NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF STUDENTS ARRIVE UNPREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGE.

Thirty percent of students arriving on college campuses need to take remedial classes before they can begin college course work, and over 50 percent of those who enter college never earn a degree.

COLLABORATION IS SWEEPING THE NATION. COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION AMONG ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION—PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND

post-secondary—for the purpose of building a smooth pathway from pre-kindergarten through college or “16th grade,” has become a national reform movement. Currently, 24 states have significant P-16 efforts under way, 21 of which have been initiated within the past five years.

NEW YORK CITY IS A P-16 REFORM LEADER. NEW YORK HAS BEEN PIONEERING COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS FOR 25 YEARS, AND IS CURRENTLY OUT IN

front of all other major cities in making public school and college collaboration a priority.

COLLEGE NOW, NEW YORK’S FLAGSHIP P-16 PROGRAM, HAS BEEN EXPANDED OVER THE PAST ACADEMIC YEAR TO ALL 17 CUNY CAMPUSES, SERVING 13,000

students at 161 public high schools. It allows advanced students to take college-credit courses while still in high school, and offers remedial help to those who are not yet making the grade.

NEW YORK IS THE FIRST MAJOR PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE NATION TO ALIGN HIGH-SCHOOL EXIT AND COLLEGE PLACEMENT EXAMS. THE CUNY

system now accepts a score of 75 on the Regents exams as adequate evidence that a student does not need remediation. Other cities have discussed such an alignment, but New York is the first to actually implement one.

NEW HIRES REFLECT THE NEW PRIORITIES IN NEW YORK. CUNY CHANCELLOR MATTHEW GOLDSTEIN HAS HIRED THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM’S FIRST TEACHER

education czar, responsible for improving teacher training programs throughout CUNY. Goldstein and Schools Chancellor Harold Levy have appointed the first-ever joint deputy to the chancellors, responsible for coordinating activity between the two systems.

P-16 COLLABORATION WORKS. GEORGIA, A LEADER IN THE P-16 MOVEMENT, SIMULTANEOUSLY ENDED REMEDIATION AND INCREASED ACCESS TO ITS

four-year universities, preparing students for the transition under a collaborative program known as PREP. As a result, over five years, SAT scores improved, the need for remediation throughout the University of Georgia system dropped by 40 percent, and the state’s university system is now ranked among the top 20 in the nation. In El Paso, Texas, which has been running its own program for eight years, the results have been even more impressive. In 1992, only one-third of African-American and Hispanic students passed the state’s standardized tests; in 1999 those numbers were 78 percent and 82 percent, respectively.



The Center for an Urban Future is a policy institute dedicated to aggressively pursuing solutions to the most critical problems facing cities.

Kim Nauer, Executive Director
Neil Scott Kleiman, Director
Jonathan Bowles, Research Director
David J. Fischer, Project Director

This report was written by Neil Scott Kleiman and edited by Andrea Coller McAuliff. Additional editing provided by Suri Duitch. Additional research and writing provided by Kimberly Bachechi, David Jason Fischer, and Marla Nierenberg Hanan. This report was designed by Julia Reich.

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PUBLIC EDUCATION'S QUIET REVOLUTION

Want smarter kids, better teachers, and more college grads? More and more places think P-16 is the answer

The most remarkable thing about P-16 is that we haven't done it already. The idea is to foster collaboration among all levels of public education—pre-kindergarten, grammar school, high school and college—in an effort to streamline the connections and encourage successful transition from one level to the next. It is also about combining forces and resources to respond to the intense pressure being exerted by politicians, businesses and parents, who are demanding major and immediate improvements.

P-16 is not a radical-sounding, headline-grabbing idea. It does not require the use of the word “privatization”, or compete with the plan to raise standards. It is a quiet revolution that is already well under way in many places across the nation.

P-16 activities fall into three general categories:

- **Shared Programs**—These include “middle college high schools” in which students at risk of dropping out or failing out of the public school system attend high schools located on college campuses, that offer intensive, college-oriented curricula designed to re-engage students in their education; dual-enrollment courses, in which qualified students complete college-level courses while still in high school; and faculty exchanges, in which college faculty members go into local schools and work with teachers to re-design courses, in order to improve their content and help students meet new standards.

- **Teacher Education**—Good teachers equal better-educated students, yet teacher education at the college level has too often been only an afterthought. Compared to university engineering, business or even history departments, teacher education departments have been the absolute lowest in the pecking order. But the times are changing. With the recognition of the need for more college grads and an acknowledgement of the poor quality of many teacher education departments, there is a move to improve college-level teacher education programs. These efforts are the cornerstone of a solid P-16 strategy.

- **Coordination**—This includes aligning standards at all levels and sharing those expectations with students and faculty in a clear and timely fashion, as well as tracking and evaluating existing programs, so that successful approaches can be replicated where appropriate, and resources can be used to their greatest effect.

In response to the ever-greater necessity of a college diploma for current and future workers, and a universal desire to eliminate remediation at the college level, education systems at all levels are partnering like never before.

There are literally thousands of local examples of colleges working with public schools in every corner of the country. P-16 programs include Syracuse University's Project Advance, which has certified high school teachers in seven different states as adjunct professors qualified to teach college-level courses. In Long Island City in Queens, LaGuardia Community College runs a middle college high school for at-risk students. And in Pueblo, Colorado, school teachers and university instructors are collaborating on a new integrated science and math

curriculum for elementary school students.

Nationally, 24 states are formally engaged in P-16 activity, according to the Education Commission of the States. Twenty-one of those efforts started up within the past five years.

Of the 24 states with formal statewide P-16 efforts, teacher education programs are a major component in all but one. Maryland, Missouri and Wisconsin are working to align teacher education with new statewide standards. And in New York, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has appointed the first teacher education czar, someone uniquely empowered to revamp programs throughout the entire five-borough university system.

As for coordination, states such as Georgia have set up voluntary coordinating councils, and Maryland and Florida are in the beginning stages of erecting a formal governance structure to oversee public education at all levels.

A History of “Splendid Isolation”

As banal as educational partnerships may seem, the concept is truly revolutionary. Working together across educational levels may not sound so difficult, but even talking about it on a large scale has been out of the question until now.

Here's a little known fact: No industrialized country in the world has as fractured an educational system as the United States.

We are the only fully developed nation with local control at every level and no strong federal role in education. Each of our educational levels has developed independently. Grade schools, high schools, middle schools, colleges, community colleges and even kindergarten and pre-kindergarten have all sprung up at different historical points completely in isolation from one another.

Not only was there a lack of collaboration, but growth at one level was often seen as competition for another. “Well into the 20th century, high schools and colleges competed for the same students,” notes Arthur Levine, President of Teachers College at Columbia University.

In the 21st century, competition amongst educational levels may have subsided, but the net result is an educational system with virtually no shared history and little incentive to work together. As Michael Usdan, Executive Director of the Institute for Education Leadership, puts it, higher ed and the primary and secondary schools “live in splendid isolation.” They have different sets of publications, associations, unions and networks.

Michael Kirst, a Stanford University professor and a major P-16 booster, notes that, “Typically states have a higher-education coordinating board and education chancellor, but they never talk to each other. I mean never. They are like two separate orbits that never collide. There is just no force bringing them together.”

This “let a million flowers bloom” approach has helped to create an unrivaled diversity of educational institutions in the United States. But the current push for more rigorous testing and higher standards has exposed the major weakness of a completely disjointed system. Without shared goals and expectations that translate from one level to another, or even across the same level, students—and teachers—are being asked to do the impossible,

PUBLIC EDUCATION'S QUIET REVOLUTION

which is to somehow magically meet each level's distinct set of expectations and standards.

To exacerbate the problem, few Americans have any idea that the educational levels never communicate, or that the standards are not shared. Michael Usdan noted that, "The American public would be appalled if they knew how little collaboration goes on, but they've just never thought of it."

Few know, for example, that the intention of some of the first community colleges was to steer students away from four-year colleges and universities, according to Berkeley sociology professor Jerome Karabel. The Harvards and University of California-Berkeleys of the world were overwhelmed and unimpressed with the students they were seeing in the early 1900s,

and diverted many of them to two-year colleges.

And in "Left Back," education historian Diane Ravitch notes that both vocational schools and junior high schools were originally created to educate students who were not considered college material. She discusses the late 19th century debate about what high schools should teach, whether it be focused on "Utility or Knowledge," explaining that society's view of high-schools' role has bounced back and forth between these two poles over the past two centuries, and has always varied widely from one high school to another.

This debate is now obsolete. In the information age, nothing is more valuable to a job-seeker than a college degree. Brainpower is the manpower of the new millennium. Utility and knowledge have become one and the same. ✨

More Ed, More Bread

Higher education correlates with higher income, and has become worth more over time.

	High School Dropout	High School Diploma	Some College or Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate Degree
1959	\$22,648	\$30,348	\$36,202	\$45,310	\$44,258
1979	\$28,517	\$37,778	\$41,714	\$51,704	\$55,427
1998	\$21,927	\$31,859	\$38,910	\$56,332	\$71,971
					
1959	\$9,644	\$13,053	\$14,986	\$18,568	\$24,208
1979	\$12,531	\$16,422	\$18,685	\$22,070	\$30,366
1998	\$12,952	\$19,217	\$24,331	\$32,721	\$43,941

Source: College Board Review, May 2001

HOW NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A P-16 PIONEER

Finding Common Ground

If ever a public educational system was desperately in need of answers, it was New York's of the past few years. The high school dropout rate spiked upward for the second year in a row in 2000, to 19.5 percent, or 13,000 students. The National Center for Education Statistics says on average, 30 percent of students across the country arrive on campus needing remedial course work; at the City University of New York that number rises to 58 percent. So in the midst of a red-hot economy, New York had to contend with an increasing dropout rate and a huge number of students arriving at CUNY unprepared for college level work.

Of all the many crises in this troubled system, perhaps the worst was a lack of leadership. Both CUNY and the public schools were headless horsemen at one point or another between 1998 and

Of the many crises in the troubled education system, perhaps the worst was a lack of leadership. Both CUNY and the public schools were headless horsemen at one point or another between 1998 and 2000, with no good heads in sight.

2000, with no good heads in sight. Both systems underwent a succession of chancellors and were running out of willing victims. CUNY had vacancies in the position of president at a third of its 17 undergraduate campuses, and was having considerable difficulty finding anyone to take the chancellor job after the mayor's public denunciations of the university system. The Board of Education was not having as much trouble finding qualified candidates to be chancellor—its problem was holding on once they picked one; each of its previous five chancellors had lasted an average of 2.5 years on the job.

Stable leadership was the first thing that New York's two educational systems needed. And within 10 months, two initially unlikely candidates stepped in to fill the void.

Matthew Goldstein was an effective president at Baruch College, a CUNY campus based in Manhattan. He implemented tough new standards for students and pushed through a major building campaign that led to a new library and academic center. Goldstein wanted to bring his vision to the entire system, defining and building upon the strengths of each individual campus. But, sensing little interest in his candidacy from a divided CUNY Board of Trustees, Goldstein took the top post at Long Island's Adelphi University, a campus plagued by scandal and falling standards, and badly in need of the Goldstein touch.

After just one year at Adelphi, however, Goldstein resigned to accept a belated offer from CUNY. How did CUNY get him to quit his new post? They asked. Goldstein had left his heart in New York City, and it didn't take much to woo him back. He became chancellor in August of 1999.

Harold Levy was director of the Global Compliance Group at Citigroup. Levy already had a leadership role in New York education as a member of the State Board of Regents in Albany, but wanted to be in the center of things. Despite vociferous protest from Mayor Giuliani, Levy threw his hat into the ring. After less

than a year as interim chancellor, Levy got the job on a permanent basis in May of 2000.

The two new chancellors quickly learned they had a lot in common. Both cared deeply about public education in New York. Both left comfortable and challenging posts to take what many perceived to be no-win jobs. Both are native New Yorkers, and each is a product of the system over which he now presides: both Goldstein and Levy went to public school in New York, and Goldstein is the first chancellor ever to be a CUNY graduate himself. Both have a business sensibility and a passion for cutting through educational rhetoric and accomplishing big goals.

They became fast friends.

"If anyone is going to understand the [progress we have made], you have to understand the human element of this. You need to form a personal bond," noted Larry Edwards, a longtime Board of Education administrator and the first joint deputy to the two chancellors. "Generally, you have a relationship where the two have a stiff or no relationship. Here you have two people who personally care for each other. This never would have happened before in a million years."

Chancellor Goldstein made clear the level of connection, saying, "Chancellor Levy and I are tied together. We are each other's lifeline. If I stumble, he stumbles. If I stumble, he gasps."

Common ground quickly became common action, as Goldstein and Levy both crafted a series of major multimillion-dollar initiatives almost overnight. Goldstein started by replicating standout programs on every campus. Levy continually turned to CUNY for help in solving some of his biggest problems, including the need to fast-track new teachers into the system. As Levy noted last April, "We have not waited for K-16 legislation, we just did it."

LEVY AND GOLDSTEIN CERTAINLY DID NOT INVENT PUBLIC school/higher ed collaborations, nor did they pilot them in New York. In fact, CUNY and the public schools have been partnering on programs for decades. The city is even home to two national models, LaGuardia Middle College High School and the Gateway to Higher Education, which have been bridging public schools to higher education since 1974 and 1986 respectively. (See

CUNY and the public schools have been partnering on programs for decades.

profiles in Best Practices section). And there are dozens of smaller collaborative programs strewn throughout the system.

No CUNY campus we investigated was without at least a half-dozen small-scale programs working with the public schools, from writing programs for high school teachers taught by CUNY faculty, to tutoring programs at local middle schools.

Kati Haycock of the Educational Trust, who knows New York well and is involved in the P-16 efforts here, commented that "these are mostly lovely little programs, but not enough for fundamental change. For real reform you need institutional change."

That's where Levy and Goldstein come in.

Says Benno Schmidt, CUNY's Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees and President of Edison Schools: "Levy and Goldstein should be praised—they have taken this to a whole new level. There were programs before and good intentions, but it was always [disconnected] and never systemic."

HOW NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A P-16 PIONEER

Choosing a Flagship Program

College Now is what's known as a dual-enrollment program, where students can take additional courses for college credit while still working towards their high school diploma. It is also, and perhaps even more importantly, an early warning and support system for students. The program works by evaluating students in their junior year of high school, looking at a combination of grade point averages and Regents test scores. After a thorough evaluation, kids are told whether they have the option to earn college credit free of charge or whether they are in need of reading, writing and math assistance first. In other words, those who need remedial work begin it immediately, while they still have a chance to catch up in time for college.

Piloted at Kingsborough Community College in 1983 (see Kingsborough profile in Best Practices section), College Now really began to take flight when top officials, including CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman Herman Badillo, took note of the program's success at raising expectations and tackling remediation needs in high school level.

The new chancellors also recognized the program's potential, and in February of 2000, with Badillo at their side, quickly designated funding and created a mandate to expand College Now to the entire city.

WHEN CHANCELLORS GOLDSTEIN AND LEVY STOOD AT THE lectern on February 7 of last year and announced that College Now would be expanded to every CUNY campus and high school in the city, they knew it was the right decision, but weren't exactly sure how to make it happen.

They knew that they wanted to retain the core elements of the Kingsborough program: assessing students early in order to identify those who need remedial help; providing college credits free of charge as inducement for improvement; fostering collaboration between the schools and CUNY campuses.

Beyond this everything was up for grabs, because the individual CUNY campuses and schools are uniquely populated and fiercely independent. The chancellors knew that this diversity could keep the College Now expansion stuck at "go" for years unless there were incentives to implement the program. So they each carved out \$7 million dollars from their own budgets and city and state funds. And they created an incredibly ambitious timeline. In the first year alone (2000–2001), they wanted College Now to expand from six colleges to 17, from 60 high schools to 150, and to serve 25,000 students.

Nobody seriously thought the two systems could create such a seamless system overnight, but given all that could have stalled or gone wrong, our assessment of the first year of the expansion of College Now is that it went quite well.

One year later, the program indeed comprises all 17 undergraduate colleges in CUNY, which are working with 161 secondary schools and providing courses to well over 13,000 high school students. Overall there were 11,277 registrations for college credit courses this past academic year (some students are registered for more than one class).

A detailed review of each campus' program reveals a wide range of offerings (see chart on following page). Kingsborough, which originated the program, had 5,465 registrations for college courses this year, the highest of any CUNY campus. LaGuardia had 1,713 registrations in college courses, the second-largest number, with the rest of the campuses recording anywhere between 30 and 900 registrations.

Some senior colleges are still clarifying their level of participation

in the area of credit offerings as Queens College and the College of Staten Island only had about forty students registered. These and other four-year colleges have instead focused on providing a range of academic assistance designed to boost college preparation. All campuses in the College Now program had a grand total of 11,416 registrations this past year in special non-credit courses and workshops designed to address remedial and pre-collegiate educational needs.

The significant participation of every undergraduate CUNY campus in College Now is remarkable. But not surprisingly the process of implementation was not entirely smooth. Dual-enrollment programs historically have been run by community colleges, not four-year institutions, and CUNY is no exception. All of the senior colleges are new to the program—Queens College did not even accept College Now credits issued by neighboring LaGuardia Community

College Now's core elements include assessing students early to identify who needs remedial help; providing college credits free of charge as an inducement for improvement; and fostering collaboration between the schools and CUNY campuses.

College until last year—and their arrival has presented some difficulties. Setting CUNY-wide standards for entrance into college-credit courses through College Now has been somewhat sticky, as the four-year schools have a ban on remediation, which has made them leery of accepting "borderline" students, and the senior colleges also have pre-requisites for many of their courses, leaving fewer choices open to College Now students wishing to earn college credit at the high school level.

Another issue has been dividing up the more than 160 city high schools among the 17 CUNY campuses. The neediest high schools are considered the least desirable partners, and some campuses are concerned that Kingsborough, as the program's pioneer, has already laid claim to 24 of the best schools in Brooklyn and Staten Island.

There are also fears that allowing each campus to control its own approach to College Now will present problems in the future. Variations in program design among the 17 participating colleges abound. About half of the colleges offer courses on campus; the rest offer them at the participating high schools. Some colleges are sending adjunct professors already on staff to teach courses, while others are hiring adjuncts directly from the high schools.

A mix of uniformity and individuality is necessary in the multi-faceted CUNY system, but some fear that the name "College Now" will grow to mean so many different things that it will be hard to know exactly what to expect from the program. It is also possible that if some CUNY campuses do not give College Now adequate attention, other colleges will refuse to accept the credits earned through those programs.

ONE ASPECT OF THE COLLEGE NOW EXPANSION THAT IS A complete, and many say an important, departure from the original Kingsborough program is its increasing emphasis on the lower

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College Now: Enrollment

COLLEGE	Total Unduplicated Participants		Registrations in College Credit Courses		Registrations in College Non-Credit Courses	
	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001
Baruch College	125	391	25	123	—	—
Borough of Manhattan Community College	810	901	291	485	—	—
Bronx Community College	165	240	106	118	102	44
Brooklyn College	1,882	1,345	12	60	—	—
City College	323	614	67	140	—	168
Hostos Community College	304	264	113	93	—	—
Hunter College	94	221	33	82	—	—
John Jay College	140	171	46	53	—	—
Kingsborough Community College	3,552	3,458	2,683	2,782	819	676
LaGuardia Community College	1,382	1,350	848	865	254	198
Lehman College	804	1,091	129	149	120	100
Medgar Evers College	194	272	63	52	46	—
NYC Technical College	353	290	151	174	75	—
Queens College	159	450	6	9	—	—
Queensborough Community College	437	913	348	632	97	281
The College of Staten Island	1,244	1,244	—	31	—	—
York College	426	620	203	305	—	—
TOTAL	12,364	13,872	5,124	6,153	1,513	1,467

Source: City University of New York

ent for Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 Academic Year

Registrations in Non-Credit Workshops		Registrations in Special High School Courses		Registrations in Special Outreach Activities		Registrations in College Now Nine	
FALL 2000	SPRING 2001	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001	FALL 2000	SPRING 2001
—	—	100	244	—	377	—	—
159	65	—	—	450	—	382	364
118	84	—	—	—	332	—	—
1,470	905	—	—	91	—	400	380
154	85	—	—	—	281	102	110
191	171	—	—	—	—	—	—
47	119	14	20	295	185	—	—
94	137	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	280	287
145	463	—	—	—	—	410	379
46	150	—	70	40	—	—	—
14	36	168	80	129	290	—	—
153	441	—	—	—	22	—	—
—	—	—	47	—	—	—	—
—	—	964	964	—	—	280	280
223	295	—	—	—	20	—	—
2,814	2,951	1,246	1,425	1,005	1,507	1,854	1,800

Note: Some students are registered in more than one credit course and/or non-credit course or workshop. Therefore, the total number of registrations for a college do not necessarily equal the total participant count.

grades. In the most significant example, CUNY and Board of Education officials have established a major program just for the ninth grade, called College Now Nine.

The College Now Nine program is being piloted in 19 high schools, which are paired with 6 CUNY colleges. So far the program is targeted to large zoned high schools that are struggling though not failing, using a few different approaches. The first identifies a cohort of 100 students in each school who attend class regularly, but seem to be in danger of failing the Regents exams, and provides them with an array of benefits and services, like smaller classes and increased guidance from school-based counselors. The second brings together CUNY faculty and the high school's ninth-grade teachers to devise ways of improving instruction across disciplines.

Students in the College Now Nine pilot will be the first group to go through the whole College Now program from freshman to senior year. School administrators are hoping these students will hit two important benchmarks: Graduation in four years, and entering college without needing remediation. If College Now Nine can meet those goals with its target audience of borderline students, these administrators will have made tremendous progress.

The increased services of College Now Nine are a clear plus to any school, but the helping hand of the CUNY faculty is not always as welcome. Some campuses are having a difficult time gaining the attention of school principals overwhelmed by other problems. And there is no obvious connection between College Now Nine and the core College Now program aimed at juniors and seniors.

LEGITIMATE CONCERNS HAVE BEEN RAISED ABOUT THE COLLEGE Now expansion. CUNY and the Board of Education have expanded both the traditional College Now and College Now Nine programs so quickly that there are some missing links as well as uneven progress. Most notably absent is the trust so necessary to make a true college and school partnership work. Every administrator we spoke to made a point of saying that school principals are bombarded with dozens of crises on any given day, from falling test scores to sex scandals, and that the last thing they need is a know-it-all college administrator telling them how to improve their school. Trust can be built, but it takes time.

Commenting on the program's growth, John Mogulescu, CUNY's Dean for Academic Affairs, says, "I try and temper expectations and [remind] people that there is no magic bullet out there. We are changing two systems to be more responsive, and there will be bumps along the way."

Mogulescu's comments echo those of other administrators overseeing the program's expansion at CUNY and the Board of Education. They are well aware of the problems, and consequently working hard to hammer out a more uniform evaluation process and better coordinate standards and activities on the various campuses.

Reforming Teacher Education

Teacher education is the equivalent of basic training for our army of public-school teachers across the country, but within higher education, it has been treated as an afterthought. Few university chancellors, including those at CUNY, have touted or even paid much attention to teacher ed.

Now, of all the many pieces of the public education crisis, none is more daunting than the looming teacher shortage. Within the next 10 years, it is projected that this country will need to recruit 2.5 million new teachers. New York City will need between 50,000 and 60,000 new teachers in the next 5 years alone—a number that represents over 75 percent of its teaching workforce.

Never has the need for good teachers been so great, and never has recruiting them been so difficult. Nearly 40 percent of New York City teachers leave the city's schools after a few years. Others avoid the city's schools altogether and go right to the suburbs, where pay is higher and class sizes smaller. Nearly 1,700 teachers left the system in 2000—four times as many as in 1997. And right now 14,000 teachers in the city are uncertified, and many of them teach in the city's lowest-performing schools.

And this is all happening just as the city's Board of Education gets set to universally implement one of the toughest statewide graduation tests in the nation.

Like dozens of top university officials across the nation, Goldstein has helped respond to the crisis by making teacher education a priority at CUNY.

His first move was to appoint Nicholas Michelli as CUNY's first-ever teacher education czar, charged with reviewing and improving teacher education at the eight campuses that offer teacher ed programs. Michelli comes to CUNY as a national expert and leader on teacher ed programs with over 20 years of experience, most recently chairing the Governing Council of the National Network for Educational Renewal, the country's largest network of schools and universities working together around teacher education reform.

Michelli understood the importance of his task from day one. CUNY teacher programs graduate close to 40 percent of all teachers in the New York City public school system, far more than any other

Like dozens of top university officials across the nation, CUNY Chancellor Goldstein has helped respond to the crisis by making education a top priority.

institution. But the quality of the programs has been uneven at best. For the past few years CUNY teacher ed programs have been widely cited for falling standards and low numbers of students who pass state certification exams. In 1996 the state announced that campuses where less than 80 percent of the students passed the certification exams would be shut down. At the time, six of the eight CUNY teacher education programs were in that danger zone.

The first priority was to establish communication and accountability. For the first time in the university's history, heads of all of the teacher ed programs now come together every month to discuss how to improve and coordinate their efforts. But more than just opening the lines of communication and fostering the formulation of a shared vision, Michelli's position should bring accountability to a system that has previously had little.

According to CUNY officials, Michelli is being given the muscle to not only review all programs and make changes where needed, but also to shut programs down. Chancellor Goldstein backed this

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Pre-Kindergarten: Putting the “P” in P-16

Cognitive research suggests that the majority of an individual’s brain development and organization occurs between birth and age 5. This means early childhood programs can not only have a tremendous impact upon a child’s level of preparation for elementary school, but may also affect his or her lifelong cognitive abilities.

And the surge in the number of two-career and single-parent households has created an incredible need for daycare and preschool programs. Most of them are privately run, held to no educational standard, and operate entirely separate from the next tier of the education system.

According to the Education Commission of the States, two-thirds of children under 6 are in the care of an adult other than their parents for a period of time each day. Many of these children are in daycare or preschool programs—some 40 percent of which are of such poor quality that they may be downright detrimental to a child’s development.

The bottom line is that kids need somewhere to go while their parents are at work, and the quality of that environment has a tremendous impact upon a child’s future. To all external appearances, the Empire State, and New York City in particular, seem to be getting the message.

In 1998, New York became only the second state in the country (behind Georgia) to formally establish a Universal Pre-Kindergarten program. Many states now provide some amount of pre-K, but New York’s law calls for an educational program to be made available to every 4-year-old in the state, at a cost of \$500 million per year. The program is to be phased in over five years, with a goal of serving 215,000 4-year-olds statewide by 2002.

And New York City is again out in front on educational collaboration: The city has already begun to align its pre-K guidelines with its K-3 curriculum, to create continuity in the educational pipeline.

All of this sounds great in theory, but in practice it has been anything but. Implementation of the law has been fraught with so many problems at the state and local levels that it is far from certain that the program will exist at all in a few years.

Part of the problem is that Governor George Pataki has not demonstrated committed to a universal program. The governor agreed to back the legislation as part of a political pact, but has never shown any real support for it. Simply securing the funds already allotted in the state’s budget has entailed a protracted battle every single year. And despite the seemingly unequivocal language of the law mandating the program, pre-K is still viewed as a “soft money” program created during a boom—and likely to be reviewed for a major cut should the economy sag for any length of time.

On the other hand, New York City hasn’t even managed to implement a large enough program to spend the money it has received. The city has gone from taking on 13,000 children its first year to 35,000 children in 2000-2001, but this is still far below the 44,000 kids the Board of Education planned to enroll. The enrollment shortfall has forced the city to return \$10 million to the state.

Simply finding physical space for the program has proven to be a major obstacle. In New York City’s crowded school buildings, available rooms are hard to come by, and leasing space in private schools and other community facilities hasn’t been enough either. Since hunting up enough classrooms and facilities to serve 35,000 kids hasn’t been easy, squeezing in 100,000 threatens to be impossible.

The other major stumbling block in New York has been the program’s length. Unlike program in Texas and Georgia, New York’s program is only funded for a 2-hour day. So parents have to decide whether it is worthwhile, or even feasible, to schlep their kids to an often out-of-the way location for three hours, and then pick them up and schlep them somewhere else for another three hours. The Board of Education says registration for the program is unimpressive, largely because of the short day and inconvenient locations.

Universal pre-K makes sense, and New York is still seen by many in the early education field as a pioneer for passing the legislation and serving as many kids as it does. But the way things stand now, pre-K is still a long way from becoming universal.

up by saying, “I won’t be shy about closing programs that appear hopeless.”

CUNY backed the tough talk with more rigorous standards. For the first time, teacher education students in any CUNY program must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and they are required to take a more demanding course load as well. The results have been encouraging: CUNY students are passing teacher certification exams at much higher rates and all but two programs recorded pass rates above 80 percent last year.

Despite the improved test results, there is still hard work ahead. College-based teacher education programs are notoriously entrenched and resistant to change. Goldstein is moving in the right direction by trying to instill coordination, accountability, and new standards, but overhauling curricula and teaching methods is another matter entirely. How successful CUNY is in that crucial endeavor remains to be seen.

EVEN BEFORE MICHELLI COULD BEGIN TO GET HIS OWN HOUSE IN order, however, he was thrown a major project: He was put in charge of the New York City Teaching Fellows program, a joint effort with the Board of Education to fast-track interested New Yorkers into the system’s most troubled classrooms. The program recruits individuals working in other fields, but with no background in teaching and offers them a CUNY-taught crash course to get them into the classroom, and then a fully paid-for master’s degree program. The Board of Education pays for the cost of the program, and CUNY faculty members, along with some of

*Despite improved test results,
there is still hard work ahead
for teacher education programs.*

the city’s top high school teachers, train the individuals and provide ongoing support. Last year, the program brought 300 new teachers into the city’s public schools—next year as many as 3,000 people are expected to enroll.

But CUNY’s most intriguing idea for improving teacher ed is the creation of “teacher empowerment zones.” Modeled after economic empowerment zones, the idea is to focus attention and resources on the city’s worst-performing schools. CUNY will videotape some of the best teachers and CUNY faculty members tackling real-life instruction and behavior control situations in some of the system’s toughest schools. Once the tapes are made, teachers-in-training will review them with these “master” teachers to discern exactly what to do in a given situation. The chancellors also hope to put the training sessions on CD-ROM and export the lessons learned to other big cities. Chancellors Levy and Goldstein have gone together, hats in hand, asking for \$15 million in federal money to start the project.

Aligning Expectations & Exams

High school seniors across the nation are getting hit with standardized exit exams, and 28 states so far have said, “If you don’t pass, you don’t graduate.” But if students do pass, they will be ready

for the next level of education, right?

Not so fast.

It is shockingly common for students to pass their high school exit exams only to be told that they have failed college placement tests and need remedial work. That is because no major university, until CUNY, has aligned its placement tests with high school exit exams.

The truth is, it is shockingly common for students to pass their high school exams only to be told that they have failed college placement tests and need remedial work. This is because no major university system in the nation has aligned its placement tests with high school exit exams. No major system except CUNY, that is.

Over the past few years, New York State has made passage of its rigorous Regents exams required for a high-school diploma. At the same time, CUNY phased out remediation courses at all of its four-year colleges. CUNY Vice Chancellor Louise Mirrer saw the obvious symmetry: Align the tough new Regents exams with CUNY’s tough new entrance policy.

Mirrer conducted an outside assessment of the Regents and determined that a score of 75 on either the math or English Regents should exempt any entering student from taking remedial classes. Mirrer says, “After looking at the exams, it was clear that they were sufficiently rigorous and there was no question in my mind that we could make an alignment between the Regents and our exams.”

She says making such a decision at CUNY wasn’t difficult, but that other systems might think twice about alignment, because few states have high school tests as difficult as New York’s. In other words, despite the national rush to implement standardized tests, New York City is among the few places making college readiness the benchmark for high school graduation.

Stanford University Professor Michael Kirst has been studying an ever-increasing number of tests, which he calls a “Babel of standards.” He notes that unless we align the multitude of tests, “students and secondary schools will continue to receive a confusing array of signals, and will not be able to prepare adequately for higher education.”

There is nothing inherently wrong with testing students, but Kirst’s point is that, nationally, the education world is blowing a golden opportunity to connect tough new tests—and curricula—in secondary schools with what colleges are looking for. Shared standards would allow schools to actually cut down on testing while at the same time improving student understanding of what is required of them if they want to succeed in college. CUNY has become an instant model in doing this, and the hope is that other states will follow suit. As Mirrer made clear, CUNY’s decision was “exactly what we wanted to say to students; that they should have no further barriers to entering the university.”

Here Today...Gone Tomorrow?

OK, so New York has the largest city-based P-16 partnership in the country. More than 11,000 registrations for college credit by high school students were recorded. CUNY's Chancellor Goldstein has appointed a teacher education czar to revamp the training of teachers on campuses in all five boroughs. And the Regents exams have been deemed rigorous enough to serve both as high-school exit exams and CUNY placement exams, so high school seniors who want to continue on with higher education know exactly where they stand.

This progress is remarkable, but it's far from sufficient. Without long term, sustained support, not only will the P-16 revolution fail, but the gains already made will likely slip away.

The biggest potential problem is that the progress to date is, as is often the case with such education partnerships, largely attributable to force of personality.

As Gene Maeroff, former education reporter at the New York Times and now director of an education policy institute at Columbia University puts it, "I have looked at these partnerships for 20 years, and they are still dependent on the good will of people. They always depend on personalities."

New York City right now is fortunate to have education leaders who are committed to partnerships. The two chancellors have brought collaboration to a whole new level with expansion of College Now to every campus, a focus on teacher ed, and the alignment of high school and college exams. But individuals can only take the revo-

commented that, "they had to create a P-16 council in Georgia. Well, we have our own right here."

In fact, the SED already has its own P-16 office on collaborative programs. At this point, however it mostly administers grants, and isn't not really connected to the system-wide changes that are going on in New York City.

John Garvey, the CUNY-based administrator in charge of many collaborative and P-16 programs, noted that the SED administers a range of P-16 programs, "but there is not as much coordination as needed. Even regular meetings of all the funded programs would be helpful."

State Education Commissioner Richard Mills has been active behind the scenes, bringing CUNY, SUNY and Board of Education leaders together to work with the Education Trust and the National Association of System Heads. But the SED can and should do much more.

Finally, even with the unprecedented level of communication and coordination among the public schools, public education leaders are ignoring a major resource. Private colleges and universities educate 54 percent of the undergraduates in the city, and even conduct many joint programs with the public schools, yet they are not included in the larger collaborative discussion.

There are many examples of collaborations between private universities and the schools. Columbia University's Double Discovery Center has undergraduate students mentor 1,000 public school students who are first-generation immigrants; New York University has started a free master's degree program to help quality public-school teachers become certified; even some upstate institutions, such as Ithaca College and Syracuse University, provide academic support to city students.

Unfortunately, private and public universities are pretty much completely ignorant of one another's efforts in the public schools: One CUNY official noted that "we literally bump into the private [institutions] when we are working in the public schools." What's worse, most independent colleges do not even attempt to track what programs—or even how many—are occurring on their own campuses.

Leaving private campuses out of citywide P-16 planning is a wasted opportunity, but as these partnerships expand there can also be some pernicious side effects. For example, when the Board of Education formed a near exclusive relationship with CUNY last year for fast-track teacher training, city private universities called foul and demanded to participate in the program, which was already up and running.

These missing pieces are not only necessary to perfect the system, but necessary to sustain it. The more all of the players are engaged in the P-16 effort, the stronger the system will be. ✨

New York has more postsecondary institutions than any other city in the nation; the majority of them are private.

Number of Degree-Granting Institutions in New York City

- SUNY 4
- CUNY 19
- Independent/Private 50
- Proprietary 19

Source: State Education Department

The progress in collaborative efforts in New York is remarkable, but it's far from sufficient. Without long term, sustained support, not only will the P-16 revolution fail, but the gains already made will likely slip away.

lution so far, and if these leaders lose interest or leave the system right now, all the progress they have made will go out the door with them. Given a history of frequent turnover in the city's education leadership, this is certainly cause for concern.

The good news is New York State already has a body that is ideally positioned to help supervise and facilitate the P-16 effort. The State Education Department (SED) in Albany is the only state board in the nation that oversees all educational levels. It is charged with overseeing everything from pre-kindergarten to graduate school, plus all of the state's museums and libraries. One education official

BEST PRACTICES

Ending Remediation and Increasing Access: A Peach of a Plan in Georgia

IN THE EARLY 1990s, GEORGIA HAD JUST ABOUT THE WORST EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE IN THE NATION AND WAS WIDELY SEEN AS INCAPABLE OF producing college graduates in-state. Georgia's 1990 average SAT scores hovered about 50 points below the national average, and its college-going rate was 42nd in the country.

Then, in 1994, the University System of Georgia (USG), a sprawling 34-campus system of research universities, state colleges, and two-year colleges, which hadn't had a chancellor from out-of-state in more than 30 years, hired Englishman Stephen Portch for the job.

With the full support of the Board of Regents, Portch devised an educational remedy that on its surface looked contradictory. Portch wanted both to end remediation at all four-year colleges and to dramatically increase the number of Georgia's students going on to college, at the same time.

Portch's plan to increase access and simultaneously raise standards seemed downright oxymoronic to most in the education community, but he was committed to making it work. His solution was to move full steam ahead with the new remedial policy, setting a deadline of eliminating remedial classes at USG four-year colleges and universities within five years. At the same time, Portch ushered in a major statewide P-16 initiative to make sure that as standards were raised, students could meet them.

One major element of Georgia's P-16 effort is a collaboration between the colleges and public schools known as the Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP). PREP is designed specifically to make sure students, particularly low-income ones, understand the new standards and know exactly what they need to do to get in to college.

PREP, unlike most such programs, begins its work with middle-school students who come from poor communities or whose parents never attended college. The program's advocates argue that by high school it is often too late to reverse poor habits and low expectations about college, so middle school is the place to start. With over \$6 million in corporate support, PREP has reached out to 45,000 students in 200 middle schools throughout the state. Most of PREP's services revolve around exposing students to college through methods ranging from simple one-day trips to local campuses, to mentorships with college faculty.

The Georgia reform effort's boldest component is a major overhaul of teacher education throughout the state. This entails re-thinking all teacher ed curricula, integrating teaching courses with traditional liberal arts and science courses, and better linking teaching programs with local public schools. As proof of his commitment to reform, Chancellor Portch has extended a quality guarantee to the public schools: Any teacher not performing up to par can be sent back to USG free of charge for additional training. Georgia is now the first state with such a "money-back" guarantee on its teachers.

To coordinate these efforts, the university system has established the country's first-ever state and local network of P-16 councils. Fifteen regional P-16 councils form a statewide P-16 network. Each of the regional councils coordinates activities at local colleges and public schools.

Coupled with the tough new standards and Georgia's generous state funding of college tuition through the HOPE scholarship fund, Georgia's P-16 plan seems to be working. The state has seen vast improvement since the project's start: The elimination of remediation is almost fully implemented, yet average SAT scores have increased from 998 in 1995 to 1029 in 2000, and are now above the national average. The number of college admissions has gone up, the need for remedial work has dropped by 40 percent, and the University System of Georgia has risen from the bottom to become one of the top 20 ranked public college systems in the nation.

This is an incredible amount of improvement in six years, and at least partly attributable to the state's P-16 effort.

Fostering collaboration among all the educational levels has not been easy. The university system's Chancellor Portch has taken the lead, but others have not always followed. The various educational leaders would meet, but often the agreements hammered out would not be honored by the public schools and other educational actors.

Roy Barnes, Georgia's new governor, is doing what he can to support the partnership effort. Barnes came to office with education reform high on his agenda, and he quickly embraced the notion of a seamless system, and wanted to give the network of P-16 councils process more clout. So he established an Education Coordinating Council, which he himself chairs, and which requires the participation of all the major state education CEOs. The governor has mandated top-level attendance—no deputies are allowed at the council's meetings—and if the leaders agree on a reform, each representative must go back to his or her board, get a vote on it, and report back to the governor directly about the outcome.

Jan Kettlewell, who oversees all P-16 efforts for the university system believes that with the creation of the council, "Our momentum will go up tenfold now. The Education Coordinating Council gives P-16 work the needed leverage."

Texas' Lone Star: P-16 Proof in El Paso

LOOKING FOR PROOF THAT P-16 REFORM YIELDS RESULTS? LOOK NO FURTHER THAN EL PASO, TEXAS. THE EL PASO COLLABORATIVE FOR Academic Excellence, up and running since 1992, is the grandfather of the young P-16 movement, and the evidence of its success is staggering.

✓ Among schools participating in the program, the long-standing gap between the passing rate for white students and passing rates for African-Americans and Hispanics on state math and reading tests has been reduced by almost two-thirds over the last five years. The percentage of African-Americans who passed the state math exam rose from 32 percent in 1993 to 78 percent in 1999; among Hispanic students, the rate rose from 36 percent in 1993 to 82 percent in 1999; among white students, it rose from

63 percent to 92 percent over the same period.

- ✓ In 1999, El Paso had a higher percentage of students pass the state's math tests than most other cities in Texas. El Paso's pass rate was 83 percent; San Antonio's was 72 percent, as was Dallas's; Austin's was 76 percent.
- ✓ In 1995, 15 schools in El Paso were classified as "low performing" by the state; that number is now zero. The number of schools recognized as "exemplary" has leapt from fewer than a dozen to 75.
- ✓ The number of Hispanic students who enroll in and complete physics doubled between 1993 and 1999; for chemistry the number is up 60 percent, and for biology 55 percent.

Is it something in the water? Definitely not. These numbers are the most credible evidence yet of what an intensive P-16 collaboration can do if given the time to succeed.

In many ways, El Paso is a perfect laboratory for other troubled urban systems. This city of about 700,000 on the Mexican border is in a very challenging educational environment. El Paso is part of the fifth-poorest congressional district in the country, with 85 percent of its residents qualifying for free or reduced-price school lunches. About 70 percent of city residents are Hispanic, one third are functionally illiterate, and in 1992 only one third of the city's Hispanic and African-American students passed Texas' new standardized tests, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

Such poor test results in the early '90s, plus mounting pressure from the city's business community for a better-educated workforce, made it clear something had to be done.

Help came from University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) President Diana Natalicio, head of the city's only research university, which is a major player in all civic and economic efforts in the area. Natalicio saw that UTEP enrolled 85 percent of its students from local schools, and graduated 70 percent of school teachers in El Paso. "We prepare teachers for the public schools, and we admit their students. So it's our problem just as much as theirs," she recently told the Chronicle of Higher Education.

The solution that Natalicio championed was the El Paso Collaborative, an idea initially proposed by Dr. Susana Navarro, an educational leader with deep roots in El Paso. The collaborative got an initial financial boost from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Science Foundation, and now, with a staff of 25, is the largest staffed city-focused P-16 effort in the nation.

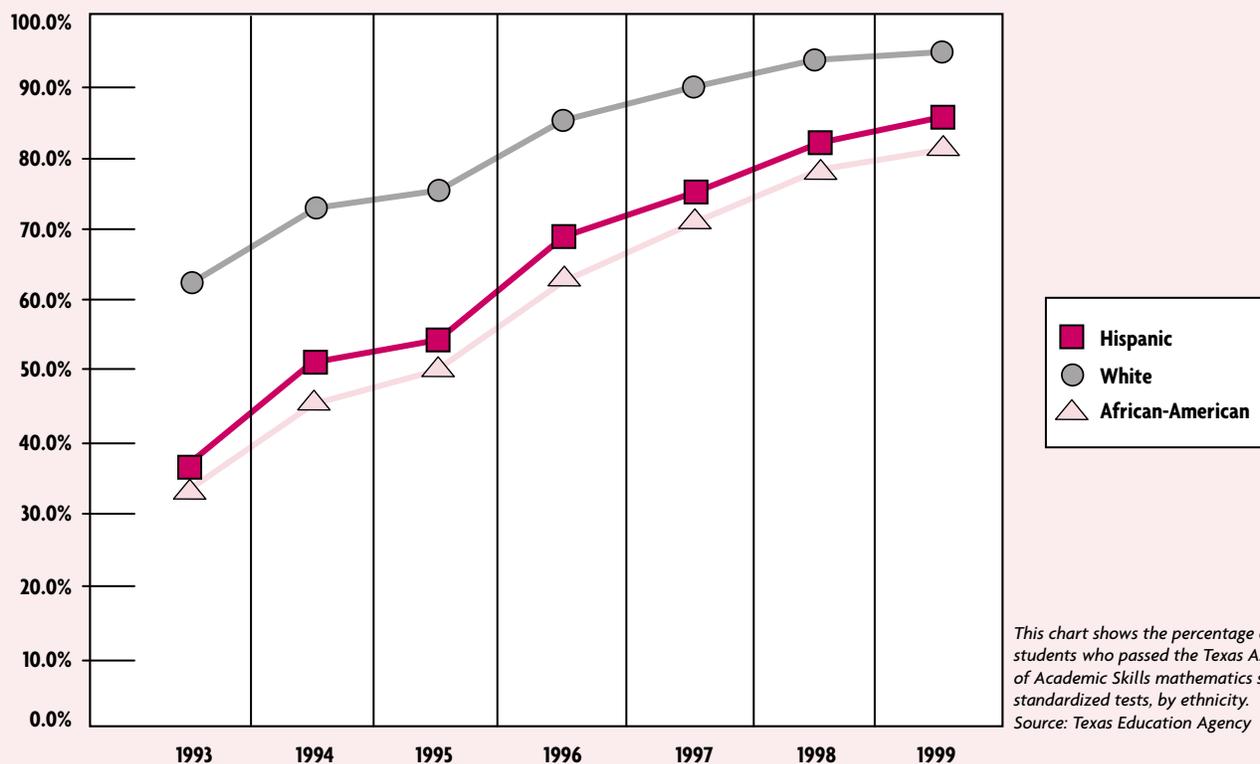
The collaborative believed that high standards were fundamental to improvement; rather than viewing the new state tests as insurmountable obstacles, they created their own—even tougher—set of standards. These new standards address what students should know and be able to do by the fourth, eighth, and 12th grades.

The collaborative, based on UTEP's campus, also provides teachers with professional development, using 30 mentors who fan out to the public elementary, middle and high schools and work intensively with school instructors on curriculum development and improving teaching methods.

Numerous outside experts credit El Paso's educational turnaround directly to the collaborative's programs. But perhaps even more important than the programs themselves is the collaborative's organizing work. It has sponsored regular meetings of all local college presidents and school superintendents, and ensured that parents, members of the business community, and civic leaders were involved from the very start. In doing so, it managed to create a citywide movement to improve education, and that has been the key to making reform stick.

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Making the Grade: Math Scores Rise in El Paso



A Program Grows in Brooklyn: College Now's Roots at Kingsborough Community College

BEFORE COLLEGE NOW BECAME THE FLAGSHIP PROGRAM OF THE MOST ACTIVE SCHOOL-TO-COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP IN THE NATION, IT WAS A RENOWNED and respected program in its original incarnation, at CUNY's Kingsborough Community College (KCC).

The program was born out of a political embarrassment. In the early 1980s, KCC's President Leon Goldstein was entertaining some elected officials from the state legislature, and one mentioned an interesting little program at Brooklyn College that worked with the local high school. The politician wanted to know what KCC was doing to connect with area high schools. As far Goldstein knew KCC wasn't doing much of anything.

President Goldstein may be known as a failed early choice of Mayor Giuliani's for schools chancellor, but out in the quiet Manhattan Beach section of Brooklyn, Goldstein was renowned for his unrivaled political connections. He was responsible for bringing a campus dispersed throughout Brooklyn into a sprawling 71-acre academic fortress on the eastern end of Coney Island. Goldstein, who died in 1999, built an empire in Manhattan Beach, and the idea that his college was behind the curve on something was intolerable.

Within five years, KCC had established the largest CUNY/public school partnership ever, enrolling up to 7,000 high school students from 21 area schools in college courses each year.

The structure of the Kingsborough program is relatively simple. College Now recruiters go into local high schools and offer to assess every junior to determine whether or not they are on track to enter college by the end of the following year. Those who are can take college credit courses during their senior year; those who are not yet on track are told that they are unlikely to be prepared even for community college work without extra help. Students in the second group are offered a series of remedial courses to bring them up to speed, and if they pass those are then given the opportunity take a college course.

The college credit courses were designed by then-KCC Provost Michael Zibrin, who came from the University of Chicago and believed in the value of a core curriculum. They were also designed in consultation with college faculty members and high school teachers in the core areas of humanities, business and applied sciences. The offerings haven't changed much since they were first introduced in 1984.

A core curriculum helps ensure that the program remains of consistently high quality—there are no “gut” courses offered. The other built-in quality control mechanism is a requirement that high school teachers become official CUNY adjunct professors in order to teach College Now courses. Becoming an adjunct at KCC is no easy task; teachers go through a rigorous screening and interview process, and are constantly monitored by full professors at Kingsborough. Rachelle Goldsmith, who runs the program at KCC, says the standards are so high that “there are times when we can not find someone sufficient from the school.”

The quality of the Kingsborough program has been recognized by public and private universities from all over the state, including SUNY Binghamton, NYU and Columbia, which readily accept college credits from College Now students. These days, Kingsborough College Now students often bypass KCC for more prestigious institutions when they leave high school.

CUNY's centrally based researchers have also been vocal advocates for College Now. CUNY has often struggled to produce proof of its successes—its officials believe they have found proof in the KCC program, which they have investigated regularly for years. One study compared College Now graduates with a group of CUNY freshman who had not been in the program, and found those that had participated in College Now earned over 40 percent more credits, graduated college on time at twice the rate, and were far less likely to need remedial work of any kind. As one researcher put it, “These are numbers you don't have to massage.”

CUNY researchers and administrators knew the program was effective, and they tried to win converts to it, but aside from LaGuardia Community College, which began its own program after visiting KCC's in 1986, no other CUNY campus followed suit. That all changed once the furor over remediation engulfed CUNY in the mid-1990s. CUNY insiders steered Chairman Badillo and others looking for solutions toward College Now. Guided partly by Badillo and the Benno Schmidt-authored report that urged greater college and school collaboration, College Now became the focal point for partnership under Chancellors Levy and Goldstein.

Big Plan on Campus: LaGuardia's Middle College High School

SINCE OPENING ITS DOORS IN 1971, CUNY'S LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE HAS BEEN AN INCUBATOR FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND innovation. The school in Long Island City, Queens, has pioneered numerous programs, including a college curriculum that includes mandatory work experience in a degree candidate's field of study (see profile of LaGuardia's cooperative education program in Center for an Urban Future report “Why New York Needs a Jobs Policy”). But it is LaGuardia's middle college high school experiment that really caught fire.

A so-called “middle college high school” is simply a high school based on a college campus. The focus of such schools, at LaGuardia and elsewhere, is on students who have the potential to succeed in college, but are instead on the verge of dropping out of high school. These “at-risk” students are identified by guidance counselors and offered enrollment in the program, which provides full access to the college's library, gym, faculty, and a college-like curriculum with longer periods of study and small seminar-like classes.

Perhaps the most important thing such programs offer is the opportunity for students to escape low expectations. LaGuardia's Middle College High School Principal Cecilia Cunningham notes that most students arriving at the school come from an environment that has led them to believe they will not succeed, regardless of how smart they may be. “We change the question from ‘Are you going to college?’ to ‘Which college are you going to?’ That is a huge shift in our schools.”

The approach works. Of LaGuardia's 500 high school students, 95 percent graduate, 90 percent go on to college and 20 percent take college courses while still in high school. These numbers are considerably better than the numbers for traditional

Board of Education students, let alone those students who are identified as “at risk.”

Fortunately, this is one best practice that does not begin and end in Long Island City. The Ford Foundation recognized its success early in the 1980s and gave Cunningham funds to set up more middle college high schools across the country. LaGuardia has now helped set up 25 of the approximately 33 such schools in the United States.

The model has also expanded locally. In 1985, soon after the Ford Foundation began to support the program nationally, the state legislature dedicated funds to creating more such schools in New York City. This effort has led to a total of eight middle college high schools in the CUNY system—three of them on LaGuardia’s campus.

There are many reasons to duplicate the LaGuardia middle college high school model. It is a proven way to re-engage kids and get them onto a college track, it provides an immediate connection between the public schools and a college campus, and it offers a haven for students who have potential but for whatever reason are struggling at traditional large high schools.

The middle college high school model is a proven way to re-engage kids and get them on a college track. It provides an immediate connection between the public schools and a college campus, offering a haven for students struggling at traditional high schools.

“I have had a parade of people from almost every state come in here the past year to see what we do,” noted Cunningham. “It is not only about stemming dropout rates, but about combating the alienation that leads to school violence.”

Middle college high schools do this by specifically targeting those students who are disengaged or disaffected, taking them out of large, often isolating schools, away from sports culture and fierce competition, and putting them into a setting that provides intensive supervision and a focus on academics.

Cunningham believes LaGuardia’s program, and those it has spawned, are part of a vital small-schools movement that can help address some of the problems that are at the root of many cases of school violence. “I think we should establish a middle college high school on every CUNY campus,” she says. With Bill Gates, George Soros and the Rockefeller Foundation pumping \$30 million dollars into the public schools in New York next year to create 20 additional small schools, this may not be such a crazy idea.

Entering the Sciences: New York’s Gateway to Higher Education

WHEN FORMER CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND VETERAN EDUCATOR MORTY SLATER STARTED GATEWAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN 1986, HIS GOAL—TO PUT minority high school students of modest means on an educational track to medical degrees or doctoral degrees in the natural sciences—might have seemed a bit ambitious. In 1986, New York City’s public school system had 250,000 students from minority families, yet the state’s 14 medical schools were graduating a total of just 100 African-American and Hispanic physicians a year; African-Americans accounted for just 1 percent of Ph.D. graduates in science and engineering.

Slater had been involved in efforts to move African-American students toward careers in medicine since 1979, working with high school seniors applying to CUNY’s joint bachelor’s and M.D. program. But the approach had a number of problems. “The objective was to get into med school,” Slater remembers. “If not, you were a failure in life,” he says. The program also pulled students away from their high schools for 25 hours each week, disrupting their regular academic schedule.

With Gateway to Higher Education, Slater looked to correct those mistakes. Working with 135 ninth-graders at four high schools around the city, Gateway emphasized rigorous academic standards, with a special focus on science and math courses. The students—selected on the basis of teacher recommendations, academic competence as demonstrated through grades and standardized test scores, and their own expressed interest in science or medical careers—were also challenged with an extended school day and an extended school year.

“When we started, even the teachers didn’t believe we could do it,” Slater remembers. “You’re convincing the kid that their investment of time is going to pay off. If everyone else is doing 20 minutes of homework and goofing off, how do you convince them to do three hours a night?”

Four years later, when the first Gateway class graduated, it was clear they were convinced: 119 of the original 135 students graduated, and 114 of them went on to college. By 2000, the program had served more than 1,600 students, and had placed at least 10 graduates at Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Howard and NYU. The program has now expanded to seven New York City high schools, with additional Gateway sites planned.

Numerous surveys, studies, and evaluations confirmed observer’s impressions that Gateway was a success at moving young people of color on to college and career tracks. One evaluation compared 136 Gateway students to 136 public school students who were not in the program but had performed as well as the Gateway students through seventh grade. Ninety-three percent of the Gateway students graduated from their schools, as compared to 73 percent of the non-Gateway group. The Gateway students earned an average combined score of 930 on the Scholastic Aptitude/Achievement Test (SAT)—94 points higher than their non-Gateway peers, who posted an average combined score of 836.

The most recent evaluation found that 97 percent of all entering Gateway students went on to college. And according to Gateway’s periodic surveys of its graduates, 15 percent of them are either practicing medicine or in medical school.

With 15 years of experience behind it, the Gateway program’s success seems to bode well for College Now. The programs, while somewhat different, are equally ambitious, and employ similar methods in an effort to reach similar goals. Gateway’s accomplishments give good reason to believe that what the city seeks to do with College Now can indeed be done. ✨

Q & A with Kati Haycock and Janis Somerville

Kati Haycock and Janis Somerville are two leading advocates in the national P-16 movement. Haycock is Executive Director of the Education Trust, a Washington-based policy group that publishes reports and provides technical assistance around collaborative education programs. Janis Somerville is Director of the National Association of college and university Systems Heads (NASH) state K-16 initiative, a partnership with the Education Trust that is attempting to build an alliance of all education CEOs across the country. NASH members include New York State Education Department Commissioner Richard Mills, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein and Board of Education Chancellor Harold Levy.

Over the course of writing this report, Center Director Neil Kleiman conducted a series of interviews with Haycock and Somerville about a range of P-16 issues, with a particular focus on the unique dynamics in New York. What follows is excerpted from those interviews.

You have worked with many states. What level of participation in P-16 programs are you finding?

JS: The range of participation is from some, such as New Mexico, that are just beginning, to others, such as Georgia, that have been working systemically for five years to rethink existing policies, and are implementing bold new strategies for raising standards for students and teachers.

Ten states are at the next level and have formalized K-16 councils—although they may call them something else—or other vehicles that are a way for the education chiefs to meet regularly within their own states.

How does New York stack up with the other states in terms of statewide coordination of higher education with public schools?

JS: New York doesn't have a formal K-16 council, but Rick Mills really gets all this more than anyone, and he is in a unique position with K-16 all falling under his purview—no other state has this. But his ability and his willingness to make this happen is limited. He is prodding SUNY and CUNY and education together, but I think he is also mindful of all the upheaval in these systems. So in the end it is more about getting them to participate than mandating anything.

What do you think about the whole testing or standards craze going on across the country? Can it be used to improve collaboration between the schools and higher education?

JS: Standards should and can be used as leverage to get these systems to work closer together. And the results would be so positive.

Most important, this will have a positive effect for poor kids if done in earnest. This is very difficult for a lot of our colleagues to believe or accept, and I don't blame them—committing to bringing all students to high standards by [a certain] date is scary stuff—but when it is done well, with supports for students and teachers, it leads to major improvements. In short, standards are the best shot we have of improving equity. Just look at the success that has been obtained in El Paso, Texas.

And K-12 can't be expected to do it alone. Higher ed needs to roll up its sleeves as well. One of the main reasons is that they prepare the teachers, but that is not the only role. Students, particularly high school students, need positive incentives to meet new rigorous standards. They need to know that the tests they are taking will help them enter college and/or the workplace.

What is your sense of New York's version of the standardized tests, the Regents exams?

KH: In contrast to other states, New York's high school exams are stronger and more rigorous, and thus more likely to be useful to employers and colleges. Also, they provide teachers with much more useful information about the standards to which they should be teaching than do the off-the-shelf, deadhead, multiple-choice exams used in so many other states. This is the kind of assessment system that can drive real change.

The CUNY system has done a lot to align the high school Regents exams with its entrance exams. Is this really such an improvement?

JS: You don't know how big a deal it is that CUNY will now use Regents as placement exams. This just never happens. CUNY is the first system I'm aware of where they actually sat down and really looked at the Regents standards. This is exactly the kind of attention you need to focus on high-end achievement.

Now you have faculty in states like Kentucky and Maryland looking at CUNY and trying to follow their lead.

At the local level here in New York City, there are dozens of collaborative programs between individual schools and CUNY campuses. Do we really need to go beyond that to coordinate all this activity?

KH: Actually, it's the limits on what small programs can accomplish that got us into this more systemic P-16 work in the first place. Most colleges have a variety of partnerships with local schools. Usually, these take the form of a math professor working with 12 teachers over here, an English professor working with 14 middle-school kids over there, and the like. Programs like this make participants feel good; and they often provide real help. But that help is seldom enough to make a significant difference for participating teachers or students. That requires change of a more systemic nature.

The problem with systemic change, however, is that it tends to proceed in fits and starts. One leader gets something going, then leaves. The replacement comes in, but wants to head in another direction. That's why we've advocated the creation of P-16 structures that transcend individual leaders. These civic structures can keep the change effort on track over time. ✨

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Recommendation One: Shore up the Progress Already Made

Even though P-16 partnerships are relatively new, New York has made major progress over the past 20 years and has two chancellors committed to these initiatives. The problem is, P-16 efforts aren't yet deeply rooted in the entire system and may simply blow away the minute one of the chancellors leaves or these reforms fall out of favor.

First and foremost, it is time to begin building supports for the P-16 structure taking shape in the city. The chancellors of the two systems need to come together to plan and determine exactly how much it will cost to continue funding this work over a five- or 10-year period. Next, this multi-year plan should be brought to the mayor and governor to form a secure budget compact so that both systems can engage in the long-term planning that is practical only with a firm commitment to future funding. This should not be a generalized P-16 slush fund, available to anyone who has an idea that fits the definition of a collaborative, but money specifically earmarked to support and supplement the programs and efforts already under way, so that initiatives such as College Now can be seen through whether the program's current champions remain in the system or not.

2 Recommendation Two: Standards for Teacher Ed Must Be Set and Met

Of all CUNY's P-16 reforms, teacher education is perhaps the most important and the most difficult. The University System of Georgia's chancellor is demonstrating how serious he is about teacher ed reform by offering a "money back" guarantee to the public schools: Any teacher not performing up to par can be sent back to USG free of charge for additional training. At CUNY, the chancellor has boldly appointed a dean to clean up and oversee these programs at each of the campuses, but the real work still lies ahead. CUNY campuses are notorious for their independence, and this is not necessarily a bad thing—differing approaches can be acceptable, even welcome, so long as they bear fruit. In order to ensure that they do so, CUNY should set concrete standards for its campuses and a timeline for reaching them, issuing an annual teacher ed progress report to monitor the program's progress.

3 Recommendation Three: Monitor and Evaluate Progress at the State Level

New York is the only state in the nation with its own built-in P-16 governing structure. The State Education Department (SED) in Albany oversees every educational level, from pre-kindergarten to graduate programs, in addition to all private, public and for-profit institutions. And State Education Commissioner Richard Mills is the unsung hero of this process, working behind the scenes to bring the systems together.

But the SED, like other state education agencies in the United States, has done little to monitor or formally encourage P-16 reforms. This is unfortunate, because as important as these reforms may be, they have yet to be evaluated. Some are very good and some need improvement, but few have any idea of what similar programs are doing or experiencing in other parts of the state.

The SED should expand the scope and authority of its official P-16 office. This could help collaboration efforts throughout the state immeasurably simply by cataloging, coordinating and evaluating what's out there. For example, programs such as Syracuse University's Project Advance have much in common with CUNY's College Now—the connections between them could be most easily capitalized upon with the help of an office that actually oversees both. Ideally, the SED should also serve as a standard-bearer and evaluator of programs such as College Now, so that schools throughout the state would have some way of gauging whether credits earned through, say, Hunter College's College Now program, represent coursework rigorous enough to be counted toward a SUNY Binghamton diploma.

Commissioner Mills has an opportunity to take New York's P-16 movement to the next level by trading his diplomatic role for a more programmatic one. We hope he seizes it.

4 Recommendation Four: Include Private Colleges and Universities in P-16 Reform Efforts

New York may be ahead of the P-16 curve in terms of history and current activity, but as is true elsewhere, private colleges just aren't part of major P-16 reform efforts.

We think this is a mistake. Private institutions, although not nearly as active as CUNY, have established some excellent programs with the public schools. New York University has started a free master's degree program to help quality public-school teachers become certified, Columbia University's Double Discovery Center has undergraduate students mentor 1,000 public school students who are first-generation immigrants, and Ithaca College is developing academic programs for students in Harlem.

Bringing the private institutions into the fold is something that can only be done by City Hall. Facilitating a joint effort among the city's public and private colleges and universities is a job for the mayor, not for CUNY or the Board of Education. One has to go back to the Koch administration to find a mayor who has even attempted to tap the collective strength of New York's postsecondary institutions. Bringing higher ed together around college preparation and collaboration is a 2001 campaign issue ripe for the picking. ✨

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