

*"We have recognized that ensuring a pipeline of highly qualified high school graduates requires highly qualified teachers...As I have said repeatedly, we prepare the teachers who prepare the students who come to college ready or not. We own this challenge!"*

*Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor, 2014 State of the University Address*



## TeachNY Overview

TeachNY is an initiative of the State University of New York to create bold new teacher and leader preparation policy for decades to come. The work is supported by a Race to the Top grant awarded to SUNY from the New York State Education Department, to advance the existing partnership between the two organizations to offer the best preparation possible for teachers and schools leaders in New York State. A set of recommendations is being developed with the support of an Advisory Council, with the expectation that SUNY's policy framework will serve as a model for the state and the country.

Each year, SUNY prepares nearly a quarter of New York State's teachers, and New York is a key provider of teachers for our country. SUNY's goal is to attract, develop, and retain a sufficiently large, diverse corps of highly qualified and uniformly efficacious teachers committed to continuous improvement and excellence in their profession. SUNY must ensure that all teachers, from novice to expert, can engage in professional development and continuous-improvement strategies that equip them with the information, technology, and resources they need to thrive in their practice, wherever their classrooms may be.

Recognizing that policy is a key vehicle for change and sustaining excellence, SUNY has empanelled a TeachNY Advisory Council—a distinguished panel of state and national thought leaders in the area of educator and leader preparation—to develop recommendations on how enabling policy can directly support core priorities focused on achieving sustained improvement in the preparation of teachers and leaders, and school renewal. The recurring charge to the Advisory Council has been to think boldly and focus on the classrooms and students of tomorrow.

### **TeachNY Leadership Task Forces**

Three Leadership Task Forces (LTFs) of Council Members supported by NYS Master Teachers and SUNY System Administration Staff focused on priority areas and provided recommendations to the full Advisory Council. The three LTFs, along with their charges, are listed below.

#### **Recruitment, Selection, and Cultural Competence**

- Provide guidance on implementation of SUNY's recently adopted policy on admission criteria.
- Consider policy elements regarding recruitment of teacher preparation students, with a focus on diversity and skills necessary to lead the classrooms of tomorrow.
- Consider the public perception of the teaching profession and its work, dispelling myths and affirming facts.
- Review best practices for student retention and completion.

#### **Curricular Design, Pre-Service Education, Simultaneous Renewal, and Related Partnerships**

- Consider policy elements regarding curricular design, including the review and adoption of best practices, alignment to P-12, and the engagement of faculty across disciplines.
- Consider existing SUNY policy and make recommendations regarding clinical placements clinical placement and innovative partnerships.
- Provide guidance on the creation of partnerships between higher education and NYS school districts to allow all students in teacher preparation programs the opportunity to teach in a model school.

#### **Induction, Continuing Professional Development and Teacher Leadership**

- Provide recommendations on the development of induction programs, extension of pre-service preparation, continuing support for the novice teacher in the first years of service.
- Consider policy elements related to ongoing professional development of education program faculty, clinical supervisors, and teachers in the field.
- Consider linkages with the New York Master Teacher Program.

In addition, the TeachNY Advisory Council was asked to consider and frame recommendations for the two areas of Evaluation and Assessment, and Sustainable Infrastructure, as described below.

### **Evaluation and Assessment**

- Provide policy recommendations for a process for ongoing evaluation and assessment of SUNY’s educator preparation programs.
- Align policy recommendations with current thinking on continuous improvement, new advances in technology, and changing student needs.

### **Sustainable Infrastructure**

- Provide policy recommendations to ensure sustainable infrastructure in six areas:
  - Leveraging resources (physical, financial, and human capital)
  - Effectively employing data for improvement and accountability
  - Ongoing engagement of stakeholders/partners
  - Optimizing communication
  - Incentivizing and supporting research and innovation
  - Renewing policy/regulations/laws

### **TeachNY Advisory Council Meetings and Deliberations**

Four all-day plenary meetings of the TeachNY Advisory Council were held during the 2014-15 academic year—in September, December, February, and May—at SUNY Global in New York City. The plenary sessions were webcast to allow for expanded participation among NYS Master Teachers and SUNY Deans and Directors, and all sessions were recorded to allow for transcript analysis for research purposes. Between plenary meetings, the LTFs met virtually. With support from the System Administration staff, the Council conducted environmental scans for each of the five priority areas, identifying persistent challenges and best practices, grounded in the research literature and practice. The data from the scans were captured in matrices that then served as organizers for subsequent discussions and the development of policy recommendations. The Council’s recommendations address SUNY as well as NYSED, P-12, and other stakeholders. Beyond the Council itself, outside experts from across the country were invited to speak and offer their perspectives on the five foci.

### **SUNY Deans and Directors of Education**

Following the December TeachNY Advisory Council meeting, SUNY hosted a convening of the SUNY Deans and Directors of Education to gain their insights on the policy recommendations and the initiative overall. The Deans provided valuable feedback and have continued to be actively engaged in the TeachNY work by volunteering to help review drafts of the Council’s draft recommendations, and providing key research documents and other resources. Two Advisory Council members serve as representatives for the SUNY Education Deans and Directors.

### **Rockefeller Institute of Government**

The Rockefeller Institute of Government was commissioned to conduct a comparative analysis of state and higher education policies. The RIG study will complement the Council’s Report of Findings and Recommendations.

### **SUNY Teacher and Leader Education Network (S-TEN)**

In 2012, SUNY was awarded a multi-million dollar Race to the Top (RTTT) grant from the New York State Education Department to develop and implement a reform initiative through the SUNY Teacher and Leader Education Network (S-TEN). The goal of this pioneering effort is to engage higher education faculty and their educational partners in the renewal of teacher and school leader preparation to meet the needs of today’s children. The initiative focuses on four topics of the Regents Reform Agenda: Clinically-Rich Teacher and Leader Preparation, the Common Core Standards, Performance Assessments of Pre-Service and Practicing Educators, and Data-Driven Instruction. S-TEN and TeachNY are companion initiatives, the latter focused on development of policy to ensure sustainability of most effective approaches.