

## Summary of May 2021 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021 via video conference.

As a precursor to the formal adoption of the **Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** in New York State, Dr. Yvette Jackson, from the Teachers College at the University of Columbia, delivered a presentation entitled **Excellence Through Equity**. Citing research from a variety of areas including cognitive research, neuroscience, and personal experiences in the area of gifted education, Dr. Jackson outlined her vision for an Equity Conscious Classroom. Dr. Jackson emphasized that the brain continually searches to be engaged, challenged, and seeks opportunities to reflect and receive feedback. She feels that pedagogical practices which are continually focused on these areas, combined with social/emotional practices which engage students' cultural frames of reference, are key to implementing an Equity Conscious Classroom.

Below is a link to the summary of Dr. Jackson's presentation.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/Excellence%20through%20Equity%20-%20Dr%20Jackson%20Final.pdf>

Before the Board unanimously adopted the **Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**, Chancellor Lester Young emphasized the importance of this initiative and stressed that "diversity for all students is not just about students of color. It benefits all students." He went on to challenge educators to continually ask themselves how we can remove barriers to create learning environments where every student can be successful.

Below is a link to the adopted Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy Statement.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/521bra7.pdf>

Board of Regents members were updated on the progress of the Civic Readiness Initiative and the proposed Seal of Civic Readiness. In January 2020, Board members were presented with recommendations from the Civic Readiness Task Force. During the past year NYSED has worked with stakeholders to develop guidelines for the Seal of Civic Readiness which includes a proposal that the Seal be added to the six current +1 Pathway diploma options for students.

Deputy Commissioner for Instructional Support, Kim Wilkins, and Asst. Commissioner for the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Mary Beth Casey, outlined proposed guidelines and a draft rubric for both the academic and civic participation requirements needed to earn the Seal. The academic component focuses primarily on demonstrating civic knowledge through social studies course work. The participation component focuses on civic engagement through activities such Service-Learning, a Capstone Project, or an elective course that promotes civic engagement.

A Seal of Civic Readiness pilot is currently planned for the 2021-22 school year in with 50 schools participating. Dr. Wilkins stated that 133 schools have already applied. The Deputy Commissioner went on to say that the selected schools will include a balance of rural, urban and suburban districts. Pilot participants will be monitored throughout the throughout the year and student work will be analyzed. Based on the feedback and recommendations, necessary changes will be made to the current draft guidelines and it is anticipated that the option will be offered to schools across the state for the 2022-23 school year.

The proposal to formally adopt the Civic Readiness Seal as a +1 Pathway diploma option will be presented to the Board for formal adoption in September, 2021.

Below you will find a link to the presentation which includes more detailed information on the presentation.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P12%20-%20Civic%20Readiness%20Initiative%20and%20The%20Seal%20of%20Civic%20.pdf>

The Board approved several pandemic related amendments including:

- Hands Only CPR – the amendment exempting high schools from requiring they provide Hands-Only Compression CPR instruction to students was extended through this school year.
- Physical Health Examinations – an amendment was approved which extends the deadline for students who are required to obtain a health examination/health certificate during the 2020-21 school year to September 1, 2021.
- Certificate of Biliteracy – an amendment was approved extending the exemptions that were approved last year with regards to students earning the Certificate of Biliteracy.

The link below provides the specific information associated with each amendment.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/521p12a5.pdf>

The Board reviewed a report that was produced from the feedback gathered during five recent Stakeholder Engagement Sessions conducted across the state on Substantial Equivalence of Instruction in Nonpublic Schools. The sessions included approximately 500 participants and the report provides some very interesting perspectives on this controversial topic.

The link below includes the power point presented to the Board and presents an excellent cross section of the many viewpoints and concerns associated with the issue.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/DRAFT%20SE%20Stakeholder%20Input%20Report%20Slides%205-6-21%20FINAL.pdf>