

COMMISSIONER ELIA

REMARKS

NYS P-TECH 2015 FALL CONVENING

11:30 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015

SUNY SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, ALBANY

Thank you, Robin, for that introduction and for bringing us together today to launch Cohort Three of our New York State P-TECH Partnerships. Your work along with the Business Council and the other members of the Leadership Council has been essential to protecting this model as we scale and grow.

Good morning. It's a pleasure to welcome our new group of New York State P-TECH Planning Teams to the Statewide Network.

You are joining more than two dozen teams across the state that are already making a difference every day for our students, their families, our communities and the local economy. I had heard and read about the model, but I have been a champion since the first week of school when I visited my first New York State P-TECH. (Pat Michel, DS of Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES who hosted the visit will be in attendance – they are partners for a second program in Cohort 3).

This new model – integrating rigorous high school instruction, college coursework and work based learning into one seamless six year program of individual support – is proving to be an especially effective approach. We target disadvantaged students, those who would not otherwise be preparing for college or even completing high school. Our success is that much more noteworthy and the return on our investment – in dollars, time and commitment – is that much greater.

Though the New York State initiative is still maturing, we have clear indicators of the impact we will have. The first school in Brooklyn has already graduated its first 6 students in only 4 years and has dozens more in the graduation queue this year

– I know Stan Litow from IBM, their employer partner, will have more to share about the success at P-TECH Brooklyn.

Across New York, our first 16 schools in Cohort One have already demonstrated that there was nothing unique about the success in Brooklyn. We will have the same kind of success in every P-Tech community in New York.

We are serving the students we targeted:

- 69% are eligible for free and reduced meals
- 75%+ meet one or more at-risk factors
- 58% children of color
- 9% have IEPs

And here are our First Year Student Outcomes:

- Average Daily Attendance is 94%
- Disciplinary actions are minimal
- 89% passed at least one Regents exam
- 71% passed two or more Regents exams
- At seven schools, students already completed at least one college course and 234 students earned their first college credits

And that's just the beginning.

This third cohort of schools is going to have to live up to the very high standard set by your colleagues. But you also have their support, guidance and experience to help you along the way. You have the benefit of our first three years of experience to help you avoid many of the pitfalls and to get the most out of your planning time.

You will have my team from the State Education Department working at your side. And I want to thank those who are with us today and have helped to create an innovative program that offers the high standards we demand and the flexibility we need to implement these innovative schools.

And you are already adding to our statewide experience and understanding. We have a number of new approaches in Cohort Three that will extend and enhance the model:

- Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES and Canajoharie are designing our first career pathways in agriculture, taking farming into the 21st century world of STEM;
- Syracuse and Onondaga Community College are developing the first online program;
- Buffalo and SolarCity are innovating in the solar energy arena; and
- Elmira and Corning are developing the first P-TECH to be housed at a business site.

And each of you are adding to the model and expanding our perspective.

I want to take just a few more minutes to underscore the importance of P-TECH and the 9-14 model as part of our broader agenda. We will never step away from high standards and we will always work to provide our students with the services and resources they deserve to meet our expectations. P-TECH demonstrates every day that our students, even those who have been considered most at-risk, will meet and exceed our expectations when we take the time to listen to them, motivate them and offer them opportunity. High standards are not the problem – it is low expectations that discourage and frustrate our students. P-TECH succeeds because we introduce college opportunities and work place experiences as early as possible, without delay. Our secret is focusing on individual students, connecting them with the real world and helping young adults to imagine a future filled with success, empowerment and leadership.

I want to thank you for your enthusiasm as we begin the planning and I want to thank you for all you will be doing this year. I look forward to visiting your schools next year.