



**DASA Task Force Meeting Notes**  
**December 6, 2017 (12:30-3:30)**  
**New York State Education Department**  
**89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY (Room 5 A/B)**

**Members present in Albany:** Khin Mai Aung, David Cantaffa, Natasha Capers, John D'Agati, Cynthia Gallagher, Mary Grenz Jalloh, Gloria Jean, Agatha Kelly, Terry McSweeney, Gina Miller, Jeffrey Mongelli, Elizabete Payne, Eoghann Renfroe, Renee Rider, Andrew Shanock, Toni Smith-Thompson, Jolynn Thaickal, Ron Woo, Tricia Zupan

**Members on WebEx:** Becky Carman, Grant Cowles, Mary Jane Karger, Trace Lahey, Michael Rosenberg, Christy Smith, Mara Sapon-Shevin, Shirley Sommers, Kathleen Hayes Sugarman

**NYSED Staff:** Laura Glass, Kelly Grace

**Guests:** Ann Horowitz, Counsel to New York Assemblymember O'Donnell

1. Presentation on DASA research (Elizabete Payne, Director, Queering Education Research Institute and Distinguished Lecturer, CUNY Hunter College)
  - Elizabete reviewed the current findings from three studies that are continuing into the spring.
  - DASA implementation study
    - This study builds on interviews with Dignity Act Coordinators (DACs) in 2015.
    - DACs were confused about which trainings they have taken.
    - The majority of DACs in 2015 and 2017 did not feel that they know enough to do the job or teach anyone else. Knowledge of enumerated categories comes from their own work.
    - DACs mentioned transgender students more in 2017 than in 2015, which may be a result of transgender guidance from the New York State Education Department. However, the interviewers did not see an increase in the discussion of LGB.
    - The definition of bullying was not very good. Approximately half of DACs noted that bullying has increased since the fall of 2016.
    - The researchers are proposing circulating a definition of bullying.
    - The primary DAC responses changed in 2017, such as discussing reporting more and referring to restorative justice.
    - The number one barrier to implementation is the lack of time for professional development.
  - Replication of a study with new teachers about their experience with the six-clock hour DASA training for certification
    - Most new teachers did not learn about LGBT or other enumerated categories. They also could not report strategies supporting the intent of DASA. They said that their training discussed internalized bias (22%), mentioned the transgender bathroom case (15%), and did not provide strategies for intervention or create a positive climate (76%).
  - Analysis of multicultural education course syllabi in New York State
    - Researchers analyzed syllabi from 23 multicultural education courses from 19 institutions of higher education.
    - LGBT inclusive syllabi were a small percentage of the total. Only 43% of the syllabi included sexual orientation. The researchers are recommending LGBT inclusion be spelled out on syllabi.

- Gender identity was not mentioned in the syllabi. A very small percentage of the syllabi referred to transgender students.
  - Elizabeth noted that it is not easy to make a change, but we have the opportunity to set precedent and move close to effective anti-bullying implementation. We need to pair serious diversity work with anti-bullying initiatives.
  - A task force member suggests moving beyond seeing if ideas are mentioned in syllabi to an “innovation configuration” to analyze them.
  - A task force member asked Elizabeth for her recommendations. She distributed a summary of the recommendations developed by the Queering Education Research Institute. The recommendations are:
    - A three-semester hour, face-to-face, LGBT-inclusive multicultural education course for candidates pursuing teacher, educational leader, and pupil personnel service certificates.
    - Out-of-state candidates for the above certificates would have one year to complete the face-to-face or real time face-to-face (web-based) multicultural education college course.
    - Candidates pursuing other service certificates would complete the six-clock hour DASA training.
    - Develop an online DASA training module with information on the law; legal requirements for districts, schools, and personnel; DASA reporting, etc. with a built-in testing component.
    - New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (NYSTCE) should be revised to include DASA content.
    - Have a single, research-based definition of bullying that addresses identity-based targeting and the importance of the enumerated categories be adopted as the DASA definition of bullying for purposes of implementation.
  - A task force member shared that she met with a new superintendent where one of the district’s schools is a new refugee location and a lot of fighting developed at the school. The superintendent paid for culturally responsive education for the teachers, but does not know how she will pay for it in the future.
2. Develop recommendations for the Board of Regents related to the DASA training required for certification
- Laura explained the difference between the options in the first task force survey question regarding possible recommendations: “For teacher certification applicants (e.g., subject area teachers, career and technical education teachers, library media specialists), which of the following DASA training recommendations would you like to make to the Board of Regents?”
    - a. Multicultural education college course (only) for all teacher certification applicants.
    - b. Combination of a multicultural education college course and a workshop focused on reporting requirements offered by state-approved provider (e.g., BOCES, colleges, education organization) for all teacher certification applicants.\*
    - c. Multicultural education college course (only) for pre-service teachers in NYS teacher preparation programs and a workshop offered by a state-approved provide (only) for all other teacher certification applicants.
    - d. Workshop offered by state-approved provider (only) for all teacher certification applicants and replace the broad language related to diversity in the NYS teacher preparation program requirements with specific language related to diversity that draws on the Dignity Act so

that NYS pre-service teachers would learn about diversity sometime during their program, but not necessarily in a separate multicultural education course (please see Section 52.21 attached to the email).\*

- e. Workshop offered by state-approved provider (only) for all teacher certification applicants with no changes to the NYS teacher preparation program requirements.
- f. Other (please describe).

\* These recommendations were offered by task force members at the November meeting.

- Task force members discussed ideas related to the options.
  - If multicultural education is integrated, then it is everywhere but nowhere.
  - Culturally responsive teaching is critical. It should be evaluated.
  - This focuses on curriculum; need interpersonal skills too.
  - It is not only about what to teach, but also how to teach it.
  - The ESSA plan refers a lot to being culturally responsive. How many more mandates must we have?
  - Teachers should receive training before they enter the classroom, saving money for schools.
  - Teacher preparation is insufficient to create a healthy school environment.
- The group thought that it would be helpful if Laura and Kelly drafted possible regulation amendments for the next meeting to make options a. and c. in the above survey questions more concrete.
- A task force member expressed her frustration that the group only discussed the first question in the survey and that some members referred to the possible changes as “hard”. She emphasized the importance of this work for children.