Coalition for Multiple Pathways to a Diploma

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September 28, 2015

Board of Regents
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Re: 2016 - 2017 State Aid Proposal

Dear Members of the Board of Regents:

We are writing in regards to the 2016 – 2017 State Aid proposal that the Board of Regents is currently developing. We ask that you include funding to support Career and Technical Education (CTE) and expand student access to the coursework required to pursue a 4+1 pathway to a diploma.

Based on our collective experience, we believe that expanding access to high-quality CTE programs has the potential to improve student engagement and contribute to improved graduation outcomes as well as college or career readiness. It is critical for all students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs), to have the opportunity to benefit from participation in high-quality CTE programs. Our coalition has highlighted some of the barriers to CTE instruction that students with disabilities and ELLs face along with recommendations for improving access to CTE programs in a paper that we have previously shared with the Board of Regents. We encourage you to revisit our recommendations, which can be found here, as you develop a CTE aid package and include provisions in the package that support improved access to high-quality CTE programs for all students.

In addition, we ask you to include funding to improve student access to the coursework required to pursue the other 4+1 pathways to a diploma. Based on our Coalition's wide range of experience, many of the 24 percent of students who do not currently graduate do not have access to the coursework required to pursue any of the recently created pathways. We urge you to address this lack of access to

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coursework and ensure that all students have a more meaningful opportunity to benefit from all approved instructional pathways.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these issues further, you can reach me at 212-822-9502.

Sincerely,

Abja Midha
Diploma Coalition Coordinator