

Accountability, incentives key to eliminate achievement gap

Written by Bruce P. Corrie, PhD, Guest commentary
Thursday, 16 May 2013 13:36



Minnesota is on the threshold of making some groundbreaking changes in educational policy and funding this legislative session. We know that the increased funding for e-12 and higher education is a much needed investment to make our youth competitive in the global economy. We thank the Legislature for its focus on specific needs of the ALANA (African Latino Asian and Native American) students and efforts to close the achievement gap by developing a robust model from preschool to career pathways.

In the context of the ALANA communities we request that:

1. Specific accountability systems and goals be set up from early childhood to graduate education to improve the educational outcomes of ALANA youth in the system and accelerate the closing of the achievement gap. A dashboard with accountability indicators will help monitor our progress in closing the achievement gap.
2. Specific accountability systems and goals be set up to ensure that high quality STEM education is delivered to our ALANA youth in the educational system to help prepare them for the jobs of the future. When our youth drop out of math and science classes we condemn them to a career path with limited options. We need to hold educational institutions accountable for delivering a high quality STEM education to all, especially our ALANA youth that are poorly represented in STEM careers.
3. Specific accountability systems and goals be set up to ensure that ALANA youth are getting the top quality advice and direction for their career pathways and can avail of quality internships and other resources to achieve career success. The report of the State Demographer, *Time for Talent* documents the failure of workers to get jobs because of the lack of experience. Implementing a state-wide internship and apprenticeship system and ensuring our ALANA youth participate

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effectively in this system is very important.

4. Incentive systems and other mechanisms be established to break down barriers to success in the world of work, in the public, private and nonprofit sectors that ALANA youth will enter, to ensure that their talents are well utilized and rewarded and that they do not experience a structural "mismatch" in their quest for employment as documented in the report of the State Demographer, *Time For Talent*.

5. All residents of Minnesota, regardless of their immigration status, be allowed equal access to and pay the same tuition at our educational institutions as other Minnesotans as they are adding to the human capital base of Minnesota and will help make us globally competitive. These youth will also help address our talent shortage as documented in the report of the State Demographer.

The report, *Time for Talent*, by the State Demographer, can be found at http://www.demograp hy.state.mn.us/documents/Talent_Full_Report_FINAL_March2013.pdf