

A Model for Recruitment and Retention of Minority Students to Teaching: Lessons from a School-University Partnership

By Aram Ayalon

School-university partnerships are effective devices for “bringing together institutions that need each other for the solution of tough problems” (Goodlad, 1988, p. 26). One such problem in American education has been the shortage of teachers in urban schools, and, in particular, the shortage of teachers of color. This shortage is becoming more acute as the student population becomes increasingly diverse. Currently, out of three million K-12 educators, only about 13% are people of color (U.S Department of Education, 1996); yet of 47 million school age children in the U.S public schools approximately 39% are linguistic or racial minority children (U.S Department of Education, 2002). This gap between the racial-ethnic makeup of the student body and the teacher workforce has widened as more options

have opened up for students of color attending college (Hodgkinson, 2002).

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Increasing the number of people of color in the teaching force has many benefits. Teachers of color are likely to provide positive role models to children of color (Clewell & Villegas, 1998), empower children of color to succeed in school (Cummins, 2001; Nieto, 1999), build bridges and a cultural match between the students’ homes and the schools (Garcia,

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1995; Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 1995; Tyrone, 2001), and are more likely to be willing to work in urban settings than white teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996).

This article documents implementation and critically reflects upon the results of a partnership between a predominately white rural college and a multicultural urban school district. The partnership was intended both to recruit high school students of color from an urban school to teacher education and to encourage teacher candidates from a rural college to seek employment in urban areas. Establishing a school-university partnership is a challenging task, and the literature suggests that few school-university collaborations exist. Further, the paths to collaboration among the partnerships that do exist are not well documented (Shive, 1997). Quioco and Rios (2000) discovered that few K-12 level recruitment programs have been referred to in the literature. Furthermore, no literature was found on collaborations between rural colleges and urban K-12 schools with the primary goal of recruiting students of color to teaching. The present article describes the main elements of such a program and the most helpful and most challenging aspects of developing a partnership. It also lists lessons learned from this endeavor.

Models for the Recruitment of Minorities to Teacher Education

In order to increase the number of teachers of color it is necessary to increase the pool of students of color who enroll in teacher preparation programs. Villegas and Clewell (1998) list three non-traditional sources of potential candidates — paraprofessionals, junior college students, and middle and high school students. At the high school level, the recruitment programs usually consist of “teacher cadet” programs that include future educators clubs, introductory education college-credit courses, mentoring, and summer programs that offer students rigorous learning experiences accompanied by academic support.

Teacher education programs, however, have been criticized as ineffective in recruiting students of color to teaching and in preparing teachers to work in urban and diverse areas (Boyer & Baptiste, 1996; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Haberman, 1996). A number of recruitment efforts in the 1980s provided for such initiatives as enhancing teacher candidates’ test-taking skills, establishing offices for the recruitment of minority teacher candidates, and providing them with financial support. Yet, these efforts were described as piecemeal or ineffective because they failed to integrate such efforts into more inclusive programs and to enlarge the pool of minority teacher candidates (Clewell & Villegas, 1998). In the late 1980s, more focused and comprehensive efforts appeared, centering on expanding the pool of teacher candidates of color by targeting both traditional and non-traditional students while providing supportive strategies to increase retention and placement in teaching positions.

In 1988, the Ford Foundation supported an eight-state consortium focusing on recruiting minority paraprofessionals to teaching. The program provided money for tuition, books, and support services (Dandy, 1998). In 1989, the DeWitt Wallace-Readers' Digest Fund launched a more comprehensive national initiative. The initiative targeted four populations: paraprofessionals, returning Peace Corps volunteers, middle school students, and traditional undergraduate students. In reviewing the paraprofessional recruitment efforts, Villegas and Clewell (1998) concluded that strong partnerships between teacher education programs and urban school districts were "instrumental in helping program participants overcome barriers that, unless addressed, could easily have kept participants from becoming fully certified teachers" (p.48). Other studies about recruiting students of color confirmed these findings. Dandy (1998) found that having both the university and the schools assign liaisons to work closely together to find creative solutions to barriers within their institutions was one of the overriding factors contributing to the success of a program for the recruitment of African American paraprofessionals. Similarly, Genzuk and Beca (1998) discovered that a strong collaboration between a university and three school districts in Los Angeles was key to reducing institutional barriers and streamlining an efficient path for training Latino paraeducators to become bilingual teachers.

In addition to national initiatives, a number of local university-school collaborations for the recruitment of teachers of color exist. Quijano and Rios (2000) found that between 1989 and 1998 several universities conducted recruitment programs for diverse students to become teachers by collaborating with area public schools or community colleges. One such program provided high school students with a high school-based college credit course on teaching (Yopp, R. H., Yopp, H. K., & Taylor 1992). Gonzalez (1997) reviewed six different diversity recruitment programs and identified several elements that combine to produce successful recruitment: human connection, peer recruitment, sustained school-based experience, a link to college, how-to-learn strategies, continuous progress monitoring, individual responsibilities, setting achievement standards, reduction of bureaucratic hurdles, and having a new paradigm of teaching.

School-University Partnerships

The literature on school-university partnerships indicates that partnerships are more effective in dealing with complex educational problems than are attempts to deal with these problems by individual institutions (Essex, 2002; Goodlad, 1988; Jones, Yonezawa, Ballesteros, & Mehan, 2002; NCATE, 2001; Osguthorpe, Harris, Black, & Harris, 1995; Shive, 1997). But, despite the crucial importance of school-university partnerships to the success of recruitment and retention programs for underrepresented teachers, extensive analysis of the nature of such partnerships is lacking (Hall Mark, 1998). What we do know is that an effective school-university

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partnership must be symbiotic embodying three basic characteristics: (1) the partners need to be dissimilar (e.g., having different missions) (2) the goal of the partnership should address the self-interest of each institution, and (3) each member should sacrifice sufficiently so as to fulfill the needs of other participants (Clark, 1988).

In a survey of partnerships between area schools and the University of Rochester, the programs that reported high levels of collaboration were characterized by open and frequent communication, shared recognition of the need of the program, joint program development, a working contract, effective leadership at the school level, and respect (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001). On the other hand, collaborations that were unsuccessful were characterized by a lack of communication, frequent staff turnover, and a lack of commitment to investment in the program (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001). Another review of school-university partnerships found that effective partnerships were distinguished by clearly defined purpose and direction, enthusiastic endorsement by top leaders of both institutional levels, trust and mutual respect among partners, open communication, and tangible benefits for all partners (Essex, 2001).

In sum, combining the research on recruitment of students of color into teaching and school-university collaborations indicates that recruitment might be more effective when both institutions share the need and belief in the importance of recruiting minority students to teaching, top leaders of both institutions support this goal, both institutions are willing to be selfless, and they frequently communicate about this matter.

Partnership Background

The partnership described in this article grew from my desire to provide multicultural and urban field experience opportunities for teacher candidates at my institution. State University of New York College at Potsdam (SUNY Potsdam) is a major teacher preparation institute in northern New York located in a small town of 10,000 residents, 350 miles north of Yonkers Public Schools District (YPSD). The college is one of 64 units of the State University of New York. SUNY Potsdam became a normal school in 1868, preparing many generations of teachers before becoming a state university in 1948. SUNY Potsdam offers Bachelor of Arts and science degrees as well as several master degrees with a major focus on education. Out of the 4,000 students at SUNY Potsdam, 92% are white and reside mostly in rural white communities. The school of education in SUNY Potsdam provides teaching certificates in all levels and in most discipline areas. While teacher candidates are provided with extensive pre-student teaching field experience in area schools, they normally have no experience in urban settings. This meant that SUNY Potsdam graduates were unlikely to be interested in or prepared for teaching in urban settings. Accordingly, I wanted to establish a long-term partnership between the university and an urban school district.

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I grew up in the Middle East and arrived in SUNY Potsdam after living in the Southwestern United States, where the population is ethnically and racially diverse. I often felt like an outsider in this homogeneous, rural area, and thus I wanted to reach out and create bridges between my college and a diverse urban center. After the director of Human Resources of YPSD and I met at a conference, we decided to explore ways to increase the population of teachers of color in the school district as well as provide urban field experiences for SUNY Potsdam students.

YPSD is the fourth largest school district in New York State. It is located in the fourth-largest city in New York State with a community of about 200,000 people. The district is comprised of 32 schools: 24 elementary schools, 4 junior high schools and 4 senior high schools. YPSD provides educational services through a magnet school program — the most comprehensive in the region and one of only a few full-magnet school districts in the United States. The district's 21,000 students may select from magnet programs including computer science, the law and public service, performing arts, television production, pre-teaching, and more. While the K-12 student population is comprised mostly of a Latinos, African American, and Middle Eastern immigrant population, the teacher population is mostly European American. The school system has been criticized as lacking in racial and ethnic minority teachers. In addition, many teachers recruited to the district are perceived as being ill prepared to the challenges facing them in an urban setting.

The program was devised after mutual visits by administrators from YPSD at SUNY Potsdam and by faculty from SUNY Potsdam at YPSD. The visits included two district administrators and two school administrators (one at the elementary level and one at the high school level) to SUNY Potsdam. In addition, ten arts and science and education faculty and two deans from SUNY Potsdam visited YPSD. Initially, thirteen SUNY Potsdam students, enrolled in a social studies methods course that I taught, commuted to YPSD for a two-week field-intensive winter session. Over the next four years, 10-15 teacher candidates commuted every January to YPSD and spent their winter session in an elementary school assisting teachers, teaching mini-units, learning about the children's culture, sharing their own culture, and preparing with the children a school-wide exhibition to share the curriculum they had studied.

In addition to working with children, the teacher candidates visited Lincoln High School (LHS), met with students from the pre-teaching magnet program, and shared with them the experience of being college students and education majors. In this magnet program, high school students take an education course each year and work with children in an early childhood center on campus. This visit became a link to the recruitment aspect of the program. Each visit also included a presentation by a multicultural admission counselor from SUNY Potsdam. Following each visit, a delegation of LHS junior and senior students, administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents visited SUNY Potsdam. These visits included campus tours, attending college courses, meeting with admission counselors, meeting with student minority

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organizations, and participating in campus events. The school's chaperones, in addition to supervising their students, spoke in teacher education courses about their experience as urban educators, and attended partnership-planning meetings.

The partnership became official in June 1998, when LHS and the School of Education at SUNY Potsdam signed a contract intended to "enhance the career intentions of high school pre-education students," as well as "provide professional opportunities for LHS Educational Services staff and SUNY Potsdam teacher education staff" (1998-1999 Agreement). Both parties agreed to provide an introduction to education college credit course for the high school students, mentorship and collaboration between college students and high school students, and staff development opportunities. The district felt this provided an opportunity to "grow its own teachers," as well as to recruit teachers who have been trained to teach in urban schools.

During the four-year partnership, over 70 pre-teaching magnet students, most of whom are students of color, were exposed to college life and admission requirements. In the first three years of the partnership, seven pre-teaching magnet students enrolled in SUNY Potsdam — four in the first year, two in the second year, and one in the third year. As of 2003, two students graduated — one with high honors — and two students are still attending SUNY Potsdam. At the other end, through four winter session courses at YPSD, over 40 teacher candidates spent two weeks of intensive field experience at an urban school. An important aspect of the course was the unusually high percentage of SUNY Potsdam minority teacher candidates participating in the program. Over the four years, about 15% — four Native Americans and four African Americans — attended the 2-week course at YPSD. Thereafter, five teacher candidates conducted their student teaching at YPSD and one, so far, has obtained a teaching position in the district.

Methodology

The implementation of the SUNY Potsdam-YPSD model was documented using qualitative methods. Data source included extensive notes, memos, and e-mail messages gathered between 1997 and 2001 while I served as the director of the partnership. A major source of the notes was intermittent e-mail reports sent to partnership participants. Additional data was collected from the SUNY Potsdam admissions data bank regarding the number of students from LHS who applied, and were accepted or rejected. I obtained data on the SUNY Potsdam teacher candidates who had an urban field experience at YPSD through observations during daily seminars, course written evaluations, reflective journals, and feedback from cooperative teachers. The various sources were compared and contrasted to one another in order to identify common themes.

During April 2002, I conducted phone interviews with key partnership participants. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes. The interviewees included five

recruitment and retention staff members at SUNY Potsdam, three LHS staff, and one YPSD administrator. Interviews were conducted to uncover important factors contributing to the success and failure of the program and their role in the partnership (see Appendix 1). In addition, I interviewed four former LHS students who attended SUNY Potsdam. Each of the four interviews lasted about 40 minutes. Interview questions were aimed at understanding what role the high school experience, recruitment efforts, and college retention programs played in the students' decision to enroll and stay in college (see Appendix 1). Finally, during April 2003, I conducted follow-up phone interviews with former SUNY Potsdam students who attended the winter session at YPSD. These phone interviews lasted between five and twenty minutes. The interview questions were focused on uncovering the impact that the urban experience at Yonkers had on the interviewees (see Appendix 1). The interviewees included twenty-two former SUNY Potsdam students (50% of participants).

All the phone interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed by identifying common themes that seem to reoccur among all or most participants. Since the goal of this study was to learn about the perspectives of members of the partnership, open-ended questions were used (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). There were six themes that appeared important to the success as well as failure of this model: focused recruitment efforts, retention programs, profound urban field experience, creative funding initiatives, institutional policies, and leadership.

Results

Recruitment Efforts

Like most colleges, SUNY Potsdam sends admission recruiters to various schools and college fairs in an effort to meet the enrollment objectives. The rate of return, however, is low. After presenting to hundreds if not thousands of students of color in urban areas, only several dozen students of color enroll at SUNY Potsdam each year. In this partnership, however, recruitment efforts were handled differently. A SUNY Potsdam admission counselor, assigned specifically to recruit in urban areas, met with small groups of LHS pre-teaching students as well as any other interested students at the high school. All the students from LHS who attended SUNY Potsdam indicated that this meeting was crucial to their interest in SUNY Potsdam. One student said,

They took us to the library. He [the admission recruiter] gave us information about education. He gave us information about the school... He talked about the possibilities at the college.... That was very unique. It was very important. You have one person describing about their [sic] school instead of [us] standing in line [in a college fair] like shopping and many people are talking and running around.

In addition, teacher candidates conducted discussions with small groups of

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high school students and provided their points of view. Admission also hosted annual visits to SUNY Potsdam by LHS students, parents, and staff. It arranged for housing on campus, campus tours, transcript assessment, classroom visits, and entertainment. The admission counselor felt this was a unique model: "This was the first time that we actually targeted a specific institution and students who were interested in a specific degree. In the past, students would come up pretty much on their own." The counselor felt that the presence of the adults from YPSD was significant.

The people who were going to be instrumental to the student's making a final decision whether or not to enroll were all present...there was opportunities to deal with issues that parents had; opportunities to address the concerns that students had; opportunities to address both the principal and the guidance counselor...I think it works much better. . . . All in all, it was a much more comprehensive visit than what most students get at any college.

LHS' staff including teachers and administrators, which accompanied these visits, also felt the nature of these college visits contributed significantly to their students' desire to attend college in general and also to attend SUNY Potsdam. The pre-teaching magnet director described it this way:

For many, this was a first-time exposure to life outside of their own neighborhoods and certainly a first-time exposure to the process of career and life-style planning that are part of the experience of higher education. Most came back enchanted both with the experience and with the possibility that this type of life-style choice could well be possible for them.

The students who came to the visits confirmed these impressions. When asked how the college trip was different from other college visits, one indicated, "We stayed three days in SUNY Potsdam. We saw everything from top to bottom. . . . We just did things that we normally would not have done in other colleges."

In addition to visits, SUNY Potsdam expedited the application process. The expedited process allowed the SUNY Potsdam admission counselor to meet face-to-face with a student applicant, evaluate the transcript and recommendations, consult with the student's counselor, get a sense of who might have a reasonable chance of success in college, and then tell the student whether (s)he has been admitted or what alternative routes to pursue. The LHS counselor summarized well the initial recruitment efforts,

I believe that what made the program so successful during this time was the enthusiasm and commitment of all the staff members involved, and the willingness of the two institutions to cut through red tape and get things done. . . .

Retention Efforts

The partnership did not include a special retention program for LHS students except for informal contact they had with me. Most of the pre-teaching magnet students who enrolled at SUNY Potsdam were able to take advantage of existing

retention programs. The enrollment of a cohort group who went to high school together, however, eased their transition to college. All were able to obtain support from one another. One student, for example, indicated that he would have left college after the first semester had he not had an old-time friend to help him. He told me:

She told me that if I had a problem I could come to her. Because of her I stayed. The one person in my life that, for ten years, made me feel safe. A person I could go to whenever I feel nervous or whenever I have a problem. If she weren't there, I would transfer somewhere else or not go to college, period!

The campus retention programs were Education Opportunity Program (EOP), Collegiate Science and Technology Education Program (CSTEP), and Teacher Opportunity Corps (TOC). Attending campus retention programs played a key role in whether the students stayed or left. EOP, which provides on-going counseling and resources for low-income students who do not meet the required SAT scores or grade point average, helped the students get organized and focused. CSTEP and TOC, through ongoing support in study skills, textbook purchasing, counseling and job search, helped students of color with their professional development and future career plans. A student who enrolled in both EOP and CSTEP commented, "The EOP program helped me stay organized. I knew what to do. I wrote things down. I accomplished what I was supposed to accomplish. The CSTEP program helped me with development – what I want to do in the future."

In sum, LHS students benefited from enrolling as a cohort and from participating in existing retention programs.

Urban Experience and Recruitment of Teacher Candidates

While pre-teaching high school students received in-depth exposure to college life, teacher candidates enrolled in an elementary social studies methods class received an even more profound exposure to urban schools. Through encounters with children of diverse backgrounds at the elementary and high school levels as well as with urban school teachers, a new world was opened to these teacher candidates. The following typical excerpts from student journals illustrate the intense and eye-opening experience these teacher candidates had:

I learned more in the two weeks that I spent at YPSD than I have in any other methods and cross-cultural classes that I have taken thus far, because my experience was so intense and different from anything I ever known. I came from a rural town and had only participated in rural field experience. [Here] I was immersed in a school community that, although [it] had much in common with other schools I have visited, was unique in many ways.

Another student heard about homelessness for the first time,

One boy told me that he lived in a shelter for a year. At that point I had to change the subject. Surprisingly, the other students did not even seem phased about the comment. . . . I had a reality check about how life is different in an urban setting.

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The intensive interaction that teacher candidates had with their peers, including a substantial number of people of color, had a significant impact on them as well. Most traveled together from upstate New York, stayed together in a dorm, and spent their entire day together teaching, planning lessons, participating in discussions, and touring the city. In a short period, they found close friendships and lasting bonds. One student of color wrote, “We were strangers who were living and working together. Strangely, I felt an attachment to other education students. I am gratified that I took two weeks out of my life to make an impact on the students. . . .” Teachers at the elementary school confirmed the teacher candidates’ observations. Following the first traveling course they wrote in a joint journal, “The college students acted out [sic] as positive role models and they brought their own diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences into our urban classrooms.”

In addition to participating in an intensive field experience, teacher candidates were actively recruited by YPSD human resources personnel. Each year YPSD hosted a recruitment event in the district’s central office. All teacher candidates were given job application brochures and information about the district and working conditions.

Most teacher candidates indicated that the two-week course convinced them they chose the right career path. They also felt wanted and flattered by the district’s attempts to recruit them and would consider the possibility of teaching in an urban school.

Creative Funding

An important factor in the partnership’s success was creative use of existing funds so the partnership was not dependent on short-term grants. At SUNY Potsdam several funding sources were used to advance the program. First, the admission office used its recruitment budget to fund housing for LHS students. Second, the office of continuing education, which coordinated the enrollment and tuition charges of pre-teaching magnet students taking the principles of education course, charged only \$100 per student and directed the money to a fund aimed to support partnership activities. Similarly, school of education funds were used to support some of the partnership costs such as travel. In addition, during the first two years of the program, the office of multicultural affairs funded several visits of SUNY Potsdam faculty to YPSD. Finally, money donated by an alumnus through the college development fund was used to sponsor SUNY Potsdam minority students who participated in the 2-week course at YPSD.

At YPSD, funding from the Tech Prep grant, which supports partnership between schools and universities that promote future careers of high school students, was used to fund the yearly college trips of more than 20 students, parents, and staff. The grant also supported a professional development workshop of pre-education staff at SUNY Potsdam.

Institutional Policies

In the third year of the partnership, despite a record ten LHS applicants, only two were accepted and only one actually attended SUNY Potsdam. When a new president was chosen at SUNY Potsdam, he hired a consulting firm to suggest ways to increase the profile of the college. One of the firm's recommendations was to increase the SAT and GPA requirements for enrollment. As SUNY Potsdam implemented these suggestions it no longer allowed admission counselors to provide special considerations to students who did not meet the requirements. Instead, the policy required all special admission considerations to be processed through a campus-wide admission committee. The results of these policy changes have been detrimental to the recruitment of LHS students. The admission committee did not benefit from the insights of LHS administrators and counselors who previously worked closely with the SUNY Potsdam admission counselor. This policy change was, in effect, defeating the whole purpose of the partnership.

For a partnership like this to be successful, each institution's policies must be aligned with the partnership's goals. School-university collaboration studies suggest that in such areas as recruitment, selection, and preparation of teachers, schools and universities are not independent agencies; rather they are "interdependent agencies that could better serve the public if they concentrated on a common agenda" (Schlechty & Whitford, 1988, p. 193). It is therefore essential that the institutions maintain policies that are consistent with common goals they establish. When policies change in ways that contradict the common goals of the partnership, failure might result. As SUNY Potsdam funding became more enrollment-driven, admission policies changed and it became difficult to recruit students of color.

Leadership and Idea Champions

Leadership also had an important impact on the establishment and demise of the partnership. At SUNY Potsdam, I played a key role in creating and maintaining the partnership. As a faculty member and coordinator of the elementary education program, I was able to recruit teacher candidates to the two-week urban experience, arrange for the college admissions to host visiting students from LHS, arrange for joint meetings between administrators at YPSD and SUNY Potsdam, and seek funding for things such as partnership activities.

The participation of YPSD in the partnership was possible thanks to the support of the human resource director at YPSD. He recruited an elementary school principal to host SUNY Potsdam teacher candidates for the urban experience and mediated the involvement of the LHS pre-teaching magnet program in the recruitment program. His eloquent presentation before the school board about the benefit of the school-university program for both institutions was ground-breaking and provided the vision and foundations for the district's support of the partnership. His enthusiastic support of the program brought about other idea champions in LHS and in the elementary school. In LHS, one of the vice-principals became an important

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advocate for the program by organizing and chaperoning the recruitment visits to SUNY Potsdam and by hosting visits of SUNY Potsdam teacher candidates to LHS. At the elementary school, the principal became the idea champion. She persuaded her staff to host SUNY Potsdam students and to organize meaningful experiences for the teacher candidates. She organized field trips for the visiting teacher candidates in the community and invited guest speakers to share their urban teaching experience.

A change of leadership, however, also brought about the weakening and ultimate demise of the partnership. After initial strong support, the district's effort to recruit SUNY Potsdam candidates decreased significantly. During the third year of the partnership a new superintendent was hired who instituted massive personnel changes which resulted in the transfer or resignations of key idea champions. After the fourth year of partnership, I left SUNY Potsdam for a position in another university. The SUNY Potsdam administration did not assign any other faculty member to replace me as the coordinator of the partnership and consequently, the program ceased to operate.

Lessons Learned

This partnership provided many meaningful lessons. The collaboration included some aspects that were characteristic of exemplary partnerships and recruitment efforts. The establishment of an open and frequently used communication system as well as forming a trusting relationship between SUNY Potsdam and YPSD was an important component of the program's success. Close communication between colleges and schools is one of the key ingredients in exemplary school university collaborations (Clewell & Villegas, 1998; Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001). Osguthorpe, Harris, Black, Cutler, and Harris (1995) posit that an effective school-university partnership "requires that members of both cultures be willing to enter each other's worlds specifically and seriously enough to become somewhat comfortable there" (p. 8).

Another valuable component was what Gonzalez (1997) calls the use of a "bridging experience." Gonzalez (1997) found that experiences intended to ease the entry to college of students of color who are first in their families to attend college was essential for the success of recruitment programs. Visits by SUNY Potsdam admissions at LHS and the college visits of LHS students at SUNY Potsdam students appeared to be invaluable to the LHS students and motivated them to apply to SUNY Potsdam.

A third aspect that was key to the success of the collaboration was the leadership provided at both institutions. According to Dandy (1998), one of the most important factors contributing to the success of a program of recruitment of minorities to teaching in southern states during the 1990s has been the leadership provided by a campus advocate.

While the partnership between SUNY Potsdam and YPSD had some aspects that were effective, there were still some aspects that were missing. Sustainable school-university collaborations require mutual recognition of a common need (Essex, 2001). Changes in administration at YPSD and the increased emphasis on recruiting students with higher SAT scores at SUNY Potsdam reduced the degree of commitment of both institutions toward this program. Two key actions could have increased the likelihood of a long-term success of this partnership. First, attempts should have been made to obtain a broader support for the partnership by incorporating the goals of the program into the fabric of each institution. Universities and schools have standing committees for such aspects as curriculum, assessment, and governance. At SUNY Potsdam support should have been obtained from such important institutional bodies as faculty assembly, arts and science council, and an affirmative action committee. This would have enabled it to enhance institutional congruency and would have made it easier to maintain a more flexible admission policies.

Similarly at YPSD, gaining support from important district-wide bodies would have contributed significantly to the program's success. By lobbying the PTA council, the magnet programs steering committee, and the professional and staff development department, it would have been easier to strengthen the pre-teaching magnet program which might have enhanced the quality of applicants to SUNY Potsdam.

Second, each institution should have had a resident partnership advocate with an official task to conduct partnership business. Shive (1997) warns that school-university collaborations might be fragile and temporary especially if key leaders leave the relationship and if collaborative efforts operate outside the core activities of both schools and universities. In this partnership, I did not have regular release time, and when I left the college, the college did not fill the position and the partnership ceased to exist. Similarly, at YPSD the district failed to assign a district-wide administrator whose job would have been to coordinate the partnership activities on an on-going basis.

Implications

When establishing a partnership, both schools and universities should ensure that policies related to the goals of the partnership are aligned. The institutional priorities should be congruent with any partnership it establishes. In this case, establishing a partnership for the purpose of recruiting minority students to teaching should be incorporated into any budget and admission policy decisions made by the college. The college's admission policies need to be transformed. Grades, English proficiency, and speech proficiency, the most prevalent college entrance criteria, have not been derived from research evidence about what makes college graduates effective teachers (Case, Shive, Ingebretson, & Spiegel, 1988; Haberman, 1996).

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Conversely, hiring policies and program decisions at the school district level should also fit well with the goals of the partnership. The literature on school-university partnership confirms the importance of sharing goals and programs that are integral to the activities of both schools and universities (Kirschenbaum & Reagan, 2001; Shive, 1997).

For majority white colleges, especially those in remote locations, this partnership model holds the most promise. The personal connection between the college and an urban school district and the use of cohorts for both teacher candidates and college applicants helped to overcome some of the hurdles that appear during the transition from one environment to the other. Personal connection was one of the keys to the success of other minority recruitment programs (Gonzalez, 1997). Furthermore, while most partnerships occur between urban schools and area universities, this partnership shows that it is possible to form collaborations between an urban school and a predominately white college in a rural area.

Finally, this school-university partnership was a worthwhile endeavor even with its limitations and short lifespan. The participants in this partnership had a transforming experience. The elementary school children and staff formed close bonds with the visiting teacher candidates, and the teacher candidates had an unforgettable experience with children of diverse cultures and life experiences. The high school students gained exposure to a higher education environment that they thought was out of their reach, and the pre-teaching magnet staff formed relationship with their counterparts at the college level and had gained new professional perspectives. During a follow up survey of teacher candidates who participated in the urban experience, I discovered that, while only one is currently teaching in an urban setting, seven others have had some urban experience, and most have had a transformative experience.

The participants gained compassion and caring attitudes that they continue to hold as they teach rural and suburban students. The experience was an eye opener for many and opened many doors for them to consider teaching outside of rural areas. Many keep revisiting their experience by reading through their memoirs and telling stories about their experience to students and fellow teachers. One teacher candidate who now teaches in a rural school said, "I changed profoundly. I am a different person since the YPSD experience." Another teacher candidate, who currently teaches, said, "Whenever I feel down that my students are not cooperating, I take out these cards [from YPSD children] and I read them and then I know why I am teaching."

The students recruited from LHS also benefited from attending SUNY Potsdam. The first LHS student to graduate from SUNY Potsdam was accepted in spring 2003 to the New York City Teaching Fellow program, a selective program intended to recruit students to teach in high need urban schools. At the same time, another LHS recruit has moved to Texas with the intention of eventually teaching bilingual education.

Thus, although the program did not achieve its goal of increasing substantially the number of teachers of color in the schools, it is perhaps more meaningful to focus on the life experience of the participants. Even when best practice does not transform institutions, it can transform individuals.

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Appendix 1

Interview questions with former LHS students:

1. Tell me about your pre-teaching magnet program. To what extent did it encourage you to pursue teaching?
2. What brought you to SUNY Potsdam?

Aram Ayalon

3. How important was the campus visit for you and your peers in deciding to apply to SUNY Potsdam?
4. What challenges did you face in the enrollment process?
5. Tell me about your contact with SUNY Potsdam students who visited your high school. What role did it play in your recruitment?
6. What challenges did you face in college? Why did you stay? What helped you most?
7. Did you choose education as a major? Why or why not? If not what would have convinced you to stay in education?
8. What needs to be done to recruit students who belong to under-represented groups to teaching?

Interview questions with partnership key participants:

1. Tell me about your involvement with the YPSD-SUNY Potsdam partnership.
2. What were the outcomes of the collaboration from your perspectives?
3. What were the key aspects for the success or failure of the program?
4. What ingredients should be in a successful program intended to recruit minority students to attend college major in teaching, and return to teaching in urban schools?

Interview questions with former SUNY Potsdam students who attended winter sessions at Yonkers:

1. What is your current occupation? Please elaborate.
2. If you are teaching, where are you teaching (Urban, suburban, rural)? What grade level? What subject matter? How long have you been there? Are you working with minority students?
3. If you are not teaching, does your job involve working with minority populations?
4. How has the Yonkers experience affected you, if at all?
5. How has the Yonkers experience affected your work?
6. How has the Yonkers experience affected your teaching?
7. Any other comments?