



Empire State STEM Education Initiative Progressive Dialogue

Introductory Fact Sheet

The Empire State STEM Education Initiative, led by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has initiated a “progressive dialogue” to identify ways to advance PK-20 education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) across New York State, and thereby prepare the next generation of New York’s graduates to innovate and compete in the global economy. The progressive dialogue is engaging a statewide network of leaders in the design of a strategic public policy roadmap for increasing the number of students – from all backgrounds – aspiring to and prepared for STEM disciplines. Advice and participation in this work is being sought from stakeholders who span the ecosystem of education providers, influencers and beneficiaries.

The first dialogue was held on June 25-26, 2009 on the Rensselaer campus in Troy, New York. Over 100 thought leaders came together, representing sectors including PK-20 education, government, industry, corporate and private foundations, and other non-profit organizations. Participants discussed, debated, envisioned, and exchanged ideas for an initial set of recommendations that establish a platform for expansion through regional dialogues to follow in September-October, 2009.

The regional dialogues will provide the forum for additional stakeholders and partners to engage in designing the strategic roadmap and building a network of supporters:

- **Regions:** Buffalo (including Western New York), Rochester, Syracuse (including the Southern Tier), Yonkers (including the lower Hudson), New York City, Long Island, and the Capital region (including the north country).
- **Hosts and sponsors:** it is envisioned that locally-based leaders will partner with the Empire State STEM Education Initiative to host and/or sponsor each regional dialogue, with sponsorship from stakeholders from business, higher education, school districts, NYS education, museums, libraries, and/or foundations. Their contributions could include:
 - Provide a suitable space for the event.
 - Help with hosting costs such as technology support; lunch and break service; photography
 - Identify and help recruit major event cosponsors, such as large area employers and local universities or colleges
 - Collaborate with the Empire State STEM Education Initiative team in establishing the date, time and detailed agenda for the Regional Dialogue
 - Provide or help develop a database of local business, higher education, school district, parents, museum, library, and foundation leaders that should be invited
 - Identify local support staff for the planning and operation of the event
- **The Empire State STEM Education Initiative project team:** will partner with hosts/sponsors in planning and execution, and provide all necessary supporting documentation for the dialogue
- **Invitees:** the regional dialogues are anticipated to convene 40-60 local stakeholder leaders
- **Event framework:** One-day meeting from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A typical agenda will include an introduction to provide context for the dialogue, small group working sessions to develop input for the strategic roadmap, and plenary discussion and assessment of ideas.

At the conclusion of the regional dialogues, recommendations will be synthesized into an integrated strategic roadmap for stakeholder review and implementation.