Making Lincoln's declarations of freedom real

By Betty Ro
Regents Chancellor

Last month, the Board of Regents celebrated the opening of a new exhibit at the New York State Museum featuring President [illegible] handwritten draft of the "Preliminary" Emancipation [illegible] Rights Act of 1964, we have not yet accomplish[illegible] formation of [illegible] we will not accomplish it until we provide all children with an education that prepares them [illegible] lives.

Success [illegible] all have equitable access to services that are developmental [illegible] ly appropriate and re[illegible] essential services such as: prenatal care; medical, dental, [illegible] vision and hear[illegible] mental health counseling and [illegible] guidance to help ensure that all students have access to [illegible] coursework, especially those children who have [illegible] excellence and equity for every student.

To help gi[illegible] bout possible [illegible] every one of these s[illegible] inati[illegible] you're skeptical about the need to focus so intently on civic learning and civic engagement, let me share [illegible] statistics:

[illegible] under the U.S. Constitution.

[illegible] New York State ranked 47th in the nation in voter [illegible] the 2016 general election.

[illegible] elec[illegible] by the wayside ... Civic education, like all [illegible] an obligation to pass on to the next, not only [illegible] people.

[illegible] make Lincoln's declarations of freedom [illegible]

[illegible] make the hard work that remains before us [illegible] progress we have made and contemplate the hard work that remains before us.

The exhibit is dedicate[illegible] friend, Regent Judith John[illegible] Throughout her brilliant career, Ju[illegible] care for educational equity and exce[illegible] She understood better than anyone that we *can* and we *will* close the achievement gap, but only after we first close the opportunity gaps that persist throughout society and throughout the educational system.

The Emancipation Proclamation was an executive order in which Lincoln declared that slaves in re[illegible] free[illegible] marking the 100th anniversary of the January 1, 1863 event, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Th[illegible] commemorate the Emancipation Proclamation [illegible] its declarations of freedom real."

Sadly, despite the 13th Amendment and the Civil