

From: L. David Eaton on behalf of the President's Cabinet  
To: The SUNY New Paltz College Council  
Date: 2/21/2019  
Subject: Support for Renaming the Hasbrouck Complex Buildings

College Council members, faculty and staff colleagues, students, and guests, I am David Eaton, Vice President for Enrollment Management and the longest serving member of the presidents' cabinet. On behalf of my cabinet colleagues, I will take a few minutes to articulate our opinion and recommendation concerning a matter before this Council today. My colleagues are:

Lorin Basden Arnold, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Stephanie Blaisdell, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Michele Halstead, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Erica Marks, Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations  
Tanhena Pacheco Dunn, Associate VP for HR, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Shelly Wright, Chief of Staff and VP for Communication and Marketing

My colleagues and I have more than 120 years of combined executive leadership experience within and outside of higher education. Making tough decisions is not new to us individually or as members of a policy making group. Collectively, we are responsible for all aspects of this enterprise called SUNY New Paltz – an academy that functions as a small city, comprised of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

It is our customary practice as a team to have the college president make public policy statements, recommendations for action, and to articulate institutional vision and values. We advise the president on these matters and due to our diversity of world views and professional experiences, we are seldom, if ever, of one voice in our opinions. The matter before the College Council today, removing and replacing the building names in the Hasbrouck residential complex, is an exception.

From the outset, in the summer of 2017, when the cabinet discussed and debated this matter, we were unanimous in our opinion that it should be forwarded to the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force for exploration, consideration, and a recommendation. Following receipt of the recommendation of the Task Force to remove and replace the names, the cabinet team discussed and debated the matter and unanimously endorsed the recommendation and advised the president accordingly.

It is clear, at this point, that such unanimity exists across this community's primary stakeholder groups; faculty, staff, and students, as is evidenced by the multiple resolutions from representative stakeholder groups urging affirmative action on the resolution before the College Council today.

Like many decisions we are required to make every day, this is not an easy decision because there are passionate views on multiple sides of the issue. When we, as a cabinet, face difficult decisions, we typically reboot by eliminating all but one variable.....What is in the best interest of the institution? We think that the unanimity of opinion across this community speaks for itself. We heartily recommend that the Council support the resolution before you today.....in the best interest of the institution and our students, now and into the future.