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Dear Colleagues—

I am delighted to announce the appointment of **Dr. Zoila Morell** as interim Associate Dean of the School of Education effective Monday, August 11, 2022. Dr. Morell is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood and Childhood Education. She holds a Ph.D. in Urban Education from the CUNY Graduate Center, an MSW from Fordham University, and an educational leadership certification from Columbia University. She is the recipient of a number of awards and honors, including the Pathways to Leadership Scholarship Award from the New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS) and the Bilingual Support Person of the Year Award from the New York State Association of Bilingual Education.

Prior to joining Lehman College, Dr. Morell served as a faculty member at Mercy College. As a consummate practitioner, she also served as a school principal, a family literacy coordinator, a school social worker, a psychiatric social worker, and the director of a Head Start center. Her many experiences in administration at multiple levels and sectors will serve Lehman well and will help enhance the ongoing work of the School of Education in addressing the needs of schools today within the context of the growing diversity of teachers and young learners as we deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition to her experiences in administration and as a practitioner, Dr. Morell served as a reviewer to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Next Generation Early Learning Standards, focusing her contributions on age-appropriate use of standards for young children who are learning English in school. She also developed a protocol for identification and instruction of emergent multilingual learners (EMLs) for NYSED. Her scholarly and professional work has included collaboration on the New York Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB) and acting in the role of reviewer for the New York Immigration Coalition and Center for Children's Initiatives related to appropriate policies for culturally and linguistically diverse young children. She also works with the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) on program development for Universal Prekindergarten.

Following her passion for our youngest learners, she is currently writing a book titled, *The Littlest New Yorkers: School Readiness in the Empire State*, focused on the conditions and early programming children need for optimal school readiness. Her work is informed by data collected across the state. In addition to the book, Dr. Morell is an active scholar in the fields of translanguaging, emergent literacy, bilingualism in early childhood, instructional planning, and bilingual early childhood education. Notably, her scholarly work has been published in journals such as the *Journal of Multilingual Education Research*, *Educational Leadership*, and *Science and Children*.

At Lehman, Dr. Morell has been active in service to uphold the mission of her department, the School of Education, and the college. She has participated in numerous committees at all levels, including her instrumental work in accreditation reporting related to the Early Childhood and Childhood Education programs, service on the College Senate Ad hoc Academic Assessment Council, and the College-wide Task Force on Institutional Effectiveness. In addition, she has collaborated with NYSED to develop the Lehman College Initiative for Multilingualism in Early Childhood (IMEC), offering topic briefs, presentations, learning modules, and podcasts relating to the instruction and programming of young multilingual children at the preschool level.

Dr. Morell will work closely with Dean Rene Parmar and will support the School of Education in its plans for the renewal and growth of existing programs, creation of new programs as appropriate, support for faculty, staff, and students, and engagement with partners that serve the Bronx community. The administrative experiences and skills that she brings will be critical to advancing our strategic priorities. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Morell to her new role and providing her with the support she needs to be successful.

Remain well and be safe.

-P

Peter O. Nwosu, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Success  
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