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Kids key for Bloomy aide



Dennis Walcott

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Whether working as a kindergarten teacher or president of the Urban League, Dennis Walcott has always focused on children, education and health issues.

Now, as the newly named deputy mayor for policy, Walcott is hoping he'll get a chance to bring those issues to the forefront.

The advocate's goal is to become a bridge-builder of sorts between the incoming Bloomberg administration and the education and health communities.

"I like challenges," said Walcott, who marked his 50th birthday this year by going skydiving for the first time.

Walcott, a one-time Board of Education member, served as president of the Urban League for 12 years.

On Friday, Mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg tapped Walcott, a married father of four, along with Marc Shaw as deputy mayor for operations and Patricia Harris as deputy mayor for administration.

"My focus is making sure more of our children are educated, can succeed and go to college so they can compete in the workforce," Walcott told the Daily News yesterday.

He will serve as the mayor's link to the Board of Education, the City University system and the city Health and Hospitals Corp.

But Walcott said it's too soon to say where the new administration will stand on such thorny issues as teacher salaries and CUNY tuition.

"That's something that has to be discussed with the mayor-elect and his labor director," Walcott said. "It's premature to talk about it at this point."

Meanwhile, Walcott is meeting with current deputy mayors and is brushing up on his knowledge of municipal government by delving into the dense language of the City Charter.

"Every job I have had is about the delivery of service to the community," Walcott said. "This is the ultimate service to the city."

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