

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

NO.: BHE 22-65

BOARD DATE: June 21, 2022

GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the May 26, 2022 recommendation of the Greenfield Community College Board of Trustees recommending Dr. Michelle K. Schutt as President of Greenfield Community College. Such appointment is effective on or about July 18, 2022, is subject to the successful and satisfactory completion of a State Police background check, and is subject to and in accordance with the attached Terms of Appointment.

VOTED: Motion adopted by BHE 6/21/2022.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 9(q) and 21

Contact: Constantia T. Papanikolaou, General Counsel

Background

The Board of Higher Education (BHE) is a coordinating board, with some governing authority, over the public higher education system. Among the BHE's governing functions are its statutory responsibilities to approve the appointment and removal of, and set the compensation for, the president of each state university and community college within the public higher education system. M.G.L. c. 15A, §§ 9(q) and 21.

In furtherance of these legislative requirements, and consistent with the BHE's responsibility to establish overall goals in order to achieve a well-coordinated, quality system of public higher education in the Commonwealth, to establish coordination between and among institutions, and to resolve conflicts of policies or operations, the BHE issued guidelines and procedures for the search, selection, appointment and removal of the chief executive officers at state universities and community colleges. M.G.L. c. 15A, §§ 9(c) and (u). [BHE Presidential Search, Selection, Appointment and Removal Guidelines \(2013\)](#). The BHE Presidential Guidelines establish minimum procedural expectations for Board of Trustees conducting presidential searches, delegate to the Commissioner the authority to act on behalf of the BHE as specified therein, and include several touchpoints between local Board of Trustee Chairs and the Commissioner to ensure that the Presidential search process is being conducted consistent with the BHE and the Commissioner's expectations.

The Greenfield Community College (GCC) Board of Trustees initiated the search process for the President of GCC in October, 2021, shortly after President Yves Salomon-Fernández announced her plans to step down and an interim president was appointed. The GCC Board of Trustees conducted the search with the assistance of search consultants at Academic Search. As required under state law and the BHE's implementing guidelines, the Commissioner appointed a voting member to the search committee, DHE Associate Commissioner for Mario Delci, who participated in the development of the position profile, the selection and interviews of semi-finalist candidates, and the search committee decisions to recommend final candidates for public interviews. (The GCC Presidential Position Profile may be accessed through the following link: [Greenfield Community College Presidential Search Profile 2021](#).)

After the semi-finalist interviews, the search committee recommended five candidates as finalists. One recommended candidate withdrew, and the following four finalists advanced to the next stage of the process and participated in GCC Board of Trustee on-campus interviews in May: Jennifer Berne, Ph.D.; Richard Hopper Ed.D.; Nicole Esposito, Ed.D., and Michelle Schutt, Ph.D. Community surveys were posted on the GCC website to enable GCC community members to provide feedback to the GCC Board in advance of the Board's determination. During that time, the BHE was extended an opportunity to interview all candidates, as required by the BHE Presidential Guidelines. The Commissioner and the Secretary of Education engaged in this procedural touchpoint and interviewed all candidates on behalf of the Board.

On March 26, 2022 the GCC Board of Trustees convened a special meeting to discuss the final candidates and after deliberation voted to unanimously recommend Dr. Schutt to the BHE for approval and appointment, subject to and in accordance with the attached Terms of Appointment. M.G.L. c. 15A, § 21.

The Commissioner has received and reviewed the GCC Board of Trustee's recommendation, along with all supporting materials, and has determined that the submittal is complete, and the search was conducted in alignment with the BHE Presidential Guidelines. Accordingly, the Commissioner is forwarding the recommendation to the BHE for consideration and formal action.

Attachments to BHE 22-64:

04a_ Cover Letter and Resume (CV)

04b_ Letter from Greenfield Chair Toledo to Commissioner Santiago

04c_ Greenfield Presidential Search Process Summary

04d_ Terms of Appointment