

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

October 22, 2019  
10:00 a.m.

Massasoit Community College  
Student Center, Student Lounge  
1 Massasoit Boulevard  
Brockton, MA 02302

**Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Board of Higher Education (BHE) was held on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 in the Student Lounge of the Student Center at Massasoit Community College (MCC) in Brockton, Massachusetts.

**The following Board Members were present:**

Chris Gabrieli, Chair  
Alex Cortez  
Nancy Hoffman  
Tom Hopcroft  
J.D. La Rock  
Paul Mattera  
Michael O'Brien  
Jim Peyser, Secretary of Education, Ex-Officio  
Fernando Reimers  
Paul Toner  
Abby Velozo  
Anna Grady, non-voting student advisor, State University segment

Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner and Secretary to the Board

**The follow Board members were absent:**

Sheila Harrity, Vice-Chair  
Kush Patel, non-voting student advisor, UMass Boston

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gabrieli called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

## II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chair Gabrieli reported that there were no requests for public participation.

## III. WELCOME

### List of Documents Used Handouts

Chair Gabrieli invited MCC President Gena Glickman to make remarks.

President Glickman welcomed the BHE and everyone in attendance to MCC. She noted several renovations on campus, such as the Student Lounge and MCC's investment in student spaces. She remarked that MCC has also started the Strategic Planning process and that MCC's Strategic Planning task force will be meeting with Commissioner Santiago and Associate Commissioner Hagan. The college has been engaged in background planning processes through collaborative meetings on campus. She also referenced the publication of a new Massasoit Factbook that has been published for the first time. She continued that it has been a very busy year that has included her becoming acclimated to a new college and state and the retirement of MCC's former Provost. The new Provost is Deanna Yameen who also serves on the DHE Campus Equity Advisory Board.

President Glickman continued, stating that MCC has acquired a new space in downtown Brockton and has submitted a proposal for two new classroom buildings for Allied Health programs, noting that this will allow MCC to share academic buildings and will allow for collaborations and programmatic partnerships regionally. She remarked that Early College programming has been moved into one division and acknowledged Early College staff and partnerships with high schools. Currently, MCC has 500 high school students taking classes at MCC with a completion rate of 87%. President Glickman introduced two Early College students to make some brief remarks. She first introduced Samuel Wong who is a participant in the Gateway to College program. Mr. Wong remarked that he is also a student senator and that he will transfer to a four-year institution next fall to earn a degree in Biochemistry with the ultimate goal of attending medical school. President Glickman then introduced Sauvanie Lorrinvil. Ms. Lorrinvil remarked that coming to MCC every day is surreal; she's both a sophomore in high school and a freshman in college. She stated that this program will help her in the future and allow her to accumulate less debt. This program is a blessing and she is proud to be in it. President Glickman thanked the students and introduced a brief video that highlights MCC.

Board member Mike O'Brien arrived at 10:17 a.m.

Chair Gabrieli thanked President Glickman.

#### **IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Chair Gabrieli brought forth a motion to accept the minutes from the June 18, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved by all Board members present.

#### **V. REMARKS AND REPORTS**

##### **A. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

###### *List of Documents Used*

Presentation on Commissioner's Annual Review

Chair Gabrieli remarked that he was glad to hear from Early College students, especially in the context of the equity lens. He had the opportunity to be in north central Massachusetts and acknowledged the president from that region in attendance: President James Vander Hooven from Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC). Early College is now a large-scale growing effort. He remarked that he recently discovered the student BHE member is an Early College high school student. He asked student member Velozo to talk about her experience as an Early College student.

Student member Velozo remarked that she is a full time Early College student at MWCC in her second year; she was just turning 16 when she started and is now 17. She is also the student government president and the Open Educational Resources (OER) representative. She remarked it has been a great opportunity and experience.

Chair Gabrieli continued his remarks by referencing the Commissioner's review and remarked that it is actually a Department review developed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Commissioner. It serves as partly a review and partly a statement of where we stand strategically. The equity lens serves as the key theme and overarching priority. He remarked that the next year will be crucial for us and our progress will have an impact greater than in Massachusetts; FY19 had exciting developments but FY20 will be the defining year for the direction of Massachusetts public higher education. He remarked the Board is eager to continue the strong partnership with the Department on this ambitious agenda. Of particular importance will be forming an evidence-based strategy that, executed soundly, can lead to significant advancements for students. He referenced Early College programs as an evidence-based program. Similarly, the Board wants to ensure that it fully leverages the resources it has, collaborates to pursue additional resources needed for success, and engages outside stakeholders, including philanthropy, business, and civic and community leaders. He remarked that it is crucial to draw everyone in and that he sees this happening already on the campuses. In the spirit of making the equity lens the Board's priority, the Commissioner's evaluation is centered on the agenda, and while the Board has other business, this is its priority.

Board member Reimers stepped out at 10:28.

## **B. COMMISSIONER'S REMARKS**

Commissioner Santiago began his remarks by recognizing the presidents in attendance today: John Cox from Cape Cod Community College, President Glickman, President Vander Hooven, Patricia Gentile from North Shore Community College, Javier Cevallos from Framingham State University, and David Nelson from Mass College of Art and Design. He additionally acknowledged Tom Sannicandro and Vincent Pedone from the segmental Executive Offices and Rich Doherty from AICUM.

He then reported on actions taken over the summer using his summer delegation of authority and in consultation with Chair Gabrieli and other BHE members. First, under the business of the Academic Affairs Committee, there were two associate degree programs approved: an Associate in Applied Science in Funeral Services at North Shore Community College, which is the second funeral service degrees offered at the community colleges since the closure of Mount Ida College in 2018, and an Associate in Science in the Science of Earth and Environmental program at Greenfield Community College.

Next, there were two approvals under the business of the Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee. First, he approved the implementation of the leave accrual provisions of FAAP 18-20 as it applies to non-unit professional staff at the DHE, which brings the DHE in compliance with provisions that apply to all non-unit professionals within the system. He also approved guidelines for the implementation of the recent National Science Foundation Robert F. Noyes *MassTeach* program.

Finally, the Commissioner approved Touch Point III, in consultation with Chair Gabrieli, of Bunker Hill Community College's Strategic Plan and forwarded it to Secretary Peyser. He noted the final plan responded appropriately and completely to the questions raised by the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) during Touch Point II.

He remarked that since the BHE last met in June, it has been a very busy time for the DHE. Considerable time has been dedicated to socializing the Equity Agenda to their many stakeholders. At the Chair's request, the Commissioner remarked he will be reporting on progress made towards the Equity Agenda at each BHE meeting this year. He remarked that on the agenda for today's meeting is a discussion on the pillars of student success and the use of state financial aid to support the Equity Agenda. He also reported on several crucial meetings supporting this work over the last few months, including convening the thirty-plus members of the statewide Equity Advisory Committee in September at MassArt.

On October 4, Worcester State University hosted over 500 attendees as part of the Pursuit of Excellence – Latinx Students in Massachusetts K-16 Education conference. On October 9-10, representatives from the Lumina Foundation came to Massachusetts to meet with higher education stakeholders, including institutions, presidents, leaders of the non-profit and business sector, the Governor, and legislative leaders to learn about the Commonwealth's approach to equity and to determine if Massachusetts should be designated a Talent, Innovation, and Equity

(TIE) state and therefore receive financial support. The Commissioner remarked that he is appreciative of the participation of BHE members during the site visit. Finally, DHE staff have been presenting at a number of conferences sponsored by SHEEO and the Lumina Foundation, including Pat Marshall, Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Allison Little, Christine Williams, and Tom Simard.

**C. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION’S REMARKS**

Secretary Peyser stated that his comments would cover two topics. First, with regard to Early College, there is an education funding bill before the House, which has already passed in the Senate, that would change the funding formula for public education. One of the components of this bill adds resources for Early College and would enable us to build in an ongoing revenue stream to sustain this program and provide financial incentives for new programs to come into the field.

Second, this is STEM week which is now an annual event across the Commonwealth involving schools of all levels (early education programs, K-12, and higher education) and employers and partners who come together to highlight best practices in STEM. This year’s theme is *See Yourself in STEM* which ties into the Equity Agenda. He remarked that Massachusetts is a leader in STEM jobs, and our STEM economy is the envy of many states. He acknowledged the changing demographics of our state and the need to improve STEM for underrepresented groups and women, noting that our economy depends upon it.

**D. REPORTS FROM PRESIDENTS**

**Community College Presidents’ Report – North Shore Community College President Patricia Gentile**

List of Documents Used:

*Handout*

President Gentile thanked the BHE and remarked that it is a busy time at the 15 community colleges, and they are looking towards the future, just as the BHE and Department staff are. She remarked the community college sector was pleased to be asked by Community College Segmental Representative J.D. La Rock in his past role as CEO and President of Commonwealth Corporation to provide a letter of support for a grant proposal to the National Governors Association focused on the Commonwealth’s system of lifelong learning. Now that Massachusetts is one of six states selected as an awardee, the community colleges are also pleased to be part of the implementation team looking to better understand adult learners and their education and training needs and preferences as well as potential state financial aid streams to support the unmet financial needs of lower-income and diverse pools of potential enrollees. This initiative fits in well with the Board’s Equity Agenda and will hopefully result in expanding opportunities for matching post-secondary training and education strategies with market skill and credential demands.

President Gentile then stated that it is fortuitous that the Board's agenda includes a presentation on the 2017 Massachusetts Student Financial Aid Study. She urged the BHE to be mindful of the unique needs of the adult learner throughout the process of simplifying student financial aid policy, programs, and process and addressing equity needs. She was struck by how relevant the Financial Aid Study is to the Equity Agenda goal in the distribution of state financial aid resources, noting that the study found that the most financially needy students often bear a larger financial burden to finance their education than more advantaged students, and that aid appears to be awarded with little regard to ability to pay as families with higher incomes often receive as much or more than lower-income families. President Gentile remarked that this inequitable distribution of state financial aid resources has the biggest negative impact on the Massachusetts community college segment, which enrolls 52% of undergraduate students in public institutions of higher education and serves the largest proportion of students of color, the largest proportion of lower-income families, the highest number of first-generation students, as well as the largest number of adult learners. She remarked that when the limited amount of state resources going to the highest need student populations is combined with those students' enrollment in the least resourced sector of public higher education, it creates a losing proposition. Historically, the community college segment in Massachusetts receives the lowest per student operational support while also receiving the lowest levels and least timely distribution of capital bond funds. She remarked that she fears that the goals of the Equity Agenda will not be realized without addressing the inequitable distribution of state funding.

President Gentile noted that Northern Essex Community College President Lane Glenn recently laid out a comprehensive and fiscally conservative approach to radically improving student success rates and eliminating achievement gaps at the open-admission colleges in our state and referred to the handout from President Glenn. She stated that President Glenn's thesis is that an additional investment of \$1,561 per community college student would provide the needed resources to help turn this "lose-lose" into the "win-win" needed to achieve the Massachusetts Equity Agenda.

She concluded her remarks by encouraging the BHE to consider the following in the FY21 budget requests and future distributions: first, provide the students in the public system with the adequate level of financial aid to cut the unmet financial need they face; second, provide enhanced operational support to the least resourced institutions to adequately address the equity agenda goals; and third, ensure that higher education capital bond funding provides the needed infusion of infrastructure and equipment to support today's learning needs.

## **State University Presidents' Report**

### List of Documents Used:

*None*

Mr. Pedone stated that President Richard Lapidus of Fitchburg State University was unable to attend today's meeting and said he would present remarks that had been prepared in advance. He began his remarks by thanking Massachusetts Maritime Academy President Fran McDonald for serving as the chair of the State University Council of Presidents. He remarked that he is pleased to welcome and recognize the two new student representatives, Ms. Abby Velozo and Ms. Anna Grady.

He continued that the Commissioner recently met with campus leadership to brief them on the Equity Agenda. The state universities fully embrace this agenda; public higher education institutions are perfectly positioned to offer this support, and several of our state universities have been recognized for their work on serving students from diverse backgrounds. He referenced the several state universities who have been recognized by USC's Race and Equity Center for serving African American Students, including MCLA, Salem State University, Fitchburg State University, and Bridgewater State University.

Mr. Pedone continued his remarks by referencing the previously mentioned conference at Worcester State University for Latinx Students and thanked Chair Gabrieli and Commissioner Santiago for presenting and addressing the many barriers to these students for success.

He continued by stating that state universities are good stewards of public resources. They offer a high-quality postsecondary education at a low cost, and our Massachusetts workforce is the most educated in the nation. He referenced the financial aid redesign and urged the BHE to consider a bold investment in the financial aid line item. State financial aid once covered much of the cost of attendance at our public institutions and now it covers just a fraction. Financial aid is a crucial element to the Equity Agenda, and it only makes sense to continue to protect this investment. He thanked the BHE in advance for the budget request in support of financial aid. He additionally thanked Chair Gabrieli for partnering with the state universities to advocate for more financial aid support, referencing the MASSGrant Plus program. This program has resonated with the legislature as they appear to be poised to offer a supplemental budget for more financial aid support. He concluded his remarks by stating that the state universities are transformative and committed to excellence and improving quality of life for students and graduates. He thanked Commissioner Santiago and his team for their good work and ongoing partnership.

Board member Reimers returned at 11:00

Chair Gabrieli thanked the Presidents for their enthusiasm and support.

## **E. REPORT FROM STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### List of Documents Used:

None

Student member Velozo reported the Student Advisory Council (SAC) had their first meeting on October 4. Assistant Commissioner Sarah Mealey had a conversation with SAC members updating them on the Equity Agenda and the Performance Measurement Reporting System (PMRS), and Director Bob Awkward spoke about efforts related to Open Educational Resources (OER). She remarked SAC is proud of how far the OER work has progressed and that it looks forward to continuing to work on this in the future.

Northern Essex Community College had a forum with the legislature, organized by students, to promote OER, and UMass Amherst will be doing the same. She remarked that students are highly engaged on this matter and referenced a student-led social media campaign about how much students are spending on books. She additionally referenced campus climate surveys and their importance to student success and retention as well as internships as topics of importance to SAC. She concluded her remarks by reporting that SAC elected a new executive board and tomorrow is community college advocacy day.

Chair Gabrieli thanked student member Velozo for her remarks and participation.

## **VI. MOTIONS**

### List of Documents Used

AAC 20-03 through 20-07

FAAP 20-03 through 20-08

BHE 20-01

### **A. Academic Affairs Committee**

Chair Gabrieli turned the meeting over to AAC Chair Nancy Hoffman. Chair Hoffman reported that the AAC met last week and was given an overview of the major projects in Academic Affairs and Student Success. This included a summary on efforts related to:

- Advancing the Equity Agenda
- Transitioning to the new program approval process for public institutions
- Transforming developmental education
- Changes to the Police Career Incentive Pay Program

The Committee also learned more about efforts to increase access to OER and considered three new program approvals.

Chair Hoffman asked for a motion of approval for AAC 20-03: Receipt of the Commissioner's Open Educational Resources Working Group Final Report & Recommendations. On a motion



duly made and seconded, AAC 20-03 was approved unanimously by all board members present, without discussion.

**AAC 20-03      RECEIPT OF THE COMMISSIONER’S OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS**

**MOVED** The Board of Higher Education receives the final report and recommendations of the Commissioner’s Open Educational Resources Working Group.

The Board thanks the members of the Working Group, including co-chairs Marilyn Billings of the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Susan Tashjian of Northern Essex Community College, and the DHE lead staff Robert Awkward, PhD. For their work. The Working Group’s findings and recommendations provide a wealth of information about open educational resources issues, challenges and practices.

The Board directs the Commissioner to continue work with key stakeholders, including faculty, staff, administration, students, legislators and the leadership at our institutions of public higher education to implement the short-term recommendations in the report. Further, the Board asks the Commissioner to conduct additional research, coordination, and due diligence on the mid-term and long-term recommendations in the report and to develop a plan of actionable items for Board consideration, as he may deem appropriate. The Board further directs the Commissioner or his/her designee to periodically report back to the Board of the Department’s progress in this regard.

**Authority:** M.G.L. c. 15A, §9(c) and (u)

**Contact:** Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

Robert J. Awkward, Ph.D., Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment

Chair Hoffman then asked for a motion for approval on AAC 20-07: Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Motions AAC 20-04 through AAC 20-06 on a consent agenda. On a motion duly made and seconded, AAC 20-07 was approved unanimously by all board members present, without discussion.

**AAC 20-07      CONSENT AGENDA AAC 20-04 THROUGH ACC 20-06**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education approves the following motions on a consent agenda:

- AAC 20-04     Greenfield Community College  
Associate in Science in Adventure Education
- AAC 20-05     University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Bachelor of Science in Managerial Economics
- AAC 20-06     University of Massachusetts Dartmouth  
Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design

**Authority:**     Article III, Section 6, By-Laws

**Contact:**     Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D, Sr. Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning & Public Program Approval

**B. Strategic Planning Committee**

Chair Gabrieli turned the meeting over to SPC Chair Fernando Reimers who reported that the Committee met last week and while there were no votes on the agenda, the Committee engaged in a productive discussion regarding the campus strategic planning process and the role of the BHE.

**C. Fiscal Affairs and Administrative Policy**

Chair Gabrieli turned the meeting over to FAAP Chair Tom Hopcroft who reported that the FAAP committee met last week and received a presentation from Ed Adelman from MSCBA and are bringing forward four building projects for the Board’s approval. FAAP also considered a motion to name a building at Framingham State University.

Chair Hopcroft then asked for a motion for approval of FAAP 20-07: Approval of Fiscal and Administrative Policy Committee Motions FAAP 20-03 through FAAP 20-06 on a consent agenda. On a motion duly made and seconded, FAAP 20-07 was approved unanimously by all board members present, without discussion.

**FAAP 20-07     CONSENT AGENDA FAAP 20-03 THROUGH FAAP 20-06**

**MOVED**     The Board of Higher Education approves the following motions on a consent agenda:

- FAAP 20-03     Approval of Massachusetts State College Building Authority Learning and Resources Center Bunker Hill Community College
- FAAP 20-04     Approval of Massachusetts State College Building Authority Science and Engineering Center Cape Cod Community College
- FAAP 20-05     Approval of Massachusetts State College Building Authority Commons Dining Hall Roof Replacement Salem State University

FAAP 20-06 Approval of Massachusetts State College Building Authority  
Refunding Revenue Bonds

**Authority:** Article III, Section 6, By-Laws

**Contact:** Thomas J. Simard, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance

Chair Hopcroft then asked for a motion for approval of FAAP 20-08: Approval of Framingham State University's Building Naming in Honor of Mary Miles Bibb. He remarked that in his letter to the DHE, President Cevallos briefly described the extraordinary contributions of Mary Miles Bibb, particularly her staunch advocacy for abolition with her husband, a fugitive slave; her establishment of an abolition newspaper in Canada; and her position as the host of the final stop of the Underground Railroad in Canada. Student leaders at Framingham State University extensively researched the life and work of Mary Miles Bibb and led a student petition to support the naming of North Hall in her honor. Although this particular building naming is not tied to a specific monetary threshold, the institution references prospects of future fundraising opportunities for naming rights within sections of the building, as well as for other unnamed buildings at the university. It also aligns with the Board's Equity Agenda.

On a motion duly made and seconded, FAAP 20-08 was approved unanimously by all board members present, without discussion.

**FAAP 20-08 NAMING OF FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY'S NORTH HALL IN  
HONOR OF MARY MILES BIBB**

**MOVED** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the request of the Framingham State University Board of Trustees to name the college's North Hall in honor of Mary Miles Bibb.

**Authority:** Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(m)

**Contact:** Thomas J. Simard, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance

**D. Board of Higher Education**

Chair Gabrieli introduced the next motion, BHE 20-01: Commissioner's FY2019 Performance Evaluation. He provided highlights of the Commissioner's Review. The overall assessment remains consistently positive and noted the Commissioner's skills and commitment to working collaboratively with the campuses. He highlighted the Commissioner's key accomplishments, including building a broad consensus around the equity lens, a strong response to the Mount Ida closure, the rollout of the PMRS, making progress on ongoing initiatives, and continued management of compliance and oversight responsibilities. He remarked that PMRS is a very tangible link to the Equity Agenda. Chair Gabrieli concluded by noting key areas of focus in the year ahead related to pursuing the Equity Agenda.

On a motion duly made and seconded, BHE 20-01 was approved unanimously by all board members present without discussion.

**BHE 19-01      COMMISSIONER’S FY2019 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**MOVED**      The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the attached Commissioner’s FY2019 Performance Evaluation, as prepared by members of the Executive Committee. Further, that the Board approves a two percent salary increase for the Commissioner, effective July 7, 2019, which is the start of the first full pay period of the fiscal year.

**Authority:**      Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 6

**Contact:**      Constantia T. Papanikolaou, Chief Legal Counsel

**VII. PRESENTATIONS**

**Advancing the Equity Agenda through Financial Aid Redesign**

List of Documents Used

Advancing the Equity Agenda through Financial Aid Redesign and Beyond Presentation

Chair Gabrieli remarked there is no motion for the next presentation, but it serves to frame the discussion of the ongoing financial aid redesign, which aligns with the Equity Agenda.

Commissioner Santiago invited Senior Associate Commissioner Jonathan Keller, Senior Deputy Commissioner Clantha McCurdy, and MassArt President David Nelson to come forward for the presentation. He began his remarks by highlighting conversations he has been having with higher education stakeholders and that the Equity Agenda has resonated with those stakeholders. This resonance is no coincidence because this issue is timely. He referenced a report last week issued by American Community Survey which showed that inequality has reached its highest point in 50 years. The Commissioner stated that his colleagues will be providing the data, but we know that there are important pillars for student success: affordability, student supports, campus climate, and policy innovations.

The Commissioner continued that direct costs of instruction, including tuition and fees, and books (which OER addresses), are rising. Additionally, indirect costs such as housing, childcare, and food are rising as well. The number of students with unmet need is increasing and the total amount of unmet need is rising too. The amount of unmet need has risen from \$27 million to \$104 million in the last 10 years, and the biggest disparities are based on race and ethnicity, not socioeconomic status. He remarked that, if all the Board does is reduce unmet need, it will not meet its equity goals because the situation is more complex. Redesigning financial aid as a stand-alone approach is also not going to get things to where they need to be. Expected family contributions are, on average, higher for white families than for students of color in the community college sector, and these students enroll predominately part time. They typically

cannot afford to enroll full time, and since one of the biggest predictors of success is whether a student attends full time or part time, these students are further disadvantaged. He remarked that this is why it is so crucial to look at the data from different perspectives.

Commissioner Santiago turned the presentation over to Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy. She began by stating there are two different views of this data. First, the data shows direct costs which is what students are billed, including tuition, fees, books, and supplies; but the data also shows total cost of attendance, including those same direct costs as well as room and board and other basic needs.

She continued the presentation with an update on the financial aid redesign, which was presented to the Board the previous year. Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy remarked that the Department's work on vetting these reforms with the financial aid community has been extensive and includes the statewide Financial Aid Advisory Committee and the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) summer workshops. The Department's efforts are focused on simplifying the process. Staff are working to acquire a software system that will allow them to reach students in different ways and better collaborate with partners to reach students at various points throughout their education. She continued that where appropriate, the Department is looking at combining programs that serve similar students for the purpose of simplification and greater effectiveness, citing workforce programs as an example. The Department is further targeting specific resources to pilot programs like MASSGrant Plus, which is essential for improving likelihood of completion.

Senior Associate Commissioner Keller continued the presentation by showing data on the average direct and total costs over time by segment. The data show increases for both points across all three segments. He continued that, considering the amount of unmet need over time, the numbers of students with unmet need continues to grow and is most stark for community colleges. With that in mind, he showed the total scope of unmet need in direct costs; this amount has grown over time from \$26 million in FY09 to \$104 million in FY18. The scope of unmet need in *total* cost of attendance goes up to over \$1 billion.

Secretary Peyser asked how total costs are calculated. Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy responded that colleges are required to report on a total cost of attendance for each student for both dependent and independent students for federal financial aid calculations. Secretary Peyser requested clarification that it is an estimate based on housing costs, tuition and fees, books, and other basic needs. Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy confirmed that this was accurate.

Board member Toner asked what is driving up these costs, considering that inflation and wages have been flat. Board member Cortez also stated that he applauds this report, but transparency is important and asked for the rationale behind the stewardship of public dollars that is going behind these ballooning costs, and what is it that is driving up these costs. Chair Gabrieli responded the obvious target here is unmet need in relation to direct costs. However, just channeling more money to address the cost is not always the best strategy; the Board needs to

explore what policy combination will be the best at addressing the direct costs without leading to an inadvertent inflation that will compound over time.

Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy responded that tuition and fees, as well as cost for room and board, increase every year. DHE staff suggested further answering Board member Toner's question at the December meeting where the Board budget will be presented. Senior Deputy Commissioner McCurdy continued the presentation and said the financial aid line item received a \$7 million increase in FY19 in order to implement the MASSGrant Plus program for community colleges. The Department received funding for a continuation of MASSGrant Plus again for FY20, and the proposal is that MASSGrant Plus be expanded to all four-year public university students. She remarked that the Department knows what would be required in the projections to cover the cost of the expansion, and staff will include this in the FY21 budget proposal. The Board has expressed interest in addressing unmet need over the last two decades, and now it will be doing so in the context of the Equity Agenda.

Senior Associate Commissioner Keller continued the presentation by presenting data showing the distribution of students by expected family contribution (EFC) by segment and also by race/ethnicity. The greatest distribution of wealthy, white students is at UMass, while Latinx and African American students with low EFCs are clustered at community colleges. He continued by showing what percentage of students have some unmet need and what percentage of their cost was unmet for both direct and total costs. Across EFC ranges, students of color and white students are represented at similar levels when looking at students with unmet need. He continued with data on students with unmet need distributed by EFC range, which showed that students of color with unmet need are more likely to be found in the lower EFC ranges than white students. Students of color with unmet need are disproportionately enrolled in community colleges compared to white students. Further, white students are more likely to be full-time and students of color are more likely to enroll part time, noting that most traditional financial aid focuses on full time students.

Secretary Peyser stepped out at 12:06 p.m.

Senior Associate Commissioner Keller continued the presentation with data on degree attainment by race/ethnicity and unmet need status. The data shows that white students with no unmet need are the most likely to graduate, but also white students with unmet need are more likely to graduate than African American or Latinx students with met need. This suggests that more needs to be done than just addressing affordability and focus should be on the other pillars of student success.

Commissioner Santiago then introduced MassArt President David Nelson and remarked that the research suggests a welcoming campus and support services make a huge difference. He stated that he is aware of the ongoing work at MassArt and asked President Nelson to speak to the institutional transformation, and the need to move away from the concept of college-ready students to one of student-ready colleges.

President Nelson thanked the Commissioner for taking up this issue, which he called the defining issue of the time. He remarked that in June, the Board approved MassArt's Strategic Plan, which identifies the importance of equity and the student-ready campus concept that intentionally subverts the college-ready student idea. He remarked that a middle school mother asked about her child's middle school as a place where students can bring their culture with them. Although MassArt did not frame the question that way, it is a terrific way to frame it: is the campus a place where students can bring their culture with them? He remarked that MassArt has not yet arrived at that, but the institution has undertaken a few efforts and he went on to list several examples.

First, institutions should address issues of bias as quickly as possible. MassArt has set out to conduct training on anti-bias and has also conducted faculty and staff training on justice and equity issues, which have been difficult but productive. He reported that the entire MassArt cabinet participated in Undoing Racism workshops offered by the Colleges of the Fenway consortium. MassArt has also done faculty labs, and 30 faculty members participated in the first round. He continued with several more examples including exploring how syllabi might be adjusted so that students can bring their culture with them; inclusive facilitation and conflict resolution; the expansion of the Compass program for high-need and underrepresented students from a one year to a four year program; and a new office called Office of Justice, Equity, and Transformation (JEDI). He noted that the creation of JEDI came from the campus community and is not a compliance office; compliance is necessary but not sufficient.

Secretary Peyser returned at 12:17 p.m.

President Nelson remarked that faculty are seeking help for this; the curriculum is very Eurocentric, and these changes are not just for equity purposes but lead to better education for all. He referenced financial aid and remarked that all of these efforts cost money; the fastest way to save money is for students to graduate in four years, not six or seven.

Board member Hoffman referenced Bunker Hill Community College's Center for Equity and Cultural Wealth and asked if there is the possibility of partnering with institutions who are invested in making necessary changes to advance the Equity Agenda. President Nelson responded that the campuses are collaborating, connecting, and supporting each other. Board member Mattera asked about faculty cooperation. President Nelson responded that while staff immediately responded, faculty responded more slowly but the positive response is growing. He remarked that participation in any of the trainings is not necessarily mandatory, but peer pressure has been helpful with increasing participation. An entire department went to a white fragility conference at Boston College on their own, and another department worked over the summer to reshape their curriculum. Again, this was voluntary, and these actions confirm there is a cultural shift happening on campus.

Board member LaRock thanked President Nelson for his input and the Commissioner and staff for the conversation on unmet need. He remarked that unmet need exists in all corners of public higher education, but in looking at the various data points, growth in the population of students

with unmet need is at the community colleges, and community colleges have the greatest proportion of students with unmet need. He wondered how these data insights can be turned into policy initiatives.

The Commissioner responded that he believes there are some policies the Board can promote that are direct interventions to the most at-risk students and cited Early College as an example. Massachusetts is unique in that this work is being done at the system level. The Campus Equity Advisory Board recently convened at MassArt, and there is a lot of collaboration and learning. He remarked that this is a long game, but that some extraordinary progress has been made since the Board approved the vision statement in December.

Board member La Rock remarked that demographic projections show that the number traditional age students will continue to decline, which also creates an incentive to serve adult learners. Commissioner Santiago responded that, in considering the three segments, there is a concentration of students of color at our community colleges, and the average age of a community college student is 28; in addition, most are part time. He continued that he does not think the Board has fully explored those populations, and the best mechanisms to help those students succeed are not yet known. He remarked that getting to adult learners, especially concerning labor market concerns like automation, is important.

Chair Gabrieli asked about the next steps as the Board digs into these pillars and the interactions between these pillars. He remarked that he hopes the Department will provide some specifics at the December Board meeting for the FY21 budget recommendations.

Commissioner Santiago continued the presentation on student supports and what services that might entail. He continued with an example, the City University of New York ASAP program, which is an intense program in terms of support services. It has a significant price tag, but it is important to add it to the discussion. He continued by highlighting policy innovations which includes a revision of policies that hinder student success and the identification of promising, innovative practices that can be replicated and scaled. He referenced Early College programs as an example. He concluded the presentation with a summary of the next steps. Department staff will present some recommendations in December to help inform the budget process, although that does not mean the work stops with the budget; many of these matters involve much more than the budget.

## **VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

### List of Documents Used

*Draft Motion on AP exams*

*"Advance Placement Inconsistency is Troubling" Commonwealth Magazine July 2019 article*

Chair Gabrieli recognized Board member Toner who stated that would like to introduce a motion that instructs the Department to take a closer look at how Advanced Placement (AP)



credit is accepted within the public higher education system. He specifically asked that staff and perhaps the AAC review and report back to the Board on what criteria are being used by our public community colleges, state universities, and UMass to determine 1) what Advanced Placement (AP) courses are accepted for college credit; 2) whether students receive college credit for AP exam qualifying scores of 3, 4, or 5; 3) whether the credit is for a specific major or general credit; and 4) demographic data for students who receive college credit for achieving a qualifying score on AP exams. He remarked that he is not asking for a uniform policy on this, but he does think it is an important consideration given the Equity Agenda. He referred to the *Commonwealth Magazine* article as context and remarked that this is an opportunity to look at what AP courses mean in Massachusetts and create streamlined policies. Students may or may not receive credit for their AP courses and it is important to be more transparent about this for students.

Commissioner Santiago remarked that Deputy Commissioner Marshall has been working on this with the campuses, and the Department can provide the Board with the information requested. Board member Toner responded that the legislature is supportive of increasing funding for AP courses.

Secretary Peyser responded that he thought Massachusetts already had a policy requiring each campus to post on their website what their AP policies are, so there already is transparency. He noted that there are good arguments for not having a uniform policy across the state, but also there is a good argument for campuses to have a rationale for what their policy is.

Board member Reimers responded that he supports the motion, but there are so many practices that on the surface shape the day to day life of students but could end up being exclusionary. He suggested thinking of AP classes as one example of a larger class of issues that affect the Equity Agenda. Board member Cortez suggested reviewing different classes to see if there are emerging trends in K-12 that higher education has not yet caught up to in order to determine if there are trends in AP level work that are not being valued on campuses.

## **BHE 20-02 AP CREDIT FLOOR MOTION**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby instructs the Commissioner and Department of Higher Education staff to work with the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) to review and report back to the Board of Higher Education on what criteria are being used by our public community colleges, state universities and the University of Massachusetts system to determine 1) what Advanced Placement (AP) courses are accepted for college credit; 2) whether students receive college credit for an AP examination qualifying scores of 3, 4 or 5; 3) whether the credit is for a specific major or general credit; and 4) data on student demographics for students who receive college credit for achieving a qualifying score on an AP examination.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chair Gabrieli adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carlos E. Santiago  
Commissioner of the Department and  
Secretary to the Board