



## Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

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Richard M. Freeland, *Commissioner*  
Chris Gabrieli, *Chairman*  
*Massachusetts Board of Higher Education*

# Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Names Commissioner Finalists

*Three Candidates to be interviewed in Boston May 15<sup>th</sup>*

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Wednesday, May 6, 2015 – BOSTON – A search committee of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education today named three finalist candidates to lead the state's public colleges and universities as Commissioner of Higher Education.

The finalists are:

**John O'Donnell, President**  
Massachusetts Bay Community College

**Carlos Santiago, Sr. Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs**  
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

**Bill Walczak, Founder and Past President**  
Codman Square Health Center

The candidates' resumes, bios, and head shots can be accessed [here](#).

"These candidates bring a broad cross-section of leadership experience and talent to the table," said Chris Gabrieli, Chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE). "I am delighted that the Board will have to work hard to choose among excellent finalists, all of whom have the knowledge and skills needed to build upon the good work of our current Commissioner, Richard M. Freeland, and the twenty-nine campuses. I thank the search committee, led by BHE member Dani Monroe, for its excellent service."

“With more than half of all Massachusetts high school graduates now choosing community colleges, state universities or the University of Massachusetts for their post-secondary education, the Commissioner plays an especially critical role in developing our state’s future citizenry and workforce,” said Monroe. “We believe that each of these individuals would, if chosen by the Board, help advance the educational mission of the Commonwealth.”

The selection process will continue as follows:

**Friday, May 15, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

Candidates interviewed by the Board of Higher Education  
*(Public Session)*  
Omni Parker House Hotel  
Alcott Room  
60 School Street, Boston, MA 02108

**Wednesday, May 20, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

Special Board of Higher Education meeting to select a new Commissioner  
*(Public Session)*  
One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108  
Ashburton Café Conference Room (Lower Level)

The search for a new Commissioner of Higher Education began last October, when Freeland informed the Board of his plans to step down after serving six years as Commissioner. The BHE named an ad hoc [search committee](#) comprised of board members, leaders of both public and independent institutions, students and external stakeholders to conduct a search with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm that developed a pool of prospective candidates. Beginning in December 2014 the committee held a series of seven meetings to develop a [position profile](#) and consider possible finalists.

The Board intends for the new Commissioner to assume responsibilities on or before July 1, 2015. The Board’s vote on May 20<sup>th</sup> is subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education, James Peyser.

For ongoing information on the Commissioner’s search, please visit <http://www.mass.edu/about/commsearch.asp>.

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