

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

**NO.:** BHE 15-04

**BOARD DATE:** October 21, 2014

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**CREATION OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
TO SEARCH FOR A NEW COMMISSIONER**

**MOVED:**

The Chairman of the Board of Higher Education is authorized to create an ad hoc committee for the purposes of conducting a national search for a new Commissioner. The search committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Higher Education, which has the statutory authority to appoint the Commissioner, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education. The committee shall:

1. Develop a statement of desired qualifications for the position of Commissioner that will guide the search and selection process and be shared with candidates and nomination sources.
2. Adopt a timetable for the search that will permit the appointee to begin by June 1, 2015, or as soon thereafter as is possible.
3. Conduct an active national search to attract highly qualified candidates.
4. Periodically report to the Board of Higher Education about the progress of the search.
5. Observe strict confidentiality in the conduct of the search while also adhering to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Any member of the Search Committee who breaches confidentiality may be removed from the Committee without replacement.
6. Bring forth the names of three or four finalist candidates to the Board of Higher Education, which retains the right to select and appoint the Commissioner, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education.

The membership of the committee shall be determined by the Chairman of the Board of Higher Education.

**Authority:** M.G.L. c. 15A, §6; BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

**Contact:** Constantia T. Papanikolaou, General Counsel



## Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Board of Higher Education

**FROM:** Charles F. Desmond, Chairman

**DATE:** October 21, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Ad Hoc Commissioner Search Committee: Creation and Charge

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As we are all still processing the news that Commissioner Richard Freeland has announced his intent to retire in June of 2015, I want to inform you of the beginning of the process to select a new Commissioner for the Department of Higher Education.

By BHE motion 15-04, the Board will establish a search committee to advise the BHE in executing its responsibility to appoint a new Commissioner, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education. The ad hoc committee will include representatives from each of the segments, faculty, private higher education, students, external stakeholders, and of course, Board members. The Search Committee will be guided and assisted by a professional executive search firm to be named later.

The charge to the Search Committee is as follows:

1. The Search Committee will develop a statement of desired qualifications for the position of Commissioner that will guide the search and selection process and be shared with candidates and nomination sources.
2. The Search Committee will adopt a timetable for the search that will permit the appointee to begin by June 1, 2015, or as soon thereafter as is possible.
3. The Search Committee will conduct an active national search to attract highly qualified candidates.
4. The Search Committee will periodically report to the Board of Higher Education about the progress of the search.
5. The Search Committee will observe strict confidentiality in the conduct of the search while also adhering to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Any member of the Search Committee who breaches confidentiality may be removed from the Committee without replacement.

6. The Committee will bring the names of three or four finalist candidates to the Board of Higher Education, which retains the right to select and appoint the Commissioner, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education.

At the outset of this search process, I want to thank Commissioner Freeland for his incredible hard work and dedication to the Board, Department and to all of higher education here in the Commonwealth. As we now embark on the search, the assistance of Commissioner Freeland and his staff will be invaluable in conducting a process that will lead to the identification of the highest qualified candidates by the Search Committee.

The Search Committee will convene for its first meeting within the next several weeks.