Richard M. Freeland, Commissioner of Higher Education
Charles Desmond, Chairman, MA Board of Higher Education
February, 2011
The Vision Project

A New Agenda for Public Higher Ed

- Where We Are **Today**
- Where We **Need to Be**
21% enrollment increase in last decade

New enrollment highs across all segments: over 40,000 undergraduates in MA state universities

Enrollment not as dramatic as last year’s, but still consistent and impressive
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Good News at a Glance…

- **Strong Patrick-Murray Administration Support:**
  - $2B bond bill for campus building projects
  - Tight FY12 budget maintains student scholarships, dual enrollment, supports Vision Project goals
Fierce Economic Competition Among States, Nations
- Investment, jobs, talent

Public Higher Education Plays Critical Role, but...
- Public system complex, decentralized
- History of uneven state $ support
- Private colleges & universities often perceived as “better”
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Urgent Need to Build Support for MA Public Higher Ed

- Innovation Economy
  - Demands educated workforce

- Stagnant Population Growth

- Private College “Brain Drain”
  - Private college graduates often go elsewhere; public college graduates stay

- National Context
  - Inter-state competition will intensify
Sharing The Vision

National K12 Leadership

- **Major Investment in K-12 Ed Reform**
  - Mass. investment in K-12 sustained since 1993
  - Business community has offered leadership, support
  - Mass. ranks #1 in NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) scores
Historically, fewer $ for Public Higher Ed

- State support per FTE ranks in middle of pack (25th among 50 states, FY ’01-‘09)
- Biz leadership increasingly engaged, but...
- Statewide public support still questionable
We Must Change Public Perceptions

- *Build appreciation* of the system’s value, economic impact
- *Increase awareness* that Massachusetts’ “educational leader” mantle depends on strong public system
- *Foster sense of urgency* about public higher ed

We Must Be More Aspirational and Accountable

- To justify increased support, we need *clear goals*, system-wide performance measurements, annual progress reports
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The Strategy

- The **Vision Project** will:
  - Articulate the most important contributions of public higher education to the Commonwealth
  - Engage all public campuses in achieving these contributions
  - Hold public higher education accountable for a high level of achievement in this work
  - Generate greater appreciation of and support for public higher education

**In sum,** the Vision Project will demonstrate that **public higher education can act in a **unified and focused way** to ensure the future well-being of the Commonwealth and that we are ready to hold ourselves **accountable** for results to the people of the state.
Our Vision: A Bid for National Leadership

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We will produce the best-educated citizenry and workforce in the nation.

We will be a national leader in research that drives economic development.

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Key Outcomes: Measuring Achievement

- **National Leadership in Education**
  - College-going rates of high school graduates
  - Graduation and student success rates
  - Alignment of degree production with key areas of workforce need
  - Academic achievements on campus-level and national assessments of learning
  - Comparable learning outcomes among different ethnic/racial, economic and gender groups

- **National Leadership in Research**
  - Research activity related to economic development
  - Economic activity derived from research
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Working Together

- 29 Campuses Unified Behind Effort
  - Strong support from community colleges, state universities, UMass system
  - Board of Higher Education endorsement May 2010
  - Vision Project “launch” conference September 30
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The Road Ahead

- **Work of DHE Organized Around Advancing Vision Project**
  - Project teams for each educational goal
  - Participation by campus personnel and non-academic stakeholders
  - Research supports policy, program intervention
  - Metrics to measure progress

- **Pursuit of Outside Funding to Support Efforts**
  - The Boston Foundation
  - The Nellie Mae Foundation
  - The Davis Educational Foundation
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Critical Need for Faculty Engagement

- **Governance bodies:** asked to familiarize themselves with Vision Project goals on each campus
- **Provide feedback** through Presidents’ offices by **March 15**
- Be cognizant of **Vision Project goals** in work with students
- **Communicate** your concerns, hopes to me at: commissioner.freeland@bhe.mass.edu
...Massachusetts will have the system of public higher education that its citizens demand.