

**Massachusetts Board of Higher Education
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes**

The October 16, 2018 meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was held in the 14th Floor Conference Room, One Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

SPC Members Present: Fernando Reimers, J.D. La Rock; Paul Toner; Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner

Other BHE Members Present: Secretary of Education James Peyser; Paul Mattera

Department Staff Present: Winifred Hagan; Patricia Marshall; Elena Quiroz-Livanis; Dena Papanikolaou; Tom Simard; Kate Flanagan Copans

Other Guests: Ramon Torrechila, Diane Prusank, Susan Leggett: Westfield State University; Javier Cevallos: Framingham State University; David Podell, Lynn Hunter, Courtney Jackson: Massachusetts Bay Community College; Luis Pedraja, Lillian Ortiz, Nancy Schoenfeld: Quinsigamond Community College; Jake Oliveira; Gretchen Manning

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Fernando Reimers called the meeting to order at 12:26 p.m. He invited those in attendance to introduce themselves.

II. MINUTES

Chair Reimers brought forth a motion to accept the minutes of the June 12, 2018 SPC meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by all SPC members present.

III. REMARKS AND REPORTS

A. Committee Chair's Remarks

Chair Reimers offered remarks, and emphasized the critical importance of examining the purposes of our institutions and whom they serve, citing Governor Baker's recent remarks that this divisive time is reminiscent of the Civil War. The Chair also cited Harvard President Lawrence Bacow's recent remarks that for the first time in American history, people are questioning the purpose of the American University and we need to pay attention. He closed by

noting that we (in higher education) are holding each other to high standards and are charged to do more with less.

B. Commissioner's Remarks

Commissioner Santiago briefly stated that today the SPC will see three plans at different stages of development that are representing three different institutions. The plans presented reflect differences in approaches and differences in how the campuses support the work driving towards their purpose.

IV. Touch Point II Campus Discussion

A. Westfield State University

Westfield State University (WSU) President Torrechila thanked Commissioner Santiago, Chair Reimers and the members of the SPC. He provided an overview of the strategic planning process, noting that it was an opportunity to align university priorities with statewide priorities. He stressed the importance of collaboration throughout the process. He stated that WSU has utilized data to inform the plan. WSU conducted an environmental scan, had focus groups and used survey data to identify general strategic concepts with the campus community. The goals, priorities and strategies were developed by the campus community, while implementation and measures of success were driven and developed by the cabinet. The plan was reported to provide the campus with an opportunity to review and revise their mission to ensure alignment with current WSU values.

President Torrechila then turned the presentation over to WSU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Diane Prusank, who provided an overview of WSU's strategic goals, beginning with the first goal of a fully integrated and exceptional student experience, noting that this goal hinges on promise of partnership. She continued, stated that academic direction is multi-layered and it considers a holistic direction for students, encompassing the life cycle, and not just between the ages 18-22; rather, it is an approach that considers student experiences from preschool to the workforce. The Vice President remarked that this goal would enhance the college-going culture in Western Massachusetts, as WSU seeks a nimble and flexible set of curricular models, strong K-12 connections, and significant community college, industry and private sector engagement.

WSU's Parenzo Hall renovation project was cited as something that is hoped will reverberate across the entire campus and its culture. WSU is imagining a space in which technology is the nexus for collaboration, planning to bring technology into Parenzo through private sector and industry partnerships. Community college opportunities for co-enrollments are planned. Faculty members' interest for potential course expansion such as health program technology is included, and Parenzo as the site for the Center for Student Success and Engagement is underscored as an important component of the strategic plan. Integrating academic support with industry in this success center is further planned to increase student engagement with physical proximity and synergy expected to develop among internal partners. The WSU Experience is planned as a four-year program that partners academic affairs and student affairs, promising each student a road map from admission through graduation coupled with the

established WSU Promise program. Revisions to the common core and new graduate and certificate programs are also expected to be part of the Strategic Plan. WSU framed what will be measures of success for their goals, citing several specific metrics as examples in the interest of time.

Next, WSU Chief of Staff Dr. Susan Leggett presented an overview of strategies and initiatives derived from the metrics of the Vision Project, providing an update of WSU's Touch Point I presentation to the Commissioner. WSU plans to enroll a more diverse population of students and increase financial aid. They will be holding four "Enrollment 101" workshops to engage the whole campus community on best practices. Additionally, WSU plans to increase their enrollment profile by increasing requirements for SAT scores and admissions GPA requirements. It is intended that this will increase underrepresented minority enrollment by 4%. WSU plans to conduct campus climate surveys in Year 1 and Year 5. Chief of Staff Leggett concluded with a brief overview of WSU goals and strategies around financial resources.

In response, Chair Reimers validated WSU's process for including a lot of campus engagement. He suggested WSU could improve with respect to a specific goal that addresses completion. The Chair urged WSU not to be shy about their goals and to be more explicit and encouraged WSU that while the actions and statements are bold, the target goals are not as ambitious. He recommended the addition of explicit goals that are not just incremental improvements but that are bold and ambitious. President Torrechila agreed, and stating that he wants the campus to be bold and that he will take this back to the WSU community. Chair Reimers also suggested clearer metrics for some goals, and cited Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) as an example for WSU to reference in developing the final plan. SPC member La Rock noted that the plan provides evidence and reflects the state's priorities. He asked that specific enrollment goals be reflected in the final plan and noted that first year retention rates are on par or lag with the rest of the state, and perhaps this should also be addressed in the final plan. Chair Reimers asked if Open Educational Resources (OER) are part of the plan, suggesting the significance of OER particularly in serving non-traditional populations. Secretary Peyser remarked that Western Massachusetts is challenged from a population point of view, as there will be a large demographic shift soon. He remarked that enrollment goals are bullish for underrepresented minority students, but also related to the fact that projections are for adult learners. He noted the bulk of the WSU plan is creating a coherent and integrated 4-year experience, but Secretary Peyser underscored that there will be more adult learners, remarking that there is tension between those two things and that WSU should also include a more modular experience for adult learners in the final plan.

V. Motions

Chair Reimers invited President Pedraja from QCC and President Podell from MassBay Community College (MBCC) to the table and asked Associate Commissioner Winifred Hagan to make remarks. Associate Commissioner Hagan began her remarks by stating that during Touch Point I, President David Podell and his leadership team discussed MBCC's engagement of various subcommittees that were determining the internal needs and best directions for the institution. MBCC had reviewed the Strategic Planning Guidelines and was ready to develop the planning with external partners. Touch Point II took place in January 2018 at the SPC meeting. During the meeting members recommended that as the plan is further developed it should have a clearer focus in addition to presenting a comprehensive strategy for the years ahead. In May 2018, the Massachusetts Bay Community College Board of Trustees approved the MBCC

Strategic Plan and President Podell submitted the plan to Commissioner Santiago in June for his review and recommendation. Staff have thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by the Massachusetts Bay Community College and recommend approval of the proposed *Strategic Plan, 2017-2022: A Catalyst for Transformation*. She then invited President Podell to make remarks.

President Podell remarked that the campus embarked on this soon after he arrived in July 2016. The campus brought in Grey Associates, a strategy consulting firm that looked at program demand, and provided a treasure trove of information about program openings and closures. He remarked that their work was pivotal in the process and helped MBCC determine where best to invest resources. MBCC received a lot of feedback on process and goals, which also informed where the MBCC final plan landed. President Podell provided a copy of MBCC's goals, cited some grants received, and their partnership with Framingham State University (FSU) on science courses on-site at FSU.

Chair Reimers remarked that some of MBCC's measurable outcomes, specifically the one about achievement gaps, were modest and asked why. President Podell responded that MBCC struggled with putting something more ambitious in writing as a goal. Many issues are contingent on factors that are outside of the college and out of their control. Secretary Peyser asked: "what is the biggest leverage point to address this concern?" President Podell responded that it is unequivocally developmental math. He noted it affects the students most differentially and many career paths depend on math. He remarked that MBCC is taking multiple approaches to solve the problem. Secretary Peyser asked if this is a disproportionate problem between traditional and non-traditional students, or is it across the board? President Podell responded that it is more of a problem for traditional students, but they have different strategies for dealing with them. SPC member La Rock asked President Podell to elaborate on the current state of workforce development. President Podell responded that they need to do more, and it needs to be more robust. He cited the automotive technology program and remarked that he would like to provide similar programs in other areas. President Podell noted the challenge is closing the gap between what students know when they graduate and what they need to be successful in the workforce.

There being no further discussion, Chair Reimers called for a motion on SPC 19:02. On a motion duly made and seconded, the following motion was approved by all members in attendance.

SPC 19-03 APPROVAL OF MASSBAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the Massachusetts Community College Strategic Plan, 2017-2022: A Catalyst for Transformation, and authorizes the Commissioner to forward the same to the Secretary of Education for final approval pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 9(l) and 22(1)

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 15A, Sections 7, 9(f), 9(l), and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

Associate Commissioner Hagan began her remarks by stating that Commissioner Santiago and staff visited Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) in October 2017 for the first Touch Point. QCC's steering committee was in attendance with President Pedraja to discuss the formulating plan, including how to monitor progress throughout the course of actualizing the strategic plan. Touch Point II took place in June 2018 at the SPC meeting, during which members validated the inclusive and participatory process of the plan but asked for the final plan to include greater specificity indicating when the campus has attained its' goals. QCC's Strategic Plan was approved by the campus board on September 12, 2018 and on September 19, 2018 President Pedraja submitted the plan to Commissioner Santiago. Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by QCC at Touch Point II and Touch Point III. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed QCC Strategic Plan, 2018-2022.

Chair Reimers remarked that he liked the plan because it is very easy to understand what the campus is trying to achieve and it makes it easy to hold people accountable. Secretary Peyser remarked that the plan has very ambitious goals, and it is notable for its ambitions, citing the Pell Grant eligible enrollment figures and graduation rates. He noted that he did not get a clear sense of what the main levers were to drive that level of change. President Pedraja responded that his goal is to keep working to get to 100% student success, and QCC cannot stop trying. President Pedraja stated that he does not want to set goals too low and become complacent. He remarked that there are a variety of goals that can define success to continue to strive towards. He noted QCC can be realistic on enrollment goals with the knowledge that trends are going down, but they can maintain current enrollment levels and increase retention rates which will increase QCC graduation rates. He continued, QCC will be more targeted, using advising and creating more flexibility and guided pathways, all of which are expected to catalyze the momentum to keep students engaged through graduation. Developmental education is a barrier to graduation, and President Pedraja cited the use of more co-requisite education. He remarked that QCC continues to explore other alternatives, like developing an aggressive mentoring program and obtaining a Perkins Grant, which are expected to increase graduation rates.

Secretary Peyser asked if the ambition of the plan matches the ambition of the metrics. President Pedraja responded that ramping up existing metrics will not be the challenge, but creating new ones will, remarking that the staff is engaged and excited to move forward. Secretary Peyser remarked that the 3 years cited to get a guided pathway seems excessive and that he would like to see more of a sense of urgency about the way this business is conducted on our campuses. President Pedraja responded that he agrees, noting also that other state examples, including California and New York, have demonstrated that in order to create a guided pathway, and do it well, it takes 3 years, further explaining also that the process includes a 1-year pilot with a cohort.

There being no further discussion, Chair Reimers called for a motion on SPC 19:03. On a motion duly made and seconded, the following motion was approved by all members in attendance.

**SPC 19-03 APPROVAL OF QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the Quinsigamond Community College Strategic Plan, 2018-2022, and authorizes the Commissioner to forward the same to the Secretary of Education for final approval pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 9(l) and 22(1)

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 15A, Sections 7, 9(f), 9(l), and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

VII. ADJOURMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:46 p.m.