



Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Community College President's Report

Bill Heineman, President, North Shore Community College
Chair, Community College Council of Presidents

May 19, 2026

Good morning Chair Gabrieli, Secretary Zrike, Commissioner Ortega, and members of the Board:

Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to offer an in-person welcome to my colleague Dr. Mary Grant as she assumes her new role as chair of the Council of State University Presidents and thank you President Grant for your hospitality today. I also want to offer our gratitude to Dr. Linda Thompson who has served in the State University Chair position for the last two years. As for the community colleges, I will be continuing on as chair for another year.

During the month of May, I have the distinct privilege of celebrating students as they complete their time at North Shore Community College – this year, I'm proud to say that our college will confer about 800 degrees and certificates, a significant growth over recent years. And we'll also graduate the first group of high school seniors from the Frederick Douglass Collegiate Academy, a Commonwealth designated full four year Early College high school in partnership with Lynn Public Schools. At least 32 of those high school grads will also graduate NSCC with an Associates Degree. The other 14 community colleges are also celebrating the many accomplishments of their graduates.

And with celebration also comes transition. Today we welcome Dr. Jennifer Cournoyer as the next President of Springfield Technical Community College – as you just heard, the Board at STCC has chosen Dr. Cournoyer to lead the college after President John Cook departs at the end of June. While we will miss President Cook's leadership, we look forward to warmly welcoming Dr. Cournoyer.

Additionally, we offer our gratitude to Dr. Ellen Kennedy who will round out her tenure at Berkshire Community College at the end of June and then assume the role of Interim President at Cape Cod Community College where she'll oversee operations until a permanent president is named. We again offer our thanks to Dr. Carlhita Greene who has been serving as Acting President and who will return to her role as VP of Academic Affairs at the same time Dr. Kennedy joins 4Cs.

Even as we acknowledge this season of transition, we also look ahead to the upcoming fiscal year. While the Senate works its way through its version of the budget this week, we continue to advocate for increased SUCCESS funding. As I've noted in the past, the outcomes seen in our SUCCESS program continue to point to the value of the investment and we hope that the Senate will follow the House in allocating additional funding to this initiative.

In addition to our budget advocacy, our colleges – alongside state leaders like Assistant Secretary LePage – continue to prepare for the implementation of Workforce Pell and navigate the increasingly complicated landscape of federal grant applications.

Finally, we appreciate the continued partnership of the Department in working on the legislatively-mandated compensation study for faculty and professional staff at the community colleges. My colleagues and I remain committed to advocating for competitive pay until this issue is addressed across the system.

Thank you for your continued leadership. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.