

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

**COMMITTEE:** Strategic Planning

**NO.:** SPC 19-09

**COMMITTEE DATE:** June 11, 2019

**BOARD DATE:** June 18, 2019

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**APPROVAL OF MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN STRATEGIC PLAN**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the **Massachusetts College of Art and Design** Strategic Plan 2018-2023 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(l).

**VOTED:** Motion approved by SPC 06/11/2019; Motion adopted by the BHE 06/18/2019

**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 and Student Success

## Background

A fundamental responsibility of the BHE is to provide overall direction to the state's system of public higher education. The Board enacts this responsibility by establishing statewide goals and by regularly measuring and reporting progress toward these goals building upon the foundation of the Vision Project and Closing Gaps. Articulating statewide goals has no impact on creating greater equity in public higher education unless these goals and performance metrics are embraced by the individual colleges and universities and incorporated into their strategic plans. Massachusetts state statute therefore charges the BHE and the Secretary of Education with reviewing and approving campus strategic plans. M.G.L. c. 15A, §§9(f), 9(l) and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

### Massachusetts College of Art and Design Planning Process

Touch Point I took place on February 4, 2019 during which Commissioner Santiago and President Nelson discussed the strategic plan with the MassArt leadership team and DHE staff. The plan was already very much a work-in-progress because President Nelson saw value intentionally integrating it with his work as MassArt's new President and with the campus Board of Trustees. A steering committee has been established and over 800 comments and responses to surveys, focus groups and stakeholder meetings had been gathered, synthesized and analyzed. MassArt displayed exhibitions of the plans in progress throughout the planning process making it accessible to all. President Nelson described the process as iterative and non-linear allowing for important elements to surface and be included in the plan.

During Touch Point II on April 30, 2019 MassArt President Nelson provided an overview of the strategic planning process to the SPC, noting that the process was very inclusive of both internal and external stakeholders. He showed the MassArt Ten Year Horizon plan and highlighted the five-year priorities that emerged during the process, and which are expected to be the vehicle for reaching the ten-year goals. President Nelson told the story of each of the priorities and provided visual and graphic images for each. He underscored the significance of MassArt's Identity Initiatives, stating that these would help it be a student-ready campus, and intentionally subvert pressure for students to be college-ready, intending instead to direct pressure on to the institution to be guided in every decision by the question- *Does this make MassArt a student-ready institution?* President Nelson described how MassArt will invest in the people who are creating the future of the institution. He continued that moving forward, the campus has assembled a tactical team, an assessment team, and the steering committee is staying together and will annually assess and update the plan.

Chair Reimers remarked that many elements of this plan are very clear, particularly the use of evidence in comparing MassArt to peer institutions. He noted that 25% of MassArt students are minority and graduate at a higher percentage than other institutions have demonstrated. The Chair underscored that in making it a priority to close this gap, MassArt should emphasize that this offers great value to the state. Chair Reimers remarked that he appreciated the statement of using the arts to improve the world. He noted that the documents discuss the MassArt connection and contribution to the creative economy and suggested further explaining these and their relationships to access and equity. Commissioner Santiago and Chair Reimers commented that more details addressing MassArt's role to prioritize the BHE equity agenda would strengthen the plan. SPC member La Rock asked about the business model and how

MassArt will accomplish its' goals in a broader context in which financial models are challenged. President Nelson responded with details regarding a few of the models MassArt is considering.

Touch Point III: Initially, in January 2019 the MassArt Board of Trustees approved a draft of the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 as discussed during Touch Point I. On April 20, 2019 President Nelson submitted the plan to Commissioner Santiago and on April 22, 2019 the plan was distributed to the Strategic Planning Committee. On May 23, 2019 the final draft of the plan was submitted to Commissioner Santiago. The plan was approved by the MassArt campus board on May 31, 2019.

### **STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION**

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by the Massachusetts College of Art and Design at Touch Point II and Touch Point III. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed **Massachusetts College of Art and Design 2018-2023 Strategic Plan**