



Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Community College President's Report

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Good morning Chair Gabrieli, Secretary Tutwiler, Commissioner Ortega, and members of the Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you for the last time as Chair of the Community College Council of Presidents! The last year has passed quickly, and although I have enjoyed serving in this role, I am also happy to turn the reigns over to my colleague, Dr. Luis Pedraja, president at Quinsigamond Community College who will serve as our chair for the upcoming academic year. President Pedraja has served as president at QCC since 2017 – please join me in welcoming Luis as the incoming Chair.

In other personnel changes at the community colleges, I am pleased to welcome Dr. Jonathan Jefferson, the incoming president of Roxbury Community College. Dr. Jefferson brings more than 30 years of experience in strategic planning, academic leadership, consulting, and leadership development to the Roxbury community. Before joining RCC, Dr. Jefferson served as Chief Academic Officer and Provost at Lesley University, where he played a key role in evolving the landscape of business education and leadership. Dr. Jefferson has also served as Director of the Institute for Leadership at the US Coast Guard Academy, and Dean of the Schools of Business at Clark Atlanta University and Albany State University, where he led initiatives to elevate academic programs, advance faculty development, and enhance student success. He will officially begin his tenure as President on July 1.

Of course, as we welcome Dr. Jefferson, we also bid farewell to Jackie Jenkins-Scott who has been leading Roxbury since early 2022. Jackie served as the president of Wheelock College for 12 years and, before that, as the longtime CEO & President of the Roxbury-based Dimmock Community Health Center. A seasoned leader, Jackie graciously stepped in to lead RCC for the last two years, and I hope you'll all join me in wishing her well as she transitions into her retirement.

As we all wait for the House and Senate conference committee to prepare a final budget, we are tracking funding for, among other things, SUCCESS, STEM Starter, Early Childhood Pathway grants, expansion to financial aid, and, of course, free community college. While we still have a ways to go before we know what we'll be implementing this fall, whether that is free community college for all under MassEducate or year two of MassReconnect, we are beginning to

proactively plan so that fall can be as smooth for our students as possible. We look forward to working closely with the Department as we prepare for the start of the fall semester!

To that end, we recognize that the distribution of funds has caused some concerns on our campuses over the last fiscal year. We are pleased to have seen recent movement on a number of items and look forward to additional collaboration with the Department on this process as well.

I wind down my time as chair of the community college council of Presidents, I want to use my last minutes to again thank our tireless faculty and staff, without whom none of this work would be possible. They show up for our students day in and day out at every single one of our colleges, and we are exceptionally grateful for their commitment and dedication.

Thank you – I am happy to take any questions you might have.