

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

NO.: BHE 25-17

BOARD DATE: October 22, 2024

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 Partnership Plan 2024** 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 adopted by the BHE on 10/22/2024.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 7, 9(f), 9(l) and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3 and Article III.
Contact: Richard Riccardi, Sc.D., Deputy 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. 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 law 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).

Massachusetts College of Art and Design Planning Process

Touch Point I: On September 18, 2023, DHE staff met with President Grant and Chief of Staff Chambers. President Grant positioned the upcoming campus strategic plan as being part of the 10-year strategic plan that her predecessor had developed with a significant representation of all internal and external constituents. She indicated that this plan would be a 5-year check-in and not a repeat of the deep and extended effort that came before. President Grant underscored that values embodied by the last strategic plan survived the pandemic and all of its challenges and have re-emerged as central to the newly developing plan. DHE staff reviewed the applicable BHE guidelines for Massachusetts College of Art and Design, clarifying that BHE did not approve a ten-year plan because the statute is written for five-year plans. Staff recalled that the five-year plan previously approved by BHE was a comprehensive, robust, and elegant plan. Staff noted that making the forthcoming plan contiguous by utilizing the previous plan would likely be a valued strategy which BHE members would appreciate. Staff underscored that plans should be aligned with BHE goals and priorities, should be designed in a way that a wide range of internal and external stakeholders are included in developing the plan, and that the plans should be clearly aligned with the character and mission of the institution.

Touch Point II: Massachusetts College of Art and Design submitted the Touchpoint II draft plan on May 20, 2024. After a comprehensive DHE staff review, a Touchpoint meeting (virtual) was held on July 12, 2024 with Provost Molife, Chief of Staff Chambers and DHE staff to provide feedback. The staff noted the updates that built on the institution's strengths, leveraging work that had already been done while also responding to the environmental changes that had occurred since the original 10-year plan was developed. DHE staff was pleased to see data elements integrated in multiple areas throughout the plan

with metrics that were achievable and reasonable given the current environment. Staff noted the visual and foundational components of the Partnership Plan through the use of nested circles, as well as the strong alignment with the BHE's Strategic Plan for Racial Equity (SPRE), and the Student Success Framework. The staff also noted the integration of internal and external groups into the planning process that made the plan responsive to the needs of the community it serves by engaging its members in the plan's development from beginning to end. Staff suggestions for the plan were minimal and were incorporated in the final plan.

Touch Point III: Chief of Staff Chambers submitted the plan to DHE staff on September 4, 2024. The plan was distributed to the members of the Board of Higher Education on October 12, 2024. A draft of the plan was approved by Massachusetts College of Art and Design's Board of Trustees at its June 2024 meeting.

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 BHE approval of the proposed **Massachusetts College of Art and Design Strategic Partnership Plan 2024.**