Remarks from CSCU President Mark E. Ojakian
Regional President Search meeting
November 8, 2018

- Good morning. Thank you all for helping us to kick off this important effort to select Regional Presidents for the community colleges. I am very pleased to have foundation leaders, administrators, faculty and staff participating in this effort.

- We will have student engagement in the process as well at the regional level as we move forward.

- As you know, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and the CT State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) are undertaking a major reorganization of Connecticut’s community college system.

- The BOR and CSCU plan to consolidate the 12, independently administered community colleges into a singly accredited institution by 2023. This consolidated institution with 12 campuses (and satellites) statewide will provide credit and non-credit programs to more than 100,000 students.

- This bold plan will provide Connecticut students with an affordable, accessible, high-quality education that meets their personal goals and the community-based workforce needs of our state.

- A structural change of this magnitude will ensure a sustainable future for the community college system.

- The new consolidated institution will be administered by a regionalized leadership team, of which the Regional President will be the key position.

- The BOR and CSCU seek leaders for this transformational change to position the campuses, their students and graduates, and Connecticut for a secure and vibrant future.

- The Regional Presidents will be instrumental in supporting the alignment of college curricula statewide to support high-quality educational programs and seamless transfer; implementing initiatives such as Guided Pathways to improve and increase student enrollment, retention, completion, and career readiness; centralizing administrative functions; and sharing resources across campuses.

- Reporting to the CSCU President and serving on the President’s Leadership Team, the Regional President ensures that institutional operations and priorities are coordinated across all campuses in a consistent manner.

- The primary role of the Regional President will to guide the overall strategic direction of campuses in the region serving as a change agent for the new college structure and mission.
• The Regional President will be an active leader in developing and deploying the budget for the region; supporting the work of the Campus CEOs including assisting with their management of the local budget; ensuring the region aligns with overall institutional goals; helping to leverage resources, find efficiencies, facilitate critical relationships with business and industry, scale best practices, improve the student experience, and secure additional resources to support teaching and learning.

• The Regional President will also support fundraising and networking in collaboration with the Campus CEOs and the CSCU system office to build relationships and secure resources for local campuses.

• The Regional President plays a major role in the regional community, working with businesses and community groups, and serving on multiple initiatives and boards, as well as advocating for the system at the legislature, and other government bodies and agencies.

• The colleges have a 50-year history of functioning independently, so it is imperative that the Regional President establish new ways of working effectively across campuses and help to deploy resources efficiently and strategically to meet regional and local needs in support of teaching and learning.

• These Regional Presidents, along with all of the campus leaders, report to me. In 2023, with the establishment of a single accredited institution and hiring of a College President, the Regional Presidents will report to that leader and take over supervisory responsibility of the Campus CEOs.

• You are going to help us, with the support of Aspen, to identify the leadership qualities we need in the new Regional Presidents and the strengths and challenges of each region.

• Together I believe this is going to be an exciting process for our system and I thank you for your engagement.
ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TODAY TO GET THE RIGHT CANDIDATES TOMORROW

Aligning Strategic Priorities and Executive Hiring Criteria

Josh Wyner
Executive Director

Jessica Leach
Program Associate
Session Overview

• Introduction to Aspen and Our Focus on Student Success

• Defining Purpose: Discussion of Statewide Goals

• Diagnosing Needs: Analysis of College and Regional Strengths and Challenges

• Presenting Research: What We Know About Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

• Break for Lunch

• Building Consensus: Defining Sought-After Qualities of Regional Presidents

• Closing: What’s Next?
INTRODUCTION

Aspen’s Focus on Student Success
Who We Are

The Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership in ways that help institutions of higher education make the choices that matter most to improving student outcomes in four areas:

- Completion
- Equity
- Labor Market
- Learning
Our Work

Eight major initiatives, including:

- Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence
- Frontier Set
- Presidential Fellowship
- American Talent Initiative
- Tackling Transfer
Themes characterizing the institutions that achieve exceptional outcomes for students

1. Strong Leadership and Organizational Culture
2. Guided Pathways to Continuing Education and Well-Paying Jobs
3. Intentional Focus on Improving Teaching and Learning
4. Strategic Data Use to Improve Practice and Close Equity Gaps
5. Partnerships and Structures Aligned to Defined Student Outcomes
President Sandy Shugart aligns highly effective change management processes to sustainable college-wide focal points – called “Big Ideas” – that reflect shared visions of what most needs to be done to advance student success.

Result: Sustained, dramatic improvements in completion rates.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional improvements over time in completion

Increase in the number of credentials awarded at Valencia College, 2002-2011
AA, AS/AAS Degrees and Certificates/Diplomas Awarded

- AA Degrees: 84% increase over 6 years
- AS and AAS Degrees: 46% increase over 6 years
- Certificates and Diplomas: 66% increase over 6 years
President Deb Shepherd built a culture and processes by which the college designs and consistently updates programs based on industry need and job expectations, always ensuring hands-on instruction that engages students and simulates the work environment. 

Result: 76% graduation rate and remarkably strong employment rates for graduates.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Completion/transfer rates that far surpass the national average

National Average: 39%
Valencia College (FL) 2011 Winner: 53%
Lake Area Technical Institute (SD) 2017 Winner: 74%
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Far greater equity in outcomes than the national average

Three-year completion and/or transfer rates for underrepresented minority students compared to the national average

- National Average: 34%
- Finalist Average: 44%
- Top 3 on This Metric: 59%
  - Brazosport College (TX)
  - Santa Barbara City College (CA)
  - Santa Fe College (FL)
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional transfer and bachelor’s completion outcomes

Rate of first-time in college students who successfully transferred to a four-year college in six years, and the rate of bachelor’s degree completion for those students who transferred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer-Out Rate</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Completion Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe College</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Barbara City College</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24% higher than avg.

50% higher than avg.

67% higher than avg.

54% higher than avg.
Outcomes of Prize Finalist Colleges

Exceptional labor market outcomes for graduates

Average salaries of recent graduates compared to the average for others in the region (top short-term and long-term performers)

Lake Area Technical Institute (SD)
One Year After Completion

- Regional average for New Hires: $22,808
- $28,908 (27% above avg.)

San Jacinto College (TX)
Five Years After Completion

- Regional average for All Workers: $69,027
- $88,577 (28% above avg.)
DEFINING PURPOSE

Discussion of State-Wide Goals
What are the state’s strategic goals related to student access and success?

1. **College Readiness:** Prepare more high school graduates, GED graduates, and adults to enter college prepared for college-level work.

2. **Student Success:** Graduate more people with the knowledge and skills to achieve their life and career goals.

3. **Affordability and Sustainability:** Maximize access to higher education for students from all economic backgrounds.

4. **Innovation and Economic Growth:** Create environments that emphasize innovation and prepare students for successful careers in a fast changing world.

5. **Equity:** Eliminate achievement disparities among different ethnic/racial, economic and gender groups.
DIAGNOSING NEEDS

Analysis of College Strengths and Challenges
Take 30 minutes to discuss the following questions with your college team.

1. What is working? What are the college’s top positive student access and success outcomes and what is the college doing that might explain this?

2. What is not working as well? What are the college’s areas for improving student access and success outcomes and what is the college doing that might explain this?

3. Where has change been the most difficult at the college over the past 3-5 years and why? What challenges do you think like ahead?

4. What does the college need to do internally to maintain and build on its strengths? What does it need to do to overcome weaknesses in student outcomes? What is the role for external partnerships to assist in improving student access and success?

5. Create a list (on chart paper) with your college’s 3-5 top strengths (mix of internal and external) and 3-5 most pressing challenges.
Move into your regional groups to continue the discussion for the next 45 minutes.

- Each group assigns a facilitator, a recorder, and a timekeeper.

- Use the provided discussion guide to keep the group on track.

- By 12:00pm, each group should have two completed flip charts: 3-5 top regional strengths and 3-5 top regional challenges.
LUNCH
12:00-12:45
What are the top regional strengths?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region 1 – Capitol-East</th>
<th>Region 2 – North-West</th>
<th>Region 3 – Shoreline-West</th>
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</thead>
</table>

What are the top regional challenges?

Region 1 – Capitol-East  
Region 2 – North-West  
Region 3 – Shoreline-West
PRESENTING RESEARCH

What We Know About Qualities of Exceptional Leaders

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
COLLEGE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
Our Work: Crisis and Opportunity

In partnership with Achieving the Dream, Aspen explored three core questions:

• What are the qualities of excellent community college presidents?

• What qualities do trustees value in hiring?

• What skills do education and professional development programs emphasize?
Our Work: Hiring Exceptional Community College Presidents

Ten qualities of exceptional presidents
The Ten Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

- Committed to Student Success
- Takes Strategic Risks
- Builds Strong Teams
- Establishes Urgency
- Plans Lasting Internal Change
- Results-Oriented
- Communicates Effectively
- Financial and Operational Ability
- Entrepreneurial Fundraiser
- Develops Effective External Partnerships

Handout p. 5
### The Ten Qualities of Exceptional Presidents

1. **Committed to Student Success**
2. **Takes Strategic Risks**
3. **Builds Strong Teams**
4. **Establishes Urgency**
5. **Plans Lasting Internal Change**
6. **Results-Oriented**
7. **Communicates Effectively**
8. **Finances/Operations**
9. **Entrepreneurial Fundraiser**
10. **External Partnerships**

1. What qualities on this list would you expect to see most frequently in the applicant pool? Why?
2. What qualities would you expect to be least common? Why?
3. What strategies could be used to attract candidates with rarer qualities?
Hiring an Exceptional President

Tool #1 Set Strategic Priorities & Hiring Criteria
- Align Priorities to Hiring Criteria

Tool #2 Recruit Candidates
- Announce Job

Tool #3 Assess Candidates
- Writing Exercise
- Interview Questions

Tool #4 Confirm the Choice
- Evaluation Rubric
- Assessment Aggregation
- Reference Checks
BUILDING CONSENSUS

Defining Sought-After Qualities of Regional Presidents
Take 30 minutes to discuss the following questions in your table groups.

Given the system-wide goals and the strengths and challenges of your region’s institutions…

• Which of the Aspen qualities would you value most in a regional president? Which Aspen qualities are least important?
• What qualities would you value most that are not present in the Aspen qualities?
• From the two lists, what are your table’s top 5-10 qualities?
Regional Presidents - Roles

• Supporting alignment of college curricula statewide to support high-quality educational programs and seamless transfer

• Strategic implementation of initiatives such as Guided Pathways to improve and increase student enrollment, retention, completion, and career readiness

• Centralizing administrative functions and resources

• Fundraising and networking (with college leaders)

• Developing and deploying budgets
Whole Group Discussion: Prioritizing Qualities
CLOSING

What’s Next?
Hiring an Exceptional President: Use Cases

Set Strategic Priorities & Hiring Criteria
Rhode Island
Harper College

Recruit Candidates
California Community College System

Assess Candidates
Harper College
Grand Rapids Community College

Confirm the Choice
California Community College System
What are the state’s strategic goals related to student access and success?

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5. **Equity**: Eliminate achievement disparities among different ethnic/racial, economic and gender groups.
Student Success is the Focus

Completion

Equity

Labor Market

Learning
THANK YOU

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