

CONNECTICUT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

RESOLUTION

concerning

Endorsement of Revised Students First Plan

June 21, 2018

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Regents believes the proposed organizational structure for a singly accredited college with three regions and 12 local campuses best serves students and the state;

**WHEREAS**, the Board's Human Resources and Administration Committee has discussed and provided initial input into job descriptions and hiring processes for new leadership; and

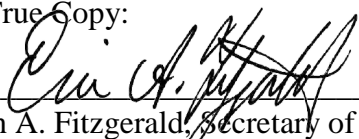
**WHEREAS**, the Board's Finance and Infrastructure Committee has reviewed updated savings targets for the Students First plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board's Academic and Student Affairs Committee has reviewed revised timelines for alignment of academic programs across the 12 campuses, reviewed timelines for student success efforts, and identified areas for the development of specific metrics for measuring success; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that based on the above-referenced deliberations, the Board of Regents for Higher Education endorses the attached Students First revised plan to prepare for a singly accredited community college by:

- maintaining the accreditations of the 12 community colleges until fall 2023 when all integrated academic, student support services are in place, and CSCU has worked with NEASC on a process to achieve a single accreditation;
- reorganizing our college system regionally with new leadership structure;
- aligning college curricula statewide, while addressing local and regional distinctiveness, to support high quality educational programs and seamless transfer, including adoption of a statewide general education curriculum;
- implementing initiatives such as guided pathways to improve and increase student enrollment, retention, and completion;
- integrating administrative functions into centralized shared services; and
- sharing resources across campuses to stabilize critical college functions, reduce redundancies, and leverage expertise.

A True Copy:

  
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Erin A. Fitzgerald, Secretary of the  
CT Board of Regents for Higher Education

**ACTION ITEM**

REVISED STUDENTS FIRST PLAN

**BACKGROUND**

After the CIHE-NEASC response to the Students First proposal in April, CSCU President Ojakian and his leadership team and Board of Regents members have taken several steps to determine our path forward. A meeting was held with Dr. Barbara Brittingham from NEASC to review the Commission's response. Additionally, the CSCU leadership team connected with leaders from Vermont and Maine and other systems (such as Lone Star College in Texas) to identify alternative strategies for addressing our student success and financial challenges. CSCU college faculty, staff, and the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) also offered suggestions for reaching the goals laid out in the Students First plan.

At Dr. Brittingham's suggestion, Board leadership, President Ojakian and his leadership team and a number of college presidents met with Dennis Jones and Sally Johnstone from National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to review the Students First submission to NEASC. NCHEMS provided input on ways to lay the foundation for a single college in the future by consolidating administrative functions and aligning curriculum through a more gradually paced academic planning and transition process. They also helped to identify ways to progress towards a more efficient organization in the near-term while adhering to the BOR's objectives of sustainable, quality, accessible public higher education, consistent with NEASC standards throughout the process. Based on this information, President Ojakian presents to the Board of Regents a revised Students First plan that advances the vision stated below as well as the benefits of this college reorganization for students, the CSCU system and the state.

**VISION**

Provide a dynamic community college that leverages talents and capabilities to help students attain their individual educational goals within available resources and responds to community and state needs.

**BENEFITS OF CONSOLIDATION**

A single CIHE-NEASC accredited community college with 12 campuses significantly improves CSCU's ability to serve students by removing barriers to student success, prioritizing student-facing services amid fiscal constraints, mitigating upward pressure on tuition, scaling best practices, streamlining administrative tasks, and aligning common procedures. The realization of these benefits will require new or updated Board policies.

Key attributes include:

- Maintaining the uniqueness, identity, and community connections of each campus.
- Establishing a common General Education curriculum that is more efficient to navigate for students.

- Aligning program curricula to provide a common and consistent high quality higher education, enabling students to take courses on different campuses without concerns about course transfer or conflicting program requirements.
- Implementing Guided Pathways strategies for student success to improve student enrollment, retention, and completion.
- Instituting clear enrollment management practices – including strategic use of limited institutional aid, targeted recruitment, and metrics-driven policies – to improve student enrollment, retention, and completion.
- Providing a consistent experience for students through fully integrated information technology systems, a single admissions application, a single financial aid process, a single billing process, a single student ID number, and a common course catalog.
- Creating consistent websites across the 12 campuses to provide information on courses, transfer opportunities, wrap around services, industry partnerships, etc.
- Ensuring colleges meet the needs of students as well as local and regional employers.
- Ensuring a financially stable and sustainable future for the state’s community colleges that minimizes tuition increases in the face of declining state funding.

## **REVISED STUDENTS FIRST PLAN**

CSCU will prepare for a singly accredited community college while respecting the importance of the 12 campuses for the delivery of instruction and for meeting state, local and regional needs by:

- Maintaining the accreditations of the 12 colleges until fall 2023 when all integrated academic, student support services are in place, and CSCU has worked with NEASC on a process to achieve a single accreditation.
- Regionalizing our community colleges and creating a new leadership structure.
- Aligning college curricula statewide through faculty workgroups to support high quality educational programs and seamless transfer, including adoption of a statewide general education curriculum.
- Implementing initiatives such as Guided Pathways to improve and increase student enrollment, retention, and completion.
- Integrating administrative functions into centralized shared services.
- Sharing resources across campuses to stabilize critical college functions, reduce redundancies, and leverage expertise.
- Hiring a number of positions to raise additional income for the system including a VP of Enrollment Management and a CSCU Development Officer to support student success and programmatic initiatives for the colleges

### New Community College Leadership and Regional Structure

CSCU will implement a regional structure, while maintaining the 12 accreditations of the colleges until fall 2023, our target date for transition to a singly accredited college. Three Regional Presidents will be hired in spring 2019, while maintaining the 12 college-based chief executive, chief financial and chief academic officers per NEASC standards. (See attached organizational chart – Attachment A)

Three regions are proposed based on an analysis of the towns that serve as primary feeders to campuses, employer partnerships, and student enrollment trends. Originally, the regions were established to distribute equitably campus populations and resources statewide. However, given geographic and programmatic considerations, as well as feedback from Middlesex Community College faculty and staff, we propose a change in their original placement. Proposed Regions (with informal working titles):

**Capitol-East (Region 1): Capital, Manchester, Middlesex, Quinebaug Valley and Three Rivers Community Colleges**

**North-West (Region 2): Asnuntuck, Naugatuck Valley, Northwestern, and Tunxis Community Colleges**

**Shoreline-West (Region 3): Gateway, Housatonic and Norwalk Community Colleges**

#### Align College Curricula Statewide

CSCU will continue to align curricula statewide to ensure seamless student transfer between colleges and to the universities. The Students First Academic and Student Affairs Consolidation Committee has begun developing a common general education curriculum. Faculty workgroups will be engaged in making all curricular decisions in consultation with campus senates, curriculum committees, and academic administrators. Those programs with specialized accreditation will remain at their current locations.

The Students First Academic and Student Affairs Consolidation Committee has updated its timeline for program curriculum revision into three rounds, with the first beginning September 2018 and the third concluding in May 2021. There are additional steps planned to get all registration, student data systems, and financial aid considerations addressed by August 2023, the single college launch date. (See attached Gantt chart for more information – Attachment B)

Based on feedback from many sources, including FAC and NEASC, CSCU also revised the proposed academic leadership plan to maintain the current department chair structure, which will minimize disruption and facilitate the academic alignment process.

#### Student Enrollment and Completion Initiatives

Guided Pathways will serve as the cornerstone of our plan to improve student enrollment, retention, and completion. Guided Pathways helps students efficiently complete credentials, seamlessly transfer, and attain jobs with value in the labor market. Working with the CSCU Student Success Center, faculty and staff are collaborating to design new and aligned practices for the single institution including extensive work this summer. These groups are generating recommendations to improve student experiences with enrollment in the colleges for fall 2019, including a single application to the community colleges, consistent websites at both the system and the colleges to support enrollment, transfer and transparency, and greater use of technology to enroll and support students through advising.

The Connecticut legislature appropriated over one million dollars to support student completion efforts. Distribution of these funds to the CSCU community colleges will now be based on improvement in Key

Performance Indicators, which measure first-year momentum and success, as designed by the CSCU Student Success Center.

To reverse enrollment declines, improve retention, promote timely completion, and generate revenue, CSCU will hire a Vice President of Enrollment Management in 2019 to serve the colleges and implement new strategies across the regions to support enrollment.

### Shared Services

The revised plan integrates and centralizes key administrative areas including institutional research, marketing, facilities, human resources and information technology functions over the next few years. Leadership will be provided centrally to the various functional teams at the campuses.

President Ojakian has also dedicated resources for the hiring of a CSCU Development Officer to locate new funding streams to support student success and programmatic initiatives for the colleges. In addition, the Regional Presidents and Campus CEOs will support the efforts of the college foundations to raise much needed resources for the individual colleges while sharing best practices and costs where appropriate.

### Shared Resources across Campuses

Regional Presidents will achieve savings and economies of scale by sharing resources across colleges, including in the areas of administration and academic programming. This has been achieved through partnerships between Gateway and Housatonic and between Asnuntuck and Tunxis Community Colleges. These efforts save resources, allow colleges to reinvest in teaching and student supports, and make better use of the talents of the system.

## **BOR COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REVISED PLAN**

In May and June of 2018, Committees of the BOR met to review aspects of the revised Students First plan. ***The Human Resources and Administration Committee*** provided initial input into qualities essential for community college leadership endorsing those identified by Aspen Institute for exceptional leaders:

- 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

The Committee determined that the same skills are required of the Regional Presidents and Campus CEOs as well as the eventual College President. However, the responsibilities and deliverables for each

position demand different levels of skills. For instance, all must be committed to student success, but their fundraising roles might differ. Committee members stated that key skill sets in leadership, administration, and academic/student affairs were critical for ensuring success. They acknowledged that experience in a community college setting would be desirable. In addition, the HR Committee reviewed proposed hiring processes for the Regional Presidents and Campus CEOs ensuring that the composition of search committees represent a diverse cross section of appropriate stakeholders at both the campus and system level. Decisions regarding job descriptions, CSCU leadership in consultation with the HR Committee will finalize salary ranges and searches as the plan moves forward. Additionally, the Committee has recommended to President Ojakian that the system engage in a change management process to make sure reorganization efforts are successful.

**The Finance Committee** met to review updated targeted savings for the revised plan. Given the Commission's response, President Ojakian and his leadership team re-evaluated what can be implemented in the near term and established a new Phase 1 target for the revised plan.

To maintain accreditation at the 12 community colleges, each must have a chief executive officer, a chief academic officer, and a chief financial officer. Each officer must maintain an appropriate structure so that the institution may “fulfill its purposes and objectives and establishes the means to assess the effectiveness of the institution.” The organizational structure proposed will comply with the standards for institutional accreditation. CSCU will seek to consolidate support activities and share services to optimize efficiencies and provide a pathway for the full single college consolidation when appropriate.

New estimates indicate \$17 million can be saved in the near term through the regionalization of the college structure and administrative consolidations in key areas such as information technology, facilities, institutional research and human resources versus \$23 million in the original plan. The \$6 million difference, attributed largely to the finance operation that cannot be consolidated at this time, can be achieved as savings as the single college structure is implemented in 2023.

<b><u>SUMMARY</u></b>	<b>Original Consolidation Plan</b>	<b>Phase 1 Revised Plan</b>	<b>Delta</b>
Dollar Savings	23,301,255	17,297,869	(6,003,386)
Headcount Savings	163	117	(46)
Implementation Costs	2,161,348	1,560,848	(600,500)

**The Academic and Student Affairs Committee** met to review the revised plan particularly related to the academic planning timeline, student success efforts and the establishment of metrics to measure progress in these areas. Based on the revised timeline, the colleges could be prepared for a single accreditation for the fall 2023 semester.

As recommended by the ASA committee, CSCU will develop specific metrics for Board review beginning Fall 2018 to document the results of regional reorganization, administrative integration, and academic and student affairs planning, as well as to identify areas for continued improvement, including:

- Increased enrollment
- Increased first-year momentum
- Increased retention
- Increased completion and completion in timely manner
- Reduced gaps in attainment for underrepresented populations in support of equity goals
- Increased use of different teaching delivery methods, including hybrid, online, and synchronized

Additional metrics were identified that speak to the fiscal effectiveness of the regional structure and administrative integration of functions:

- Savings due to administrative integration
- Savings due to regional consolidation Redirected savings to student supports
- Increased responsiveness to regional economic development and workforce needs embraced by stakeholders across sectors

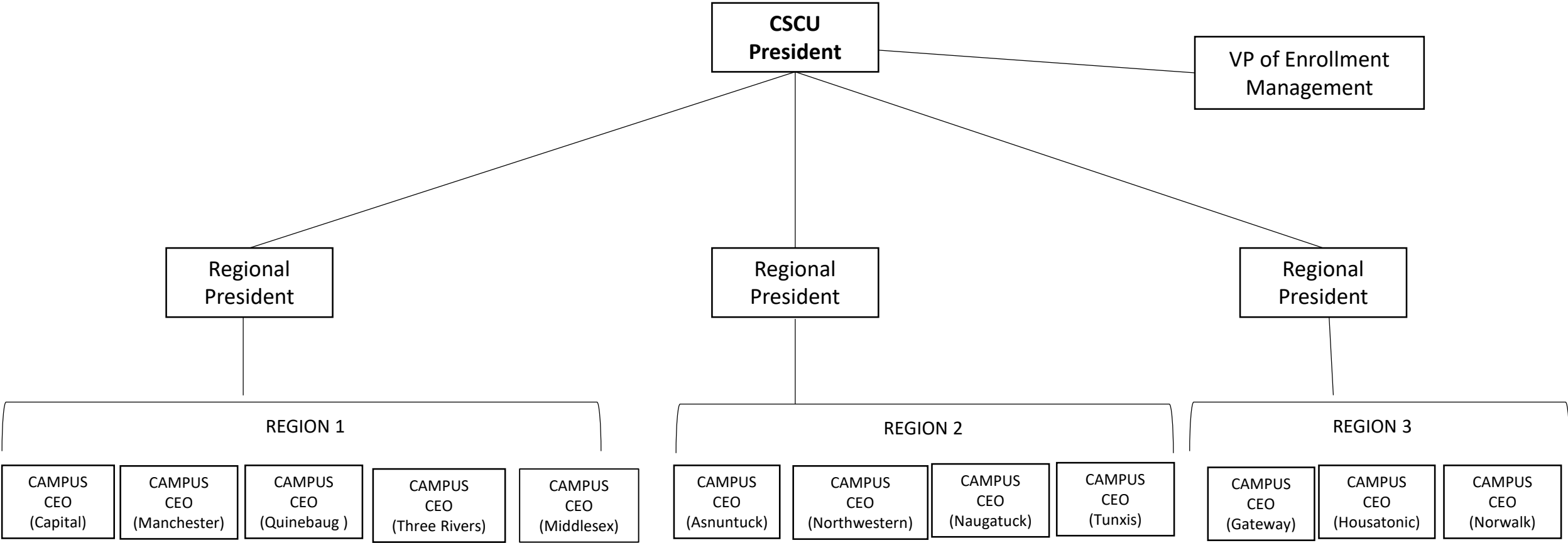
## **NEXT STEPS**

***President Ojakian seeks Board endorsement of the revised plan with direction to begin the regionalization of the college structure, selection for the new leadership positions, integration of administrative functions, implementation of student success efforts, alignment of statewide curricula, and engagement in change management activities.***

President Ojakian will keep NEASC staff apprised of CSCU's efforts and invite them to attend future BOR Academic and Student Affairs committee meetings to discuss our progress and prepare for the process of accreditation.

President Ojakian will provide regular reports at BOR Committee and full Board meetings to keep members, CSCU faculty, staff and students and the public apprised of progress, challenges related to implementation and new opportunities for the system (see attached community letter dated June 18, 2018 – Attachment C hereto).

# Proposed Leadership Structure



*Note: Each campus will have a CEO, CFO and CAO per NEASC standards*



CSCU Students First Timeline  
6/13/18

ID	Task Name	Start	Finish	2018							2019			2020			2021			2022			2023																														
				M	J	S	N	J	M	M	J	S	N	J	M	M	J	S	N	J	M	M	J	S	N	J	M	M	J	S	N																						
1	<b>Academic Affairs: Building the Curriculum</b>																																																				
2	General Education Work Group completes common Gen Ed proposal	Tue 5/1/18	Tue 4/30/19																																																		
3	Program/course consolidation round one	Thu 11/1/18	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
4	Round one governance/approval	Sun 9/1/19	Tue 12/31/19																																																		
5	Program/course consolidation round two	Fri 2/1/19	Tue 12/31/19																																																		
6	Round two governance/approval	Wed 1/1/20	Sun 5/31/20																																																		
7	Program/course consolidation round three	Sun 9/1/19	Sun 5/31/20																																																		
8	Round three governance/approval	Tue 9/1/20	Thu 12/31/20																																																		
9	U.S. Department of Education Program Approval (for programs not at chosen consolidation college)	Wed 1/1/20	Mon 5/31/21																																																		
10	Business Information Systems Build (Banner, myCommNet, Degree Works, etc.	Wed 1/1/20	Tue 5/31/22																																																		
11	Single Application Available for Student Use	Sat 10/1/22	Wed 8/30/23																																																		
12	Course catalog open and single college registration	Sat 4/1/23	Fri 9/15/23																																																		
13	Could mark first day of new college	Wed 8/30/23	Wed 8/30/23																																																		
14	<b>Student Success Initiatives</b>																																																				
15	Establishment of Student Success Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Sat 9/1/18	Tue 10/30/18																																																		
16	VP of Enrollment Management Hiring	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 12/31/18																																																		
17	Guided Pathways development of single student application and associated paperwork	Sat 9/1/18	Tue 12/31/19																																																		
18	Guided Pathways policy recommendations to inform consolidation	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 5/31/21																																																		
19	Guided Pathways rolled out at 12 colleges	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 1/30/23																																																		
20	Continue call center services for colleges with opportunity for expansion to universities and Charter Oak	Sat 9/1/18	Wed 8/30/23																																																		
21	Create a student communications plan across all campuses including modernization of contact formats	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
22	Reorganize campus structure and delivery of strategic enrollment management	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
23	<b>New College Leadership/Regional Reorganization</b>																																																				
24	Hire College Marketing Director	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 12/31/18																																																		
25	Conduct national search for and hire three Regional Presidents	Sat 9/1/18	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
26	Develop plan for regional organization of workforce development	Sat 9/1/18	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
27	Hire CSCU Development Officer	Sat 9/1/18	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
28	Replace Campus CEOs as needed	Sat 9/1/18	Wed 8/30/23																																																		
29	Hire three budget officers	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
30	<b>Administrative Integration</b>																																																				
31	Reorganize college staff in Institutional Research into one team dedicated collectively to the needs of the colleges at both the campus and system level	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 12/31/18																																																		
32	Establish administrative savings metrics	Sat 9/1/18	Mon 12/31/18																																																		
33	Create new Strategic Human Resources Management structure for delivery of services to the colleges and Charter Oak	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
34	Create IR teams engaging all 17 campuses in areas including data analytics, federal and state reporting, etc.	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
35	Hire new facilities manager at system office	Tue 1/1/19	Fri 5/31/19																																																		
36	Establish Centers of HR Expertise that engage all 17 campuses in areas including labor relations, Title IX and affirmative action, searches and hiring, benefits and retirement counseling	Sat 6/1/19	Tue 12/31/19																																																		



June 18, 2018

Dear CSCU Community,

This week the Board of Regents will convene to discuss among other things, our proposed revisions to our Students First consolidation plan. In keeping with the promise to keep you informed, I am sharing our recommendation to the Board in advance of the meeting. I encourage all of you to review [the Staff Report](#) that will be discussed in detail during the Board meeting on Thursday.

After the NEASC response to our Students First proposal in April, members of the Board and my leadership staff have taken a number of steps to determine our path forward. First, we met with Dr. Barbara Brittingham from NEASC to review the Commission's response. At Dr. Brittingham's suggestion, we also met with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) who assisted NEASC in reviewing our original proposal. They helped to identify ways to progress towards a more efficient organization while adhering to the BOR's objectives of sustainable, quality, accessible public higher education, consistent with NEASC standards. CSCU college faculty, staff, and the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) also offered suggestions for reaching the goals of removing barriers to student success, scaling best practices, streamlining administrative tasks, and aligning common procedures.

As a result, we are revising our Students First plan in three significant ways: extend our timeline for the single accredited community college to 2023 thereby keeping the 12 accreditations of the colleges, develop a more gradually paced academic planning and transition process, and maintain the current department chair structure. The revised plan is estimated to save \$17M when fully implemented versus the \$23M as originally proposed. Our revised plan also includes:

- Regionalizing our community colleges and creating a new leadership structure. We will hire three Regional Presidents in spring 2019, while maintaining the 12 college-based CEO, CFO, and CAO positions per NEASC standards.
- Aligning college curricula statewide to support high quality educational programs and seamless transfer, including adoption of a statewide general education curriculum.
- Implementing initiatives such as guided pathways to improve and increase student enrollment, retention, and completion.
- Integrating administrative functions into centralized shared services.
- Sharing resources across campuses to stabilize critical college functions, reduce redundancies, and leverage expertise.
- Hiring a number of positions to raise additional income for the system including a VP of Enrollment Management and a CSCU Development Officer.

Our goal remains the same, to create a dynamic community college focused on helping students attain their individual educational goals, and responds to community and state needs. We also recognize that more time is needed to get the foundation in place for a change as large as this.

Beginning this fall, as directed by the Board, we will implement the immediate next steps of regionalizing the college structure, selecting new leadership, integrating and centralizing administrative functions, implementing Guided Pathways and aligning curriculum statewide. CSCU will establish metrics to document the results of regional reorganization, administrative integration, and academic and student affairs planning, to help identify areas for continued improvement. We will keep NEASC staff apprised of our efforts and invite them to attend future BOR Academic and Student Affairs committee meetings so that we may discuss our progress and prepare for the single accreditation process.

I want to thank everyone for their engagement in this important work, particularly those who are planning this summer for the Guided Pathways initiative. I will continue to provide updates on the progress and challenges related to implementation and new opportunities for our students and our colleges.

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark Ojakian, President  
Connecticut State Colleges & Universities