

**SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

Monday, June 24, 2019

Student Learning Commons, Building 19, Library / Reading Room  
5:00 p.m.

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Present:** Franklin Quigley, Acting Chair  
MacArthur Starks, Jr., Trustee  
Steven Grande, Trustee  
Vicky Crouse, Trustee  
William Johnson, Trustee  
Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, Trustee  
Eric Hagopian – Trustee  
Jeff Sattler - Trustee  
Karolyn Burgos-Toribio, Student Trustee

**Unable to Attend:** Marikate Murren, Secretary

**Also Present:** Dr. John Cook, President  
Christopher Johnson, Retired Chair  
Jynai McDonald, recently appointed Trustee  
Yanira Aviles, elected Student Trustee – 2019-2020

**I. Call to Order**

Acting Chair, Franklin Quigley called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken with the following members of the STCC Board of Trustees present: Acting Chair, Frank Quigley; Trustees: MacArthur Starks, Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, Steve Grande, Vicky Crouse, William Johnson, Eric Hagopian, Jeff Sattler, and Student Trustee, Karolyn Burgos-Toribio. Nine members were present constituting a quorum.

**III. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting – May 20, 2019**

Trustee Steve Grande moved to approve the minutes from May 20, 2019 meeting, seconded by Trustee Eric Hagopian, and unanimously approved.

#### **IV. Trustee Committee Reports**

##### **Committee on Ways and Means Meeting held on June 10, 2019.**

Committee Chair MacArthur Starks proceeded to address the report from the June 10, 2019 Committee on Ways and Means meeting.

Cash flow projection continues to align with last year's trend. The sources of funds are generally where expected. Investment earnings reflect \$423K through the month of April; however, the market drop in May will negatively affect these results.

Request for Quotes RFQ for value streaming consulting was posted on May 31, and sent to ten Lean Consulting Companies. These were due on June 21.

No votes at this meeting. Next Committee on Ways and Means meeting scheduled on September 16, 2019.

Trustee William Johnson moved to approve the Ways and Means Report from June 10, 2019 meeting, seconded by Trustee Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, and unanimously approved.

#### **V. Old Business – None**

#### **VI. New Business - None**

#### **VII. President's Perspective – Dr. John Cook**

##### **Key Updates:**

**New roof** – Building 2.

**College for Kids** – Officially launched today (June 24, 2019)

**STEM Starter** – Runs from July 1 – August 9 – eligible: High School Graduate class of 2017, 2018, or 2019. Participants receive free college credits, and will earn a stipend of \$400 upon successful completion of the program.

**Value Streaming** – RFQ submitted – Consultant expected to be in place in the fall.

**Enrollment** – Enrollment decline projection of 7.6% is down to 6%. Based on trends, 12 – 15% of students enroll closer to the start of school. Summer 1 enrollment is low; however, Summer 2 is projecting higher numbers. Looking at projections differently - We are comparing what data was used in the past to estimate projections and working on configurations to make better projections.

Enrollment discussion led to conversations on strategies used to attract potential students to STCC. Dr. Cook is having intentional conversations with Cabinet on marketing strategies.

## **VIII. Chair's Report**

### **Presidential Evaluation:**

Acting Chair, Frank Quigley prepared President Cook's evaluation for the period of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, with context based on the President's self-assessment. President Cook's self-assessment was distributed to Trustees in advance for review (Exhibit 1). Presidential Evaluation (Exhibit 2) points out successes and challenges throughout fiscal year 2019 and actions taken by President Cook.

Trustees discussed individual perspective and offered suggestions on issues such as declining enrollment. Trustees also discussed how they might conduct future Presidential evaluations. In response to the question on leading the college, President Cook reviewed his self-assessment and talked about managing changes and the dynamics of higher education leadership.

Trustee William Johnson moved to submit President Cook's Self-Evaluation and Presidential Evaluation prepared by Acting Chair, Frank Quigley to Commissioner Santiago and the Board of Higher Education. Seconded by Trustee Steve Grande and unanimously approved.

For the record: Dr. Cook also stated, if granted by BHE/DHE, he would not accept a raise for this past year, or the one ahead, given budget challenges.

### **Farewells and Recognitions to:**

Student Trustee Karolyn Burgos-Toribio ended her second term. Karolyn was elected to serve as Student Trustee from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, and re-elected to serve a second term from July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019. Student Trustee Karolyn represented STCC's student body with respect and determination. Best wishes to Karolyn as she moves forward to completing her Bachelor's Degree.

Chair, Christopher C. Johnson is the longest serving Trustee since December 22, 2006. Chair Johnson's support and commitment to STCC is invaluable. Chair Johnson sought through 3million for the renovation of Building 19 and served through completion of the project. Thank you.

- IX. Building Tour** – Meeting held in Student Learning Commons.
- X. Date of next Board of Trustees meeting** – Friday, September 27, 2019 – Board of Trustee Retreat – Location TBD
- XI. Adjournment** – Acting Chair Franklin Quigley moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 pm., seconded by Trustees William Johnson and Vicki Crouse.



Marikate Murren  
Chair, STCC Board of Trustees



**Date: June 14, 2019**

**To: STCC Board of Trustees**

**Re: Presidential Self-Assessment/2018-2019 Performance Evaluation**

Dear Members of the STCC Board of Trustees:

As of August 2019, I will have completed three years as President of Springfield Technical Community College. It continues to be an honor and privilege to lead one of the most unique higher education institutions in the Commonwealth, and for that matter, New England. I continue to discuss internally and externally our “two middle names,” both of which distinguish our role in Western Massachusetts for students, and with employers.

With a mission that encourages us to consider how we transform lives, it is through technology, innovation, and an appreciation of economic needs, that STCC will sustain our role as a critical institution in the region. As the only technical community college in the Commonwealth, and as a federally-designated Hispanic Serving Institution, I will continue to ensure the college is responsive, creative, and mission-focused, particularly because STCC remains the largest higher education institution in the City of Springfield, which itself is the fourth largest city in New England.

**Summary of Goals Set by Trustees for FY 2019**

1. Finish the creation of a Health Science Guided Pathway/Allied Health Degree program with stackable credentials.

**STATUS:** Accomplished

2. Complete the Space Utilization Study to gauge the impact of the new Student Learning Commons on the campus and its programs.

**STATUS:** Accomplished

3. Advocate for state, federal and private funding to meet the College's significant deferred maintenance needs, especially as it relates to Building 20 which houses the College's Allied Health Program and its patient simulators.
4. Continue to expand his professional and personal engagement with the greater Springfield community, especially the business community that can be a new source of job and workforce training opportunities for the College.
5. Strengthen the College's connection to traditional sources of new students such as area high schools to stem the regional trend of lower enrollment in community colleges as the economy continues to improve. Explore new revenue opportunities for the college especially in the area of employment training and non-traditional students.
6. Continue to develop and strengthen communication with the colleges shared governance bodies, including continuing efforts to formalize of direct communication opportunities with the President, the President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.
7. Explore training opportunities for Board members to enhance their knowledge of issues facing community colleges in Massachusetts and across the nation. Continue to attract new Trustees with a direct connection to the college's mission.
8. Continue to implement the Student Success Plan especially as it relates to closing the equity and achievement gaps for students of color and women.
9. Continue to steward the Professional Development of Faculty and Staff by providing resources and support for enhanced training and educational experiences so that the best and brightest in the academic fields are recruited to STCC and retained with the College.

**STATUS:** The above goals remain in progress, with specific achievements for each described in the below narrative

## **Executive Summary**

Fiscal Year 2019 was particularly difficult from a budget standpoint and my signature accomplishment was navigating the college through significant facilities and infrastructure projects and emergencies, as well as an approximately \$2 million budget shortfall, without faculty or staff layoffs.

Just prior to the start of Fall Semester 2018, the “Core” switch for the college failed, and with it key student, financial aid, and registration technology and software. Almost simultaneously, two lightning strikes occurred on campus, that along with the Core switch, resulted in IT damages totaling nearly \$1.1 million in unbudgeted costs. Also around this same time, structure concerns were identified in Building 17/Putnam Hall, resulting in \$1.7 million in emergency repairs that impacted teaching and learning in this building for much of Fall Semester. On top of these challenges, the college failed to reach our enrollment projection (-3% budgeted vs. -7% actual), which resulted in the additional loss of approximately \$1 million in tuition/fee revenue.

In bringing a steady resolve to these very difficult situations, I ramped up communication with the campus, initiated significantly more planning meetings with Cabinet and senior administrators, engaged Trustees with budget revisions and a reserve request, and ensured proactive fiscal/cost-saving measures were implemented.

In preparing the way forward for next year, I led efforts this year to develop a FY 2020 budget that required difficult personnel decisions, but again, with significant communication on my part to the campus community. I ensured a budget process for the coming year included substantial transparency, as illustrated by a Spring Semester All-College Town Hall, in which I shared with campus an anticipated FY 2020 budget shortfall of approximately \$1.5 million, and the likelihood of personnel reductions. The FY 2020 budget, which included the necessary reductions in operations and personnel expenses, was approved by Trustees on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 20 full-time positions were eliminated from the budget for next year, with the vast majority via retirement, and there were no lay-offs/retrenchments of full-time faculty. Next year will likely be a complex and difficult budget year with respect to enrollment (recruitment, retention, graduation), and in my role as President I will continue the necessary facilitation, planning, and implementation of strategies so that STCC remains a responsive technical community college.

## **Department of Higher Education Performance Measurements**

To frame the year in review, the Department of Higher Education (DHE) asks for institutional data to be included by Presidents for consideration. In a review of foundational institutional metrics, STCC continues to serve a remarkably diverse student population. In Fall 2018, 29% of students were Latina/Latino, which is up from 19% in 2008. Additionally, African-American students are 15% of the STCC student body, which is the same as 2008. In addition, DHE data indicates STCC, at 52% in FY 2017, has one of the highest Pell grant recipient populations, and serves as a proxy for access by low-income families to higher education. As a comparison, across the nine state universities in Massachusetts, the highest percentage of Pell was 36% in that segment. Also, with 85% of students living within eight-miles of campus, STCC has the fourth most “local” student body of any Massachusetts public college or university. Considering these indicators, STCC represents one of the most diverse and accessible Massachusetts public higher education institutions.

Data provided by the Department of Higher Education also offers a view of student success, workforce alignment, and equity. Key data metrics are now available with a particular focus on first-time/full-time students. Specifically, in 2017 at STCC, 20% of first-time/full-time students had “timely” completion of gateway courses (i.e. English 101); 24% of these students had “on-time” credit accumulation, and 59% of Fall 2016 full-time/first-time STCC students returned in Fall 2017. By way of comparison, Northern Essex Community College, another Hispanic-Serving Institution in Massachusetts, saw a 26% timely completion rate, 21% on-time credit accumulation, and a 58% retention rate. When looking over a six-year window at “long term success,” a full 66% of STCC students who started in 2011 had either completed a credential, transferred, were still enrolled, or had earned 30+ credits. This is a very encouraging outcome given that the Massachusetts community college average is 65%, and counterparts like Northern Essex CC similarly had a 66% long term success rate.

Specific to workforce alignment, DHE data shows that of the 838 degrees awarded by STCC in 2018, 23% were in Health Care. Again, an indicator placing STCC toward the top of Massachusetts community colleges with respect to the proportion of our graduates graduating in an allied health field. To this point, in Spring 2019, STCC graduated 91 Nursing students, which appears to be the single largest class of any community college in the Commonwealth.

Data provided by DHE specific to equity considerations (particularly gender and ethnicity) is discussed in detail below within the section on Goals, Successes & Key Initiatives.



### **Expanded Narrative: FY 2019 Goals, Successes & Key Initiatives**

**Goal #1** was to establish a Health Science pathway, and this was formally accomplished in August of 2018 with the granting of degree approval by the Board of Higher Education. The Health Science degree and pathway now launched, includes the unique elements of embedded patient simulation and career certifications (i.e. EMT), and was an important achievement this past year given the significant role of STCC in regional healthcare workforce development. Related, the imperative to evolve from a “Pre-Health” concentration to a Health Science degree and pathway was done with equity considerations front and center. “Pre-Health,” which was not discernably different from General Studies, represented 20% of all STCC students, and a ten-percentage point equity gap in persistence was seen between Latina/Latino students in this degree, and their white counterparts (43% vs. 53%). Going forward, as enrollment management for the now-launched Health Science pathway continues to be formalized (admissions/recruitment; advising; marketing); as simulation capacity is expanded (particularly during the day); as additional certifications including Phlebotomy are added; and as Early College pathways for high school students are established, Health Science is will serve as a key onboard, and will further enhance critical college programming for the leading industry in Western Massachusetts.

A number of important goals (**Goals #2 and #3**) related to facilities, maintenance, and infrastructure were also set for the past year, and substantial progress has been made. First, from ground-breaking in the Fall of 2016 to the ribbon-cutting in December of 2018, stewardship and completion of the \$50 million Rubenzahl Learning Commons project was a significant accomplishment in FY 2019. To have now completed the most significant on-campus capital project in thirty years was critical for the college, and I am very pleased with the efforts by our staff across the college to help see through this significant campus-changing endeavor.

I am also pleased to share that a classroom/space utilization study was completed, an environmental scan (career/workforce outlook) was completed, and after two years of effort which included significant vetting by college constituents (faculty, staff, students), this year STCC completed and adopted a formal Campus Master Plan. Again, an important accomplishment, the plan was endorsed in June 2019 by the STCC Board of Trustees. A related goal was to advocate for State/Federal/Private funding with a particular focus on Building 20. I have undertaken this goal with earnest, and along with Cabinet members, I have had many conversations, and strategic planning meetings with policymakers and executive branch administrators. One tangible outcome has been the designation of Building 20 by DCAMM for a “Readiness Study,” with project funding provided by

Massachusetts to examine a course of action. DCAMM states on their website, “information from this study step will be incorporated into a request for capital funding and submitted for FY21 capital funding approval in late fall/early winter 2019.” Needless to say, infrastructure challenges continue to be a significant issue for the college, and as previously described, structural issues identified last year in Putnam Hall/Building 17, resulted in over \$1.5 million necessary for emergency repairs to a critical science/technology/engineering building.

Specific to **Goal #4**, I continue engagement with the greater Springfield community, and embrace the stated focus of workforce development and business/employer engagement, expansion of employment training, and seeking to increase job placement opportunities for students. As an example, the college collaborated with a local non-profit to train individuals receiving human services (i.e. families living in emergency shelter), to prepare them with entry-level skills to work at CRRC, the railcar manufacturer in Springfield. A total of 24 individuals were trained in electrical/assembly, and with credit to our faculty and staff, this type of nimble and responsive “non-credit” training is critical for key industries, especially with such a low unemployment rate.

I also remain committed to championing efforts to strengthen high school connections (**Goal #5**), and continue my work to develop connections with numerous administrators noting how Early College efforts are a critical investment by the college now, and a significant enrollment opportunity going forward. For example, discussions have taken place with Westfield about students accessing in-development water (distribution & treatment) training; with Agawam and Putnam Vocational about manufacturing; multiple visits have been made to Pathfinder Regional Vocational; efforts with the High School of Commerce (Springfield) seek to scale credit and non-credit pathways; and with the High School of Science and Technology (Springfield) specific to engineering and preparation of a Performance Incentive Funding grant.

My engagement with our shared governance bodies also continues in earnest (**Goal #6**), and I met five times during the academic year with the local chapter of MCCC (Massachusetts Community College Council). I held an All-College Town Hall Fall and Spring semesters, and I also hold a Fall/Spring “Pizza with the President” forum for students, in addition to meeting each semester with student government leadership. Each spring I also seek individual conversations with full-time and adjunct faculty to hear ideas and suggestions about communication, and met again this year with over a dozen individuals.

Aspects of **Goal #6** as well as **Goal #7** include strengthening communication with Trustees, which I have done through a combination of inclusion on campus-wide communications, emails, and President's Perspective eNewsletters; many individual meetings and phone calls with Trustees throughout the year; and delving further into operational details during Trustee Committee meetings.

Specific to **Goal #8**, the 2015-2020 STCC Student Success Plan (Strategic Plan) prioritizes equity, offering that graduation rates for example, will be predicated on how the college embraces students who "may need different kinds of learning opportunities and support services." With an eye toward reducing achievement and success gaps evident by gender, and for students of color, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education has also placed a priority on equity. The following was provided by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education to public higher education Presidents:

*"I am asking that each of you report on the "Big Three" priorities through what we are calling an "equity" lens... to ensure that public higher education opens doors of opportunity and fulfilment for traditionally underserved populations, we elect to make our top statewide policy and performance priority – Significantly raise the enrollment, attainment and long-term success outcomes among underrepresented student populations."*

One of my accomplishments this year has been to champion equity strategic planning with Cabinet, and to use data in order to be clear about recruitment, retention, and graduation gaps for students of color in particular. There is an enrollment and budget imperative to equity concerns, and with informed administrators I am leading efforts to define "how" and "what" our specific strategies will be to address the following concerns:

DHE data from 2009 to 2017 shows that 69% of white students at STCC were successful (graduated, transferred, remain enrolled, earned 30+ credits), whereas 59% of Latina/Latino students were successful, and 60% of African-American students were successful, during that same period of time. More recently, retention of first-time/full-time (2016-2018) white students was 74% at STCC, whereas the retention rate for Latina/Latino students was 55%, and 58% for African-American students. For context, the white student retention rate at STCC is higher than the Massachusetts community college average (68%), while our students of color retention rates are lower than the Massachusetts community college averages for LatinX and African-American students, respectively (60%; 64%). This difference may be due in part to the large number of competitive health programs at the college where we see disparities in the proportion of students of color enrolled.

STCC also sees some disparities in our outcomes by gender (2011-2017): the success rate for male students is ten percentage points lower than for females (69% vs. 59%). Women on the other hand, are underrepresented in STEM programs at STCC which include manufacturing and engineering (14% in Mechanical Engineering Technology; 5% in Electrical Engineering Technology/Robotics; 20% in Engineering Transfer).

In terms of interventions, over the past year the college has leaned on grant support to aid efforts to address equity concerns. As an example, with leadership from Professor Beth McGinnis-Cavanaugh, the National Science Foundation awarded STCC, in partnership with Smith College, \$1.1 million to focus on STEM education for girls and young women. Professor McGinnis-Cavanaugh also leads a STCC Society of Women Engineers Chapter. STCC also administers a federal Title III grant that has explicit equity goals. One outcome for example, is that by 2020 enrollment in online courses by Hispanic and African-American students will increase to 20%. I am pleased to share that this goal has already been achieved. The Title III grant also seeks to increase overall retention and graduation rates for students of color. Strategies continue to mature, including use of a supplemental instructor (SI) model which places a student/Teaching Assistant in a select number of courses/sections. Data continues to be collected, and given that an SI is in about 5% of all sections, long-term planning and funding aspects are under consideration. One next step is the preparation of an application for a federal Title V grant, which may potentially enable the college to continue examining interventions such as SI.

In 2016 STCC received a five-year US Department of Education HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution) STEM grant. This grant provides key supports that include professional development funding for faculty, and one outcome is that by 2021 the college will increase the number of Hispanic and/or low-income students transferring in select STEM disciplines. We know for example that in 2017-2018, 18 STCC students applied, were accepted, transferred, and enrolled in the College of Engineering at UMass Amherst (out of 104 total STCC students who transferred/enrolled at UMass Amherst in the academic year).

My communication and leadership on equity considerations within the college, notwithstanding grant support, continues to be focused on how we address equity at scale. To this point, STCC has been a site for the 100 Males to College initiative, but with a modest footprint. This fiscal year two sections were run (Computer Concepts and Introduction to Sociology) with a total of 14 registrations. While not exhaustive of equity initiatives over the past year across the college, the following highlight work accomplished with my significant encouragement:

1. Development of a 1-credit First Year Experience course (FYE 101) by a committee of faculty and staff which is now a required course for all General Studies students (about 11% of the study body);
2. Launch of a comprehensive system of academic program review to include student of color enrollment considerations (recruitment/marketing);
3. Development of new degree programs, including Urban Studies in collaboration with Worcester State University, to further define for students General Studies alternatives and a more definitive experience (this degree requires FYE 101, SPN 125, Spanish for Public Service, and SOC 225, Analysis of Urban Systems);
4. Implementation of a “Success Coach” initiative which tracks and seeks engagement with students lagging in their registration, or stopping-out;
5. Reconsideration of institutional financial aid support by both lowering the threshold for account balance holds, while also using a “Pathways Grant” initiative to more intentionally fund student need.

Going forward, and knowing developmental education is intertwined with equity challenges, I am very pleased that we have implemented the revised Board of Higher Education assessment policy. Specifically, for students applying to the college with a high school diploma that includes a 2.7 GPA or better, the college will no longer require Accuplacer testing, but instead will have a given student register for college-level course work. This change is likely to have a significant impact on developmental education, which is known to disproportionately impact students of color. The college is appreciative of DHE research on this topic demonstrating that students at this GPA threshold do equally as well in college-level courses.

With facilitation by Cabinet members that include the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Advancement & External Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the CFO/Vice President of Administration/Finance, I continue stewardship of faculty and staff professional development (**Goal #9**). Our college-wide professional days have included comprehensive workshop options, and I continue despite budget issues, to support and move forward faculty sabbatical requests for approval by Trustees. I also support faculty and staff participation in training opportunities that include Leadership Pioneer Valley, and I support and encourage the pursuit of graduate degrees. Importantly, this Spring I also invited a keynote speaker to present to the college on Value Stream/Lean principles. In addition to equity interventions which will aid our budget through student retention,

value streaming also has the ability to significantly impact the budget by identifying costs savings and efficiencies. Given the expected budget challenges we face for the foreseeable future, it is important for faculty and staff to share an understanding of value stream efforts and the benefits. I will continue working with Cabinet on professional development opportunities where faculty and staff are key participants in the process. Completed this year has been the posting of an RFQ for a value stream consultant, with anticipated contracting to begin in August of 2019.

As for other outcomes and accomplishments this year, they include Academic Affairs navigating a reorganization, with one outcome the creation of a fully integrated STEM School; this summer the college will relaunch “College for Kids” as a signature way to engage future STCC students and their families while demystifying programs such as manufacturing; and with great work by faculty including Professors Gary Mullett and Nick Massa, two additional National Science Foundation grants were secured this year totaling nearly \$1.2 million and deepen college contributions to Photonics and the Internet of Things.

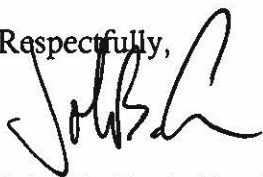
### **Goal Setting with Trustees/FY 2020**

For consideration with Trustees, I offer the following goals for the upcoming fiscal year:

1. Implement the Campus Master Plan with continuing emphasis on Building 20. To include development of a plan in concert with DCAMM which ensures stabilization for the School of Health and affiliated SIMs Medical Center. Anticipated is the need to vacate Building 20 with a 2019-2021 plan that includes a timetable, budget, and accreditation considerations.
2. To aid recruitment and enrollment, establish comprehensive and scaled Early College, which includes examining the STCC *College Now*/Dual Enrollment initiative; renewing the Gateway to College agreement with Springfield Public Schools; establishing a student-focused space on campus for Early College; and completing a Memorandum of Understanding with the High School of Commerce (via the Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership).

3. To aid enrollment, high school recruitment, community engagement of adults, and marketing, will be focused in the cities of Springfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, Agawam and Westfield.
4. Already in process, contract a value stream consultant, commence mapping, and complete the initial cost-savings project by May of 2020. To bring measurable cost savings to college operations in the first year of approximately \$150,000, the nexus of admissions-registration-student financial aid will be a likely focal point.
5. In partnership with the STCC Foundation, launch a Major Gifts Campaign in 2019 that will seek to raise at least \$3 million for student scholarships over the next two years.
6. Enhance student retention, and thereby address budget challenges, by continuing with a set of strategy initiatives that focuses on equity. Particularly for and with students of color, efforts will be made to close recruitment, retention and graduation gaps, by evolving practices and operations across the college in an integrated fashion.
7. Prepare the college for 2021 institution reaccreditation by the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE). This includes leading a process that results in the creation of a required Institutional Self Study. A significant undertaking given how much higher education, and STCC, has changed since the last accreditation visit in 2011, this process will require involvement from administrators, faculty, staff, students, community partners, and Trustees.

Respectfully,



John B. Cook, President



## Springfield Technical Community College

June 24, 2019

*[Motion to submit the below Presidential Evaluation to Commissioner Santiago and the Board of Higher Education was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved by STCC Board of Trustees on June 24, 2019 at a publicly noticed meeting held in public session]*

### **Annual Presidential Evaluation (July 1, 2018 to June 24, 2019)**

The Board of Trustees (BOT) reviewed documents including the Self-Assessment prepared by Dr. Cook, as well as, data relating to the College's performance and Department of Higher Education goals and objectives, the College's Student Success Plan (Strategic Plan), the 2018-2019 President's Report, previous STCC Board of Trustee and Committee meeting minutes, and data provided over the course of the year to the Board. Each Board member brought their individual perspective to the meeting for discussion. The BOT agreed on a final evaluation outcome, and the following summary report was approved by the BOT on June 24, 2019. The meeting was conducted in compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. The Board went through the summary report and the self-assessment prepared by Dr. Cook. The Board unanimously adopted the following Performance Evaluation.



**The Board of Trustees reviewed the following goals which were set for Dr. Cook for the 2018-2019 academic year:**

1. Establish a Health Science Guided Pathway/Allied Health Degree program with stackable credentials.

**A Health Science degree was developed in partnership with faculty, and the new degree has been approved through shared governance both by the STCC Curriculum Committee and the STCC Board of Trustees. The new degree was submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education/Board of Higher Education, and was ultimately approved by the BHE.**

2. Complete a Space Utilization Study to gauge the impact of the new Student Learning Commons on the campus and its programs.

**A comprehensive addendum to the existing Campus Master Plan was completed and adopted by the BOT at its May, 2019 meeting.**

3. Advocate for state, federal and private funding to meet the College's significant deferred maintenance needs, especially as it relates to Building 20 which houses the College's Allied Health Program and its patient simulators.

The College cut the ribbon on the Rubenzahl Learning Commons/Building 19 in the fall of 2018 marking the completion of a major capital project that will greatly enhance the student experience on the STCC campus. In addition, President Cook strongly advocated for alternatives to the continued utilization of Building 20 which is the location for our Allied Health Program and the SIMS Medical Center with 55 patient simulators, which represents millions in investment by the college, area healthcare partners, and the STCC Foundation. Building 20 has significant structural, mechanical, air-handling, water, and environmental challenges. Dr. Cook was able to move the discussion forward at the state level with DCAMM designating Building 20 for a “Readiness Study” which will flesh out available alternatives. The College continues to face significant infrastructure challenges such as the unexpected structural repairs in Putnam Hall/Building 17 this past fall costing in excess of \$1.5 million for emergency repairs. Luckily the College was able to continue to occupy Building 17 during the repair process which averted the need to try to move all the programs during the nearly yearlong repair process.

4. Continue to expand your professional and personal engagement with the greater Springfield community, especially the business community that can be a new source of job training opportunities for the College.

**Dr. Cook is a member of six boards including the Economic Development Council (EDC), the Regional Employment Board (REB), the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, and he also serves on the Boards of the STCC Assistance Corporation, and the STCC Foundation.**

**During the past year Dr. Cook continued to meet with leaders in many sectors, including health care, the new MGM casino and specifically manufacturing. Dr. Cook led a collaborative effort with a local non-profit to provide a pathway for individuals residing in a local emergency shelter to gain training to work at CRRC, the railcar manufacturer in Springfield. A total of 24 individuals participated in the training and were ultimately employed at CRRC.**

5. Strengthen the College's connection to traditional sources of new students such as area high schools to stem the regional trend of lower enrollment in community colleges as the economy continues to improve. Specifically, the college could look at developing a robust app designed to attract new high school students to the college's technical programs. Explore new revenue opportunities for the college especially in the area of employment training and non-traditional students.

**Dr. Cook has overseen extensive work to the College website and continues to work with college staff on the development of a more robust "APP" which will illustrate the wide variety of programs offered at STCC.**

**Dr. Cook has personally visited with a number of local high schools such as Putnam Vocational, Pathfinder Regional Vocational, Westfield, Agawam, Commerce and Sci-Tech to provide greater linkage between STCC and the area high schools. Dr. Cook continues to advocate for Early College and Dual Enrollment which offers high school students the opportunity to take classes on the STCC campus. Previous data collected by the College shows that a high percentage of high school students who took classes on the STCC campus return as full time students.**

**Dr. Cook has also restarted the summer “College for Kids” program offering a wide variety of STEM programs to children ages 11 through 17 during the summer months at the college. This is again based on the data which shows that if we can get a prospective student on campus, there is a strong chance they will enroll at STCC. Dr. Cook is also starting to dig deeper into the enrollment data to see which area high schools are sending high numbers of students and which high schools STCC needs stronger connections with in the future.**

6. Continue to develop and strengthen communication with the colleges shared governance bodies, including the potential formalization of direct communication opportunities with the President, the President’s Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.

**Dr. Cook continued his efforts to seek input and strengthen engagement from all corners of the college. His efforts included a purposeful effort to listen. STCC continues to be an institution in the midst of significant change. The College has begun the process of meaningful program review for the first time in many years, and recently completed a reorganization of its schools aimed at improving efficiency. The College has also begun planning for the upcoming reaccreditation process.**

**During this period of constant change, Dr. Cook continues to communicate with all college stakeholders, including students, faculty and Trustees. He invites dialogue on the future of the College and openly discusses the positive change which is ongoing at STCC. Specific to students, Dr. Cook meets with the leadership of the Student Government Association, as well as, Student Ambassadors. He also held well-attended "Pizza with the President" gatherings for STCC students.**

7. Continue to strengthen communication with the Board of Trustees as new personnel in the President's Office are transitioned into the process. Explore training opportunities for Board members to enhance their knowledge of issues facing community colleges in Massachusetts and across the nation. Continue to attract new Trustees with a direct connection to the college's mission.

**Dr. Cook has increased personal and e-mail communication with Trustees. He has personally met and talked at length with individual Trustees. He has**

increased the level and detail of communication with the Board, especially with the Board sub-committees (Ways & Means; Internal/External; and Investment Subcommittee). He has placed open dialogue items on the BOT agenda to seek input from board members on issues facing the college. During the FY2020 budget process, several board members advocated the utilization of value stream consulting to evaluate the efficiency of some of the college's operations. Dr. Cook took that advice and researched the issue and plans to initiate a request for proposals to begin utilization of value streaming to improve efficiency at the College. Dr. Cook also placed an open dialogue item on marketing on the BOT agenda and plans to take Trustee input into consideration to draft a comprehensive marketing plan for STCC. Dr. Cook has been successful in his engagement and communication with all Board members.

8. Continue to implement the Student Success Plan especially as it relates to closing the equity and achievement gaps for students of color and women.

Dr. Cook has made strong efforts to close equity and achievement gaps. The 2015-2020 STCC Student Success Plan (Strategic Plan) prioritizes equity, offering that graduation rates for example, will be predicated on how the college embraces students who “may need different kinds of learning opportunities and support services.” With an eye toward reducing achievement and success gaps evident by gender, and for students of color,

the BHE has also placed a priority on equity. Dr. Cook has engaged in equity strategic planning with his Cabinet, and has urged them to use data in order to be clear about recruitment, retention, and graduation gaps for students of color in particular. STCC has utilized grant support to aid efforts to address equity concerns. As an example, the National Science Foundation awarded STCC, in partnership with Smith College, \$1.1 million to focus on STEM education for girls and young women. STCC also administers a federal Title III grant that has explicit equity goals.

9. Continue to steward the Professional Development of Faculty and Staff by providing resources and support for enhanced training and educational experiences so that the best and brightest in the academic fields are recruited to STCC and retained with the College.

**Dr. Cook continues to advocate for increased professional development for the college's faculty and staff.**

**The Board of Trustees also notes the following:**

**I. Financial & Budget Acumen**

During the year under consideration, STCC faced severe financial difficulties. The College continued to see declining enrollment, and at the beginning of the fiscal year, the campus suffered two lightning strikes which caused significant damage (over \$1

million in unexpected costs) to the College's IT infrastructure. Dr. Cook demonstrated strong leadership while dealing with the financial and budgetary needs of the college. He opened up the FY2020 budget process providing the BOT and the entire campus with an unprecedented amount of information utilized in the budget review process. Ultimately a balanced budget was adopted by the BOT which called for no layoffs and only a modest increase in student fees.

Dr. Cook stressed the importance of keeping tuition and student fees in close proximity to the Pell Grant amount which allows students with no expected family financial contribution to enroll at the college. While some members of the BOT were not comfortable with the prolonged FY2020 budget discussions, Dr. Cook demonstrated that he has a firm grasp of the college's financial and budgeting process.

## **II. Infrastructure Stewardship**

Dr. Cook has grasped the unique and complex aspects of the STCC campus infrastructure. He successfully oversaw the completion of the Rubenzahl Learning Commons/Building 19 project, and continues to strongly advocate for alternatives to Building 20. He and STCC's talented facilities maintenance staff were able to avert a crisis with the unexpected problems in Building 17. Unfortunately it seems only a matter of time before STCC is faced with another significant infrastructure crisis that will disrupt our ability to provide educational services to our students. Dr. Cook has a good handle on the college's needs for the foreseeable future, but without increased



state funding, the College's ability to avoid a future disaster becomes increasingly difficult.

### **III. Institutional Leadership & Strategic Management**

During the timeframe under consideration, Dr. Cook has improved as an institutional leader and strategic manager. The BOT understands that an effective leader brings a degree of change, and Dr. Cook has been thoughtful and diligent with his approach to reorganizing the College.

### **IV. Institutional, System & Commonwealth-level Goals**

We recognize that there are a multitude of System and Commonwealth-level goals, and we read in Dr. Cook's Self-Assessment how STCC is faring regarding key metrics related to enrollment, degree completion, as well as, success in developmental education. STCC serves a diverse student population. In the fall of 2018, 29% of students were Latina/Latino (up from 19% in 2008) and African-American students comprised 15% of the STCC student body (roughly the same as 2008). In addition, DHE data indicates STCC (at 52% in FY 2017) has one of the highest Pell grant recipient populations in the Commonwealth. This shows that STCC is providing access to higher education by low-income families in the area. We recommend in the year ahead that Dr. Cook further educates the BOT in understanding how our local institutional goals connect to efforts across Massachusetts higher education.

## **V. Goals for the Coming Year**

The Board of Trustees has decided to continue and expand the goals set for Dr. Cook for the coming year:

1. Continue to advocate for state, federal and private funding to meet the College's significant deferred maintenance needs, especially as it relates to Building 20 which houses the College's Allied Health Program and its patient simulators. Implement the Campus Master Plan with primary emphasis on Building 20. Continue to work with DCAMM and other state officials to gain stabilization for the College's Allied Health Program. Prepare a realistic plan surrounding anticipated need to vacate Building 20 which includes a timetable, budget, and accreditation considerations.
2. Continue to expand his professional and personal engagement with the greater Springfield community, especially the business community that can be a new source of job and workforce training opportunities for the College.
3. Continue to strengthen the College's connection to traditional sources of new students such as area high schools to stem the regional trend of lower enrollment in community colleges. To aid recruitment and enrollment, establish comprehensive and scaled Early College, which includes examining the STCC College Now/Dual Enrollment initiative; renew the Gateway to College agreement with Springfield Public Schools; establishing a student-focused space on campus for Early College; and complete a Memorandum of Understanding with the High School of Commerce (via the Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership). Increase high school recruitment, community engagement of adults,

and marketing, with particular focus in the cities of Springfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, Agawam and Westfield.

4. Continue to develop and strengthen communication with the colleges shared governance bodies, including continuing efforts to formalize of direct communication opportunities with the President, the President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.
5. Attract new Trustees with a direct connection to the college's mission.
6. Continue to implement the Student Success Plan especially as it relates to closing the equity and achievement gaps for students of color and women.
7. Continue to steward the Professional Development of Faculty and Staff by providing resources and support for enhanced training and educational experiences so that the best and brightest in the academic fields are recruited to STCC and retained with the College.
8. Retain a value stream consultant, commence mapping, and complete the initial cost-savings project by May of 2020 with a goal of bringing measurable cost savings to college operations in the first year of approximately \$150,000, the nexus of admissions-registration-student financial aid will be a likely primary focal point.
9. In partnership with the STCC Foundation, launch a Major Gifts Campaign in 2019 that will seek to raise at least \$3 million for student scholarships over the next two years.
10. Prepare the college for 2021 institution reaccreditation by the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE). This includes leading a process that results in the creation of a required Institutional Self Study. A significant undertaking given how much

higher education, and STCC, has changed since the last accreditation visit in 2011, this process will require involvement from administrators, faculty, staff, students, community partners, and Trustees.

### **Conclusion**

President Cook has the full faith of the Board to oversee the day-to-day operation and management of STCC, its systems, and personnel. We recommend, based on our comprehensive performance review, that Dr. Cook receive the maximum increase in compensation authorized by the Board of Higher Education for community college presidents given his thorough, thoughtful, and engaged performance this past year.

Respectfully Submitted,



Franklin Quigley, Acting Chairperson  
Springfield Technical Community College  
Board of Trustees

Enc. Presidential Self-Assessment from Dr. John B. Cook