North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges
Board Self-Evaluation Committee Report
April 19, 2022

Board Self-Assessment: High-Level Outcomes and Recommendations

Introduction and Context

Members of the State Board of Community Colleges were invited, in March 2022, to participate in the Board's initial self-assessment survey. The confidential survey was designed to inform the following key objectives:

- Establishment of annual goals and expectations for the System President, System Office and Board
- Development and execution of a three-year Board Engagement and Development plan designed to:
  - support more clear expectations for Board involvement and execution of its responsibilities
  - pursue strategies and tactics to strengthen onboarding, infrastructure, and processes that support meaningful Board engagement
  - facilitate the activation of Board members as System advocates

At its March 2022 meeting, the Board discussed Board responses and recommendations related to the System President's goals for calendar year 2022. At the April 2022 meeting of the Policy and Governance committee, the Board Self-Evaluation Committee will discuss Board responses to the balance of the survey and share a set of recommendations (outlined below) for Phase Two of a Board development and engagement plan.

Our desired outcome, at the Policy and Governance Committee, is to reach alignment around a set of recommendations to take forward to the full Board. Following the Board's review and approval of final recommendations, the Board Self-Evaluation Committee will confer with the Chair, State Board and Chair, Policy and Governance Committee to determine next steps.

Board Self-Evaluation Committee Recommendations

1. **Recommendation: Establish a process and schedule for annual presidential evaluation and goal setting**

There is broad support for a process that supports a stronger and more meaningful partnership with the President and System Office; this process would establish a cadence and timeline to include annual goal setting, quarterly meetings to sustain alignment, and a year-end evaluation.

Recommendation for a cadence and timeline of related activities for Board engagement:

- August: Board will review/update the Presidential evaluation instrument to support a related goal-setting exercise for the following fiscal year
- September: System President will share a self-evaluation with the Board
  - President may choose to review the self-evaluation, in advance, with a sub-committee comprised of at least three members of the Board: Board Chair, Chair of the Personnel Committee, and Chair of the Policy and Governance Committee.
- October: Board will participate in the Presidential Evaluation and Goal-Setting process
- November/December:
  - Outcomes of the Presidential Evaluation and Goal-Setting Survey to be discussed by the Board in closed session
  - The President will meet with a sub-committee of the Board to discuss the annual review and to review a draft set of goals. The sub-committee will be comprised of at least three members of the Board to include the Board Chair, Chair of the Personnel Committee, and Chair of the Policy and Governance Committee.
- January: President will share his annual goals with the Board for the next fiscal year
- The President will use monthly Board meetings to share updates on progress toward annual goals to support alignment and facilitate refinements over the course of the year.

2. **Recommendation: Establish a stronger framework for Board engagement in supporting, understanding, and monitoring Strategic Plan KPIs, milestones, and deliverables**

We find broad support for the Board's sustained engagement in strategic decisioning around critical issues facing the System and in strategic oversight of the Strategic Plan. Board members also want the System Office to establish stronger performance indicators and metrics and provide regular updates on our progress toward out goals. Survey outcomes indicate that the Board finds the current Strategic Plan dashboard to be too high-level and that many presentations provide extensive data sets that do not feel actionable. Understanding performance within the context of historical trends and the competitive landscape is also recommended.

It is recommended that, as the System Office completes and disseminates a new four-year strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Committee work closely with the System Office to accomplish the following two deliverables:

- Design of, and routine presentation--at each monthly Board meeting--of a Strategic Plan Dashboard that clearly captures progress toward defined milestones, KPIs and deliverables
- In partnership with the leadership of each Board committee (Chair, Vice Chair, System Office liaison) support the integration into the Committee's annual workplan and monthly agenda of a stronger oversight function for those Strategic Plan initiatives related to the Committee's charge. (See related recommendations regarding Board committees, below)

3. Recommendation: Establish a stronger platform for Board engagement and service in fulfillment of its role and mission

Survey outcomes reveal that, with ½ of Board members serving less than one year, nearly 60% of Board members would like to have a stronger understanding of the role and mission of the Board and there is unanimous agreement for a Board handbook.

Board members also expressed interest in more clearly defining expectations for Board members and ensuring its capacity to both participate meaningfully in the establishment of strategic priorities for the System and to provide oversight of the System's achievement of defined priorities. Board members also indicated an interest in reviewing the by-laws.

Survey outcomes also illuminate a desire to bring greater focus in Board and Committee meetings to the discussion of strategic system issues and for the need to explore both new standing committees as well as ad-hoc, time-limited committees to explore critical issues.

Finally, many members expressed a desire for Board members to get to know one another better.

The Board Self-Evaluation Committee offers six additional related/embedded recommendations, for consideration by the Policy and Governance Committee, designed to strengthen Board processes, practices, and structures:

a. Establish a new curriculum for onboarding and Board education, in collaboration with the System Office. Develop a Board handbook and a schedule for Board education.

b. Review, evaluate and revise, as needed, by-laws to ensure that they provide comprehensive and adequate guidance to support the board's actions and decisions. By-laws should clearly outline governance and authority levels, rights, and expectations.

c. Establish greater Board control over its agenda to support Board review and discussion of substantive System issues, facilitate strategic decisioning, and enhance oversight of the System's achievement of defined priorities.

d. Enhance Committee structure, mission, and processes: Review and refine current Committee charters to ensure that each Committee has a clear charge as to its areas of responsibility, oversight and risk mitigation. Align the charge of each committee to support fulfillment of its statutory obligations and the implementation of the new Strategic Plan. Partner with Committee liaisons from the System Office to redesign committee agendas to support better information flow to members that will facilitate their engagement and strategic decisioning. Assess whether additional committees or work groups are needed to support implementation of the Strategic Plan.

e. Establish a process for vetting the establishment of new committees and work groups, with the potential establishment of a Marketing and Communications committee for initial consideration.

f. Re-introduce informal Board dinners to take place during monthly meetings.

Next Steps and Timeline

- Thursday, April 21: Policy and Governance Committee to review the Board Self-Evaluation Committee's report and recommendations. Policy and Governance Committee to consider adoption of these findings and recommendations for referral to the full Board.
- Friday, April 22: Policy and Governance Committee to refer the Committee's (potentially refined) findings and recommendations for approval by the Board.
- May: Board Self-Evaluation Committee to reconvene, with the Chair, State Board and Chair, Policy and Governance Committee to discuss next steps and development of an action plan, in collaboration with the System Office.