

# **Advancing Public Higher Education in Massachusetts:**

## **A Roadmap for Governor-Elect Patrick**

**Prepared by the Public Higher Education  
Coalition**

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# **Advancing Public Higher Education in Massachusetts: A Roadmap for Governor Deval Patrick**

## **Introduction and Executive Summary**

The Public Higher Education Coalition has come together to articulate a broad vision of how the Commonwealth's public higher education system can be dramatically improved. Tinkering on the edges of the system -- a little more financial aid, a year or two of slightly increased funding, a few more teachers in classrooms -- will not achieve our aims. Dramatic, principled investment based on an in-depth understanding of the critical importance of public higher education to the Commonwealth will.

For all the outstanding teaching, research and public service that is done at our 29 campuses, the system has not been provided the means to become what the citizens of the Commonwealth need and deserve: one of the finest public higher education systems in the nation. Now is the time, finally, to build that system.

The following paper outlines the five key goals we believe the new Governor (and everyone committed to public higher education) should embrace. For each goal, we provide relevant background information, facts and figures, and some clear steps that should be taken to move us toward the goal.

We offer two important caveats about the paper. First, we expect that as more supporters of public higher education review and discuss it, it may be modified. While we see this as a work in progress, we believe strongly that the goals and steps we outline lay a strong foundation for developing a stronger, more effective, and more relevant system of public higher education for Massachusetts. Second, while we are firmly committed to the entire system of community colleges, state colleges, and the five UMass campuses as an integrated whole, most of our examples and statistics come from the UMass Amherst campus. This is where this paper originated and where more data is readily available, but we believe the principles outlined in it are applicable system-wide.

What follows is a summary of the goals and steps we propose in the paper.

## **1. Fund public higher education so it can serve the commonwealth**

**Step 1: Fix the immediate funding gap**

**Step 2: Take care of profound capital needs**

**Step 3: Put public higher education on firm financial footing for its upward progress**

## **2. Make higher education affordable**

**Step 1: Reform financial aid and freeze fees**

**Step 2: Free community college and explore free college and university**

**Step 3: Institute free public higher education**

## **3. Make higher education accessible to all**

**Step 1: Be pro-active in recruitment.**

**Step 2: Provide a full range of services and supports to those students who enroll**

**Step 3: Guarantee access to one of the state's public colleges or universities**

## **4. Hire more teachers and researchers**

**Step 1: Require campus reports on the change in the number of faculty and staff over the past fifteen years, and on plans to rebuild to appropriate levels.**

**Step 2: Earmark funds in the budget for five year hiring plans on each campus**

**Step 3: Require reports to the Joint Committee on Higher Education on progress toward five year hiring goals**

## **5. Democratize public higher education**

**Step 1: Establish Campus Councils that truly are broadly representative of the community**

**Step 2: Guarantee meaningful autonomy for student governance bodies.**

**Step 3: Democratize the Boards of Trustees**

**Step 4: Respect Collective Bargaining**

# 1. Fund public higher education so it can serve the commonwealth

First to be cut, last to be restored, our state colleges and universities are chronically underfunded. In good times we gain back only a portion of what was lost during budget crises. In the best of times, the system has not been funded at a level for us to achieve our common goal: creating one of the top systems of public higher education. Our faculty's cutting edge research provides the basis for new patents and economic growth; we educate and train many thousands of students every year; and we serve struggling cities and towns, battered women's shelters, child care providers, and many others. These activities are what distinguish a *public* higher education system, and they should be valued and supported.

- **Step 1: Fix the immediate funding gap:** Commit to funding public higher education at least at the level called for in the Senate Higher Education Bill. That bill, passed unanimously by the Senate, calls for a \$400 million increase in operating funds to our state colleges and universities, to be achieved over a five to seven year period.
- **Step 2: Take care of profound capital needs:** Consistent with the Senate task force recommendations, approve at least \$2 billion in capital bonds over the next 5 to 10 years necessary to repair the ailing infrastructure of our aging and long-ignored campuses.
- **Step 3: Put public higher education on firm financial footing for its upward progress:** Find the means to achieve funding mechanisms that provide public higher education the financial stability essential to its growth, and in doing so provide that Massachusetts colleges and universities be funded on a par with the top public colleges and universities.

## The Benefits of Public Higher Education

The benefits of an educated population are many and incontrovertible: College graduates earn more than high school graduates, pay more taxes, and build and work in businesses that sustain the economy. More than 80 percent of the graduates of public higher education stay in the state. Massachusetts, a leader in the "knowledge economy," needs a highly educated citizenry even more than most states. An outstanding college education is essential to the continued social, cultural, and economic development of the state.

*More than 80 percent of the graduates of public higher education stay in the state.*

Massachusetts' public colleges and universities have responded to the demands of the knowledge economy with research that has rippled throughout our economy. A recent report finds that every dollar of direct state investment generates eight times that in economic activity. The result is the hidden giant of research in this state: The University of Massachusetts ranks third,

right behind Harvard and MIT, in research dollars; it is one of the top 15 nationally in generating royalties and licensing revenue.<sup>1</sup>

Our colleges and universities are prepared to accelerate Massachusetts' entry into some of the most important new industries, such as stem cell research, nanotechnology, renewable energy, and wireless networks. Governor-elect Patrick has supported "new technology to guarantee wireless Internet access from anywhere in the State, regardless of region."<sup>2</sup> Researchers in the UMass Amherst Computer Science Department have been leading a large project to bring wireless Internet to urban centers, rural townships, wildlife habitats, and remote regions of the globe – and this is just one of several projects to expand wireless networks.<sup>3</sup> A second area of innovation, where funding can make a difference, is nanoscience, the investigation of the fundamental science behind the "very small," and nanotechnology, the development of applications based on nanoscience, such as the use of small assemblies of atoms and molecules for targeted drug delivery or high density information storage. "Nano" will be a critically important part of the economic future of the Commonwealth and the University is a leading center for nanotechnology. The recent award of a \$16 million five-year grant to the University is allowing the creation of the Center for Hierarchical Manufacturing, which has the mission to move nanotechnology from laboratory innovation to components and devices that can be manufactured.<sup>4</sup> In November 2006 the Trustees' Stem Cell Strategy Working Group recommended creating a human stem cell core at UMass Worcester and an animal stem cell core at UMass Amherst. The Amherst group works on stem cell engineering, in vivo and in vitro biomanufacturing, and applied systems biology.

*From 2001 to 2004 the Commonwealth decreased its funding for public higher education by more than any other state.*

Administrators understandably value that research which generates external funding support and leads to patent royalties, but a *public* college should value all those activities that serve the organizations and residents of the Commonwealth – even if those served are too poor to contribute financially. Stem cells, wireless systems, and nanotechnology contribute mightily to the good of the Commonwealth – but so do faculty studies of the feasibility of a Boston living wage, analyses of domestic violence, studies of gender equity in the labor movement, or programs to examine universal child care. UMass boasts the only public architecture school, a nationally respected Dance and Music program as well as a world famous African American Studies department. Students from UMass graduate and contribute to the cultural and academic life of the Commonwealth, both vital to sustaining the standard of living we experience here. A public institution must be concerned with more than the revenue it generates; it must value and reward all the ways its faculty, students, and staff serve the people.

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<sup>1</sup> "UMass: A Strategic Investment. A Critical Asset for the Commonwealth's Economic Future," 2006, pages 2 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> Deval Patrick, "Moving Massachusetts Forward," 2006, page 4.

<sup>3</sup> See "Robust Affordable Community Wireless Networks" by Mark Corner, Deepak Ganesan, Jim Kurose, Brian Levine, Prashant Shenoy, Don Towsley, and Arun Venkataraman, Department of Computer Science, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

<sup>4</sup> For much more complete information see <http://www.umass.edu/massnanotech/>

## Underfunding Public Higher Education

None of this is possible without extensive investment in the public education system: But from 2001 to 2004 the Commonwealth decreased its funding for public higher education by more than any other state, a 32.6 percent reduction (adjusted for inflation).<sup>5</sup> The Fiscal Year 2006 state appropriation is lower than the Fiscal Year 2003 appropriation.<sup>6</sup> Massachusetts now spends more incarcerating its citizens than on its public colleges and universities; a quarter century ago we spent four times as much on higher education as on the prison system.<sup>7</sup> These are indications of seriously misplaced priorities.

In bad times public higher education is cut much more than the rest of the state budget, as if higher education were a luxury good that the state would support only with surplus funds. In good times we gain back a part of what was cut, but only a part, so that each crisis we enter with a weaker base – fewer nationally competitive tenure-track faculty, older and more dilapidated buildings.

Disgracefully, the state has relied on students and their parents to make up for the shortfall in state appropriations. Consider the UMass Amherst budget. In Fiscal Year 2003, the state appropriation was more than three times as much as the amount paid in mandatory student fees.<sup>8</sup> This year (Fiscal Year 2007) the state appropriation is not even one-and-a-half times as much as the amount paid in mandatory student fees: students are paying \$68,335,559 more, and the state appropriation is \$19,682,491 less.<sup>9</sup>

The state needs to make a commitment to provide the funding necessary to ensure quality accessible public higher education. What level is needed? A starting point has been the formula administered by the Board of Higher Education which takes into account a series of factors –

*Massachusetts now spends more incarcerating its citizens than on its public colleges and universities.*

numbers and type of students, campus size, library and research lab needs -- to determine what amount of money is needed to run a campus adequately. The Senate Task Force has found a \$400 million gap between what the campuses need and what the state provides.<sup>10</sup> **As Step 1 toward reinvesting in public higher education, the state should commit to closing this**

<sup>5</sup> Senate Task Force Report, page 5.

<sup>6</sup> Table II at [www.umass.edu/budget](http://www.umass.edu/budget) for Amherst campus.

<sup>7</sup> Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, “State Spending More on Prisons than Higher Education.” Bulletin of November 24, 2003. See Figure 1. Available at <http://www.masstaxpayers.org/data/pdf/bulletins/11-24-03%20Corrections%20Bulletin.PDF> accessed November 18, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> In FY03 the state appropriation was \$226,793,544 – 3.08 times as much as the amount paid in Mandatory Student Fees, \$73,557,228. See Table II of the UMass Amherst budget.

<sup>9</sup> See table II of the UMass budget. The exact multiple is 1.46 times for FY07. If tuition retention is included as part of the state appropriation, then the state appropriation during these five years has increased by \$10,135,177 or by 4.5% in four years, not adjusting for inflation, which has run more than 3% per year. If tuition retention is included as part of the state appropriation, then the multiple rises to 1.70 times the amount paid in mandatory student fees.

<sup>10</sup> “Investing in Our Future: Affordability, Quality, Jobs,” Report of the Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education, March 2005, pages 7-8. Co-chaired by Senators Stan Rosenberg and Steven Panagiotakos.

**funding gap within five years, and to assuring funding at least at the formula level thereafter.**

Adequate yearly appropriations are crucially important, but by themselves they are not enough. For too long the state has neglected the physical infrastructure of public higher education. Many of our buildings date from the dramatic expansion of public higher education in the 1960s. All too often those buildings were not well built to begin with, and have not been adequately maintained since. Many other buildings are far older than the 1960s; the campus relies heavily on them, but incurs substantial costs in doing so. On the UMass Amherst campus, a study commissioned by Chancellor Lombardi concluded that the Amherst campus needs \$1.3 billion to address all of the deferred maintenance on campus, over and above the \$710 million the campus is spending to build new structures. If UMass Amherst borrowed enough to complete all its deferred maintenance, the campus would need to use 22 percent of its operating budget to pay building debt – an unsustainable amount.<sup>11</sup>

**Step 2, therefore, is for the state to assume responsibility for addressing the deferred maintenance and capital needs in public higher education.** The Senate Task Force recommended “that the Commonwealth borrow, through General Obligation bonds, \$1.7 billion over the next five years for the University of Massachusetts” and a further \$1.2 billion over the next ten years for Massachusetts state and community colleges.<sup>12</sup> Addressing deferred maintenance is important in itself, and further delay is likely to significantly increase the cost. It is important as well, however, to free up funds currently being expended out of campus general operating budgets. On the UMass Amherst campus, for example, during the period 2007-2011, the chancellor projects spending \$97 million of campus operating funds on capital costs. Other campuses also face the need to address problems of deferred maintenance, as well as the need to erect new buildings to fulfill the campuses’ missions.

**Step 3 is for the Commonwealth to fund public higher education on a par with national leaders, and to do so through a stable funding mechanism.** In inflation-adjusted dollars, public higher education receives less today than in 1988, and the state appropriation in FY07 is less than that in FY03.<sup>13</sup> When state budgets are good, optimism prevails that “never again” will public higher education face such problems; then, when the next fiscal crisis hits, people say it is too late to address the problem. A stable funding mechanism which will allow substantial growth in operating funds might involve a dedicated tax of some sort, one whose revenues are comparatively immune to fiscal swings: for example, two cents of the sales tax, revenue from increased gasoline taxes, or dedicated funds from any gambling facilities established in the state. The economic and political viability of any of these particular methods is beyond the scope of this statement. Our aim here is to make clear that our higher education system cannot advance without a structural change in the way we fund our colleges and universities. A Commission should be appointed to propose within one year a stable funding solution for public higher education.

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<sup>11</sup> Kristin Palpini, “\$1.3 Billion to Repair UMass: Deferred Fixes Stir Sticker Shock,” *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, November 17, 2006. The calculation of deferred maintenance costs was conducted by SightLines Facilities Asset Advisers.

<sup>12</sup> Senate Task Force Report, pages 11-12.

<sup>13</sup> For 1988 comparison see Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, “The University of Massachusetts: Removing Barriers to Educational Excellence at the State’s Public Research University,” June 2004, page 16 Figure 2. Available at <http://www.masstaxpayers.org/data/pdf/reports/UMassrep.pdf> and accessed on November 18, 2006. For FY03 to FY07 comparison see [www.umass.edu/budget](http://www.umass.edu/budget) Table II.

## 2. Make higher education affordable

More and more students are being priced out of higher education, including public higher education. In the last ten years, the real costs (after adjusting for inflation) of tuition and fees have increased by 39 percent in the University of Massachusetts system, by 29 percent in the State College system, and by 9 percent among State Community Colleges.<sup>14</sup> This is happening at the same time that a college education is more and more necessary to gain access to economic opportunities. All high school graduates should have access to a quality, affordable public university or college.<sup>15</sup>

- **Step 1: Reform financial aid and freeze fees.** Commit to freezing tuition and fees, and direct state financial aid to students whose family incomes are equal to or less than the Commonwealth's median income.
- **Step 2: Free community college and explore free college and university.** Provide tuition and fee waivers to all qualified Massachusetts high school graduates attending community college. Appoint a commission to investigate the feasibility of across-the-board free public higher education.
- **Step 3: Institute free public higher education.** College today is a necessity, not a luxury. Just as every student in the state is entitled to free high school education, they should be entitled to free higher education.

### Step 1: Reform Financial Aid and Freeze Fees

In order to address the dramatic increase in the cost of attending the Commonwealth's colleges and universities, immediate action is necessary. This action should take two forms: a reform of the financial aid system and an immediate freeze on all tuition and fees. This white paper will address these two actions separately in the pages that follow, but it is important to note that these problems are directly related. The more costly higher education becomes, the more pronounced the inadequacies of our current financial aid system. For this reason, efforts to improve the financial aid system must be carefully coordinated with efforts to decrease the cost of attendance.

### A Flawed Financial Aid System

In order to begin to reform the financial aid system, we must first understand the ways in which the current system is inadequate. To begin with, there is simply not enough financial aid available; as a result, many students cannot attend the Commonwealth's public universities at all. In 2005, the average family in the lowest 20% of the Commonwealth's income distribution would have had to pay more than half of its annual income, even after accounting for financial

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<sup>14</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, "Final Report," October 2006, page ii.

<sup>15</sup> Deval Patrick, "Moving Massachusetts Forward," page 17.



aid, in order to cover the cost of a public community college.<sup>16</sup> This makes college a major barrier for at least one-fifth of the Commonwealth's population. Massachusetts families with incomes in the bottom 40 percent would need to spend 52 percent of their family income to pay the net cost of a public four-year college or university.<sup>17</sup>

For those who are able to find a way to attend college, a whole host of additional financial aid problems await. First, large portions of the financial aid packages allowing lower income students to attend public colleges and universities are in the form of interest bearing loans. For example, Federal financial aid makes up the bulk of all financial aid available to students at UMass Amherst, and of the \$85,024,055 in Federal financial aid disbursed to UMass-Amherst undergraduates in the 2005-2006 academic year, \$63,435,610 (or 74.6%) comes in the form of interest bearing loans.<sup>18</sup> On a micro level, the average UMass Amherst undergraduate who received student loans borrowed \$7,706 in the 2004-2005 academic year, while the total average aid package was \$11,348.<sup>19</sup> Not only is the preponderance of loan-based financial aid burdensome for students; it could well have a negative impact on the Commonwealth as a whole by making public service work financially infeasible for many graduates. According to a recent report, 37% of public four-year college graduates would face serious financial hardship if they attempted to work as social workers while repaying their loan debts.<sup>20</sup>

*Massachusetts families with incomes in the bottom 40 percent would need to spend 52 percent of their family income to pay the net cost of a public four-year college or university.*

MASSGrant - the foundation of the Massachusetts Financial Aid system – has been crippled. Not only has the dollar amount invested in MASSGrant been cut nearly in half over the past 15 years (from over \$57 million in 1988-89 to \$24 million in 2003-04), but unlike other state grant programs, “the MASSGrant program does not include language that mandates funding must be ‘no less than’ a certain amount.”<sup>21</sup> As a result, MASSGrant is the first to be cut, and “earmarks” to fund other programs take funding directly away from the program. As the Board of Higher Education Task Force on Financial Aid recommends, the purchasing power of MASSGrant must be immediately increased, and legislative appropriation language must be secured to ensure that MASSGrant receives its fair share in the State Financial Aid Program account.

A significant portion of public financial aid dollars goes to students attending private institutions. For example, in FY 2004, the Gilbert Matching Student Grant provided over \$18 million in

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<sup>16</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, "Final Report," October 2006, page 6. Their source is "Measuring Up 2006: The State Report Card on Higher Education," produced by The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and available at [www.highereducation.org](http://www.highereducation.org)

<sup>17</sup> "Measuring Up 2006," op. cit., page 9.

<sup>18</sup> "Undergrad Financial Aid Award, FY 2006." Office of Institutional Research, 2006. University of Massachusetts Amherst. 23 November 2006 [http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factbooks/05-06/statistics/FB\\_ss\\_05\\_2005.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factbooks/05-06/statistics/FB_ss_05_2005.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> "UMass Amherst At a Glance, 2005-2006." Office of Institutional Research, 2006. University of Massachusetts Amherst. 23 November 2006 [http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/glance/FS\\_gla\\_01\\_2005.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/glance/FS_gla_01_2005.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Swarthout, Luke. "Paying Back Not Giving Back: Student Debt's Negative Impact on Public Service Career Opportunities." State PIRGs' Higher Education Project. 2006. Public Interest Research Group. 23 November 2006. <http://www.pirg.org/highered/payingback.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, "Final Report," October 2006, page 9

public dollars to students enrolled at private institutions, for a mean supplementary award of nearly \$2,000 per student.<sup>22</sup> So while funding for MASSGrant decreased by 74% between FY1988-89 and FY2003-04, funding for the Gilbert Grant increased by 35% over the same period<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the Gilbert Grant, a significant portion of MASSGrant funds are directed to students in private institutions. This is because of a “cap” system where the maximum MASSGrant award is the highest for students attending private colleges, and the lowest for students attending community colleges. Indeed, in FY 2004, over half of the total MASSGrant allocation – \$11.7 million – was given to students in private institutions, at a mean award of \$1,286, compared to the mean award of \$495 for a community college student or \$660 for a state college student. Indeed, this cap system was put into place years ago, when public colleges and universities were meeting students’ full financial needs. Yet clearly, we are living in a different day and age, and this antiquated system must be revisited to ensure that MASSGrant supports ALL students. In this same spirit, we support the Financial Aid Task Force’s recommendation that all need-based financial aid be directed to “students whose family incomes are equal to or less than the Commonwealth’s median income” (roughly \$70,000).<sup>24</sup>

The problems caused by the financial aid system are exacerbated by the rapid increase in the cost of attendance at the Commonwealth’s public institutions of higher education. As noted above, in the last decade tuition and fees have increased 39% in the University of Massachusetts system, 29% in the State College system, and 9% among State Community Colleges (measured in constant 2005 dollars; the costs have gone up far more in nominal terms). This increase has come disproportionately in the form of rising fees. For example, in actual dollars, tuition and fees for an in-state undergraduate at UMass-Amherst have increased 80% over the last 10 years. Taken by itself, tuition has actually decreased by 14% over the same period, while fees have increased by 137%.<sup>25</sup> For this reason, it is imperative that the Commonwealth address the fee structure at its public institutions of higher education in order to keep college affordable and accessible.

Fees are also a problem for graduate students in the University of Massachusetts system. While funded graduate students receive tuition waivers, as well as waivers for many mandatory fees, they are required to pay the Graduate Service Fee or the Graduate Program Fee, depending upon where they are in their degree progress. The Graduate Service Fee, which is currently \$554.50 per semester, has increased by over 100% since 2001. This rapid increase in grad student fees, coupled with much slower increases in graduate employee wages, puts us at the bottom of the pack with respect to our peer institutions in terms of total graduate student compensation, making it difficult for us to compete for the best graduate students.

In summary, the financial aid system, which does not meet the needs of the Commonwealth’s poorest citizens, and saddles many middle class students with unmanageable debt, must be overhauled in order to ensure that Massachusetts is able to meet its obligation to provide residents with affordable, accessible higher education. At the same time, there should be a freeze on tuition and fee increases, and where possible, a roll back of student fees and tuition.

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<sup>22</sup> *ibid.* page 8

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.* page 9

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* page 25

<sup>25</sup> “Undergraduate Student Charges: Tuition, Required Fees, and Room and Board Expenses, Academic Years 1977-78 Through 2006-07.” Office of Institutional Research, 2006. University of Massachusetts Amherst. 23 November 2006 [http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factsheets/student\\_charges/FS\\_chg\\_01\\_s06.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factsheets/student_charges/FS_chg_01_s06.pdf)

## **Step 2: Make community college free and explore free college and university.**

Freezing tuition and fees, and directing financial aid to the neediest, are important first steps, but the Commonwealth can and should do more. In a world where higher education is increasingly necessary in order to attain a good job, we need to move toward a system of free public higher education. An important but dramatic step can be taken in this direction by making Community College free.

*A study of recent high school graduates found that nearly half of those who did not attend or who dropped out of college cited financial constraints as a key obstacle.*

Four year colleges and universities are not a viable option for every student immediately. Community colleges developed out of the need for a skilled workforce in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and were an option for those who wished to enter careers while remaining close to their community.<sup>26</sup> These two goals are still applicable to contemporary society. The workforce needs of the Commonwealth's knowledge-driven economy are significant as never before. Available jobs in our economy require a wide variety of skill levels; we cannot have a system designed only to train professionals and upper level managers, providing "higher education for the privileged." Recently, there were simultaneously 74,000 vacant positions and 160,000 unemployed workers in the Commonwealth, according to the Department of Workforce Development's Job Vacancy Survey.<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, community colleges, if properly supported, can prepare those looking for jobs to qualify for the available jobs. A primary barrier between a workforce in need of training and institutions that can provide this training is access to these institutions at a price students can afford. The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education reports that "A study of recent high school graduates found that nearly half of those who did not attend or who dropped out of college cited financial constraints as a key obstacle."<sup>28</sup>

At present, public education in Massachusetts is free from kindergarten through high school. We are proposing that this free public education be extended by two years immediately, so that we move from free education from K-12 to free education from K-14. This act would have a powerful impact on the lives of thousands of Massachusetts residents and would be a dramatic message to businesses in and outside the state: in this state, we expect all students will attend college and be prepared for the knowledge economy.

How much would it cost? The Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid recommended that free Community College be provided only to those Massachusetts residents "who complete a rigorous curriculum, complete early assessment, and enter college within six

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<sup>26</sup> American Association of Community Colleges. "Historical Information".

<sup>27</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Task Force Report on Student Financial Aid. 22

<sup>28</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force, op. cit., page 1.

months of high school graduation.”<sup>29</sup> Their proposal is estimated to cost between \$32.5 million (for 5,884 students) and \$57.5 million (for 10,600 students).<sup>30</sup>

Even as we embrace free community college, the state should also explore the feasibility, cost, and benefits of introducing a system of free public higher education for all students. The governor should appoint a commission to do a serious study of this issue, to consider alternative forms of implementation, and to assess the consequences of alternative scenarios.

Massachusetts could establish a system of free public higher education for all students from kindergarten through four years of college. Such a system would be enthusiastically embraced by the state’s residents, and it would send a message to the world that Massachusetts is determined to be a leader in the knowledge economy, giving all its residents an opportunity to be fully educated. Many states used to have systems that were free or close to free, and at the end of World War II the G.I. bill made college free for millions of veterans, a program estimated to have returned economic benefits of \$6.90 for each dollar that the program initially cost.<sup>31</sup> The modern American middle class was built on that GI Bill. Free higher education is not just a distant memory: a number of states have begun offering innovative funding that makes four years of college essentially free. Georgia’s HOPE Scholarships provides free tuition plus money for books and supplies to all Georgians who have a B average in high school and maintain that average in a Georgia state college or university. The TAP program in New Jersey is different in that it is needs-based but it is broad enough to reach a third of all New Jersey state college students and provides free education for many of them. The City University of New York system for much of its history was free; the California system has traditionally had extremely low tuition rates. Each of these approaches have strengths and limitations that would need to be debated. But they all achieve something Massachusetts has not yet done: they take dramatic steps toward achieving universal higher education for its citizens.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> See Gintautas Dumcius, “Higher Ed Officials Crunch Numbers Behind Tuition-Fee Waiver Plan,” State House News Service, November 8, 2006.

<sup>31</sup> Subcommittee on Education and Health of the Joint Economic Committee, “A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Government in Postsecondary Education Under the World War II G.I. Bill,” December 14, 1988.

### 3. Make higher education accessible to all

All our institutions of public higher education should serve the full range of students in the commonwealth - neither race nor class should serve as a barrier to attending and completing college. Today, unfortunately, students of color and working-class students are less likely to attend college than their white middle-class peers.

#### An Unrepresentative System of Public Higher Education

Those attending our institutions should look like those graduating from our high schools. At present they do not.

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, for example, African American, Latino, and Native American students are present in only half the numbers to be found among the Commonwealth's 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. *Engines of Inequality*, a recent report that examines the failure of flagship campuses to serve low-income students and underrepresented minority students, gives UMass Amherst an "F" for underrepresented minority access. It noted that underrepresented minorities made up 15.3% of the Massachusetts' Spring 2004 graduating high school class, but made up only 8.1% of the incoming Fall 2004 freshman class at UMass Amherst.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the number of UMass Amherst students drawn from the lowest income categories declined by almost 50 percent from 2000-01 to 2005-06.<sup>33</sup>

This would be a major problem under any circumstances, but is all the more severe because of the Commonwealth's changing demographics: We are doing steadily worse at educating the most rapidly growing fraction of our workforce. "The Nellie Mae Foundation estimates that the minority share of the working-age population in Massachusetts will grow from 15.2 percent in 2000 to 27.7 percent in 2020."<sup>34</sup>

*A recent report...gives UMass Amherst an "F" for underrepresented minority access.*

Immigrants are also a rapidly growing fraction of the workforce and also should be provided full access to higher education. In the past 25 years, the proportion of the Massachusetts labor force who are immigrants has nearly doubled.<sup>35</sup> Immigrants who are able to attend college, just like everyone, earn nearly twice as much as those with only a high school diploma. Massachusetts should commit to providing in-state tuition and fee rates to undocumented immigrants who attended Massachusetts high schools and either apply for permanent resident status, or commit that they will do so. Ten other states already have such laws, and their experience indicates that a modest number of students would be involved. The Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation estimates that in the fourth year of the program only about 600 undocumented immigrants would

<sup>32</sup> Gerald, Danette and Haycock, Kati. "Engines of Inequality." The Education Trust. November, 2006.

<sup>33</sup> "Is UMass Pricing Out Kids Like Joe Drury?" By Lisa Prevost. Boston Globe. 12/11/05

<sup>34</sup> Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, "Final Report," October 2006, page ii.

<sup>35</sup> "The Changing Face of Massachusetts," Andrew Summ, Johan Uvin, Ishwar Khatiwada, and Dana Ansel. MassINC, June 2005.

be enrolled as students, and that the tuition and fees they paid would cover the marginal cost of these additional enrollments.<sup>36</sup>

National assessments have warned that these disparities may create significant problems for Massachusetts. A recent report card on the state's higher education system declares that "the state's current strong performance in higher education could be undermined by substantial disparities in opportunity based on ethnicity and income, and some of these disparities have widened over the past decade. . . If these trends are not addressed, they could limit the state's access to a competitive workforce and weaken its economy over time."<sup>37</sup> The report notes in particular that "if all ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total personal income in the state would be about \$3.5 billion higher."<sup>38</sup>

## Barriers to Attendance

Although preparation is an issue for some, there are many college-eligible low-income students and underrepresented minority students who are provided with inadequate information, resources and support to apply for, and successfully enroll in, higher education. This is particularly an issue on the UMass Amherst campus. According to the national report *Engines of Inequality*, "Every available source of data says the same thing: there are far more low-income students and students of color who meet the high standards of flagship universities than ever enroll there. They may not always show up in the usual places. Indeed, available research suggest that such students—and the high schools that they attend—receive far fewer mailings and visits from selective colleges than their more affluent peers.<sup>39</sup> But they are there nevertheless. Flagship leaders need to devote some of that creative energy that their institutions are noted for to devising ever better ways to reach and attract these students."<sup>40</sup>

Accessing and understanding financial aid in Massachusetts practically takes a doctoral degree, but the fact of the matter is that those who need financial aid the most often have the least help in navigating the process of paying for college. Furthermore, even the most financially needy student will have to take out additional loans or apply for private scholarships in order to cover the remainder of their bill – even after all financial aid and state, college, and federal loans are taken into account.<sup>41</sup> Aside from finances, the process of researching, applying for, and testing into college requires support from parents, guidance counselors, or mentors. Even for families who have generations of experience applying for and paying for college, these processes are confusing and overwhelming.

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<sup>36</sup> Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, "Massachusetts Public Colleges Would Gain Millions of Dollars from Undocumented Immigrants, News Release of January 5, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2006: The State Report Card on Higher Education*, page 3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. page 11.

<sup>39</sup> Don Munce. (2005). "Achieving Diversity on Campus: A Better Approach." *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 22 (23) p.43.

<sup>40</sup> Gerald, Danette and Haycock, Kati. "Engines of Inequality." The Education Trust. November, 2006.

<sup>41</sup> The median amount of unmet financial need for the neediest students (those with Expected Family Contributions of \$0 – \$8,000) "ranged from about \$4,100 to \$5,000, even after taking into account all grants and need-based loans" (And of course, this is assuming that families have the current available funds to pay the EFC in full). Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, "Final Report," October 2006, page 20.

While many parents, teachers, after school programs and clergy try to help students apply for college and financial aid, even their best intentions often cannot sort through the maze of college requirements, deadlines, forms, and fees. Those who have the greatest know-how about the college application and financial aid processes (including school guidance counselors, and college admissions and financial aid officers) are often over-worked and under-accessible.

While college needs to be made more affordable and Massachusetts' financial aid system needs to be reformed in order to offer greater access to higher education for low-income students and underrepresented minorities, we must provide public awareness about financial aid and greater one-on-one assistance to navigate the labyrinth of college.

If institutions affirm their commitment, parents, students, faculty, staff, and community leaders will be eager to help bring these goals to reality. The governor can make it clear that this is a priority, and that colleges and the university will be evaluated in part on their ability to:

**Step 1: Be pro-active in recruitment.**

\*\* Funding should be provided for regional and campus-specific K-12 pipeline programs that target working-class students and students of color.

\*\* Incentives should be provided for colleges to successfully apply for externally funded programs (such as the Federal Trio Programs).

\*\* The development of College Access Centers<sup>42</sup> and Financial Aid Awareness Campaigns<sup>43</sup> in communities throughout Massachusetts should be supported.

It is important, however, not simply to recruit working class, poor, minority, and immigrant students, but to support them when they enroll. Students who have had fewer opportunities have a world of potential, but often need additional resources and services in order to be able to realize their full potential. High attrition and a revolving door do not serve students' or the Commonwealth's interests. Our colleges and university must be evaluated not only on their success in recruitment, but also on their ability to retain disadvantaged students and to provide the conditions that make it possible for them to graduate on time.

**Step 2: Provide a full range of services and supports to those students who enroll**, with special effort to provide such services to students of color, those from low-income households, and those who are the first in their family to attend college.

Underrepresented students (including non-traditional students, first generation students, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, and students of color attending predominantly white campuses) must be met with adequate supports to ensure that they have the opportunity to succeed once enrolled in college. While neither the federal government nor individual campuses collect data to show graduation rates specifically among low-income students,<sup>44</sup> “over the past 15

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<sup>42</sup> Such access centers could provide free technical assistance and guidance with all facets of the college and financial aid application process, including filling out FAFSA forms, researching transfer options, polishing college application essays, and preparing for standardized testing.

<sup>43</sup> As recommended in the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Task Force on Student Financial Aid, “Final Report,” October 2006,

<sup>44</sup> Gerald, Danette and Haycock, Kati. “Engines of Inequality.” The Education Trust. November, 2006.page7

years, the percentage of first-year community college students returning for their second year has declined substantially,” from 59% in 1992 to 53% in 2006.<sup>45</sup> We believe that this decline can be attributed, in part, to increases in costs combined with a lack of supports specifically designed to meet the needs of low-income students.

However, individual campuses do collect data about the graduation rates of students of color. At UMass Amherst, the overall 6-year graduation rate for students of color is 57.2% - a full 10% less than the rate of 67.5% for White students. Students of color, in other words, graduate at 84.7% the rate of White students.<sup>46</sup> Individual campuses must provide adequate resources for creative, personal and individualized support services for all underrepresented students.

*The University's mission is to provide an affordable education of high quality and conduct programs of research and public service that advance our knowledge and improve the lives of the people of the Commonwealth.*

Ironically, at the flagship campus, students who are already thriving academically are offered significant resources and support through membership in Commonwealth College, the University's honors program that has a FY07 current base funding of over \$3 million in earmarked state funds, in addition to over \$500,000 in campus appropriations.<sup>47</sup> However, Commonwealth College is even less racially representative than the University as a whole: in 2004, only 2.5% of Commonwealth college students were Black/African American and only 2.2% were Hispanic/Latino.<sup>48</sup> Efforts must be made to ensure that greater resources and support are directed to students who need them most.

According to the blue ribbon Commission on Campus Diversity, convened to examine diversity and inclusion at the flagship campus, “Clearly, a strong argument can be made for providing environments and opportunities for students with like cultures, language and interest to come together. Considerable retention data claim such opportunities reduce attrition and feelings of isolation among underrepresented groups.”<sup>49</sup> In addition to enhancing academic advising and extra-curricular opportunities for all students, public institutions across the commonwealth must be provided with sufficient resources and incentives to make a special effort to offer services and programs designed to ensure the success of underrepresented students.

One step that would assist this process is attention to the diversity of the faculty itself. Any student can learn from any faculty member, but there is often a special connection, a greater level of interest, and a better faculty-student relationship if the student and faculty member share identities and experiences. If our faculty and staff are disproportionately white and privileged,

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<sup>45</sup> The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2006: The State Report Card on Higher Education*, pages 3 and 10

<sup>46</sup> *Engines of Inequality*... p. 13

<sup>47</sup> Table 1. “Base budget by Major Budgetary Unit from FY04 to FY07” [www.umass.edu/budget/updates/FY07](http://www.umass.edu/budget/updates/FY07)

<sup>48</sup> Table 5. “Race/Ethnicity of Undergraduates within the Commonwealth College” in “Diversity and Inclusion at UMass Amherst: A Blueprint for Change” A Report by the Commission on Campus Diversity, University of Massachusetts Amherst. March, 2005. Available at [www.umass.edu/campusdiversity](http://www.umass.edu/campusdiversity)

<sup>49</sup> “Diversity and Inclusion at UMass Amherst: A Blueprint for Change” A Report by the Commission on Campus Diversity, University of Massachusetts Amherst. March, 2005. Available at [www.umass.edu/campusdiversity](http://www.umass.edu/campusdiversity)



we will be less likely to represent the full range of the Commonwealth's concerns, and less likely to make students of color and working class students feel valued, respected, and welcomed.

**Step 3: Guaranteed access to one of the state's public colleges or universities.** A bedrock of the finest system of public higher education -- California's -- is a guarantee of access for all high school graduates in the state.<sup>50</sup> There should, furthermore, be a guarantee that students who succeed at the community college level can move on to a state college or UMass campus.

While the UMass Amherst campus currently has a Joint Admissions Program in collaboration with fifteen community colleges,<sup>51</sup> efforts should be made to increase the visibility of this program and the number of participating community colleges. Furthermore, the UMass Amherst Admissions office should be provided incentives to explore diversifying its admissions criteria in order to increase the flagship campus's representation of Massachusetts' racial and economic diversity.

Lastly, many young adults in Massachusetts simply do not graduate from high school, for a wide variety of reasons, both personal and systemic. However – if provided with alternative educational opportunities – many of these students would welcome a chance to attend college. We must commit to developing new, reinstating old, and expanding existing programs designed to provide a pathway to college for students who have left high school but have immense skills and talents to offer to the Commonwealth, if provided with greater educational opportunities.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> See [http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/undergrad\\_adm/pathstoadm.html](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/undergrad_adm/pathstoadm.html)

<sup>51</sup> See [http://www.umass.edu/admissions/application\\_process/Transfer\\_Students/](http://www.umass.edu/admissions/application_process/Transfer_Students/)

<sup>52</sup> Examples of such programs include the “Dual Enrollment” program (designed to allow students to complete a high school degree while accumulating course credit at community colleges) and the “Gateway to College” program adopted by Mount Wachusett Community College.

## 4. Hire more teachers and researchers

The steady decrease in the number of faculty is undermining the teaching, research, and economic development provided by our public higher education system. Over the past decade the number of full-time faculty at virtually every single one of our state colleges and universities has been in decline, despite a constant number of students. Without enough permanent faculty, our colleges cannot succeed at its central goals. Fewer teachers in the classroom leads to lower quality education for our students. Fewer researchers and scholars leads to fewer significant discoveries in all areas of knowledge. Hiring part-time and adjunct faculty instead of full-time faculty recruited through nationally competitive searches lowers the quality of education. We need a commitment that a significant portion of the restored funding will be designated to rebuild and restore the tenure-track faculty, and a commitment to monitoring and reporting on the campuses' success in meeting this goal.

As the faculty is restored, so must the staff that support their work, and whose numbers have been substantially reduced over the last several years. If we add 200 faculty at UMass Amherst – as we should – we will also need to add an appropriate number of professional, clerical, and maintenance workers.

**Step 1: Require a report from each campus on the change in the number of each category of faculty and staff -- full time and part-time -- over the past fifteen years, and on its plan to rebuild to appropriate levels.**

**Step 2: Earmark funds in the budget for five year hiring plans on each campus**

**Step 3: Require that a report on the progress toward meeting the five year hiring goals for faculty and staff be submitted by each campus to the Joint Committee on Higher Education.**

*Without enough permanent faculty, our colleges cannot succeed at their central goals.*

The case of the University of Massachusetts Amherst is illustrative of the system-wide faculty decline.<sup>53</sup>

- In 1990 there were 1,133 tenure-track faculty. Fifteen years later, with almost exactly the same number of students, the number had dropped by almost 25 percent.
- Twenty years ago, nearly all students were taught by permanent, full-time faculty, assisted by graduate teaching assistants. Today, over 40 percent of all teaching at UMass is done by contingent workers.

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<sup>53</sup> It is similar at the nine state colleges. Over the past 7 years, there has been a 6% decline in the number of full-time faculty members and a 12% decline in the number of librarians.

- The number of contingent teachers has risen 68 percent since 1994, while the number of tenure-track faculty has fallen sharply.<sup>54</sup> The use of adjunct faculty is even more pronounced in our community colleges. Board of Higher Education data indicate that in 2003 adjuncts taught 46.7 percent of courses, with full-time faculty teaching 53.3 percent.<sup>55</sup>

The effects on the campus are threefold.

1. **The decline in the numbers of tenure-track faculty has hurt students.** They are shut out of courses, and often take longer to graduate. Many students now take five years or even longer to finish their undergraduate degree. And when they do finish, many students have reported having difficulty getting recommendations for graduate school or future careers because they have not had the chance to develop relationships with tenured faculty. Many students complain that they very rarely take courses with full-time permanent faculty. Most academic departments are relying on temporary teachers with short-term contracts to provide an increasing part of the curriculum, and in some, students might have all their required courses taught by teaching assistants or adjunct faculty.

2. **A harder time sustaining an ambitious and innovative research agenda.** As the core faculty shrinks – and as professors are called upon to serve on more committees, advise more students, administer more programs, and teach larger classes – research suffers. One of the primary reasons for attending a major research university is to learn from professors who are active researchers and experts in their fields. Research is also vital to the Commonwealth. UMass Amherst brings in over \$100 million a year from state, federal and private sources in support of research. While the university’s state budget has decreased, there has been a 45 percent increase in grant money during the last 5 years. This investment advances scientific knowledge, enhances educational opportunities, and produces technological innovations that invigorate the economy and benefit society. On the Amherst campus, 12 Institutes and 69 Centers focus on a diverse array of areas, ranging from energy efficiency to environmental waste prevention, from immigrant and refugee empowerment to computer-based instructional technology.

3. **The stature of our institution is threatened.** The reputation of any research university depends not only on its teaching, but on the quality of research produced by its core faculty. Building national prominence in research requires a critical mass of active, permanent, full-time faculty. Investing in tenure-track faculty is the surest way for the university to enhance the future of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Faculty and students recognize that the future of public higher education will only be as great as its past if there is an ambitious plan to restore the university’s human capital. We hope the Governor and the legislature recognize this as well.

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<sup>54</sup> For these data, and for all facts not otherwise referenced in this section, see Ellen Story, Michael Denning, and Eduardo Bustamante, “The Shortage of Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of Massachusetts Amherst,” February 16, 2005.

<sup>55</sup> Spreadsheet provided by Joe LeBlanc, President, Massachusetts Community College Council, November 23, 2006.

## The Importance of State Oversight in Rebuilding the Faculty

In the past several years, the student government and the faculty union at UMass Amherst made the decline in the number of faculty a top priority, producing a report and a DVD, lobbying the legislature, and publicizing the problem to the citizens of the Commonwealth. The UMass administration followed their lead and issued a “250 Plan” in the spring of 2005, pledging to hire 250 additional faculty over the course of five years.<sup>56</sup> The legislature provided an increased appropriation in hopes that it would help launch the plan. In July 2005, the provost issued a memorandum projecting 500 new hires over five years, 50 a year to replace faculty who left and an additional 50 per year to achieve the projected net increase of 250 faculty.<sup>57</sup>

But what has followed has been very disappointing: despite this public pledge, the net gain in the number of faculty has thus far been about a dozen, not the fifty promised for the first year. And the campus has been told not to expect a dramatic increase in that number over the coming years, as money is diverted for other purposes. The five year plan for rebuilding the faculty has become a twenty year plan. Buildings and physical capital have been given priority over faculty. So, any plan to invest in the growth of the faculty at the state’s colleges and universities must include specific benchmarks and must be monitored by the state.

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<sup>56</sup> In the words of Chancellor John Lombardi: “The best alternative is a commitment to fund the 250 Plan over a period of about three years. The campus can hire about 80 to 85 faculty per year effectively. This would require at least 10 million dollars per year for three years to accomplish this restoration. If inflation and other costs do not rise dramatically, this would allow us to recruit effectively over this period and restore the faculty to appropriate levels within the current five-year plan.” See: <http://www.umass.edu/budget/250/index7.html> posted in 2005.

<sup>57</sup> See Provost Charlena Seymour memo of July 27, 2005, sent to academic deans and to president, MSP: “For FY 2006 the campus will receive millions in new funding to support faculty growth ... The scale and pace of hiring envisioned by the Amherst 250 plan (250 new positions over five years, with perhaps an equivalent amount of replacement hiring over the same period).” (p. 3)

## 5. Democratize public higher education

Our colleges and universities should be models of the kind of society we hope to create. All significant decisions should be made by the people affected, and every effort should be made to engage more people in decisions and the democratic process. If we hope to have a top-ranked university system, we must build the “sleeping giant” of Massachusetts politics: an engaged community of students, parents, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators. We can achieve this only by engaging these constituencies in the decisions that affect the university system.

Winston Churchill once said that *“It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried.”* Democracy is sometimes slow, occasionally contentious, and usually involves many meetings and much consultation. People don’t always agree, or it takes time to reach a solution that most people endorse. It may seem more “efficient” to have all decisions made from the top, with little or no consultation with other bodies, even when those top-down decisions are strongly opposed by the majority of those to whom they apply. But in the long run, this “inefficiency” is worth it. It results in better decisions, more harmony and consensus, and more buy-in by affected stakeholders.

### **Step 1: Establish, or re-establish, Campus Councils, as mandated by law, and give those councils the authority to be significantly involved in campus governance.**

Campus councils which, according to Chapter 75, Section 14b of the Massachusetts general laws, are supposed to be “broadly representative of the community, alumnae and students” have been entirely neglected or have a purely pro-forma existence. Such Councils should be revived as meaningful consultative bodies entitled to information on key decisions, attended by the campus president or chancellor who answers questions posed by Council members and listens to their information and advice. [At UMass Amherst, the trustees simply appointed the directors of the UMass Amherst foundation – whose primary focus is fundraising – as the campus council. This is not consistent with the spirit of the law and not useful as an advocacy instrument for students, alumnae, and community.]

Students, faculty, staff and community members could provide meaningful input on issues such as fee costs, campus diversity, family services, the role of student governments, the public service mission of the campus, and so on.

Council membership could, for example, include people representing the respective presidents of the campus student undergraduate and graduate governments, the president of the UMass Alumni Association, and the state legislators from the district of each respective campus.

### **Step 2: Guarantee meaningful autonomy for campus governance bodies.**

Student governments were instituted to provide students an opportunity to democratically make a limited set of decisions important to the quality of their lives. For much of the last thirty-some years student governments have been granted significant autonomy, including the right to make decisions about how to spend fees collected expressly for Student Government, and which activities to undertake. In recent years that autonomy has been increasingly eroded, with administrators asserting the right to control all significant decisions, even when the

administrator's position has little no support among the student body or elected student representatives. When administrators constantly frustrate Student Government operations, that leads to resentment and creates an unhealthy relationship. Students are taught to view democratic institutions as ineffective, controlled by powerful outside interests, and not worth taking seriously – exactly the same problems that bedevil the larger political system. Our colleges and universities should be showing the possibilities of vibrant democratic bodies, not the ways remote and non-democratic powers can frustrate people's preferences. Students are adults; although they will make some mistakes, so do administrators, and even presidents and Congresses. Students are entitled to make their own mistakes, and to learn from them.

*Only through the practice of democracy, and respect for those who engage it, can the Academy truly graduate students who are also healthy and vibrant citizens of the state, country, and the world.*

The relationship of faculty, undergraduate, and graduate student governments to the central administration and Board of Trustees has become stagnant and largely defunct. These bodies came together in 1973 to establish the "Wellman Document", Trustee document T73-098 formalizing the relationship between students and faculty and the administration, and giving student and faculty governments "primary responsibility" in designated areas.

While this agreement, crafted several decades ago, was a good first step in allowing the democratic process, it must be revised to revive faculty and student confidence in their representative campus governments. We call for clarification and expansion of the authority of the campus governance bodies, within the context of college or university policy, and the ability to appeal campus decisions to the Board of Trustees or Board of Higher Education.

Only through the practice of democracy, and respect for those who engage it, can the Academy truly graduate students who are also healthy and vibrant citizens of the state, country, and the world.

**Step 3: Democratize the Boards of Trustees by giving equal voting rights to all members and by exploring direct election of at least a portion of the Trustees.**

The Chancellor of UMass Amherst and the Board of Trustees have pointed to the Michigan system as a model of higher education; in that state, the Board of Trustees are called regents, and are elected in biennial state-wide elections. Massachusetts should consider electing the Board of Trustees, or at least a significant fraction of them, or giving seats to elected officials such as mayors of large cities.

At present, the UMass Board includes 22 Trustees, but only five are elected. Ironically, only two of the five annually elected Trustees are allowed to vote in a given year; the seventeen un-elected, appointed Trustees are given a full vote and multi-year terms. The elected but non-voting Trustees are all students who know their campuses intimately; some of the unelected Trustees rarely set foot on campus. All trustees should be full voting members of the Board.

#### **Step 4: Respect Collective Bargaining**

Given the sorry history of the past five years, one final issue of democracy and fairness needs to be mentioned: The state should honor the contracts it signs, and should pay employees in a timely fashion. One of the failures of recent administrations has been the lack of respect for the agreements that were arrived at between the faculty and staff of institutions of public higher education and their employers. When faculty and staff wait five years for money they are owed, the employees are the most obvious losers. But these interminable delays waste an extraordinary amount of time and energy that could much more productively be put into building a better public higher education system. The attempts to undermine negotiated agreements create an atmosphere of bad faith and an adversarial nature within our colleges and universities, which also adversely affect the ability to recruit and retain teachers and workers of high caliber. We need to be sure this never happens again. Moreover, starting this coming year, we need to conclude union negotiations in time so that new contracts can be funded before old ones expire. Administrators, faculty, students, and staff are all committed to this goal and are working toward it – but we cannot achieve it without a timely and reasonable salary offer from the governor.

## Conclusion

No one individual (not even the Governor), and no one constituency, can by itself transform public higher education. If the state colleges go one way and community colleges another, if UMass Amherst focuses on its position relative to UMass Lowell, if faculty are concerned only with their own salary and benefits, then we will have lost a great opportunity. As Senator Stan Rosenberg frequently emphasizes, if each group pursues its sectional interest then we will not make advances for the system as a whole. As Governor-elect Deval Patrick has insisted, acting alone he cannot solve Massachusetts' problems, but **together we can**. We need to build a coalition that unites students and faculty, parents and alumni, administrators and staff, flagship and community colleges, governor and legislature, trustees and unions, to dramatically strengthen our state's public higher education system. Together we can create a system that will make Massachusetts a leader and give the residents of the Commonwealth the education and research they deserve.