

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020
CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

REGENTS - PARTICIPATING (Y = yes / N = no)	
Matt Fleury, Chair	Y
Merle Harris, Vice Chair	Y
Richard J. Balducci	Y
Aviva D. Budd	Y
Naomi K. Cohen	Y
Felice Gray-Kemp	Y
Holly Howery (late arrival)	Y
David R. Jimenez	Y
JoAnn Ryan	Y
Ari Santiago	N
Eleese E. Wright	Y
*David Blitz, FAC Chair	Y
*Colena Sesanker, FAC Vice Chair	Y
*Kurt Westby, Labor Commissioner	N
*Deidra Gifford, Public Health Commissioner	N
*David Lehman, DECD Commissioner	N
*Miguel A. Cardona, Education Commissioner	N
<i>*ex-officio, non-voting member</i>	

CSCU STAFF:

Mark E. Ojakian, CSCU President
Jane Gates, SVP & Provost, Academic & Student Affairs
Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff/Chief of Operations/Board Secretary
Andrew Kripp, VP Human Resources & Labor Relations
Ben Barnes, Chief Financial Officer
Ernestine Y. Weaver, Counsel
Pam Heleen, Asst. Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Fleury called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. and, following roll call, declared a quorum present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Fleury called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as submitted; on a motion by Regent Cohen, seconded by Regent Wright, the Agenda was unanimously adopted as presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 10:09 a.m. on a motion by Regent Cohen, seconded by Regent Wright, the Board voted to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee. Chair Fleury announced that no votes would be taken in Executive Session. Chair Fleury directed CSCU President Mark Ojakian and Chief of Staff/Board Secretary Alice Pritchard to remain with the Board in Executive Session.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

At 10:46 a.m., Chair Fleury announced that the meeting was in Open Session and that no votes were taken in Executive Session, which was limited to discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

Based on the discussions in Executive Session, Chair Fleury made a motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Jane Gates as Interim President for the CSCU System effective January 1, 2021. Regent Harris seconded the motion.

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERIM PRESIDENT OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SYSTEM (CSCU)

WHEREAS, Mark Ojakian, the President of the CSCU System, will retire effective December 31, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) is conducting a national search process to fill the vacancy created by President Ojakian's retirement; and,

WHEREAS, there is a need to appoint an interim System President until the search process is complete and the BOR appoints a new System President; and,

WHEREAS, the BOR has determined that the role and responsibilities of an interim System President can best be filled by a System administrator with knowledge of the Board's academic priorities and the System's programs, operations and policies; and,

WHEREAS, the BOR remains committed to its principles of equity and excellence in selecting highly qualified personnel to serve students and to lead its mission; and,

WHEREAS, the Board seeks an interim CSCU President who is a respected voice for equal educational access for underserved student populations and a champion of student success initiatives; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that, under the terms and conditions of the CSCU Human Resources Policies for Management and Confidential Professional Personnel, Dr. Gates will not only serve as Interim CSCU President but also continue to perform the duties of her position as CSCU Provost & Senior VP for Academic and Student Affairs; and,

RESOLVED, that Dr. Gates shall receive a bi-weekly differential of \$3,813.67 for her additional responsibilities as Interim CSCU System President; and,

RESOLVED, that the Board expresses its deep appreciation to Dr. Gates for accepting the interim System presidency until the new President is appointed and takes office; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that Dr. Gates will return full-time to her position as Provost & Senior VP for Academic and Student Affairs upon the conclusion of this interim appointment.

Regent Harris made the following comments concerning Dr. Gates' appointment:

- Dr. Gates will bring continuity to the Board of Regent's work.
- Her academic skills and ability to bring national best practices for higher education are helpful to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and staff when deliberating issues.
- Their monthly meetings demonstrate the collaborative approach she will continue with the BOR Chair and all Regents.
- Dr. Gates is transparent, respects diverse opinions, believes in equity and student success and has a strong, capable team around her.

Regent Harris expressed her pleasure and confidence for Dr. Gates' success moving forward.

President Ojakian noted his pleasure with the resolution presented and with Dr. Gates' willingness and ability to take on this new, additional role. Dr. Gates has the skill set to lead and to make a difference, as well the temperament to be an effective leader - one who listens and makes the decisions that need to be made. Dr. Gates will continue the momentum to reduce the equity gap, to increase student success, and to continue the progress of the Students First initiative, thus ensuring the continuity of our world-class institutions in Connecticut. He expressed his personal thanks and best wishes.

Regent Howery indicated her happiness with the resolution. She noted the challenging times for CSCU and appreciated Dr. Gates's willingness to step and her willingness to keep CSCU moving forward. She heartily endorsed the appointment.

When discussion concluded, **the resolution was put to a vote and was carried unanimously.**

Dr. Gates made the following comments in accepting this new role:

“I am honored. I appreciate the confidence of the Board of Regents and the opportunity to serve the CSCU system during this transition. I look forward to continuing to advocate, to work with the presidents, CEOs, faculty, staff, and most importantly our students. I express my deep gratitude to President Mark Ojakian who has demonstrated remarkable capabilities, commitment, and vision to fulfill the mission of the CSCU system during unprecedented times. While I realize this is a major challenge, but with the support of the System, the support of the Board of Regents, I am confident that we will be able to not only maintain the momentum, but advance the resiliency of this wonderful CSCU System.”

Chair Fleury thanked Dr. Gates, President Ojakian, the System Office team, and the world-class leadership team at the System Regional and campus level.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Chair Fleury, seconded by Regent Cohen, Chair Fleury declared the meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Submitted,

Alice Pritchard
Secretary of the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education