

# Baker Administration Announces New Commissioner of Higher Education

## Secretary Peyser Endorses the Unanimous Decision by the Board to Appoint Dr. Carlos Santiago as the Next Commissioner

BOSTON – May 20, 2015 – Education Secretary James A. Peyser today announced the new Commissioner for Higher Education, Dr. Carlos Santiago, who currently serves as the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Senior Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs. This announcement follows the Board of Higher Education's (BHE) vote today, which unanimously recommended (12-0) in favor of Dr. Santiago's candidacy.

"I congratulate Dr. Carlos Santiago on his appointment as the next Commissioner of higher education," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Massachusetts is a leader in education, but we are faced with an increasingly competitive global marketplace and continuing achievement gaps. With Carlos at the helm, I'm confident our public higher education system will rise to the challenge."

"I wholeheartedly endorse the selection of Dr. Carlos Santiago by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and thank him for his willingness to step into this important role," Secretary Peyser said, who today formally endorsed the Board's recommendation. "I look forward to working more closely with him to improve the quality and affordability of public higher education. I'm particularly excited about building on Carlos's leadership in increasing rates of on-time college completion and strengthening partnerships between our colleges, public schools, and employers."

"I sincerely thank Commissioner Richard Freeland for his service and dedication to the Commonwealth these past six years," said Board of Higher Education Chairman Chris Gabrieli. "Through his leadership in developing the Vision Project, he has laid a solid foundation for our work in the months and years ahead."

"I am honored by the Board's vote of confidence," said Dr. Santiago. "I look forward to working with the Board and the administration to accelerate the pace of change and improvement on behalf of all our students and the Commonwealth as a whole."

Dr. Carlos Santiago

Dr. Carlos E. Santiago joined the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education in April 2013 as the Senior Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs. His past academic appointments include that of Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (Wisconsin's second largest research university). He brings over 30 years of experience in public higher education. Santiago also served as provost and chief operating officer at the University at Albany, (SUNY). He was a professor of economics at UWM and SUNY-Albany and holds a Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University. He is also the author or co-author of six books and has published dozens of articles and book reviews, of which many focus on economic development and the changing socioeconomic status of Latinos in the United States. On two separate occasions, in 1996 and 2011, Santiago has been named one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in the United States by *Hispanic Business* magazine.

### Background:

The search for a new Commissioner of Higher Education began last October, when current Commissioner Richard Freeland informed the Board of his plans to step down after serving six years as Commissioner. The BHE named an ad hoc [search committee](#) comprised of board members, leaders of both public and independent institutions, students and external stakeholders to conduct a search with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm that developed

a pool of prospective candidates. Beginning in December 2014 the committee held a series of seven meetings to develop a [position profile](#) and consider possible finalists.

The Board intends for the new Commissioner to assume responsibilities on or before July 1, 2015. By statute, the Board's vote today was subject to the approval of the Secretary of Education, James A. Peyser.

For background information on the Commissioner's search, please visit [www.mass.edu/about/commsearch.asp](http://www.mass.edu/about/commsearch.asp).

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