

**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Equity Committee**

Minutes of March 9, 2022

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Yolanda Johnson, Chair Suzanne Parker Vanessa Smith
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	Lucy Perez
<b>ALSO PRESENT</b>	Christina Royal, Olivia Kynard and Karen Desjeans
<b>MEETING CALL TO ORDER</b>	At 12:40 pm, the meeting was officially called to order by Chair Johnson.  <b>Roll Call Attendance:</b> Trustee Parker Yes Trustee Smith Yes Trustee Johnson Yes
<b>MEETING MINUTES</b>	A motion was made by Trustee Smith and seconded by Trustee Johnson to approve the meeting minutes of February 24, 2022.  <b>Roll Call:</b> Trustee Parker Abstain Trustee Smith Yes Trustee Johnson Yes
<b>DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF BOARD EQUITY STATEMENT OF ANTI-RACISM</b>	The Committee reviewed the suggested changes to the proposed Board Statement of Anti-Racism.  The College will finalize the bulleted portion regarding the College's anti-racism efforts. A final version will be emailed to this Committee and each Trustee will respond with their approval, so this statement and motion can be included in the March 2022 Board Meeting.  An email was sent to this Equity Committee on March 11, 2022 with the final version of the Board Statement of Anti-Racism.  The following Trustees responded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee Parker, 3/14/22 at 2:56 pm with Approval</li> <li>• Trustee Smith, 3/11/22 at 4:23 pm with Approval</li> <li>• Trustee Johnson, 3/12/22 at 4:58 pm with Approval</li> </ul> This Statement will go before the Board on March 22, 2022 with the following motion: Approve the Board Statement of Anti-Racism, as presented.

**BOARD STATEMENT OF ANTI-RACISM**

As members of the Board of Trustees, we are committed, both individually and collectively, to creating an anti-racist community at Holyoke Community College (HCC). As fiduciaries, we are responsible for ensuring that the College fulfills its mission and lives up to its promise of equity for our students and all members of the College community. We pledge to lead the way in taking a bold stand to live up to this commitment as we work to build a truly just and equitable society.

We acknowledge that structural and institutional systems of oppression have harmed—and continue to harm—many members of our community. It is the responsibility of each one of us to educate ourselves and others, to engage in difficult conversations, and to listen to and engage with our students, faculty, staff, donors, community partners, and alumni of color. The core of our work in equity, diversity, and inclusion must center around viewing our practices and policies through an anti-racism lens.

As a Board, we have taken the following steps while continuing to work towards becoming an anti-racist institution:

- Approved the College’s first Strategic Plan, focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Established the Board of Trustees Equity Committee which includes Trustees and College leaders who serve as advisors to the Committee and ensure alignment with the College’s Strategic Plan
- Participated in a series of Board Equity Trainings, with workshops centered on microaggression, implicit biases, equity, anti-racism, and systemic racism in higher education
- Conducted a Board Self-Assessment Survey to evaluate our progress toward strategic goals
- Prioritize equity within the Audit & Finance Committee of the College’s Board of Trustees as it relates to financial decision-making in order to best retain students and support their success
- Continued our commitment to BIPOC representation on the HCC Board of Trustees

We fully support President Royal and the College administration, whose anti-racism efforts we acknowledge and embrace, including:

- Developed culturally responsive pedagogies with special emphasis on the College's status as a Hispanic Serving Institution, as part of [HCC’s Strategic Plan Strategy #1](#)
- Collaborated with the communities we serve to increase equity, as part of HCC’s [Strategic Plan Strategy #2](#)
- Diversified our faculty and staff to better reflect the students we serve
- Created a Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion position
- Formed a Campus Safety Task Force, consisting of students, faculty, and staff, with membership from the BIPOC community, to review current events involving police agencies, provide opportunities for dialogue and community feedback, and advise the Director of Public Safety
- Launched the [Itsy Bitsy Child Watch](#), a free drop-in childcare program that provides short term care for children while their parents are learning on campus
- Maintain an agreement with the Holyoke Housing Authority that allows the College to provide housing options to students
- Continued to provide all students with a PVTA bus pass that can be used across the Pioneer Valley
- Provide all students who need one with a laptop and/or Wi-Fi hotspot
- Opened the Homestead Market, a campus store providing students with access to fresh produce, pantry essentials and quick meals. The market is the first at any public college or university in Massachusetts to accept federal SNAP benefits
- Dismissed more than \$1 million in student debt using some of the institutional portion of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:17 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Desjeans  
Board Liaison to Chair Johnson