January 2020

Dear Board Members,

Having served as a member of this Board since 2014, I was honored to be sworn in by Governor Baker as its chair in April 2019. I am grateful to each of you for your hard work and diverse perspectives and support, and I am particularly thankful to my predecessors, Paul Sagan and Margaret McKenna, for their service to this Board and to the Commonwealth’s students.

During the 2018-19 school year, the Board’s work touched on many areas, the most significant of which included:

- Approval of a new statewide accountability system that debuted in fall 2018 and which gives more nuanced and useful information about schools’ and districts’ strengths and challenges.
- Approval of a revised Arts Framework, the first update in 20 years. The revised framework emphasizes arts as an important part of a well-rounded education, and the revised framework also increases the importance of creating original work and responding to others’ work.
- A new emphasis on teacher diversity, including the creation of the Board’s Educator Diversification Committee.
- Closely working with the Board of Higher Education on Early College initiatives and cross-agency data analytics.

We also continued to monitor the receiverships in Lawrence, Holyoke, and Southbridge. I appreciate the time that Board members have taken to learn about the three districts, and I look forward to hearing more about the districts’ progress in the coming year.

In June 2019, we learned about Commissioner Riley’s priorities, as set out in “Our Way Forward,” his report to us. As he leads efforts to expand deeper learning, build a more diverse teaching force, and advocate for a wide range of supports for all students, I am hopeful that the work will pay dividends for all students, closing gaps between groups of
students of different races, ethnicities, language abilities, income levels, and disability statuses.

I am proud to be working with you in a Commonwealth that values and has led the way on education, and I look forward to working with each of you to serve all students.