MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Presidential Search Committee, SUNY Farmingdale

FROM: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor

DATE: September 16, 2015

SUBJECT: Charge to the Search Committee

It is my pleasure to work with you to identify the next president of SUNY Farmingdale.

With over 100 years of incredible growth and success, Farmingdale State College has a strong history on which to build an exceptionally bright future. Established as an institute for agricultural study, Farmingdale quickly evolved into a college of applied science and technology. In recent years, the College has developed a national reputation for high-quality and technology-based education and a congenial campus atmosphere that has been recognized by several external validators, including U.S. News & World Report naming Farmingdale one of the “Best Colleges in the North” for the past four consecutive years. In addition, in 2015 Farmingdale was recognized as the 5th Safest College in the country by UniversityPrimeTime.com, based on nationwide statistical data analysis. Both of these rankings were only made possible by the continued dedication of the entire Farmingdale community.

Particularly enticing to incoming students is Farmingdale’s array of applied science and technology degree programs that prepare students for immediate employment. According to a recent survey of May 2014 graduates, 88 percent of respondents reported employment within six months of their graduation, and of those, 78 percent were working in a field related to their degree.

Farmingdale is the largest college of technology within the SUNY system, with over 8,400 students enrolled. The College has had a long record of service to diverse constituencies and in recent years made great strides in further diversifying its student body. Thirty-six percent of the student population is minority students, and 28 percent of these students are from historically underrepresented backgrounds. In these categories, Farmingdale’s representative percentages exceed the racial/ethnic population of the region.

With research opportunities focusing on solar energy, experiments with hydrogen fuel cell technology, and the campus fleet consisting of several battery-powered automobiles, Farmingdale State College is focusing on changing ways to think about renewable energy. The Solar Energy Center on campus is the first utility scale photovoltaic demonstration project in the northeast United States. The Institute for Research and Technology Transfer (IRTT) tests and evaluates bio fuels for powering small power plants and vehicles. A model “energy smart” house is an integral part of the college’s instructional resources and public demonstration project. In collaboration with Stony Brook University and Brookhaven National Laboratory, Farmingdale is working to lead to renewable, energy-efficient fuels that will reduce the nation's future dependency on foreign oil.
Because of its location on Long Island and proximity to major business and industry as well as 4 other SUNY campuses and several private universities, Farmingdale is also uniquely situated to continue to develop major partnerships and affiliations for innovative programs and ventures.

As chancellor, the selection of campus presidents is of utmost importance to me. I greatly rely on their leadership and counsel, and their support helps strengthen the effectiveness of my role as system head. This is why the diversity of our presidents in both culture and experience is a major priority for me. We are committed to expanding on SUNY’s “systemness” to ensure that we move the University forward as a national leader and a major driver of economic revitalization in New York State. I increasingly look to our campus presidents to work collaboratively with other SUNY colleges, administrators, faculty and staff, and surrounding communities to lower cost, enhance productivity, and elevate the importance of degree completion at each of our institutions.

To that end, the Board of Trustees recently enacted the SUNY Excels performance system, which is tied directly to our strategic plan for the next five years, The Power of SUNY 2020. This step underscores our commitment as a university to transparency and continuous improvement toward excellence at every level: system, sector, campus, faculty, staff, and students. I am counting on every president in our system to drive the public commitment to document our performance. Presidential leadership is critical in demonstrating our excellence, and regular presidential reviews will help us monitor our progress.

Through our system’s incredible network of 64 institutions, nearly a half-million students, 88,000 faculty and staff, and more than 7,500 degree programs, we are leveraging our assets to maximize SUNY’s educational and economic impact for New York. In pursuit of that vision, the Search Committee is hereby directed to recruit a highly diverse group of candidates with the utmost personal and professional qualifications to fill this position. Farmingdale College Council’s top three candidates will be sent to me for review, and I will recommend one candidate to the SUNY Board of Trustees; the new president will serve at the pleasure of the Board. As dictated by “The State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees,” before making its recommendations the Farmingdale College Council shall consult with the presidential search committee. The president shall report directly to the chancellor.

As chief administrative officer of Farmingdale State College, the president will be responsible for the development and effectiveness of the campus. The president’s broad areas of responsibility include working with the Farmingdale College Council; academic affairs, which encompasses development and ensuring sufficient support of the curriculum; oversight and maintenance of facilities; fundraising and communicating the image of the college; community engagement; financial management of the institution; and resolving issues of student life. I have already mentioned the increasing importance placed on campus presidents working collaboratively with one another. I ask the search committee to be very intentional in identifying candidates with the experience and skills to lead such efforts. This list is by no means exhaustive and includes additional responsibilities detailed in a job description to be developed by the Farmingdale College Council and Search Committee.

I extend a special thank you to Patricia Hill Williams for her dedicated leadership as chair of the Farmingdale’s College Council. I would also like to recognize and thank Robert Kraushaar and Kaitlyn Beachner, who will be serving as my liaisons to the committee and Don Christian, president of SUNY New Paltz who will be serving as my designee to your committee. They will work directly with the council, search committee, and search firm. I also want to thank Academic Search, Inc. for serving as the search committee’s search firm and Jessica Kozloff, president of Academic Search, for serving as the search consultant. I have every confidence in this process and stand ready to assist in any way I can. I truly look forward to working with you to find the person who will develop Farmingdale’s already tremendous successes and elevate the College to the next level.