



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: Betty A. Rosa, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Appointment of Acting Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York

DATE:

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents approve the appointment of Shannon Tahoe, Acting Counsel and Deputy Commissioner of Legal Affairs, to the position of Acting Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York?

Reason for Consideration

Elizabeth R. Berlin, formerly the Executive Deputy Commissioner, and currently the Interim Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York, has announced her resignation effective November 16, 2019. As of November 16, 2019, the position of Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York, as well as the position of Executive Deputy Commissioner, will both be vacant. Therefore, the temporary appointment of an Acting Commissioner is necessary until a Commissioner is appointed by the Board of Regents. The appointment of Shannon Tahoe as Acting Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York will provide necessary continuity and leadership within the Department.

Ms. Tahoe has extensive knowledge of, experience with and commitment to the important work of the Department. Since September 2006, Ms. Tahoe has served in various capacities in this Department, including Deputy Counsel, Assistant Counsel for Legislation and as a Senior Attorney. In October 2019, she was appointed Acting Counsel and Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs - which appointment will continue to remain in effect along with her appointment as Acting Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York.

Ms. Tahoe has consistently provided sound legal advice and counsel to the Board of Regents, Commissioner and Department staff on critical policy matters and key initiatives. She is intimately familiar with all aspects of the work of the Department, having managed the day-to-day operations of the Office of Counsel as Deputy Counsel and now Acting Counsel. Ms. Tahoe has also been directly responsible for oversight of the Department's legislative and regulatory initiatives and has handled some of the Department's most significant litigation. Through her thirteen-plus years of service to the Department Ms. Tahoe has established close working relationships with the Board of Regents, former Commissioners and the Deputies in the Department. During her tenure, Ms. Tahoe has also assisted with the successful management of a broad array of critical Departmental functions and responsibilities, including those of the Department's Office of Management Services, Office of the Professions, Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services, Office of Cultural Education, Office of Performance and Improvement and Management Services, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, and the Department's Chief Privacy Officer, as well as the Offices of Communications, Human Resources, Education Finance, and Governmental Relations.

I am confident that Ms. Tahoe will continue to successfully manage the Department's critical functions and responsibilities in this temporary dual role while the Board of Regents continues its search for an interim candidate.

Proposed Handling

The Board of Regents will discuss this appointment in Executive Session on Monday November 4, 2019. It will then come to the Full Board on November 5, 2019 for action.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents appoints Shannon Tahoe as Acting Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York, effective November 16, 2019.

Timetable for Implementation

This temporary appointment will be effective November 16, 2019.