

Office of Board of Trustees

9501 S. King Drive/ADM 300
Chicago, IL 60628
T 773.995.3822
F 773.995.4470

Zaldwaynaka (Z) Scott
President
Chicago State University
9501 South King Drive
ADM 313
Chicago, IL 60628

Dear President Scott,

As Chair of the Chicago State University Board of Trustees, I thank you for the thoughtful and comprehensive memo you presented to the board summarizing your attainment of the goals set for your performance and other activities in which you have engaged during your first year as CSU President. I also appreciate the discussion with the Board of Trustees wherein you further described your expansive work during this annual evaluation period and the Board provided their thoughts and feedback to you. The purpose of this letter is to summarize the board's thoughts on your performance as expressed during our meeting.

We want to congratulate you on a year of strong leadership, hard work and successful focus on the goals set by the Board. There is no question that you have faced long-standing and complex challenges in a short period. In our view, CSU has begun an important process of transformation and renewal. Your convening of a Presidential Transition Committee to assist you in assessing the workings, opportunities and challenges presented is an example of your action-oriented leadership style. Your efforts this past year further demonstrate strategic focus and attention to the details generally needed to move the university forward.

Your goals to strengthen your leadership team and build enrollment have shown significant strides. Within a short period, you have added accomplished leaders to your senior team that include an Interim Provost, Chief of Police, Interim Vice-President of Administrative Services, Director of Government Affairs, General Counsel and Interim Chief Financial Officer. You have also made encouraging gains in enrollment management. We recognize that over the past five years CSU has seen a decline in our enrollment including the loss of approximately 2,000 students during the state's almost two-year budget impasse. Your steps taken to increase and retain our student body include the appointment of a Student Success Task Force, the development of a strategic plan for enrollment management, professionalizing our recruiting team, enhanced branding and marketing and improved external relationships with local high schools and community colleges.

You have effectively managed complex challenges presented by years of deferred maintenance, needed innovation initiatives while engaging in an extensive range of activities designed to bring new partners and relationships to CSU. We applaud your engagement and partnership with the Hyatt Corporation. We, like you, are confident that this innovative partnership will provide value to both CSU and Hyatt.

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We were pleased to see that the Illinois General Assembly passed a 5% increase in our operating budget as well as a \$34 million capital-spending plan. These results demonstrate important advocacy efforts with our General Assembly and set the tone and pace for our efforts around the transformation of CSU. The Board congratulates you on your recognition as a leader and trailblazer by several groups this year including Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs and by Chicago Crain's as one of Chicago's Most Powerful Women in Business. We were also pleased to see your appointment and participation on one of newly-elected Governor JB Pritzker's Transition Committees -- JB and Julianna's Governor's Education Success Transition Committee. It is critically important that your voice was heard within groups that set and put in motion policy initiatives for higher education.

Your hard work included focus on equity in public transit access for our students and surrounding community. For over ten years, the community has advocated for access to safe, reliable and regular Metra rail service at the Metra stop adjacent to our campus at 95th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue. We recognize that you made improved transit access at this stop a strategic focus of your first year and applaud your advocacy and engagement that led to the development and board of approval of Memorandum of Understanding between CSU and Metra for the complete revitalization of the train stop and improved access for the community.

You have initiated and participated in activities that promote CSU and enhance our brand including numerous interviews with media outlets and securing a pro bono commitment from one of the world's largest marketing and PR firms to work with CSU.

You have also taken the time to engage our faculty, staff, students and surrounding community. Your State of the University address was well-received and your participation in meetings with faculty, student government leaders, civil servant leadership and faculty union leadership is important to concept of shared-governance on our campus. You have also met and engaged with community organizations many of whom have an interest in supporting the success of CSU. We believe these steps in engaging the University's key stakeholders to be critically important to the health and growth of the institution.

We further recognize your efforts to reengage our alumni. For the first time in years, we published an alumni newsletter and hosted an alumni engagement event. In keeping with your goals, you made significant strides in rebuilding and renewing the Chicago State Foundation. They include the appointment of a new Board of Directors and the hiring of an Executive Director. These are all efforts that will enhance and improve the stability and brand of CSU.

You should know that the Board of Trustees and I deeply appreciate the strong, thoughtful, and committed leadership that you have displayed at CSU. You have made substantial progress in managing long-standing challenges, have brought leadership, clear direction, and focus to our path forward. We look forward to your continued work this year.

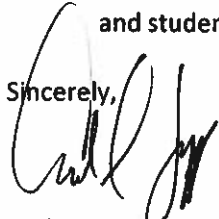
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As you consider the challenges and goals for the next fiscal year, we offer a few suggestions:

1. Continue your focus on student success and enrollment growth. As you are aware, the challenges faced by many in our student population can be positively impacted by thoughtful attention to those factors and processes that can enhance and improve student outcomes.
2. Continue to work on "telling our story" through branding and marketing efforts that extend throughout Chicago and to the surrounding states.
3. Continue to work to strengthen and promote permanence in leadership and mid-level positions across the university.
4. Develop and implement a new strategic plan for Chicago State University. A new strategic framework will provide the campus with improved direction and focus.
5. Develop and engage a President's Advisory Board. This would be an important asset to you as a leader of a significant institution in Illinois.
6. Continue to build strong relationships with the key stakeholders including faculty, staff, alumni and students.

Sincerely,



Andrea Zopp, Esq.
Chair, CSU Board of Trustees