

Johnson County Community College Board of Trustees Special Meeting

June 17, 2024

1 p.m.

Transcript of Meeting

- I am calling to order the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Johnson County Community College in the afternoon of June 17th, 2024. We are going to be doing some interviews today for the executive search firm, and I'm gonna turn over all the good stuff to Jim Feikert.

- Thank you, trustee. Good afternoon everyone. I want to thank our vendors today, EFL is our first interview. I wanna thank them for their time and interest. This interview will be 40 minutes for the presentation and followed up by another 20 minutes of question and answer afterwards. I ask the vendor, EFL to please be cognizant of their time in addressing the questions and topics that were sent in advance. This meeting, for everyone's benefit and reference, is being recorded but not live streamed. The recording will be available on the website a couple days later. In attendance in today's meeting are the following individuals; myself, I'm Jim Feikert, I'm the Executive Director of Procurement Services. Christina McGee, Vice President, Human Resources. Andrea Vieux, Associate Professor, Political Science. Dan Rattan... Excuse me, Dawn Rattan. Butchered that, my apologies, trustee and also secretary. Other community college board of trustees. Not here, but may pop in at some point; Melody Rayl, Chair, Laura Smith-Everett, Vice Chair. Mark Hamill, Treasurer. Lee Cross, member. Valerie Jennings, member. Those are my introductions. I wanna thank you again for your time and interest.

- Greg Mitchell.

- Trustee Mitchell, I apologize.

- All right.

- One more trustee. That is my job for the introductions, I'll go ahead and turn it over to EFL. Thank you.

- Thank you.

- Well, good afternoon everyone. Good afternoon, Jim. I'm so sorry, when I came in, I just caught the tail end of the rules of the road. And heard to certainly keep it concise, but I hope I didn't miss anything else.

- I don't think so. Basically, to recap; we've got a group of folks here on our end that consists of trustees and the hiring committee. You had some pretty scripted topics that were sent to you. Please allow 40 minutes to go through your presentation, we'll follow up with 20 minutes question and answer afterwards.

- Well, fantastic. Again, good afternoon everyone, and thanks so much for the opportunity to meet with you today. I do not have anything particularly planned other than going through your questions. In other words, I don't have the dreaded awful PowerPoint to put up to walk through. So hopefully that will meet your requirements.

- [Jim] I think that'll work. We look forward to it.

- Okay, great. Well, I'll start and dive right in on question one, firm overview and the folks that will be serving you. EFL Associates has been around a long, long time. We're one of the original firms in executive search. We're in now, I think our 46th year. So again, quite some time. We're a top 2% retained search firm. And by top 2% we figured that based upon revenue of the roughly 2,500 search firms out there, we're in the top 2%. So we have scale, we have reach, and we have a lot of longevity. We became part of the CBIZ team in 2008. And for those who don't know of CBIZ, 1.5 billion dollar New York stock exchange traded company. Headquartered in Cleveland, probably Kansas City is the second largest office. We serve about a hundred thousand professional clients. So again, quite a bit of reach. Very, very pleased to be part of that team. Certainly it helps with our ability to touch candidates nationwide and that sort of thing. EFL associates has remained, what I would say, intentionally boutique sized. So we're not particularly large compared to many of the others, this is really by intent. A couple of reasons. We feel like we can better serve our clients if we remain relatively small. I'll give you one quick example. Every single search firm out there will tell you that, hey, we won't recruit from your company, your school, your university, your college, your nonprofit for a period of one year. And so the more consultants that you have out there doing the more searches, doing the more placements, you have a much longer list of off limits places where you can go, off limits clients. And so that's one of the reasons we keep, again, intentionally small. We think we can better serve our clients. We think that we can have a wider base, broader group from whom we can search. I'll talk a little bit about bios and backgrounds. So your support team will be primarily me, as your lead consultant. Edith Ketay, who's the project manager. I'll say this about Edith. I have known Edith for almost 25 years, and until today, she has never been so sick that she couldn't attend. I had planned to bring Edith in. Edith really wanted to to meet with you because in many ways she's the secret sauce of what we do. But she's our program manager, project manager, and I'll tell you a little bit about her. The third critical member of our team is Mari Kerwin. And Mari's been with EFL as a senior recruiter, oh gosh, about four years now. Because we're a multifaceted executive search team, we have the ability to surge support across the organization. So if we need any additional help in any way, EFL can provide that. But I'll give you my background real quick. Certainly, the road less traveled. When I graduated from Michigan State, I was commissioned in the Marine Corps

and actually ended up spending about 27 years in the Marines. Much of that time was as a judge advocate. I tried a lot of different cases, from murder, assault to espionage cases, which as I watch the news today, I have tried cases under the very statutes that you're seeing quite often. About 2004 and '05, I went to the war college. And when I graduated from there, I said, you know what, I don't think I wanna practice law in the Marines anymore. So I went to the command and the staff side and ended up commanding a unit of 55,000 Marines. Now, they were reservists, but we had a team of about 350 or 400 that supported them. So one of the largest commands in the Marine Corps. After that, I had always thought I wanted to teach constitutional law, and that started my track toward higher education. And I was at Grantham University for a while. I ran Grantham for the last three years that I was there. And they're now part of the University of Arkansas system, so I think that was a great benefit to our students. While I was at Grantham, I met Jay Meschke, I was part of the search that EFL associates conducted. And although I was a bridesmaid, I was particularly enthralled by how they treated me personally, professionally, as a candidate. And when the opportunity to join EFL Associates came up, I absolutely jumped at it. And that I think will be one of the hallmarks of our firm. Not only how we treat our clients, but how we treat all of our candidates because we will be the face of JCCC and that is absolutely critical as we go forward and represent you. Edith, as I mentioned, I've known her for about 25 years. She was a higher... I'm sorry, an HR leader, and led a team of about 50 I think with Zenith, and then transitioned into program management, and then ran a housing unit. And I was fortunate enough to coax Edith into joining me. Her role, I would simplify for you this way, is to make sure that we take as much of the administrative burden off of your shoulders as we possibly can, and that we ensure that nothing falls through the cracks. As I said, Mari Kerwin's been with us, I think about four years. She's been with the higher ed team now for about one year, and she'll be one of our leads in terms of interacting with candidates, doing initial screens before they're handed off to me for really an in-depth sort of interview. And I'll be touching on that at multiple points throughout. And before I transition to question two, I'll simply pause and see if there's anything else that I can provide.

- I believe we have one question from Trustee Smith-Everett.

- Steve, what is Edith's title? You marked that Mari was senior recruiter, what's Edith's title?

- She's the program manager and project manager.

- Okay, thank you.

- You bet. And again, her role will be to make sure that nothing slips through the cracks and that the administrative burden is as light on JCCC as possible.

- Very good, thank you.

- You bet. Number two; an overview of other colleges and universities you've successfully worked with, specific to president searches. You know, one thing I neglected to say as I was giving you the EFL outline; so for the entire 45, 46 years that EFL has been around, we have done higher ed searches. In 1999, we actually created our own higher ed search vertical, and I do run that vertical now. Since that time, we've done, oh gosh, an excess of 300 higher ed searches. So we've really done every position, I think imaginable within a college or university, of course, to include president. As we look at locally, we've done the Ottawa University chancellor search, Kansas City University, Park University, Rockhurst, Avila, and probably one or two more that I'm forgetting about. In terms of our practice though, it is a national practice. The schools I just named, I know that you're saying, gosh, those are privates, but we've also done a lot of publics. President searches at public universities, Eastern New Mexico, Lake Superior State University, Eastern Washington. So we're very, very familiar with the nuances of both private universities and public colleges. And some of the challenges and such that come with each. We will do about two president searches per year. That's kind of the average that we've done since about 2000. I joined EFL in 2017, and that's about the number that I have done. So an average of about two a year. And by two, I mean two president searches. We do between 15 and 20 higher ed searches per year for various positions. So that's the brief overview of president searches. And again, I'll pause and be happy to take any questions.

- Trustees, any questions?

- I have one question-

- Trustee Hill... Jennings, sorry-

- When was your Avila presidential search?

- That was Ron Slepitz. That was Ron Slepitz, so that was I think, 2005-ish. I'd have to go back and double check.

- Thank you.

- You bet.

- Any other trustees with questions? Okay, I think we-

- Are we waiting till the end or are we asking as we go?

- Let's try to, Steve, if possible, just to kind of focus on the scripted questions that were sent in advance. We'll have some time afterwards to follow up with some question and answer, if that's okay.

- Happy to do that. Thanks Jim.

- [Jim] Thank you.

- You bet. Similar geopolitical environments and demographics. Then you ask, what have you found to be the most effective, I guess, pieces in running those searches? I know what I think you mean by geopolitical environments, but maybe I should open that up or shall I just charge ahead?

- Go ahead and charge ahead. I'm curious to just see, as a firm that's fairly local, familiar with Johnson County, obviously Johnson County Community College has a reputation that precedes it. We think of ourselves pretty highly, and not in a snarky way, but obviously we want the best and we strive for the best. Knowing that, and having worked with other presidential search firms, what would you think is most important to us?

- Well, and what I glean from geopolitical environment is a board of regents or a board of trustees that's either elected or politically appointed. We have done several searches with boards that are constructed or made up that way. And as we look at what's most effective, I'm gonna break that down into two areas. I want to talk to you first about committees, second about communication. Let's talk about committees first. It's imperative that the board select a superb committee to go forward. I think that there's one thing in particular that makes for a superb committee, and that's a group that comes in without an agenda other than the one primary agenda, and that's to select the best candidate possible. We have seen searches where committee members believed they were selected to follow the agenda of their particular area of expertise, be it faculty, be it advancement, be it student services, whatever it happens to be. So be very, very focused when selecting the committee, again, that they come with, but one objective and one agenda. The other thing is to select a chair that is strong and can communicate and can keep the committee focused, as we talked about. I have a saying, I don't know if you'll find it amusing, but they say in committee work, a camel is a horse designed by a committee. So we wanna make sure that we're not going to strive for the least common denominator. Someone that is, gosh, I guess we can accept that candidate, you know, type of person. We need a Chair that can constantly remind that we need to drive for, strive for the absolute best and avoid creating that camel instead of the horse that you're looking for. You have to have someone that can build trust among all committee

members right from the beginning. Trust that what they say will be respected, will be heard, will be confidential. Someone who feels empowered precisely to say exactly what they think. You have to ensure that you have that again, across the entire committee. Otherwise, you can fall into, oh gosh, situations where the committee unravels, where some go to the press, where some breach confidentiality with impunity. So you really have to create that strength of character, strength of leadership, establish the rules and establish that trust. So that's the committee side that I think is so important. The other piece is really good transparent communication. By that, don't be afraid to communicate at what stage we're in at any given time in a search. Now, we're staffing, now we're interviewing, now we're reviewing, whatever it happens to be. We can talk about those stages without having a chilling effect on candidates. And I think that that is very, very critical. It's critical not only externally, right? Because again, this is an elected body, but it's not only critical externally but also internally through really open, clear communication. We'll go back to that word, trust. So I would work very, very hard with your MarCom director, so that we provide updates that are timely, that are informative and engender that sense of trust. The other thing that I will tell you and this is kind of a differentiator, I suppose, is I'm incredibly transparent with candidates as well. So I will absolutely want to spend a lot of time on campus, find out the pros, the cons, what's good, what's bad. And I will be very transparent in my communication with the candidates. You know, I mentioned this in my first response to the first question. We are the face of JCCC. And so when we deal with a candidate, we have to be open, honest, transparent, tell them what we think, tell them what we're saying, that sort of thing. And so for those candidates that aren't selected, they can talk about how they had a good experience throughout the process and JCCC treated them properly. So when we're in an environment like this, again, committee selection, committee preparation, committee chair communication, those would be the things that I would tell you will lead to a very successful outcome and really set the candidate up for success because whomever he or she is, you don't want them coming in with a sense that that part of the community somehow felt slighted, uninformed, unheard, that sort of thing. So it really sets them up for that success. And with that, I'll move to number four; tactics that our firm will use to build a pipeline of candidates. I think in terms of concentric rings. We'll have a broad concentric ring, sort of middle concentric ring, and then a very narrow one. So let's talk about those individually. We will go to market very broadly, and we want people to know about this, we want people to hear about it, we want to create enthusiasm about the position. That's very, very important. So we'll do large scale notifications, large scale sending to get the word out. So that's that big broad concentric ring, if you will. Now, we're gonna narrow the focus. After we get the word out, we're gonna narrow the focus. These are the people that we are really specifically targeting. We do original research on every single search that we do. In other words, we don't go back and pull yesterday's database and dust off yesterday's research. We start fresh with, pardon me, every single search. And so we'll go out to them with original emails, with LinkedIn connections, telephone calls, and we'll do that targeted searching. Then we'll begin to narrow it down even closer. And this narrowest ring, these are the personal networks. So certainly one of the things that you get from EFL Associates is 45 years worth of connections. Certainly through our CBIZ colleagues as well, we have reach and we will do those personal networking outreach pieces. And again, we don't outsource this, this is done in-house, Edith, Mari, and anyone else within EFL that we believe can help. As we're talking about these personal networks, we're also gonna reach out to you as JCCC trustees, employees, professionals. And we're gonna try to tap into your networks too. We don't wanna do this as EFL without partner type of thing. We certainly want to partner with you very closely and reach into your networks as well. I'll talk about this last piece, but really only in passing. We will post

advertising. It's a leg to the stool. It's something that I think is best practice. We'll do it in a very judicious way, because most of the time, the vast majority of the time, your candidate will come from our personal outreach, our personal relationship building. And maybe that's the word to really underline, is the relationship building rather than advertising. So again, we're judicious with your budget on that. We do it because we think we should, but we are the antithesis of a post and hope sort of search firm. I also wanna touch on diversity. Building a diverse pool is absolutely critical. EFL associates has just a superb record in building diverse pools. 60% of our, this is firm-wide, our placements over the last 10 years have been women and or people of color. So we're very, very proud of that. And we'll go forward with that specifically in mind as one of the things that we're looking to do when we source. And that's build you a very deep and diverse pool. Gosh, I'll move on to five. How do you define success? You know, from a search firm perspective, I think success is first defined by the length of time that someone has been in the chair. And so we strive to ensure that we find... You know, I think what's the national average now, five or six years? It keeps moving downward, unfortunately. But we wanna find people that are absolutely going to beat the national average. And so that's probably the key metric to success is how long they're in the chair. The other thing is effectiveness. You know, this is harder for us to measure because while we stay in touch with our candidates once they're placed, you know, this is critical. Are they effective in terms of furthering the strategic plan of the organization? It's harder to track at the back end, but it sure isn't hard to talk about on the front end. So I'll become intimately familiar with your strategic plan. I'll ensure that the candidates are familiar with it and we'll talk about things when I interview them. That will be a kind of, hopefully a giveaway, to whether or not we think they'll be effective in terms of forwarding your strategic plan. You know, one thing that I think ultimately is a tremendous truth teller to whether someone's been effective is graduation rates. You know, are the students that are coming there,, are they being successful in what they're trying to accomplish and are they graduating? So those are the things that we really look at. The one that I suppose in an after the fact sort of way we can monitor the best is how long they've been there. And so if they've been there quite a while, I suspect that's indicative of their effectiveness, their alliance with a strategic plan and they're driving those grad rates. Pardon me. Number six; of the past five years of presidential placements how many are still presidents at institutions where we place them? In the last five years, we are 9 out of 10. Again, I do about two per year on average, and so nine are still in office today. Number seven; please describe your strategy for communicating with and capturing the voice of all stakeholders. You know, this is something that I think also differentiates us. We will spend an inordinate amount of time on your campus meeting with stakeholders. As we go forward with a search, we need to know exactly who we're looking for. You know, where are your areas of strength? Where are your areas of weakness? What are the leadership indicators that we should strive to find to really, I think, ensure that we found the successful candidate. And what you'll see is you'll see me on campus for two days, three days, whatever it happens to be, meeting with as many groups as possible. Now, I'm here in Kansas City, so I know Johnson County well, but when I travel, I specifically like to tie in community leaders as well because our client schools are anchors to the community, just tremendous assets to the community and I like to have their input as well. Even though I think I know Johnson County pretty well, I'd probably wanna spend a little bit of time with the community also. So I'll spend time with the board, I'll spend time with the cabinet, I'll spend time with faculty. The faculty your size, we'll probably schedule several meetings. I might like to schedule time with faculty leadership, your faculty senate, also the staff and the students and athletic director probably as well. So I hear from everybody and I think I talked to you before about sort of those tile pieces and the mosaic emerges. I can't get a mosaic unless I really go out and seek out

as many of those tile pieces as I can. We will indeed work on putting together a very professional profile. I'll work with your MarCom team to ensure it meets your look and feel. Certainly, I will work through your Chair and also your MarCom to ensure that not only does it look and feel right, but the verbiage is accurate, all the facts and data throughout are 100% good to go. Throughout and during the active recruiting process. You know, the during part, if we do our work upfront, which we absolutely will, the during part should be pretty easy. But where I'm gonna lean on on the board where I'm gonna lean on faculty and cabinet is, as I said earlier, you're an integral part of our networking. Nobody can tell the story of JCCC like you can. You all have contacts, you have trusted friends, trusted associates, and we wanna leverage those. So while we'll have most of that, I guess mosaic complete the day we start, you know, we are always looking to involve people throughout the entire process. And I'll even add this, right? When you do that, it creates ownership, it creates teamwork, it creates and builds enthusiasm and it lands toward a much more successful sort of search.

- Good idea.

- And I think that takes us to our last one. Why are we the best firm? And you know, I think what you're really asking is what are the differentiators? I would tell you that there are hard differentiators and soft differentiators. So in terms of the hard differentiators, we have a great deal of reach. EFL is a national practice. My higher ed practice is from Maine to California. We can reach into areas that many simply cannot. We have decades... Decades of cultivated relationships that enhance that reach. Not sure if you're interested in a non-traditional candidate, I suspect not, but that's one of those things that we would determine. We have a tremendous reach there, especially when we bring our CBIZ brethren into the fold. I would tell you this, that I think based on her name, our reputation, our processes, and again, I'll underline that word, relationships, there are very few doors that would not open to us... Pardon me, open to us, as we try to tell the story of JCCC. This is something that I think is absolutely critical as a hard differentiator. We don't just screen the candidates, we interview the candidates. And shockingly few higher ed search firms actually sit down and interview the candidates, but I will do that personally. I'll spend an hour, hour and a half, whatever it happens to be, two hours, getting to know the candidates so that when I come to the selection meeting to select semi-finalists, I can tell you things far beyond what are in the cover letter and in the CV. I can tell you about their personality, and how I think they would resonate based on what I've learned. Again, many search firms in higher education simply do a screening. But we will screen first and I will deeply interview. Another hard differentiator is the leadership piece. Leadership, I believe is the most critical factor that you must have in your next president. It's a little bit of a difficult thing to define. You know, we can talk about this type of leadership, that type of leadership, servant leadership, but really it's seeing that in action, knowing what to ask and knowing how to evaluate. I spent a career in a professional leadership organization. I've worked for some of the best national leaders that you'll run across. I feel like that is a very, very positive differentiator in my ability to assess who will come in and really be able to lead. Finally, we know Kansas City... We know the Midwest, but we know Kansas City extraordinarily well and that's certainly a hard differentiator for us. Let's talk about some of those soft differentiators. This is where Edith would've, I think, really made quite the impression. We will sweat the details, that's why we have Edith. Things will not fall through the cracks. She is there to ensure again, that the administrative burden is on our shoulders and not yours. I



have used the word relationship a probably disproportionate number of times, but that's for a reason, because it's true, it exists. We'll have a relationship not only with our client, which is sacrosanct and first and foremost, but we will build that relationship with the candidates. And that's imperative because that's when they'll let their guard down and we get the sense for who they really are as leaders, as people, as mentors, all of those things that are so critical to leadership. We do that, and I touched on this before, by being very upfront on the pros and cons of the position. You know, again, first that builds trust with our candidates, but it also prepares them for the position we want, whomever you're going to select to come in with their eyes wide open on the pros, the cons, the challenges. If they don't, that is a recipe for disaster. The number of times that I've had a candidate tell me that they're itching to leave their current position because they didn't have an idea of just how things were when they got there, is staggering. We work especially hard to ensure that that doesn't happen. You know, the last thing is we won't be outworked. I think anyone, everyone will tell you the same thing. Edith's work ethic is beyond reproach, I like to think mine is as well. Again, I'll emphasize that we'll become the face of JCCC, we take that very seriously. And we work hard to make sure that's a positive face. And that those candidates, pardon me, who aren't selected walk away feeling like they had a very good experience throughout the process. So we won't be outworked and we'll ensure that we work toward putting JCCC's best face forward. You know, I think that takes us to the end. I'm probably sure there's a bunch of things that I would've liked to have said and forgot, but it looks like we're about at that 40 minute mark. So I will pause and be happy to interact with you however you like.

- Oh, Steve, you did a fantastic job keeping time, so must have had a stopwatch there in front of you, but you're right on schedule. I'm gonna turn it over to the rest of the folks in the room. If they have any questions, feel free to go for it. We got one question up right now.

- Trustee Rattan.

- Sure, thank you.

- Good afternoon. I read in your profile that you have... I read it to read that you have a two year guarantee for candidates. Can you speak about that?

- Yeah, you bet. And you know, I'm so glad you brought that up. Our normal guarantee is one year. We want this job, we want to work with you, and we are confident in the candidate that we'll bring to campus. And so we again, rarely offer a two year guarantee, but I'm pleased to do that for you because again, our confidence is high, our desire is high, and we think we can do just a superb job for you.

- All right, fantastic.

- Can I follow up about that? What does that guarantee? That they stay in the job or can you speak more about what that entails?

- You bet. We're guaranteeing that they will stay in the job for a period of two years. If that does not happen, we will do the search for you anew at no professional fee. No charge for professional fee.

- Thank you.

- Any more questions?

- Trustee Rattan.

- You indicate verbally and in your packet that you interview the candidates and you have an executive candidate questionnaire. Can you give a little bit more detail about the executive candidate questionnaire?

- Yeah, you bet. And thanks again for bringing that up. It is part of our process. It has been for probably the last, oh gosh, seven or eight years. And it was based on feedback from our client. And here's what we hope to achieve, so if you reach out and you ask candidates who apply to give you a cover letter and a CV. Okay, hey, the CV will be however they make it, but the cover letters, you know, some will concentrate in area A and some in area B and that sort of thing, and so they're really all across the board. And it becomes harder for a committee to review all of those and really get a good sense of sameness, if you will. So we have created the executive questionnaire so that all of the candidates will at one point in the process speak to the same six or seven or eight topics that are most critical. So we'll work with your board chair, we'll certainly work with committee chair to develop those. So if, for example, during our campus visits, we see that student support is your number one issue, we would craft an executive question along those lines. So it creates a sameness of topics that the candidates will provide to the committee for just better, easier, more consistent evaluation.

- And that was my question. It was it like a turnkey that you kind of have a template you use for all, you create a unique questionnaire for each school. Great.

- That's exactly right.

- [Dawn] Thank you.

- You got it.

- [Laura] Trustee Cross.

- Yeah. Steve, thank you for presenting here today. I do appreciate it and it's impressive. And last time, I think I'm the only trustee here from the last search that we did with the AGB in 2019. I'm open to outside the box candidates. I know Case State had hired a former military person in the past. I think it makes sense in this geopolitical environment. And then frankly just to have someone to help articulate a budget and what it is we do here. So I appreciate the presentation. With that said, how do we know we're not just gonna get the same 15, 20 names that fill up a lot of other national searches?

- You know, I think it's the way that we go to market. We go to market again, broadly, we don't post and hope and then we work our way down. Because I interview the candidates and I spent a lot of time with them, you know, I'm really probing them along with not just my interview, but also those executive questionnaires so that we're sure that who we put forward meets your particular needs. Now, we can't stop someone that is throwing their hat in the ring on every search. But I think the way that we go to market and the way that we evaluate will give you a nice spread of candidates that fit your needs. You know, going to the non-traditional. Yeah, I have some... We have some inroads on those types of candidates that would almost... Of something other than the usual suspects.

- Thank you very much.

- You bet.

- Anyone else?

- Yes, this is Andrea Vieux. I'm curious about the community leaders. When you say community leaders, how do you define that?

- You know, I work with our school and with our client to define who might be a good group. So for example, I was down in Abilene, Texas in April. And I worked with the McMurry University team to

identify who they thought were the most critical people in town that could help me best understand what's going on. So we had the Chamber of Commerce, we had some equity groups that were doing some builds in downtown. We had somebody that had completely renovated, using McMurry grant, completely renovated the local downtown theater. We had the head of the... We had the superintendent of the local school system. And I'm missing probably five or six others. But to answer the question, we really kind of query our partner universities and partner colleges to put that short list together. We just did the same thing down in Ottawa campus. We've launched a campus president search and did the exact same thing where we reached out. Their chamber was part of it and a few others. And you really get that sense for what the community thinks about your school, what they think about the criticality of your mission is in their community. And then you also get a sense for the type of educational programs they might be interested in. So it creates a really dynamic back and forth. So yeah, we will work hard with you to put together that short list. And I'd love to meet with whomever we think can best help us shape what this next president looks like.

- Anyone else? Trustee Rattan, again.

- It's Dawn Rattan again, Steve. Did I miss where you talked about timing for the process? Oh, can we talk about that, Jim?

- Go for it. Yeah.

- Yeah. And I think we put that in the proposal, but I'll answer it this way, maybe we didn't, but I'll answer it this way-

- [Dawn] You did put it in the proposal-

- We are very agile-

- If I can interrupt you, you did put it in the proposal, but there's about five people here who have seen it, four or five, and there's four or five who've not seen it. So I just wanted to make sure it was discussed openly.

- No, I appreciate that. And I was just double checking to kind of see if I put that particular chart in there that we sometimes use that lays it out. Yep, I did, good. What I put in the proposal, and this was the point I was really gonna drive toward. What I put in the proposal is just sort of an average case, how a

typical search may run. The thing that Edith and I really pride ourselves on is our agility. So in other words, if the process isn't quite right, you wanna do something different, than what you see in the proposal, happy to do that, we're very agile. If you are on a very tight turn and you wanted to get started very quickly, we would move up the timeline, we would shorten various elements, that sort of thing to make it come to fruition. So again, we're very, very agile. So I would ask, when you need it done, when you need the next president to come in, whether you're looking for a January start, we can make it happen, we'll have to get after it. Or if you're looking for something more in the July 1st sort of range. For presidencies, those seem to be really the two points that you're driving toward, either a January or a 1 July start. So we would craft our timeline that will fit your needs to ensure that somebody is there on time, on target. In terms of the thing that probably ... The thing. The piece that takes probably the longest one that we wanna be most thorough is our sourcing. And I would like to source for this position for a period of not less than six weeks. And that will ensure that the largest, broadest pool that we can put together. Again, if your exigencies don't support that, we absolutely can do it in a shorter way. So agility is gonna be... Is something that we'll bring to the table.

- Thank you very much.

- I have a question for you, if I'm not interrupting any other trustees that have a question. All of the executives you've found are for four year institutions. Johnson County Community College is very unique. We look like a four year institution, and many people in our community think that we are in many ways, but we are still a community college, which makes us quite a bit different from four year institutions. Does your staff have experience with two year firms, or sorry, two year institutions? And do you expect there to be a little different approach when talking about community college leadership versus a higher ed four year institution?

- You know, certainly somebody that has familiarity with and or passion for the mission of a two year college. So we would communicate what that looks like, perhaps to those that don't. And yes, we have done community college searches, we've worked for MCC and also JCCC. I always feel like I'm giving one C to many, pardon me.

- [Laura] Everyone feels that way, every person. You can call it J, triple C, if you want.

- [Dawn] Or the college, like Greg said.

- But no, we're very confident in our ability to really find someone for your particular mission. And that's the other thing, right? We live in this community, we're vested. Our friends, our children, our neighbors, our neighbors' children are products of JCCC. So no, we feel like we know your mission, your impact to

the community, who you are, what you're all about. We feel like we know that very well. And again, very vested in finding just the right person.

- Well, thank you very much. Do we have any further questions? Any burning last second questions? Okay, well, with that Jim, I think we're ready to say goodbye.

- Steve, thank you very much for your time. We appreciate it. Respectfully, I know how much time goes into the proposal process. I appreciate it and getting to this point. We are going through interviews this week. We hope to make a decision as a committee by the end of this week, first part of next week. I will be your main point of contact for anything, as you're aware. So if anyone on either side from EFL or the trustee side has any questions or follow up clarifications, please direct those through me. But otherwise, I want to thank you for your time today and we will be in touch.

- Thank you.

- My pleasure. Great to see you again. Take care everybody. Thank you for your time.

- Thank you.

- Thank you. Appreciate your time.

- Bye-Bye.

- With that, I believe our next firm is scheduled at 2:15, so we can take a brief recess. If people need to stretch, go to the restroom, chat. Does that sound okay? And we'll reconvene at 2:10. Is that all right with everyone?

- [Jim] Thank you.

- Okay. I don't know, do I need to make an official motion? Any opinions back there? Can I just call it a recess and we're good?

- Okay, recess until 2:10.

- Thank you.

- All right, welcome back to our special board meeting of the board of trustees for Johnson County Community College on June 17th. We are going to proceed with our next presidential search firm. And I'm gonna turn it over to Jim Feikert to walk us to the next person.

- Thank you. Good afternoon. I would like to welcome our second interview, vendor interview for this service. This is with the Association of Community College Trustees. This presentation will be no more than 40 minutes addressing the topics that were sent in advance. This will allow for 20 minutes of follow-up question and answer. This meeting is being recorded but not live streamed. The recording will be available on JCCC's website in a couple days. In the interest of time, I'll go through brief introductions here on our end and then I will turn it over to ACCT. Myself, I'm Jim Feikert, the Executive Director of Procurement Services. Also joining us here today is Christina McGee, Vice President of Human Resources. Andrea Vieux, Associate Professor of Political Science. Dawn Rattan, trustee, and other trustees as well, Laura Smith-Everett, Mark Hamill, Lee Cross, Valerie Jennings, and Greg Mitchell. I wanna thank you for your time and your interest in this service. I'm gonna go ahead and turn it over to Association of Community College Trustees. We look forward to hearing from you.

- Wonderful. Well, good afternoon everyone, and first and foremost, thank you for inviting us and thank you for making time out of your busy schedule to spend the next 40 minutes hearing our presentation and 20 minutes to your follow up questions. We will be mindful of the time. I am Julie Golder. I am the Vice President of Search Services for the college trustees. I've been working really exclusive-

- Julie, yeah, this is Jim. I apologize, I'm gonna cut you off for half a second. We're having a hard time hearing you on our end. I don't know if it's a bug on our end or your end, but I wanna make sure we give you the opportunity to come through loud and clear.

- I'll unmute the microphone and I'll be sure to project a little louder. Is this better?

- I think that sounds a lot better, thank you.

- Wonderful. Thank you so much-

- That sound good to everybody? All right, thank you. Sorry to interrupt.

- Can you hear me as well? Am I coming clear?

- Yeah.

- Yes.

- Yes, we hear you.

- Oh good.

- Fantastic, thank you.

- Thank you. And of course, thank you for this opportunity. I am Julie Golder, I am the Vice President of Search Services for ACCT. I've been working exclusively on executive searches here for the last 17 plus years. We provide comprehensive search support to about 30 to 35 member institutions each year. We are a nonprofit, we are mission focused and we would be honored to be of service. Serving as your lead consultant would be Dr. Brad Ebersole. And I'm gonna have Brad take a few moments to introduce himself and his background to all of you. Brad?

- Yes. All right, good afternoon. And Jim, you can't hear me clearly, is that true?

- We can hear you fantastic. Thank you.

- All right, that's great. Yes, I'm Brad Ebersole. And with groups like this, I've introduced myself as a former community college student and a former community college president. And in between that, as you can guess, my life has been in community college work. I was at the community college of Baltimore County, which has a larger multi-campus system teaching, and then moved through administrative roles in that institution. I was there for quite a long time. One of the significant accomplishments was that institution contracted with a neighboring county to start a college. And I was part of the team of four that started that and that's a thriving institution. Later I was vice chancellor for academic affairs at Baton Rouge Community College, Louisiana. And we had a lot of successes there as well. And then I served as



president of Washington County College of Ohio in Ohio. And since my retirement from my full-time life, I've been working with ACCT nearly six years now, providing service for searches like this and board retreats. And I've conducted about 35 retreats for boards and presidents, and six president searches, six successful president searches. So I'm pleased to be here and to share with you what I can as you're engaged in your search.

- And Brad, I know that you have also done some work within the state of Kansas. Can I ask you to share that experience?

- Sure. Okay, more specifically, some of the work in the searches, I'll share those. But in Kansas, I worked with the board and then the president at Garden City Community College in Kansas. And then I know you were asking about more regional work with the Nebraska Association of Community Colleges, I worked and provided a day long workshop for their association in one of their annual meeting. And then in the state of Iowa, conducted about six board retreats with them. I can share the searches that I've been involved with have been some with smaller institutions and some with those that are more your size. Those that are comparable to your school have been Ocean County College in New Jersey, which is about 12 or so thousand, Riverside Community College in California, and just recently completed the search of Midlands Technical College and Columbia, South Carolina, which is about 13 or 14,000 as well. So that's been that experience. They've all... At this point, I see you have a question later about longevity of those successes and I'll be able to address that too.

- You asked about an overview of other colleges and universities that we have worked with. We are a member organization and we can only work with member organizations. And that means we are focused and dedicated to the community college mission. So we work exclusively on community college searches. We work with some of the largest institutions throughout this country. We've worked with the Los Angeles Community College District, we've worked with Lone Star in Texas. So we've worked with some that are in the over 50,000 student enrollment size. We have worked with some of the smallest institutions in the country. The one that Brad led in North Carolina has an enrollment of under a thousand students and everywhere in between. And every search is different and unique and our recruitment strategy for every search is based on the individual college and where they want to go as an institution. Brad, anything else to share to make sure that we answer question number two?

- I would just tell you that I was even going into question three a little bit of that, I think we've answered some of those. But you mentioned about similar geopolitical environments and what has been successful. And overall, my suggestion is that in all the searches, the success is in following the process. And as I'm sure you've heard of others and whatever, but it's a time for the board and the college to think carefully about where they're going and where they want the institution to be and what type of individual they're interested to have in this very important position. Also a time to be thinking about the challenges, if it's enrollment and the opportunities and workforce development and student success or whatever it might be. But the association will cast a wide net, diversity included in all of that. And the

process generally then of the 50 or 60 or so applications that you get, as you follow the process and you find yourself down to about 8 or 10 semi-finalists and then your three or four finalists as well. And the piece about the geopolitical, what I have found in my experience is through that process you do find that the individual surface that understand the culture and the life of the institution and those that are most likely to be the best match as president for what you're looking for. So my thoughts on that is largely I encourage boards and the college as a whole just to be sure you follow the process 'cause the process can work if you stick to it.

- And in terms of most effective, I have a couple of pointers that I would like to share. And one is being sure that the college communicates effectively. One of the things that we do is we create draft progress reports for the Chair to edit, for the college to make sure it's in the voice of the college. But so that we provide a solid draft to communicate effectively and efficiently that's emailed to all employees, posted on the website, and of course the most important updates can be turned into press releases and sent out community-wide. So communicating effectively is important throughout the entire process because a transition can create unease and concern amongst employees especially. So letting the college know where you are and where you're going is important. The timeline is a critical instrument in the search. So coming up with dates that everyone is in agreement with, that covers our key deliverables to you so that we are all on the same page. And that the board and the committee has key dates marked out as early as possible. That doesn't mean that the timeline is set in stone, but to have a strong draft that works for everyone early on ensures a smoother process. Then finally, ensuring that the board speaks with one voice throughout the search. The best candidates are gonna be doing a lot of research, doing their own homework. So ensuring that the college and the board is on the same page, and again, messaging appropriately and with regular frequency because again, candidates are going... The best candidates are really going to be doing their own investigation on the board, the college and the community to ensure that they're the right fit. Brad, anything there that you'd like to follow up on?

- No, I would just say that we're moving through your questions here. That in my experience, a board does its profile, the college works on defining what it is that they're looking for. And I find that to be one of the most rewarding parts of the process that involves me as the consultant to visit the institution. We have several open forums with faculty and staff and it's really a pleasure to engage with them and largely ask what it is they're looking for in a president. What are the strengths of the institution, and what are some of the challenges? And it's really critical for me to know that and listen to faculty and staff share that information 'cause my job largely is to recruit an excellent pool of candidates for this position. And having that information helps me to be involved with that in the largest manner possible. I get to know all of those factors about the institution. I've seen the grounds, I've seen the buildings, I've talked with the people, talked with the board, so that when I do speak with potential candidates who do call or are nominated, I can talk to the strengths of the institution and listen to those individuals and see if in fact they would be strong candidates for you at a particular point. What a board really is looking for though, with all those skills I always found, is an individual with honesty, integrity, one who can communicate well with individuals. So with all those skills, it's the person that comes forward as well. But that profile is very important, and developing that, with your input, with the search committee input, with faculty and staff input, really does reflect very carefully what you're looking for. And then as I work with that, I think

from my case here, it would be that this is an attractive college, significant number of students, largest one, I think you're the largest one in the community college in the state. And that's attractive in that regard as well. They will ask me questions and I'll need some honest thoughts about that at some point. I know you're the gentleman that was president, left after three and a half years and it looked like it was abrupt. You'll have to share with me what you want on that information, but candidates will ask me about that. And what I can present in the best manner possible is what we do. You also have an interim who had been with you for years before. And an interim is what I read for a short time in student affairs and now is back. Candidates will ask me, is there an interim? And I'm not at liberty to say because of confidentiality about who has applied, but what I do like to say is it's an open search. And I would have to get that assurance from you that in fact a search is open, and that helps me to then be able to recruit the very best people and people will put their application in. Generally though, when people do ask that, I say, don't worry about it. I say, you need to just be yourself. Put in your best resume, put in your best letter of application and present yourself, put your best foot forward and if you're the right person, it will come forward.

- And I'm just gonna add a point of clarification to your insight. And that is what you were describing is if there's an interim, if they're eligible to apply for the permanent position. Just a point of clarification. And you talked a little bit about the recruitment strategy, so Brad, I'll jump in, but why don't you just talk about sharing what you do to attract a strong and highly competitive candidate pool.

- Right. I will tell you, ACCT has, and if you've seen their material that goes out, they post these jobs, people know to look to ACCT who are aspiring to be presidents. They know to look to ACCT's listing of those jobs and what they are. Also, Julie and her staff send out several times during the recruitment period, a blast, as it's called. It goes to about 12 to 13,000 individuals that sees that. We ask for nominations, we ask people to inquire with me. And again, it is my task and I take it very seriously to get a strong pool of candidates for you. And as I watch those come in and I will speak to ACCT and say, perhaps you can share with me some names of people you know regionally or in the area or further away that are really good and aspiring for that and I will call those individuals and speak to them about your school and what you have to offer. And if it seems good, it's a bit of a recruitment. It's all confidential, and I swear to them that not until they are finalists will their name ever be revealed publicly in any way. Yes, the search committee would see who they are, but they are sworn to secrecy as well until somebody becomes a finalist at that point. So I think what Julie's point is and mine too is that I'm actively engaged in recruiting people for this position. And I feel the responsibility to make sure that when the day comes and the search committee starts to look at candidates, the full pool of candidates, they in fact can say, yeah, we're gonna have a hard time making a decision here.

- We work very hard to actively recruit a strong and diverse candidate pool. We do not passively wait for applicants to come in. And of course, all the standard boxes are checked, it's on our website. We ask that the college post some national ads in the standard higher education publications, including the Chronicle, Inside Higher Ed, Community College Week. But there is no substitute for actively seeking out recommendations, actively seeking out nominations, following up on those. And we use our combined

resources. We have maybe 20 search consultants from all parts of the country and they each have extraordinary networks. So relying on each other to boost each other's candidate pools is an extraordinary step up to build that strong, robust, competitive, diverse pool based on who you are and where you want to go as an institution. Again, that customization is a key part which leads to our recruitment success.

- I would add too, that since you're a major institution, a major community college in the state, it's very likely that you'll get applications of individuals who are currently presidents, maybe in smaller schools and see this as a promotion in their career, which is a very good thing. So you'll also get a lot of people who are aspiring to be presidents perhaps for their first time, but often they're very good candidates as well. So I think you should feel comfortable being who you are, your location near to a major metropolitan area. I feel certain that you would receive many, many qualified candidates. And some several, perhaps already with the position of president that see this as another step in their career. So I'm very... I'd be very optimistic about receiving strong candidates.

- Agree. And Brad, that brings us to question five. How would you-

- Okay.

- Success of a successful CEO placement?

- All right, Jim, I hope we're doing this right, going through these questions as you had suggested.

- [Jim] You're doing great, thank you.

- Okay, good. A successful college presidency placement, I would tell you, you go through this process and as I say repeatedly, a board and the college it is... You will learn the process, we'll have orientation with a search committee and with the board and clearly define the process and the steps involved and answer any questions that people have so everyone is very clear and understands that. But the placement then, when you come up with that person, you are hopefully, and I'm certain you would be very excited about this person, you think this is the... Yes, this is the person we need to lead us into the future and we're excited about that. So that first day, that first week should be one of very high expectations, but very high enthusiasm as well. Your first year also then defining goals for that person and working with them to see that they achieve those goals is also leading to a successful placement as well. So it's that process of once they get there, of being successful, and then it's the years after. And that's when there's challenges that can come up maybe with the board, maybe with the community, maybe with faculty, whatever it might be, but then dumb decisions have been made by the CEO with

board support, hopefully, and challenges can arise. What makes that successful getting through that would be the board-CEO relationship. And so we would suggest that we often do retreats, but make sure that that relationship is strong, that the CEO, when they're dealing with challenges, know to come to the board and ask about that and get that direction. If the board hears challenges, to be able to share that with the CEO and sit with the CEO or the president working with faculty. So what I'm suggesting as a successful placement as years go on, is the development of a relationship of all those constituencies so that they know they're moving in the right direction and dealing with circumstances as they are. It'd be wonderful, it's always good to have a good five years. Sometimes you get past that while looking forward to a good tenure. Tenure is very desirable but it takes work for that successful placement from first day on through to a successful tenure. So that's my thoughts on that.

- And I'll add a couple of additional thoughts. And it's a really complicated answer because it depends on each institution and where you are and where you want to go. Some boards will bring in a CEO to make really difficult decisions that are going to be extremely unpopular. And they know that this person might not be there for 10 years, but if they do that heavy lifting, it might set the stage for a long-term tenure. Setting expectations for the CEO based on institution and state needs is very helpful. So having measurable benchmarks. And as a college, you will not want to be doing this again in 24 months. But 10 years of a status quo person may not be as good as six years of someone who's extraordinary, who will move the needle, who is going to be nimble, who will respond to community needs. So somewhere in between lies that success.

- Yeah. Right, right. Yeah.

- Which kind of ties in nicely to your next question, our success rate over the last five years. And we do keep this data, we keep it updated. Our statistic after five years is 86.27%. Keep in mind, some of those changes which have led to transition are within the same system. So for example, within a state system, there been some shifts where someone has been brought to a larger institution within the state. Once in a while, unfortunately, a CEO will need to step back due to health reasons, which by and large is unforeseeable. So there are a few mitigating factors to that five year success rate. But our data shows that it is 86.27%.

- As for me, I've done six. And they were all under five years and the sixth I placed, they're all still there. So I'm happy for that. The ones who were in the early years, fortunately, they got an original contract. And one school in particular had some significant challenges. And after her first year, they were very pleased and they gave her quite a nice extension on her contract right away. And another, the same has happened too. The three that have been placed us in the last two years, I stay in touch with them 'cause I develop a nice relationship with all of them. And I tend to have the habit of calling them on their anniversary, just about the anniversary of the beginning of their employment. And just say, so how's it going? And so far it's all been good. But I do develop that relationship with those individuals and I've had them call me at other times just when they felt they had some challenges and just wanted somebody to

share it with somebody and hear some thoughts. So my interest in their success, I want them to be successful after going through that process.

- And moving on to question seven; how do we capture that all voices of all stakeholders have a say in building the profile during the recruitment process, screening and recommending candidates? Brad, do you wanna start this one?

- Sure. You know, the open forums are those... And I'm sure you understand about that, but if I'm your consultant, we'll schedule a day or two days depending on what has worked for you. But we'll set some forums up in which faculty and staff are invited to come and speak with me about, again, what are the strengths of the institution, what do they see as challenges, and what characteristics are they looking for in their next president? I find those are usually an hour in length, 50 or 60 or so people will attend. And they're conversational and they're just fascinating to hear. But common themes start to arise from those and which helps us to be able to develop this profile. My number and my email address, my cell number and email address are published and shared with all of these people and they're encouraged to reach out to me and they do. Sometimes maybe they didn't want to say something in a public forum, but I'll encourage them and say, send me an email, let me know what you're thinking or share with me your thoughts. Your inside thoughts on what's going on. The more I know, the better I can do the recruiting, the better profile that we can develop that reflects what you're looking for. So that's a big piece of what we do. And I think the faculty and staff that participate in that and students as well, and community members, we do have a session for community members, sometimes are well attended and sometimes not so much but they do have the opportunity. And community members have called me 'cause they can't attend that session. And the CEO of a hospital will call and say we need those nursing students and make sure you keep that in mind as you're coming up with the next person for us. So I think overall we work very, very hard to get a clear sense from the constituencies of the college, the foundation as well, all of them, of what they think would... The characteristics they're looking for for a successful candidate.

- And there are multiple opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in the search process. As Brad highlighted, one is public forums. To announce those public forums, we recommend that we draft a survey that goes out to all employees and it could go out community wide as well. Some people don't like speaking up in a forum environment or simply can't make the date so having a survey instrument in addition to in-person forums is really a nice way to give everyone a voice. The other part is it comes to ACCT, this is not for the college's consumption. So we want to encourage people to feel really comfortable being candid and sharing their honest insight. So we recommend a survey where the feedback comes to ACCT, we use that to distill themes. Then Brad would conduct a series of forums on all locations, giving people an in-person opportunity to share their thoughts. And again, that could be divided up by constituent group or simply a session where everyone is invited. We defer to you and your expertise and what's gonna resonate. Then by having a representative search committee that has representatives of all key constituents having a voice and a say in the process. As Brad mentioned, the names of candidates are strictly confidential, but process is transparent and shared with all constituents. Then at the end of the surge, when the committee has made their recommendation of finalists, typically

three or four, the entire college community has an opportunity to participate in forums at the end of the search where your finalists will go to the different locations, participate in forums, and everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. Everyone who attends should be able to fill out a comment card sharing strengths and concerns. And that feedback goes directly to the board as part of their deliberation process. So that the beginning of the search and at the end of the search, absolutely everyone is invited and encouraged to share their input, their thoughts and their feedback to make this as participatory and transparent as possible.

- Yeah. And I would say too is if you're making a decision, you know, I would be the individual that you would be working with closely, most closely, as we went through this. Julie and her staff are tremendous support. So it's a team, it's a full team that you're getting providing this service. But I find in these searches that I've done, I'm in fairly regular communication, and at some point frequent communication with the search chair and the board chair as well. Because certainly things come up, there's questions. It's amazing what can rise but having that relationship with me and board chair, search chair, if something does come up to be able to talk it through, figure out what's the right force of action. And so we proceed with the search staying on track. So I would just let you know that it's a pleasure for me to work with the board chairs and the search chairs on these efforts.

- And finally, why is ACCT the best search firm to partner with you throughout the search? Our nonprofit mission-driven focus on serving all community college students is in our DNA. We care deeply about the long term success of community college and the students they serve. Brad, final thoughts on that question?

- Yeah. I've been fortunate to work with ACCT in these past six years. And attending their conferences and giving presentations at the conferences. And your members and the good services that are providing... They're provided with board development and helping boards to do the best job they possibly can to govern these institutions and provide the leadership to their CEOs. So it's a wonderful institution. And Julie has numerous years of experience in this area, leading hundreds of searches in this regard. So her team that supports this as well as people make their applications, it goes to a portal. When it's time to be sent to the search committee, it's come at a very logical, easy to read way, which they can make their decisions on the people. So there's tremendous support. Mine is that personal touch with candidates and with you to make sure that we're on track and that we're getting the very best people that we can for that. So it's your institution, it's your association, and it's your membership organization, and it's there to serve in this regard and has a very much a proven track record.

- We would now like to open this up to your question.

- Thank you very much. I'm Laura Smith-Everett. I'm the vice chair of the board and I'm acting as chair today. So I'll open it up for any trustees with questions. Trustee Rattan.

- Thank you. This is Dawn Rattan. What percent of your placements have been diverse applicants?

- We have both women and candidates of color and it is just over 50%. We are proud of our track record.

- Did you hear that?

- Can you say it one more time, Julie?

- 50%.

- 50?

- Just over 50%?

- Thank you.

- You know, I find... To answer that, there are some states where DEI is a challenge. And I've been involved with some workshops, boards workshops and working for that and I was thinking about you, but I did look up your strategic plan and your strategic goals and I was pleased to see that DEI is one of your four pillars for that. So in terms of the search, it's nice for me to know that. And as Julie and I and the others go about doing this recruiting, there's no hesitation to try and make sure that this is in fact a diverse pool. And we do watch that carefully as we do this recruiting because we do feel that the association feels that significant in the success of an institution and then it's reflected in the searches. And as I've just said, it was good to see that Johnson County Community College sees that as important as well.

- Okay. Other trustees, questions? I have one. Tell me a little bit about the screening process that you use between them applying with you all and then getting to our search committee.

- Sure, sure. And we realize that every committee is different and wants us to do different things, so we provide some options. We will ask the committee, if someone doesn't meet minimum calls, do you still want them posted? So that's the decision for the committee to make. And then we go a step further and



we also ask committees, would you like us to group the applications based on your profile and based on our knowledge? So in other words, do you want an optional grouping, an A, B, C group of the applicants, again, based on your profile, based on our knowledge of the candidate pool or do you not want us to interfere when we do provide it? And the overwhelming majority of search committees ask for the support and assistance. It's an optional tool. So it's simply a confidential word document that a committee member can use before they screen, after they screen or not at all. So we really defer to the committee and their needs and desires.

- [Laura] Thank you.

- And this is answering your question as well. We get these, it tends to be 50 to 60 applications. And I must be careful what I say, but I think you're an attractive institution in terms of size and your location, and I'm certain you'll get lots of applications. But then this process, the search committee is given an orientation and direction on how to sift through those first... For all that full group. And I'm really always very impressed at how a search committee, even though it's a significant number of applications with a significant size of resumes and letters of application, whatever, tend to read it very carefully. And the association then provides them with a ranking system of saying four, yes, this is a very good candidate, three, it's okay, and two is no. And then from that, the search committee who have all looked at those individually, rank those, and then an average comes from that. And from that then I chair a meeting with them to help them identify their 8 to 10 semifinalists based on those rankings, but through intensive discussion about who they are. Then those 8 to 10 that are identified as semi-finalists through that very good process are invited for an interview via Zoom. So then it's about two days, each get about an hour with standard 10 to 12 questions that the committee will ask. And from that interviewing that semi-final group of 8 or 10, the committee goes into the deliberation and we have a nice process for this, and I like to be there for that. The committee is live, the candidates are on online and I like to be... And I am present for that. Then we take a break and we have a process for identifying who would be the three or four candidates that you would invite for a day visit to the college to meet constituents and then meet with the board and have that board interview. Brad, thank you-

- Does that help? Did that make sense for you?

- Yes. And thank you for that, 'cause that actually led to my next question, which is how much time can we expect you to be on campus?

- Myself, there's a first visit to come and do, meet with the faculty and staff, see the college, meet with the board, meet with anyone else you feel I should talk with. And that's generally about a two day visit that we can do with a school about your size. I'll tell you one thing that happened by default at one institution; their foundation had an oyster roast the night before I got there. They said, you should come. So it was 130 people that came for their foundation oyster roast. Well, they let those people know I was

gonna be there. They all... I spoke to 30 or so who made a point to see me and tell me what they were looking for. That was less formal than an open forum, but boy was it useful. And that included business leaders, industry leaders, politicians. And in that particular case, I can remember a state senator, as they say, he buttonholed me. He said, this is the kind of person we need. I think my point for sharing that with you, I don't know if you'd have any session like that, but in even an informal one, they'd come meet the consultant, that would be... That I found that to be just really valuable. So to answer your question, about a two day visit initially, then I would come back and meet with the search committee one day to identify who the semi-finalist would be. And I'd come back a third time to do the interviews for the semi-finalists where the committee would be present and the candidates would be on Zoom. And then I'd come to know the search liaison or chair very well. I mean, we'd become close friends in many regards. And then working with that individual, we begin to plan the days when the candidates would actually be on campus, what forums they would have, what groups they would meet with, how they would respond to the feelings they have about those individuals. And then I work with the board in terms of their interview at the end of those days and how they're generally structured, but given the opportunity to really see those people. And then last via Zoom, I'm available to meet with the board if they so desire for the final deliberation. So two days initially, another day with the search committee, a third time with the search committee, possibly a last visit, but three times I would definitely be with you.

- Thank you. Trustees, any other questions? Trustee Rattan?

- Two questions. The first one is about your timing. Can you go over your timing again? And then the second question is kind of a wishlist. Because the ACCT has so much knowledge about community colleges and how to make them high functioning institutions, does your search come with any added coaching for our executive that we choose?

- So it is not included in our search fee, I'll start with part two. But we do have that service available, the board may wish to have a contract either with the lead consultant or with another consultant for ongoing executive coaching, which may or may not be helpful depending on the individual you hire. If it's a first time president, it might be critical. If you end up employing someone with 10 years of presidential experience, it may not be as necessary, but we certainly offer that. And we have a wide range of consultants available to support the executive coaching piece. Brad, do you wanna start with the first part of the question then I'll jump in?

- What was the first part? I'm back to the... Tell me...

- Timing. Talk about the timing.

- Do you wanna do the timeline? Is that what she's asking?

- Yeah.

- Ms. Rattan, she's asking the timeline. While you get that, I'll tell you the wishlist piece, yeah, I think for this contract with ACCT, it's the search get you the person and there you go. But ACCT does provide those follow up services. And for several of the searches that I've done, we have scheduled several months out, like an onboarding retreat which I facilitate with the board and the president. And it's talking about communication, expectations, goals that they have, how they're gonna do evaluation. And it's really a very, very valuable opportunity for the new president and the board to begin to understand each other and expectations. And certainly you can do it yourself, but sometimes a third party in between to lead that conversation and send them on their way is good. The coaching piece is also a service to be provided. And sometimes what we've done is, there's somebody like myself, and I've done this now twice, is I'll be on an on-call basis, a retainer. And we'll say we have a certain number of hours at a certain cost. And then I say, I'm there for you to call anytime you want. And I tell the board chair and the president that in fact is available and I provide whatever service I can in providing that service. And that is valuable. You know, if it's a first time president, you can't expect that person to step into the job and know everything right away. And they're gonna... It's a learning curve as a first time president. Even somebody that's been there for a while, then the learning curve is the culture and life of that particular institution, and what they're doing, and working with the community and the challenges that they may face. So Ms. Rattan, to answer your question, if you find after you've decided who you want your candidate to be, there are some follow up services designed to help make this a success for you.

- And having that board retreat within the first hundred days can often be critical on goal setting, communication, expectation. And that might be a nice launching pad for executive coaching. So those two pieces, regular yearly retreat might be a healthy step if that's not already part of your yearly schedule. And in terms of timing, the board is in the driver's seat. We could have a contract to you within 48 hours. We could have it posted on our website with Brad's information immediately. At least where it says planning stages. The board is in the driver's seat. It could be accelerated if needed. A lot of boards don't wanna do too much during the summer while a lot of faculty are away. So it could make good sense to work on the announcements, start developing key pieces, training materials, which of course we provide. And do a heavy launch once everyone is back and the academic year starts. It is critical to have four to six weeks to recruit, minimum. That is not a step that we can skimp on. Then the search committee needs two weeks to review and rate the confidential applications through our portal system. Then the committee comes together for that selection meeting that Brad noted, where the 6, 8 to 10 confidential semi-finalists are selected. We get those individuals scheduled two to three weeks down the road, then they do their interviews, they select their three to four finalists. And again, it's important to have the finalists visit while everyone is on campus. So you want to avoid times when there are key events taking place at the college so that you get the most buy-in possible. And then we always recommend that finalist visits occur not during finals week and that there is plenty of time for the appointment in case things take a little longer with negotiating or in the unlikely chance you need to go back out. So the timing is flexible, but those are just some key pointers to consider as we would provide you a draft timeline.

- Thank you.

- Thank you. Trustee Cross.

- Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you all for being here today, I really appreciate the presentation. I'm Lee Cross, I've been a member of ACCT since 2013 and I super appreciate the organization. With 1200 member institutions, are we more likely or less likely to get more attention in a search? And I'm glad you all submitted an RFP and I'm happy to see you survive this far. And I had asked for it as Chair in 2022 and '23 at the end of the abrupt conclusion of the previous presidency. So I'm happy you're here. In politics and as someone who's worked on many campaigns, I've often worked that I never assume anybody knows what's going on, right? It's our job to tell them. So I'm encouraged that you have 1200 member institutions, and I guess my question is, are we more or less likely to get more attention by using you or why are you different than a private for-profit group? Couple of questions there, sorry.

- We work for boards, we don't work for candidates, but our integrity and reputation is extraordinarily high, that is what we focus on. So there are certain firms where candidates may not feel as comfortable applying. Having the candidates feel comfortable and protected that their names will be kept private unless and until they become finalists is extraordinarily important in a search process. So our reputation, our focus on confidentiality and that we're a known safe entity both for boards and for candidates, I think are important factors. Brad?

- I'll tell you that, Lee, the individuality you get is from me 'cause I'm assigned as the individual person to make sure that this is successful. And I'm part of the association and it has 1200 members, but my assignment would be Johnson County Community College and making sure this is a successful search. So that responsibility would lie to me to make sure that you got every bit of service you needed and the very best candidates that you could possibly get. There you go.

- Thank you.

- Thank you.

- Any other trustee? Did you wanna say something, Brad?

- I was gonna say Lee, too, your the comment too about being open and honest about things. I would work with you not knowing any of the circumstances previously, but you would share with me what you can and I would deal with candidates in a very respectful, professional way for the college and for the candidates as well. But it's fair to them. One of their questions I asked, I said, so they'll say, why did this individual leave? And I can share what I can in a professional way. They may say, is there an interim? I just mention that. But another question that is frequently asked is, Brad, what do you know about that board, are they good to work with? And as I am starting to work, hearing you make those kind of comments and others asking questions, then I like when I can say, to tell you the truth, I think it's a very good board. And that helps an individual as well to make a decision about applying for this position. But Lee, I'll make sure you got every individual attention possible.

- Sure.

- We do have one more question-

- I thank you.

- Does that conclude your-

- Yes.

- Okay, thank you. All right, Trustee Rattan.

- I just had one more question pop into my head, but I may know the answer. So you do reach out to non-member institutions as well?

- Oh yeah.

- Oh, we reach out to everyone. In other words, if our directive from the board is, you know what, we also want university candidates, that's what we do. And your profile should reflect that. Some colleges want candidates with military or government backgrounds, and that's what we seek out. So we will cultivate as broad of a pool as the college desires.

- Thank you so much.

- Thank you very-

- I know it's been a few years since you've done a search. And some of you, I was looking at your terms on the board, some are newer and have come since your last search and served on the board and now I can tell... All boards, you're getting a sense of what this is involved and what is involved with this and where you're going, but if you were to select ACCT, we do a thorough initial orientation so that you clearly understand this process and where it's going. So at a point, you would be given all that information and all of your questions would be answered.

- Thank you.

- Can I ask a quick question real quick?

- Yes, Trustee Cross.

- Julie, you don't have to tell me exactly, but I can't help but feel that your office is near Rock Creek Park. Is that right?

- We are blocks away, yes.

- The trees kind of give it away in the background.

- Oh wow!

- I had the feeling the whole hour, so I wanted to ask.

- Okay, any other questions or comments? All right, Professor Vieux. No, please.

- This is Andrea Vieux, and you had touched on this a little bit related to the community members and sort of the oyster roast. I'm curious how the open forums for community members are actually communicated to the community. And it's a similar question with the survey. How are you communicating this to community members?

- So couple of parts to that answer, and then Brad I'll have you share your thoughts. One, your website is an important tool but the community may not actively go on your website. So we work with the college, do you have a foundation list? Do you have an alumni list? Do you have a list of community, business and industry members? So actively using your connections and knowledge to get it out. Some colleges will actively use social media because that's really effective in certain communities. Others will take out ads in the local paper and or local radio stations. So we do rely on your expertise, but we make recommendations in terms of what we see is effective elsewhere. Brad?

- Yeah, I would say too, I know that your institution has a list of community people with the foundation with business and industry leaders and with advisory boards for the academic areas, superintendents of schools, healthcare areas. So as we reach out to that, we often work with the liaison for the search and make those suggestions. And say these are the people that you want to make sure... Where it's critical to know what the leadership of Johnson County is going to be, and it impacts them and their workforce. And here's an opportunity for them to have some input in that. So we do our very best to reach out to them and have them participate in these forums as much as possible. But they can come to any forum. So it doesn't... We have one special for the community perhaps in the evening. But we do say, if you wish to come at another time, you're welcome to be there, and we go from there. So we do our very best to get as much input from the community as possible.

- Okay, with that, not seeing any other questions, I think we can conclude. Thank you all for your participation. Jim, back to you.

- Back to me. Thank you very much, I appreciate it, Association of Community College Trustees. That wraps up this interview. We are going to continue interviews with a couple vendors throughout this week. We hope to make a decision as a committee toward the end of this week or the first part of next week. I am your only point of contact on this, so if you have any questions or follow up, please do your best to only engage myself. I'll pass on any clarification questions or follow ups on behalf of the evaluation committee. Otherwise, thank you very much for your time, really appreciate it and we'll be in touch.

- Thank you very much-

- It's a pleasure, I wish you the very best.

- All right, thank you. Bye-Bye.

- Thank you.

- Okay, with that, I think we can have another interim break. And 3:25, good for everybody?

- Yes.

- Okay. Thank you. We are returning from our brief adjournment of the Johnson County Board of Trustees special board meeting for June 17th. And we are going to go ahead and proceed with our next presidential search firm. Jim, I'll turn it over to you.

- All right, thank you everyone. Good afternoon, I'd like to welcome our third interview for today, vendor interview. This is Academic Search, this is of course for presidential executive search services. Welcome. This presentation will be no more than 40 minutes, allowing 20 minutes question and answer afterward. I will mention that this meeting's being recorded but not live streamed. The recording will be available on JCCC's website in probably a couple days. In attendance here on our side of the fence, I'll go ahead and go through some brief introductions and I'll turn it over to Academic Search. My name's Jim Feikert, I'm the Executive Director of Procurement Services. Also joining us here is Christina McGee, Vice President of Human Resources. Andrea Vieux, Associate Professor of Political Science. Trustee Dawn Rattan, Trustee Laura Smith-Everett, Trustee Mark Hamill, Trustee Lee Cross, Trustee Val Jennings, and Trustee Greg Mitchell. So hi, hello, welcome, and the floor is yours.

- Hello.

- Good afternoon. So thank you for having us. I'm Gwen Joseph and I am serving as the senior search consultant on the proposal. And as well as should we be blessed or lucky enough to get it, that I will also serve as the senior search consultant on the search. First of all, I wanna thank you all for giving us the opportunity to come in and address your proposal requests. What we will do as we go through this process is Disa and I will give you a brief overview as to who we are, who Academic Search is, and then we'll go through and we'll focus our presentation on the areas that you all have requested. So if that works for you, we'll go ahead and get started. So first of all, let me say that I have been in community colleges for a very, very, very, very long time. I've worked in a number of progressive level positions with more and more responsibilities. I've served as a dean, as a vice president of a state level system, I've also served when I decided to retire from full-time employment, I served as an interim president in four



different community colleges. As such, I have a really wide understanding of community colleges just because I've been in so many different kinds of systems. I've been in multi-college systems, multi-campus systems, state level systems with oversight for independent colleges, so I feel that my background and experiences will serve you all well in your search for president because even though in those positions, I also had responsibility when I was vice president for human resources. And with that oversight came the responsibility for when we had presidential search vacancies, I was responsible for identifying the candidates and working with our search consultants. So I somewhat know what you're going through on both sides. I know what it's like to be a search consultant, but I also know what it's like to be a member of a search team looking for the ideal consultant. Disa and I have worked together on a number of searches. We have partnered. We work very well together. And what I will bring to the table is my knowledge and understanding of community colleges, where Disa brings a strong background as it relates to all the technical aspects of what we do in the search process overall. So with that, I would ask Disa to take a few minutes and introduce herself.

- Hello everyone. My name is Disa Mason. I have been with Academic Search for 18 years. I know that because that's the age of my youngest child and I started when he was an infant. So I've worked on over 135 searches. 27 of those have been presidential. The majority of them have been Chief Academic Officers. And it's been great partnering with Gwen. It was wonderful when she came on board and we quickly found ourselves in a really good strong pattern of success. And we like working together and we like working with candidates. And we have a pretty strong group of people that we're in regular contact with right now. So it's a good time for us. And I wanted to mention just a little bit that within Academic Search, we have a big team, but the people that will do the work for this search are gonna be us, the two that are on the screen, it's Gwen and I. And there are deep resources in our headquarters to support us, our marketing department, our operations, our IT support, all those are there, but we go to them and get what we need to do what you need to make this search successful. And one of the hallmarks that Academic Search has as well as Gwen and I, is we really cultivate our candidates and we build trust with them throughout the process. And a lot of candidates say, you know, this has been one of the most pleasant search experiences ever, 'cause a lot of times people feel like they apply to a position, they don't get feedback, they don't hear anything. And really, we try to treat them with respect and dignity. And so we think that makes a lot of people more interested in talking with us for nominations, which is part of the networking process. So that's a little bit about who we are and then there's a lot of support behind us. Oh, and also I do wanna mention that Gwen coaches, serves as an executive coach. And so she works with candidates and campuses across the country from an executive coaching perspective. And I have had a stint, a two year stint as the assistant director of our American Academic Leadership Institute, which is a part of Academic Search, it's actually our parent company. And in that program we work with emerging leaders in higher education, all levels of higher education. And we do workshops and seminars and different things there. So our network is very vast. So I'll turn it back over to you, Gwen.

- All right. Disa would you put up the slide? We sent you our presentation... We sent you background information on Academic Search, which has more details, but we do have a slide just to let you all know the areas that we're focusing on based on what we were asked to address. And we have given you some

background as to who we are as a search team and a quick overview of Academic Search. I will say Academic Search has been around for over 45 years and we work exclusively in higher education, in identifying presidents, vice presidents and key individuals within the... Key executives, really, within the higher ed arena. And like I indicated earlier, my focus has been community colleges just because I know community colleges and that's what I'm familiar with and that's what I love. All right, so let's talk a minute about an overview of our search process. Okay, we have a very hands-on experience in terms of the search process itself. We build relationships both with the colleges as well as with the candidates. We get to know the colleges by the various interviews that we'll do should we get the contract. The various interviews that we'll do with the constituents both within the college as well as within the community. And we ask the colleges for you all to identify the key people that you think that we should talk to. We are very interested in finding out what your needs are. We don't assume anything about you, we customize our search for you. So we are very interested in finding out the needs, the challenges, those critical things that you want in a leader. And then we take all that information and assist you in preparing what we call the position profile as well as preparing any ads or any other materials. But the key piece of that is that the information that we gather upfront prior to the search, it really helps us as we go through and we are talking to candidates. It's what we use to help us better understand what your needs are. But it's also what we use to help the candidates better understand the position itself. Even though we tell candidates everything is in the profile, 99 and 9/10 percent of the time, I will get calls where somebody wants to know, well, tell me what they really want or tell me what's really going on there. And we use what you share to be able to better prepare in how we respond to those questions. In addition, then we also communicate regularly with the hiring authority or with the board of directors or whichever other key stakeholders you think you want us to communicate with. And we do that both in writing as well as verbal. So we will make it a point to make sure you all know that everything we're doing when we're doing it. We don't do anything alone, when we say this is a partnership, we make it as strong of a partnership as we possibly can. After we have identified those candidates, and let me just say Disa is a master at identifying candidates, we then will conduct due diligence on the individuals, the final individuals that you feel you want to bring to your campus for the final interviews. And that due diligence includes the criminal background checks, credit background checks, degree verification, social media review and reference checks. And you know, because of our process and because of the success of our process, we have been chosen as the, I would say the provider of choice for the TBR, the Tennessee Board of Regents in conducting their searches. We have conducted multiple presidential searches for them, and our process with them has worked very well. And I will say that even though we have a set process, we do customize it. We don't take a one size fit all approach, although we have a framework that we will go... That we use to ensure the success of our searches. Disa, is there anything you wanna add?

- [Disa] Well, I would just say that most of our community college searches together have spanned the gamut. You know, some have been more rural like West Virginia... I've worked on West Virginia University at Parkersburg for their president search. And some are more urban, Pittsburgh Technical College, you know, some are near Nashville and some are near the state line of Tennessee and Virginia. So we've really run the gamut and that's part of why our flexibility pays off.

- Okay. So the effective strategies in similar geopolitical... Let me see, I don't see the whole question... Environments and demographics.

- Gwen and Disa-

- Let me just say in turn-

- Real quick, the slides handouts that we have on our end don't match the slides that are online right now.

- Yeah, right. We didn't wanna put our whole deck online. We just put the key points, the questions that you all provided to us is-

- Perfect. Thank you for that clarification.

- Yes. And what we will show you is just an overview of those questions. It's just a headline of those questions. And it's more of a cheat sheet to keep us on target, to be honest.

- No problem. Thank you.

- All right. So in terms of the similar geographic political environments and demographics, to be candid, what we do is, like I said earlier, we try and understand how you see your geopolitical environment and what your demographics are. The reason for that is because all community colleges have some level of similarities, but there are also differences. And we'd like to account for those differences and take into consideration what we need to do when we recognize what those differences are. But the reality is, regardless to whether it's an urban environment or a rural environment or a suburban environment with heavy resources or substantial resources, in community colleges we tend to find people who are genuinely committed to the students, who are willing to come into the environment and be there for a very long time, they're engaged, they will do what's necessary. Even though there are times where you don't have the resources that you need to be successful, community college faculty staff and the employees in general, they're very creative. I find that across the board in all the searches I've done, and I've done searches like... And like Disa said, we've done rural, we've done suburban, we've done urban. And what I would say is the common thread, the similarities are the people. And everybody's dealing with change. The kind of change or the degree of the change is somewhat different. So whether then our coming in saying, okay, well this is how we perceive your environment, or this is the research we've done

that tells us what your environment is, we listen to you and hear what you say and try and take your perspective into consideration, and then from there we use that information to develop the strategies. And it's not so much to develop the strategies, but more to tweak them to meet your needs and to identify the kinds of candidates that might better meet your needs. So as I indicated earlier, there's a lot of customization that's going on that we do that once we know who you are and how you operate and what your expectations are. Disa, you wanna share anything on that?

- [Disa] Well, I just would say that I think usually our process creates a lot of goodwill on campus. You know, when we start talking with people or listening to people because we're really just taking in and maybe ensuring that we're understanding correctly. It's really interesting to hear different groups come up and say, well, thanks for listening to this. Like people are excited to be a part of it and I think it generates some goodwill and excitement on campus. And that's one of the things that we like because it makes us feel really committed to finding the right person. So then I'm gonna move to the next question, which is the tactics that we use as we build our pipeline, our candidate pool. And our goal is to build a strong, diverse candidate pool. We use advertising and really targeted outreach. We typically cast a wide net at the beginning to get the message out there. And we let that... We shoot that net out and we see what comes back. And then we use a really targeted approach. We have a large database, we have over a hundred thousand higher education professionals through the head directory and through all of our searches. And we have 48 senior consultants like Gwen, who have been former university presidents, college, university and community college presidents. There are nine consultants like me and 20 associate consultants. And we all have experience in higher ed, so our network is vast and we're constantly putting it into our database, which is sort of our secret weapon. So in addition to that, we have the American Academic Leadership side where we have candidates that are interested and eager to move up in the world of academia. And so we have their materials in that database as well. So once we've sent the message out wide, we do a more tiered approach of outreach, mainly through email. A lot of times we have phone calls with key people that lead to nominations. And every one nomination leads to two, to three, to more nominations. We speak with every nominee personally that we can, that will speak with us. And frankly, it's a lot of legwork. We periodically assess the pool to make sure that it's what the hiring authority has indicated that they're looking for. We think where do we need to tweak? What else do we need to look... Where do we need to go to find a few more candidates? But it's typically an eight week process at least, weekly of calls and emails and reaching out and sort of cultivating those candidates. So it's really our network, which comes from our consultants, our group of consultants, and our database, our relationship with AALI, Gwen's relationship with the AACC. So that's sort of what we do to reach across the spectrum. And it's always interesting to see, like there could be somebody in Hawaii who has a real tie to Pittsburgh and wants to come back. And so we find that person.

- [Gwen] Well, and along those lines, we also are well aware that often what will happen is the reputation of the institution will drive our candidate pool too, because institutions such as yourself has a reputation where people are going to apply because of the outstanding opportunity that they know that we don't even have to tell them about. Once we start advertising and we advertise in national publications, once we start that process, people then reach out to us. The other thing is that we have the college engaged in helping us identify candidates that they think will be good. We'll ask you and we'll ask

the constituents of the college, is there someone that you would like us to reach out to personally or someone that you would recommend? So there are a number of ways that we ensure that we have a robust or a large candidate pool. You know, this next question, a successful college presidential placement. We don't think the placement ends at the time you say sign on the dotted line and start on such and such day. Actually, we consider the placement to be successful when... We look at it in three spans of time. Initially after the first year, we would like to see that the person that we've helped you identify has the skills, abilities and leadership characteristics that you've indicated that you've wanted, and that the person is actually employing those in the institution. A lot of times, as you know, we can get on paper, perfect person, but on site, they may present as different. So the fact that after that initial year, that you know, you're there, the president is there, people are satisfied and we think that we're doing a good job. But then we also think that another criteria to be successful is after the first five years, what has that person accomplished? Have they met the goals and objectives and expected outcomes of not only the college but the community? Do they have people that are open to the direction that the board and the new president are trying to take the college? And within five years, has the resistance died down? Because you know, anytime someone's new, there's gonna be a certain level of resistance that someone will face when they first come on board. But how is that accepted in the college community overall is another measure of success for us. And then finally, in subsequent years, you know, what's the growth and success of the college overall? How does the college community accept the person? And does the college community feel engaged to the extent that they are now ready to... They are an advocate for the college as well? So to define a successful president overall, we think that it takes a while to clearly be successful. And the reality in going into the next question is the five year placement rate. We have a 92% placement rate over a five year period, with four presidents. So given our placement rate over the five year period and longer than... We think that we're doing a very good job in terms of making the match between the individual and the institution. And I would also direct you to slide four on what you do have. There, even though we have a 92% placement rate, we have 64% of our searches result in the appointment of women of color. Women and people of color. So given that out of almost 2,500 successful executive searches, we think that we are doing a fairly good job in what we do overall. Okay.

- [Disa] All right. And then I think when... The one other indicator that we look at is the reception of the appointed person by the community college community, by the community. Like, how is it seen outwardly? We think that's an indicator of success as well. Like that people are impressed with the choice. But our job is to bring the candidate pool to the search committee, and the search committee takes it from there. So that's all we can do. We always tell the committee, we're not the deciders, you know. We're gonna bring you the people that meet the bill you've described, and then you'll take it from there. So the next point that was given to us was talking about our strategy for communicating and capturing stakeholders from JCCC, and how do we do that? Well, we've talked about how we customize every search, and we sort of start by looking at the what? You know, what is the outcome you wanna achieve? What's unique to your culture? What are your challenges and opportunities? And what are the characteristics and skills and experience needed by the right candidate to meet those challenges and opportunities? And this is important because if you get the right... You know, somebody might say, oh, I have to do something, but if we get the right candidate, they'll say, I get to do that. Like that's not a challenge. You know, to reorganize this or to prepare for accreditation, that's not a have to, that's a, I get to. And that's what we wanna find is somebody who has the skills and experience to have done that in

the past and that they can apply that to where you are now. And we want you to have multiple candidates that meet all of those requirements. So the first thing is sort of the what. And then the how is how do you think it's best for us to work with your campus community? Often we come in person, we do come in for a day and do listening sessions. We have done it virtually. You know, COVID didn't stop us at all because we could take our whole system and do it virtually when necessary, but we find that there's a more robust response when we come in person. And we're very efficient, we can usually do it in just a day but we wanna talk with every group that wants to be heard and we wanna get their feedback, and then we'll distill what we've heard and share that with the hiring authority or the search committee, however your hierarchy is set up. And we'll share that with you to make sure that we focus on the right pieces. Because sometimes some campuses have had a major trauma and they need someone to come in and heal them. We just did a search where the previous president did pass away in office. And so that was a really different tone for that campus than another search, you know, that was a campus preparing to rebound and grow after some population drop during COVID. So it's just different every time, but what we do is we put ourselves out there to talk with everybody, to take all the feedback we can, distill it down, share it with the hiring authority, and then translate it into documents that we can share with others, that we can share with potential sources, with potential nominees, and with prospective candidates. We work with the search committee as much as we are instructed to. It depends on the charter. Every institution is different. For some, the search committee plays a more specific role, for others, the search committee plays more of a deciding role. So we would take the lead with whatever you would like there. But we firmly believe that generic documents lead to generic candidates and we wanna get this right. So we're looking for that person for the "have to" becomes the "get to." So I get to do this, this is my kind of challenge, I'm ready for this, you know. Okay, so I think I've covered that one fully. Did I miss anything, Gwen?

- [Gwen] No, I think you did a great job. Thank you.

- [Different] Okay, all right. And so why do we think that we're the best partner for you? One; Gwen and I get results. Our searches run on time, we've never run late. We have longstanding executive appointments. We're always within our budget, not that we have much play with the budget, but we get results. And secondly; we think we're the right size. You know, some firms are really big, they have huge resources, you might get shifted to other players or get lost in those firms. And then there are some niche firms that they don't have the database and the network and the connections that we do. And then there are non higher ed firms that really wanna help you, but they don't have that dedication and deep understanding of the community college industry and experience and leadership within the community college system. So we think that we're big enough, that we have the resources to support you, but Gwen and I are the ones who harness those resources. And so what you will get is the two of us dedicated to your success. And I think with that, we'll open it up to any questions that you have for us.

- Thank you very much-

- Stop share.

- Thank you. I'm Trustee Smith-Everett, I'm the vice chair of the board and I am chairing this committee meeting... Oh sorry, special board meeting today. So I'll open it up for any trustees. Does anybody have any questions? Yes, Trustee Mitchell.

- Thank you very much for your presentation today, it's very interesting. Dr. Joseph gave a very interesting discussion about how success is measured after one year, is the candidate employing some of the special skills that we're looking for? And then after five years, kind of what have they accomplished? And then periodic check-ins after that. I'm kind of curious how that's actually measured. It sounds like this search becomes a pretty long-term relationship, which is a great thing, but I'm curious.

- Yeah, no, our role will actually end after we help you identify the candidate that you're looking for. You would then determine from there. My point was you can't just take one period of time and say, oh, well the search is done, now it's successful. Yes, once we get the candidate that you're looking for, if they stay there at least a year, because we do follow up after a year to find out if... We have a year's guarantee. And Disa, we didn't talk to the guarantee at all, did we?

- No.

- Okay. Yes, if we help you identify someone for the position, and that individual leaves in less than a year, then we redo the search at no charge to you, except I think advertising. And should we do any travel, any travel costs. So that's why I can tell you after a year it's successful because someone has stayed there because we won't redo the search for free. But all the other periods of time, I think it's very subjective whether or not it's successful. And that's based on how you as the board and then how the individual constituents of the college then receives that individual and perceives what they've done, whether or not it's successful enough. And to be candid, success is... Different people have different perceptions. And the reality, unfortunate, is that a president will have some supporters and he'll have some detractors. That's why at the end, I was saying that in the long term, that if everybody then is feeling positive about the person and feeling an advocate for the college, then to me, that's a great success.

- Yes. But Gwen, I think to Trustee Mitchell, to your point, we do stay in touch and that's how we build our relationship, is the network. And then we network on the part, institutions that we partner with, and we also network with our candidates. So yes, we will stay in touch, but our job will be finished when the candidate is hired, when the right candidate is hired.

- [Laura] Yeah, go ahead Trustee Mitchell again.

- So it sounds like you guys are kind of a team, just from a bandwidth perspective, I'm curious, how many searches did the two of you work on per year on average?

- I usually do four a semester at the most, three to four, it depends. For a presidential search, I would probably do three. If it's a provost or dean search, then I might do more. So my bandwidth would change because I'm supporting Gwen and she would have less searches because I'm sort of the... I'm the engine and she's the steering wheel. Maybe that's one way to put it, right? Right Gwen?

- Right. Yeah, that's a good way to put it-

- We would normally have two to three at a time, I would think.

- Yeah, probably about... At a time, over a year. And then I would say that sometimes they do overlap, but because of Disa's availability... And let me just say this, it's my choice to work with Disa. So my searches often are picked based on her availability. And because like she said, that she's very much in demand. And I look at a number of things in terms of the community colleges, my preference is to work with community colleges. I've done a couple of university searches, but that is not my preference. I rev community colleges, because as I indicated, that's the environment I was in for 30 plus years. Well, actually even longer than that when I look at what I was doing during my retirement stages too. So yeah, let's say about three to four a year for me as opposed to three to four a term for Disa.

- But I would say that right now I only have two searches on the deck for the fall. And so if this were my third, I would shut down and just focus on three.

- And I only... I don't have any. So my goal is to at least get one for over the summer.

- We're very dedicated. When we start a search, we're very dedicated. And the process has a bell curve, you know, it starts with a little bit of work, and then it gets real heavy and real intense, and then it tapers off. And so usually we can have them, so that when one is tapering off, that's when the next one would start.



- Yeah. And just so you know, Disa indicated she has been conducting searches for over 18 years. I started with the company about four years ago, but keep in mind that when I was with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, we had 16 college presidents in over a six year period, I probably was active with about I'd say at least four of the searches there. So I have a window of time that I've worked, but not to the extent... In doing searches, but not to the extent that Disa has. Now, my other experience has been more in the leadership development aspect of working with potential college presidents, and then as an executive coach with new college presidents.

- Thank you. Any other trustees? Another follow up question? Hearing none, I have a question. How many times, how frequently and for how long would we expect you on campus?

- You tend to drive that.

- Yeah, at a minimum, we would like to at least be on the... We can be on there as much or as little as you want. The meetings that we tend to have that we would prefer to be face-to-face would be when we're doing our pre-research work, where we're conducting the interviews to find out the challenges and opportunities and any other information that we may be able to gather that would help us better be able to promote the college itself. So yeah, and we do-

- And when we come for that, we would hope to meet with the search committee and combine that into the first meeting. And then the second meeting of the search committee is very easily done virtual, so you wouldn't really... It's 60 to 75 minutes, so that's an easy virtual one. And then the third meeting is really well easily done virtual. And then interviews are virtual. So only if you had semi-finalist interviews in person, would we probably come back out. So it could just be one in person meeting, but on occasion, campuses ask us to come back for an additional meeting. But if it's a 75 minute meeting, it doesn't make a lot of sense for us to come in person unless you'd like us to, and then we will. It's just the cost.

- So in the case of if we want our finalists to be on campus, would you be on campus at the same time or would you just send the candidates and that would be, they would each come independently?

- The candidates would... For finalists, we would come independent. There's a trend right now... So originally searches were... Airport interviews were done in person. The first interview was an airport interview, and it was done in person at a neutral site. And typically Academic Search would come and support for that. But since COVID, that sort of has switched to everything being all virtual. But there's a little bit of a push now, especially for presidentials to sort of have a three stage interview process, where you might interview 10 to 12 people virtually, and then invite six to do an airport interview and then have three finalists. And so if that were the case, you would want us to come to the one where you had six at the airport. Or it really doesn't have to be airport, that's just what the term was. But finalists are

always hosted by the campus, because you really need to vet. You don't need us in between you and the candidate, you need to see all aspects of the candidate when they're on campus. So I would say that out of probably eight searches that I did last year, only one had that interim step with the second... They had a semi-finalist and then... I guess a quarter finalist, and then a semi-finalist and then finalist interviews. Only one of them did that, but it was really effective because the committee had a very hard time narrowing down the candidate pool, and they started with 12. And so then they narrowed it down to six and then they saw them in person and it made sense. So a lot of it's just driven by the candidate pool and the committee's confidence with that. And Gwen, I think I stepped on you in that conversation, so sorry.

- No, no, that's all right. The only thing that I would add to that is that our role is really to find those candidates for you. Now, coming on site, we can help facilitate you all getting to a consensus on the candidates that you want. But we don't try and, I guess, influence you one way or the other. We tell you anything we may know about the candidates, because like I said, we do extensive background searches on the individuals, but we don't say, well, that's who you need 'cause that matches... That's who you told us you wanted. That's not us. We work with you to get to you and the committee to get to the consensus of who you think is the best person to serve your needs. And a lot... And I was just gonna add that a lot of that can be done as Disa indicated, virtually. The key to me would be the pre-interviews where we are trying to find out more about you. We can feel then the campus' atmosphere a lot better if we are on site initially.

- And I would just say the other thing that we often find ourselves doing is making sure that the committee, and I mean this in the most respectful way, understands their role and stays in their role, right? If the committee's charge is to recommend three unranked candidates to the finalist, but then all of a sudden the committee says we've gotta rank them, then we're the people that sort of say, no, you don't. This is your job and your hiring authority does the rest. And so sometimes that's important because committees can get really emotionally attached around candidates. And so that's sort of what we do is keep them in their lane because we work for the hiring authority.

- Now, let me say, even though we do not... We may not come on campus, we will help you structure the various meetings. We usually will ask that you assign a liaison, a campus liaison to work with us to coordinate the meeting. And I will say, if you were to talk to any of the individual candidates that we've worked with, one of the things that they like is how well coordinated the onsite visits have been and how, I guess painless would be a good term. They find that we're very helpful because we... The open lines of communications. We talk to the campus, we talk to the individuals, and Disa and I talk to each other often.

- Thank you. Okay, Professor Vieux?

- Yes, this is Andrea Vieux, and I am curious about if you could describe the process that you use to ensure that the community partners are included throughout the search process.

- Well, once the search is underway, we really only work with the search committee and the hiring authority. Our advice would be to have community partners on the search committee and they would represent their respective aspects of the community. But during the listening sessions at the beginning, we would recommend open forums. We often have a multi-pronged approach where we have a survey that people can complete online because some people prefer that and they like the anonymity. A lot of people like to meet with us in person and we like that the best, but we understand everybody doesn't feel comfortable with that. So we gather that information at the beginning and then try to distill it down. But it's really, we present what we've heard to the hiring authority to make sure that it's accurate and that we're looking for the right attributes because there could only be one person giving us the final instruction. So, you know, we'll summarize what we've heard and then we look for clarity in what we've heard. But it's very common for search committee members to have two or three or four people from the community. You know, some are alumni, some are business representatives, some community colleges with big service areas have the mayor. You know, we've had four mayors on our search committees before. Four mayors from different towns and different counties. And they loved it until it was time for interviews. And they said, what, we have to spend two whole days sitting on a Zoom and interviews? They were like, well, we wanted to be a part of this, but we don't wanna sit on... We can't sit on a Zoom for two days, so it was funny. So some did and some said, we're gonna let the committee take it from here. So we're welcoming. We listen to everyone and we make people feel heard. But we know we take our marching orders from the hiring authority.

- Let me just add to that, that some institutions are very prescriptive in who has to serve on the search committee for a president. If you all don't already have that defined, and then we can give you recommendations who we would suggest that you would want. And we always suggest that you bring someone in from the community, especially the business and industry community. You know who your business partners are, and it's key, because your new president will have a dual function. He has the internal... He or she has the internal role of running the college, but they also have that external role of being the face of the college in the community and partnering them with the community overall.

- Thank you. Trustee Vieux, did you have a follow up?

- I do. But I am, yes. So sorry...

- Honorary.

- Just someday, maybe, I don't know. In a follow up to that, with like community forums and surveys, how are you communicating that to the community partners? Like how are they gonna get that information that there's a survey or a forum going on?

- From you all. You know, we have examples, of how we share that message out there. But it would be a call, like JCCC is hosting... You know, the Academic Search is coming to town and they wanna hear from you. And so we would prepare that and then you would share that message out there. And then we'll handle all the content and we can handle the Zoom as well or the in-person aspect of it, but we would rely on you all to do that. Because we're advisors, we're there to be helpful and to be advisors. We are not the deciders, you know, we are facilitating your handpicked search committee to know what is right for JCC-C.

- That's part of the partnership. We very much adhere to that partnership model.

- Okay, Trustee Cross, question?

- Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you all for the presentation. I never know where to look, but at any rate, earlier I heard a percentage you had with respect to diverse candidates. I forget the percentage, what was that percentage?

- It was 64% and it is on your slide. In the deck that we sent to you, it's on your slide four.

- Thank you. What does that mean? Women or persons of... Okay. No, no thank you, I just need to read. Thank you all.

- Okay, any more questions? Academic Search going once, and twice. Okay. Seeing none, I'm gonna turn it back over to you Jim. Thank you.

- All right, Academic Search, thank you very much for your time and interest in our service. We've got a couple interviews we have scheduled for this week. We hope to make a decision as a committee by the end of this week or the first part of next week. I ask in the meantime, if you have any questions or clarifications, there's a lot of folks here on our end, just direct any of that communication through myself please and I'll be your point of contact. Otherwise, we thank you for your time, we hope to be in touch soon.

- Thank you. And we're looking forward to the opportunity to work with you. So thank you.

- All right, thanks so much.

- Bye-Bye.

- Bye-bye

- Okay with that, I believe that concludes our business today and so I am going to take a motion to adjourn.

- [Cross] Moved.

- Trustee Cross, seconded by Trustee Mitchell. Thank you very much. And that adjourns our special meeting of the board of trustees. Yes. Oh, I should vote. I just was going with yes, let's go. All those in favor please. Aye.

- [All] Aye.

- Any opposed? All right, with that, it's unanimous. We are all adjourning and outta here. Thank you so much. That adjourns the meeting for today.