

Question for Governor Deval Patrick
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Governor Patrick, I was lucky enough to be here in this very building to hear you give your “just words” stump speech – you know, the one that has been borrowed by a certain Presidential candidate. You used the words of others as a “call to action” – one that many of us accepted.

I have some words for you. They are from Horace Mann, the founder of public education and founder of this the oldest coeducational teachers college in the country. Regarding the “grand mental and moral experiment” that is public education, our founder said:

The sincerity of our gratitude must be tested by our efforts to perpetuate and improve what they established. The gratitude of the lips only is an unholy offering.

Governor Patrick, Massachusetts still ranks 47th in per capita spending on public higher education.

You have found some money for buildings and the physical plant of our campuses, but what about the people that make up these institutions?

Where’s the relief from skyrocketing student fees?

The Board of Higher Education has a new Faculty Salary Survey that was due out last week. Are state college faculty still underpaid by 15%, or is it more now?

You promised honest collective bargaining with our faculty and staff units – the real human and intellectual capital of public higher education – where’s that?

You’ve propose increasing funding for the coming fiscal year for public higher education by \$34 million. We’re \$380 million below the levels of 2001. Is this a joke?

Now you have proposed doubling the health insurance contributions of state employees.

So my real question is this, Governor Patrick: will public higher education ever get real support from you and your administration or are we simply going to get the “gratitude of your lips,” “just words”?