

# Appendix A

DR. KARIN HILGERSOM, PRESIDENT  
TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATION

REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE  
APRIL 27, 2018

INTRODUCTION

On February 23, 2018, Chancellor Thom Reilly convened the first meeting of the Committee formed to assist in the first periodic evaluation of Dr. Karin Hilgersom, President of Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC). The Committee was chaired by Dr. Precious Hall, Professor of Political Science at TMCC. The Committee included Gigi Chisel, Chair of the TMCC Foundation Board and a Vice President with Lewis Management Corporation, Katy Simon Holland, President of the Board of Trustees of the Washoe County School District (WCSD) and interim President /CEO of the Alliance for Innovation, and Bradley Woodring, TMCC Institutional Advisory Council Member, Immediate Past Chair of the TMCC Foundation Board, and executive with Reliant Title of Northern Nevada. The Committee had an opportunity to review President Hilgersom's self-evaluation and interviewed her on March 7, 2018. We again met with President Hilgersom at the conclusion of our investigation on April 11, 2018 to provide her with a summary of our findings. Also in attendance at these meetings were Nate Mackinnon, Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and Chet Burton, Chief Financial Officer and advisor to the Committee during the process. As a part of the evaluation, the Committee conducted fifty-five interviews with President Hilgersom's direct reports, community members and colleagues, current presidents and acting presidents of fellow Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions, TMCC faculty and classified staff, and current and former student leaders. The Committee also met with the NSHE Cabinet, held an open forum for faculty and staff, and two open forums for students. The Committee also received and reviewed the results of the Faculty Evaluation Survey (FES) that was completed by 178 Academic and Administrative Faculty, along with a survey that was completed by thirteen members of both the TMCC Foundation Board and Institutional Advisory Council (IAC).

All of the above information has been incorporated into this report to both the Chancellor and Board of Regents.

The timetable for completion of the Committee's activities was aggressive and it could not have been met without the ongoing and timely assistance of Keli Bucci, Executive Assistant at NSHE and Lisa Farmer, Executive Assistant to President Hilgersom who assisted in scheduling the interviews and also coordinated the spaces in which these interviews and forums took place. Finally, the Committee would like to especially thank all who took the time to participate in our interviews and forums and provided honest and valuable feedback of which we have used to prepare this report as accurately and fairly as possible.

The Committee appreciates the effort that President Hilgersom put into the preparation of her self-evaluation. Even though she was given a short timeline to prepare her self-evaluation,

she addressed the necessary evaluation metrics with sufficient data and has provided valuable input and insight to this Committee as it undertakes its appointed task.

## PRELIMINARY MATTERS

The Board of Regents has adopted a series of performance metrics contained in Chapter 2, Section 2 of the *Nevada System of Higher Education Procedures and Guidelines Manual* to assist in the evaluation of all NSHE Presidents. In her self-evaluation, President Hilgersom addressed each of the metrics and has provided complementary data to support these metrics and to demonstrate her impact and influence during her first two years at TMCC. The Committee understands that much of the data provided lacks context of the President's direct influence since she has only been at TMCC for two years. However, we fully expect that should she be granted another evaluation in three years, she will be in a position to provide data to demonstrate her direct impact after this first evaluation as a President of an NSHE institution. Overall, the data suggest that as an institution, TMCC is moving in a positive direction and is continuing in its goal of being "The College for the new Nevada" as indicated in its tagline.

This report will begin by an evaluation of President Hilgersom's performance, as measured by the Board of Regents metrics. We will then expand this evaluation by drawing on the collective information we have gathered from all sources during the process of our investigation/interviews.

## APPLICATION OF THE BOARD OF REGENT'S PERFORMANCE METRICS

### 1. Fundamental Productivity

#### a. Academic Completion – Student Success

Graduation rates, degrees, and certificates awarded:

The trajectory of increased graduation rates at TMCC is impressive, from 21% in FY 2014 to 31% in FY 2017.

Dr. Hilgersom's employment commenced at the beginning of FY 2017. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) graduation rate was 30% in FY 2016 compared to 31% in FY 2017, representing a 1% increase during the first year of Dr. Hilgersom's employment.

The TMCC Strategic Enrollment Management Plan dated May 8, 2017, sets forth the college's goal to increase completions 6% by 2020. Detailed in the plan are specific strategies to raise graduation rates of full-time and part-time students, increasing the number of degrees and increasing the number of CTE credentials.

During the evaluation process it was evident to the Committee that Dr. Hilgersom is actively working on many fronts to hit the 2020 completion rate goal. Among the current initiatives are new certificate and degree programs, a few of which are noted below:

- Expanding the new Panasonic Pathway Program, resulting in certificates for manufacturing skills.
- The new Critical Systems degree emphasis to support commercial HVAC training critical to the many data centers in our area, including Apple and Switch.
- TMCC's on site CNA program at Renown Hospital named the "earn and learn" program, which is a model that can be adopted with other hospitals in the region to increase medically trained professionals.
- New degree and certificate programs in Unmanned Aircraft Flight Operations, Renewable Energy, Computer Technology, and Construction and Design programs.
- In addition to new Associate degree programs, a number of new Associate's to Bachelor's degree transitions are now solidified with other institutions, not only giving students more options but more incentives to continue their educations beyond Associate's degrees.
- New TMCC Bachelor's degree programs are recently approved and underway, others are under review. New Bachelor's degree programs including dental hygiene, logistics operation management, emergency management and homeland security.

Students, faculty, staff, and community members are aware that TMCC is rapidly expanding degree and certificate programs and the innovation underway reflects positively on the College and the region. The Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) always mentions TMCC programs in their outreach to prospective companies exploring a move to Northern Nevada.

#### Academic Completion – Student Success - Year to year persistence rates.

The IPEDS retention rate for TMCC for full-time degree seeking individuals from 2013-2016 ranged from 63-65% and for part-time degree seeking individuals the range was 44%-46%. No data was provided for 2017, the first year of Dr. Hilgersom's employment.

The TMCC Strategic Enrollment Management Plan dated May 8, 2017, sets forth the college's goal to increase retention and persistence 5% by 2020. Detailed in the plan are specific strategies to meet this goal including developing support for degree seeking undecided majors; providing faculty with training on an "early alert system"; holding a registration promotion event each semester; and implementing a model to increase utilization of academic support systems.

During the evaluation process, it was evident to the Committee that Dr. Hilgersom is extremely student focused, very engaged with the student body, and passionately committed to practices that support students' overall experience, health, wellbeing and participation. We believe that in the long run, her commitment to students will be reflected in improved retention and persistence.

## b. Enrollment – Student Access

Enrollment declines have occurred at TMCC from 6,197 FTE in FY 2016 to 5,851 in FY 2017. The headcount went from 11,427 in FY 2016 to 11,002 in FY 2017.

President Hilgersom addresses the enrollment challenges in her self-evaluation and notes that the near full employment in Washoe County, reduces the appeal of advanced education.

The region has a critical labor shortage resulting in more worker mobility than ever before and higher wages.

In September of 2017, the Reno-Sparks MSA unemployment rate was 4%. As of February 2018, the YOY job growth rate was 4.5%, resulting in over 10,000 new jobs in 2017. By contrast, the Las Vegas MSA job growth rate, while double the national average at 3.2% was significantly lower than Reno-Sparks (statistics from the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation Research Analysis Bureau).

The Strategic Enrollment Management plan sets forth a number of strategies for increasing enrollment 2% by 2020. The Committee believes that President Hilgersom is acutely aware of the need to attract more students and produce more graduates.

## Equity and Diversity – Student Access

TMCC published the Student Services and Diversity Plan on September 8, 2017. Embedded in the plan are initiatives for expanding targeted enrollment for underrepresented populations. The Committee firmly believes that Dr. Hilgersom excels at promoting equity and diversity. A few of President Hilgersom's initiatives were prominent in our interviews and worth mentioning:

- Updated and re-aligned staffing to enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion and created a faculty committee to address the faculty diversity initiatives.
- Created the Diversity and International Student Center Office, affectionately called The DISCO, which was widely praised in our interviews as offering a welcoming and inclusive environment for students, faculty and staff.
- Focused on international student recruitment to enrich the cultural makeup of the student body with a positive effect on enrollment.
- Continued support and direction of resources to the Success First Summer Bridge program serving first generation students.
- Leveraged the Hispanic-Serving Institution status and grant funding to bolster the TMCC HIS constituencies.
- Recognizing that minority representation needs improvement among non-Latino/Latina populations.

### c. Grants/Contracts/Special Events/Research and Development/Gifts

While the Committee does not have the perspective to ascertain if the aggregate amount of grants and gifts associated with TMCC is laudable, we can relay that President Hilgersom's self-evaluation addresses this topic in detail. She understands that the goal is to diversify sources of college revenue through community partnerships.

Two of our four evaluation Committee members have recent involvement with the TMCC Foundation. Our obvious bias is that, collectively, the volunteers and staff are doing a tremendous job increasing broad support for the college. With a very small foundation board (six volunteers), a very small group of highly dedicated college employees (six staff including two devoted to grants and only one development officer), generous benefactors, and community partnerships, funds are raised to support critical programs of interest from nursing to workforce development and dental hygiene to veterans' services.

The December annual TMCC Foundation report to the NSHE Board of Regents covered a few of several noteworthy accomplishments. We are particularly proud of the growth in student scholarships funded and awarded.

- Through aggressive student outreach, scholarship applications were up nearly 15% in 2017-2018 from 2016-2017, and 672 students were awarded over \$700,000 in scholarships, an all time high for the College. As a basis for comparison, \$534,000 was awarded in 2015-2016.

President Hilgersom has done a tremendous job gaining respect and visibility in the greater Reno-Sparks community, which should continue to enhance growth in gifts and grants.

## 2. Institutional Well-Being and Management Effectiveness

### a. Entrepreneurship

With the continual growth of our region, TMCC has been looked to as an integral partner to many of the local industries, both existing and new, to provide excellent training for the developing workforce. President Hilgersom is a forward thinker who cherishes innovation. According to some interviewees, she comes to TMCC with a fresh perspective and does a good job of bringing new ideas to the forefront. She is seen as a cheerleader for the institution, with the Nevada System of Higher Education and with the community and business leaders.

Dr. Hilgersom's vision is to secure resources to pilot and support innovative ways to meet workforce demands for the region. This is evident by information gleaned from the interviews conducted. Comments such as this one from a student "she is a great supporter of many programs on campus that encourages nontraditional students to attend and succeed" demonstrates the value attributed to Dr. Hilgersom by those who benefit most from her efforts. Faculty and staff commented that her vision for TMCC is exciting. Some felt that she was too aggressive in her ideas and was not inclusive enough, thus alienating some.

In the area of program specifics, Dr. Hilgersom endorses the efforts of the college's involvement with the P3 (Panasonic Preferred Pathway) program, the workforce-training program for the international company, Panasonic. Through specific funding acquired in 2016, the program was set up to recruit and train students in manufacturing competencies selected from a menu provided by TMCC. The success of this program has spurred staff and faculty of the college to become a critical part of the training of future workforce in northern Nevada.

The expansion of the Nell J. Redfield campus in 2015 provided space for additional students to attend in all facets of the medical curriculums. In the past two years, the Nursing Program has approved additional faculty positions in order to increase its student capacity. The college is reaching out to local hospitals and care facilities to secure additional clinical positions for TMCC graduates, something that has been a challenge in the past. In addition, other curriculums have seen growth in interest and enrollees such as the Paramedic and Radiologic Technician programs.

President Hilgersom communicates a vision and seeks to involve faculty and staff in innovative ways to achieve new visions and create missions. A project already in the concept stage, the EATS (Entrepreneurship and Hospitality and Tourism, ActionLink Center, TMCC Theater Arts and Technology, and Sierra Culinary Institute) facility will house the Sierra Culinary Institute. A new degree in Hospitality will compliment an already successful program in Culinary Arts. Dr. Hilgersom lobbied NSHE to approve moving forward with this project. As of this date, requests for proposals are out for architectural services. The new sports complex, housing a soccer field and health center is planning a groundbreaking for this fall.

Dr. Hilgersom continues to look for opportunities for TMCC students by offering new Bachelor's degrees. Her collaboration with local industries and continually seeking to understand the needs of our community industries' workforce needs enables TMCC to be a leader in the region in workforce development. The ongoing discovery of local industry needs and the creation of new and future conceptual programs will continue to place TMCC as a strong choice for students to gain the needed training and education to acquire employment.

Her support for inclusion of all students into the campus setting is strong. The Diversity and International Student Center Office (DISCO) is a prime example. Students attending TMCC from many foreign nations rely on the inclusive setting that this niche support effort has provided. According to the manager of the center, Dr. Hilgersom found the limited monies to do a "facelift" in a small area to provide the much-needed center and many who use it daily appreciate it. It has also provided some work experience for student workers.

She supported the creation and sustainability of TMCC being a Hispanic Service Institution (HSI), one of 286 such institutions serving the Latino/Latina student population in the United States. She also believes that it is vital to support this group and their quest for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to be upheld.

## b. Campus Environment

The assessment that Dr. Hilgersom provided in her self-evaluation alluded to some of the themes discovered during interviews. She is acutely aware that there seems to be a division of factions on campus that has led to, what one could term, a strong difference of opinion.

Several times the topic of shared governance was raised during the interviews. Certainly, there is a difference of opinion of what that means to separate camps, but it is evident that Dr. Hilgersom is making attempts to understand these differences and get to a common ground (*Self-Evaluation Appendix G Proposal Memorandum*). Coming together on this matter could prove to be a great achievement for the college at this time.

Dr. Hilgersom is viewed as approachable and a visible member in the campus community. Her open office hours are well communicated. It was noted that many interviewees felt as though she makes a point to see what is going on around campus herself, so she is aware of the day-to-day realities of the campus, and she is able to make effective and informed decisions.

Comments on communication were included in a number of responses. Examples of Dr. Hilgersom's were included in her self-evaluation as well (*Self-Evaluation Appendix H*). She engages in many vehicles of communication with staff, faculty, students, and the community. In her interview with this Committee, she alluded to the YouTube videos that she has begun using as a fun way to stay in touch and promote TMCC news and events. She believes in the handwritten note as a personal touch and regular communiqués through formal vehicles such as "Note from the President" and "Monday Minute", highlighting many events and happenings on campus and success stories of departments and staff/faculty members and students. Many interviewees appreciated her willingness to hold her "Office Hours" providing access to anyone interested in engaging her on all possible topics.

## 3. Institutional Relations to External Communities

### a. Collaboration

President Hilgersom has actively pursued collaborative relationships with both NSHE institutions and other academic institutions that can advance student achievement and educational opportunities for TMCC students.

*University of Nevada Reno* – President Hilgersom meets monthly with UNR President Marc Johnson and WCSD Superintendent Traci Davis to strengthen collaboration and to enhance academic alignment so that pathways for students are clear and mutually supportive. She is also exploring joint efforts with President Johnson to address remedial math and writing.

Space has been created in the TMCC Career Center for UNR Advising and Recruiting, and students who were part of the President's evaluation process reported that there is a much greater presence for UNR on the TMCC campus than before. In addition, Joe Nannini, UNR Coordinator of Internships and Professional Experience, has agreed to serve on the TMCC



Institutional Advisory Council. President Hilgersom also was very supportive of consolidating the UNR and TMCC police departments, and worked cooperatively with UNR to implement that change, where previous administrators had not.

There is room for improvement in the sense of competitiveness between UNR and TMCC. It was reported that sometimes her work toward what seems good for TMCC might not actually be good for UNR, or in the best interest of TMCC.

*Desert Research Institute (DRI)* – President Hilgersom is collaborating effectively and building a strong relationship with DRI President Averyt on a joint Science Solutions facility, for which \$5 million in planning funds is being requested, and participation in that facility proposal has now been extended to the President of Nevada State College. Though few, there are internships for TMCC students at DRI.

*Nevada State College (NSC)* – President Hilgersom is pursuing seamless transfer agreements with NSC, and there is tentative space for NSC in the University Center so that students gain awareness of the opportunities at NSC.

*Sierra Nevada College (SNC)* – an agreement was negotiated between TMCC and SNC to provide an affordable private college option at the Dandini campus for students to be able to complete a 2-plus-2 Bachelor's Degree in Psychology or Business via SNC. This partnership also expands opportunities for TMCC faculty to teach upper-division classes at both SNC and NSC. Space has been provided in the University Center for a Sierra Nevada College office. While most respondents were very positive about the relationship with SNC, some were critical of the costs to students choosing to pursue this option.

*Washoe County School District* – as stated above, the President meets monthly with the Superintendent and UNR President to make the pathways and alignment ever more effective for students. The relationship with WCSD is improving. TMCC supports a very positive program with the Rotary Club called “Let's Go To College”, in which WCSD middle school students are introduced to the opportunities at TMCC. She has also actively encouraged high school tour days on campus.

President Hilgersom reportedly makes it a point to talk with other Presidents, and it has been said that she “thinks from a system perspective.”

Within the TMCC community, she has been praised for her collaborative spirit in taking a class at TMCC, for attending Student Government Association meetings, and for re-energizing the Institutional Advisory Council, among other activities.

It was recommended during the process that President Hilgersom work to strengthen her relationship with the Chancellor's Office.

## b. Regent Strategic Directions

The President has supported Regent Strategic Directions with several efforts. *Access* is supported through efforts with external stakeholders such as the Governor's Office, KNPB, and EDAWN, so that broader awareness of TMCC as an option is being achieved. Additionally, a staff restructure supported access and integration of international students with services to students within equity and inclusion populations. The opening of the DISCO center has greatly improved a sense of belonging for less traditional students. Further, TMCC achieved Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status in 2017, and continues to work on *closing the achievement gap* through increasing levels of grant and donor funding to support this population.

*Workforce* goals of the Regents are supported by President Hilgersom's active service on the EDAWN Board, and her strong and continuing relationships with new employers such as Tesla, Panasonic, Switch and others. Beginning in Fall 2018, TMCC will offer the only Hospitality and Tourism degree in Northern Nevada.

It was stated during the evaluation process that it would be beneficial for President Hilgersom to gain a broader awareness of the Regents and their interests.

## c. Community Partnerships and Connections

President Hilgersom is very well-liked in the community. In addition to serving on the EDAWN Board as noted above, she serves on the Boards of KNPB and High Sierra Industries, and is active with the Chamber of Commerce, Sparks Rotary, and WIN. She has also appeared before the Reno City Council and represents the College effectively at virtually every community fundraising event she attends, where she works to keep the College visible and top-of-mind. She is a tireless advocate for the College within the community and region.

In addition, President Hilgersom has reached out to an extremely wide variety of individuals and organizations to serve on TMCC Advisory Committees. The 12-page list of community representatives serving on various advisory Committees, which she submitted with her self-evaluation, speaks to her energetic connections to all corners of the community.

She has also been praised for the positive relationships she has pursued with clinical sites that support the TMCC Nursing Program, and the work that she has done to support and promote Adult Education.

## CONCLUSIONS REGARDING REGENT'S METRICS

The Committee finds that the President has done a solid job of addressing the Regent's metrics and her performance has been viewed as effective.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### 1. Performance as a leader and as a spokeswoman for the College

President Hilgersom came to TMCC in the summer of 2016 and it is clear that she embraces the role of the community college. Although there have been many successes and positive contributions, President Hilgersom, by her own admissions understands that her initial hard and fast approach to being an “outcomes” person has made for a level of turbulence at TMCC that was not anticipated. Even though President Hilgersom acknowledges her contribution to the turbulence, the Committee would also like the Chancellor and Board of Regents to consider that she came to TMCC during a time of turbulence for NSHE, which was undergoing leadership changes with the position of Chancellor. As a result this Committee believes that the turbulence is not entirely attributable to President Hilgersom. It is difficult to assume the position of President under these conditions and it is especially difficult when the System lacks a consistent and thorough on-boarding process for Presidents. Even with a level of turbulence and dissent among a small number of faculty, this Committee would like to acknowledge that overall, President Hilgersom has a positive reputation both within TMCC and in the greater Reno/Sparks community. Several believe that she is moving TMCC forward with greater partnerships with the DRI, UNR, NSC, and SNC. With these partnerships, President Hilgersom has demonstrated that TMCC is a place worthy of investment. These collaborations are in the beginning stages and the Committee believes that should President Hilgersom be evaluated again, she would be in a better position to speak to the effectiveness of these collaborations.

Overall, President Hilgersom is viewed as a President who is very accessible and one who is very much physically present on campus. There were a number of people interviewed who believe that she is not a President who just sits in her office, but is one who is actively engaged, approachable, and welcoming. President Hilgersom is continually praised, by some, for her strong communication skills and she is viewed as someone who can stand her ground and who is not afraid of having uncomfortable conversations. However, this unabashed ability to have uncomfortable conversations has led some to view her as combative, one who can fan flames, and one that does not take into account the entirety of a situation before acting or speaking. In addition, many have been left confused over the battles she has chosen to fight on behalf of TMCC which has led some to develop the opinion that she can be dismissive of others’ ideas and may at times lack an openness to a diversity of opinions.

President Hilgersom stepped into a cultural shift at TMCC without knowing it and her self-acknowledged style of urgent leadership has caused her to make a few missteps during her initial time at TMCC; she acknowledges that she should have taken more time with some initiatives, a primary example being the proposal and development of a soccer field/sports complex on campus. Her style of urgent leadership has led some to question the soccer field/sports complex and question her ability to lead TMCC in the right direction. The Committee realizes that the soccer field/ sports complex caused many to have misgivings about President Hilgersom; but we believe, as evidenced by several interviewees, that she has learned and is learning from her initial mistakes and, as a result, has made adjustments and taken a different approach to the proposed EATS Project. However, some adjustments are not enough

for some faculty and there needs to be more collaboration and work done on the definition and process of shared governance at TMCC. We are encouraged that President Hilgersom understands this, and will keep working on a collaborative definition of shared governance that can be instituted and practiced successfully at TMCC.

In the community, President Hilgersom is viewed as a great representative for TMCC and is praised for her active community involvement. Among members of the community and within TMCC there seems to be no doubt that President Hilgersom has an absolute commitment to building TMCC, as she is not only a strong advocate for the institution, but she is extremely student-focused. Many feel that her previous experience in executive higher education leadership has contributed to her enthusiasm and her perception as an innovative risk-taker. Unfortunately, her innovation and action oriented style has led some to believe that she can be impulsive and some questioning if she fully considers the repercussions of her actions. This has also led to the perception that she has not found the right balance in talking and listening, leaning too heavily on the former, instead of the latter.

Overall, many feel that President Hilgersom has shaken things up at TMCC and many understand that this was inevitable as all new leaders bring their own style of leadership with them into this position. However, the general consensus among faculty and staff is that she has had a positive effect on the campus environment, and they are hopeful that in the weeks to come she will be able to stop focusing so much time on fending off criticisms so that she can have more time to engage in the greater mission of TMCC. There are some faculty and staff who have been jolted from their comfort zone, but a majority feels that President Hilgersom has created a better environment for open communication at TMCC.

## 2. Results of the Faculty Evaluation Survey

This Committee received the results of the Faculty Evaluation Survey (FES) on Monday, April 2, 2018. The survey contains data that the Committee believes to be of importance that should be separately highlighted in this evaluation. The FES was sent to 317 Academic and Administrative faculty who serve in a full-time capacity and are not under the direct supervision of the President. 178 faculty members responded to the survey yielding a response rate of 56%. There were a total of thirty-four Likert type statements presented in which faculty could respond in various ways, including: very effective, moderately effective, somewhat effective, not effective; very well, moderately well, somewhat well, and not well; strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. There was no option for “no basis of evaluation” presented in this survey as presented in previous FES surveys for evaluation purposes at other NSHE Institutions. In addition to the thirty-four Likert type questions, there were also two open-ended questions asking President Hilgersom’s strengths and her most important areas for improvement. Provided below are responses to specific statements (the number in parenthesis is the percentage of those responding with effective/moderately effective, very well/moderately well, strongly agree/agree):

“1. How effective is President Hilgersom at articulating a clear vision for the future of TMCC? (79.5%)”

“2. How effective is President Hilgersom at fostering a sense of campus community? (69.8%)”

“6. How effective is President Hilgersom at promoting faculty and staff diversity on campus? (78.7%)”

“7. How effective is President Hilgersom at involving faculty in the planning process? (58.8%)”

“8. How effective is President Hilgersom at using shared governance to develop policy and procedure? (59.2%)”

“14. How well does President Hilgersom promote increasing college accessibility for Nevada students? (81.7%)”

“15. How well does President Hilgersom promote student diversity on campus? (86.8%)”

“23. How effective is President Hilgersom at improving the campus infrastructure (e.g. building enhancements, academic labs) to foster a better academic environment? (70.9%)”

“24. <sup>SEP</sup>How effective is President Hilgersom at managing resources, given the budgetary circumstances since her arrival? (67.8%)”

“27. How effective is President Hilgersom at advocating for TMCC outside the college? (85.2%)”

“28. How effective is President Hilgersom at fostering collaborative relationships with other NSHE institutions? (79.5%)”<sup>SEP</sup>

“31. I think President Hilgersom is a good President for TMCC. (66.1%)”

“34. I think President Hilgersom should remain as President of TMCC. (64.4%)”

Question 35 asks for a description of President Hilgersom’s strengths and comments generally reflect the information contained in other sections of this report such as her ability to foster an inclusive and collaborative environment; the perception that she is a forward thinking, innovative visionary; she is approachable, kind, open, warm, and transparent; and that she is student-focused and advocates for all students including DACA students and those in the ABE program.

Question 26 asks for areas in which President Hilgersom has opportunities for improvement in relation to her service to TMCC. Here, several of the comments reflect statements in other sections of this evaluation such as the need for her decision-making to be more inclusive, data-driven, careful, transparent, and with the incorporation of more faculty,

staff, and students in the process. However, it is the view of this Committee that many comments deserve special consideration to help President Hilgersom better understand the nexus of discontent existing within a small number of the faculty who responded to this survey.

A. Shared Governance:

There is some concern expressed within the FES that President Hilgersom either seems to be operating outside the purview of shared governance as stated in the Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA) contract, or that she does not share with some faculty a clear understanding of what shared governance means. President Hilgersom herself acknowledges that this is a problem and this Committee believes that this should be a top priority moving forward along with the conscious effort to incorporate a broader range of voices from the institution early on in the decision-making process.

B. Communication

In addition to concerns over the practice of shared governance, there were a small number of responders concerned with President Hilgersom's communication style. While many view her approachability as one of her strengths, there are those who feel that she is sometimes talking "at them" and not "to them". Those respondents also believe that she needs to improve her listening skills, which could be hampering our community relationships and relationships with other NSHE institutions. A major issue for some has been an appearance of her seemingly being unable to resolve conflict. The Committee recognizes that although many of the conflicts at TMCC are confidential personnel matters, it is still the job of the leader to set the tone and demonstrate that she can resolve conflicts, and do so in a way that does not make people feel as if they are "belittled" or that contrary viewpoints are not welcomed.

C. Priority for Building Projects

A theme present in the comments from the FES is that while many praise the President for her innovation and the action she has taken since arriving to TMCC, there is some confusion over the choices for the physical expansion of TMCC. The primary example would be the consternation of many faculty and staff over her perceived need for a soccer field/ sports complex at TMCC. While there are many who believe that the sports complex will be a great addition to TMCC, they do so while also feeling that there are higher priorities in terms of building spaces needed on campus with less of a financial impact to students. The Committee believes that President Hilgersom would do well to state her priorities for building spaces at TMCC as a means of incorporating more voices into the initial stages in the name of transparency to address these concerns.

## GOALS AND SUCCESSES

In President Hilgersom's self-evaluation, she presents her goal as a new President at TMCC. This goal was to gain familiarity with the internal and external context of TMCC and craft a good plan based upon people, innovation, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. President Hilgersom acknowledges that although in her first year at TMCC she has been able to connect with hundreds of new faces, she has not yet met all 1,200 TMCC employees and she looks forward to continuing to grow and nurture these relationships not just among faculty, staff, and managers, but also among legislators and community members.

Based on the interviews conducted, the Committee can see how President Hilgersom has tried in her first two years to deepen her relationships within the TMCC community. This is evidenced by several interviewees acknowledging that President Hilgersom is very engaged with student events, that she is more accessible than previous presidents at all campus locations especially through the implementation of her rotating "office hours", and that she takes every opportunity to attend events and show support from the President's office. Although there are some who feel that her schedule at times can be too full to allow for the discussion of personal issues one-on-one, the general consensus is that her presence on campus is very encouraging and has been effective at deepening her relationship to the internal TMCC community.

### 1. Successful Completion of the College's Strategic Master Plan and Strategic Enrollment Management Plan

Other points from President Hilgersom's self-evaluation are her belief that a president's role in planning is vital to the success of any institution and she is proud that under her leadership, both the TMCC Strategic Master Plan and Strategic Enrollment Management Plans were completed under a model of shared governance with the Planning Council in spring 2017. In this same vein and spirit of shared governance, President Hilgersom has expanded membership on the Planning Council to include the addition of part-time and full-time faculty, as well as the addition of Deans and Directors on the President's Cabinet which also includes the Chair of the Faculty Senate, the President of the Student Government Association (SGA) and the President of the Classified Council at TMCC. These changes, along with more of a collaborative and decisive format for these meetings have been at the President's direction and encouragement, all of which correspond to her acknowledged stylistic change in leadership that she brought to TMCC which has evolved from a one-way approach to a team effort with both high collaboration and high engagement. Her focus on process has helped her to develop, in her view, a high performance team and while the Committee believes she has been able to get a lot accomplished with her action-oriented approach, the Committee also recognizes that this has not been without a degree of turmoil from factions within the TMCC community who believe that shared governance has not been as widely embraced by the President as they would like, and who also believe that she has struggled accepting viewpoints and criticisms of others.

## 2. Addressing Issues of Diversity

The Committee would like to highlight President Hilgersom's efforts as it relates to issues of diversity at TMCC. A large contingency of those interviewed believe that President Hilgersom is open to supporting diversity as evidenced by the creation and opening of the DISCO in fall 2017, the support for TMCC to be designated by the Department of Education as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), vocal and documented support of those designated as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students, and her stated interests and attempts to expand the international program for students. In addition to her diversity work on behalf of students, President Hilgersom is viewed as being very supportive of diverse hiring practices as discussed with the IAC and with job searches for positions at TMCC. President Hilgersom has also been supportive of diverse populations at TMCC as she has been conscious to include the Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs in her planning and attempts to create inclusivity at TMCC. There remains a small contingency who feels that the institution lacks diversity in terms of gender in President Hilgersom's executive leadership team. In addition, there are those who believe that President Hilgersom is singularly focused on diversity for Hispanic/LatinX students; however these impressions do not seem widespread. Although many acknowledge that President Hilgersom does not tolerate the marginalization of any group on campus, there are those who feel that she could do more to further address the issues of racism and sexism. The Committee feels that in the present climate of the U.S., this is a challenge for many higher education presidents, not just President Hilgersom or other NSHE presidents.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Campus Morale

There is an undercurrent of discontent of various degrees within the ranks of the College and this affects the entire workforce population, with low morale. There is a concern that the College may lose good faculty because of the strife, with the concern particularly acute for new faculty who may see the current environment as chaotic, negative, and all consuming. Excellent faculty deserves a positive working environment. To this extent, the Committee believes that President Hilgersom should incorporate civility training for all levels of faculty, staff, and students as a step towards improving overall campus morale.

### 2. Shared Governance

As noted in the results of the FES, the Committee recommends that the President make it a top priority to find and implement a practical and working definition of shared governance. The concepts of shared governance and shared responsibility need institution definitions and formal parameters for implementation as the various TMCC constituencies have wildly diverse opinions on the meaning of these concepts, and the role of the President in policy setting and decision-making. Creating an agreement on shared governance would help to improve faculty relationships and help all parties involved listen more with an open mind.



### 3. Communication

The Committee has no doubt that President Hilgersom is passionate about TMCC and helping students and the institution. However, we believe that in her continued quests, she needs to shore up her active listening skills and work on remaining neutral and non-judgmental, particularly when discussing major projects and initiatives proposed for the College. The Committee believes that taking more time to hear opposing views, then reflecting and revisiting issues will help to build consensus. The Committee is not advocating for the President to disregard her opinions and vision for TMCC, but to incorporate a broader range and diversity of opinions. Taking the time to do this will also help her to develop a deeper level of self-awareness towards her impact on others.

In addition to working on her personal communication, the Committee believes that President Hilgersom's efforts are hampered by communication siloes in which information does not always trickle down outside of her direct reports. The Committee believes that President Hilgersom should have greater levels of accountability in delegation to her direct reports and she should interact more with administrative staff outside of her direct reports to ensure that her goals, intent, and vision are shared and understood as broadly as possible.

### 4. Conflict Resolution

Conflict within the faculty and staff at TMCC is serious and cannot be pushed under the rug with a heavy hand. All parties need to come and be welcomed to the table and address issues openly in a professional and positive manner that is good for the institution. Communications from the President's office should be formal, reasoned, measured, and reassuring that TMCC is a place for all people even those who have ideas that conflict with the President's. The Committee recommends that the Chancellor's office should help mediate these conflicts in order to give President Hilgersom a chance to "right the ship" and go forward with civility and order and without having to spend too much energy putting out flames of contention when she could be engaged in other important work on behalf of the institution.

The Committee believes that a contributing factor to conflicts at TMCC has been a lack of a systematic process for vetting ideas and proposals. We believe that a systematic process would help President Hilgersom better "pick her battles" so that her credibility and goodwill do not suffer in the end.

### 5. Mentoring

Several internal comments mentioned the need for a formal mentoring and training program for new presidents, which would be a dedicated system to help new presidents function more effectively within the situational and political environments in their organizations, NSHE, and the State. We would anticipate that such a program would be customized based on the new hire's familiarity with the system and the State and would be more intensive for presidents with no prior experience in NSHE or Nevada. We believe President Hilgersom would have benefited

from such a program. We also believe that it is not too late for President Hilgersom to engage in more mentoring, preferably with an experienced, effective former President from whom she could seek sound advice and who could provide her with continued growth in her necessary areas of improvement.

## CONCLUSION

If there were one word this Committee could use to summarize the results of President Hilgersom's evaluation, it would be "potential". From our perspective, based on the in-person meetings we have had with her, the surveys we have received, and the interviews and open forums we have conducted, it is clear to us that President Hilgersom has the potential to be one of the best presidents TMCC has had in a long time. In just under two years, we believe that President Hilgersom has embarked on an aggressive path of innovation and change of which she explains in detail in her self-evaluation and of which we have highlighted in the sections above.

This Committee unanimously believes that she takes the mission of the community college to heart and she is a passionate and fierce advocate for TMCC in both public and private settings. She has formed relationships with key donors to the college, is credited with raising the profile of TMCC in a positive way within the community, and it is clear that she is committed to student success and workforce development.

Even with President Hilgersom's innovation and action-oriented style of urgent leadership, the Committee agrees that there are some critical issues that need work and resolution as we have summarized in our recommendations for Dr. Hilgersom moving forward. President Hilgersom came to TMCC with great ambitions and has been a force of change for the institution. Although not everyone has taken a positive view of her leadership, the majority of voices believe that she is the right president for TMCC at the right time. Missteps have been made in the last two years, but we believe that President Hilgersom is able to overcome the obstacles noted above and must do so in order to have the true impact that she wants for TMCC. This Committee believes that President Hilgersom has the right ability, background, and intelligence to firmly establish herself as an excellent president at TMCC and we believe that she deserves the opportunity to continue her work and to try to rectify the issues and areas for improvement shared in the previous sections.

The Committee approves of the performance of President Karin Hilgersom. We are excited to see the positive changes that can continue to be brought to TMCC once President Hilgersom is given the opportunity to improve upon her already highly regarded leadership.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2018

Dr. Precious D. Hall, Chair