

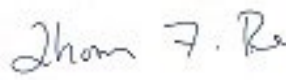
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MEMORANDUM

TO: NSHE Board of Regents
FROM: Thom Reilly, Chancellor 
DATE: May 18, 2020
SUBJECT: Periodic Evaluation of President Karin Hilgersom

By this memorandum, I submit to the Board my comments and recommendations on the periodic evaluation of President Karin Hilgersom of Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC). Consistent with the findings of the Evaluation Committee, I believe President Hilgersom has performed well over the evaluation period. Consequently, I recommend that her contract be extended, and her compensation be allowed to be adjusted in accordance with my recommendations outlined further in this document.

This evaluation was done in accordance with the NSHE Procedures & Guidelines Manual (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.2 and 2.3) as established by the Board. Accordingly, I created a committee of four community leaders, including one senior faculty member (the "Evaluation Committee" or the "Committee"). The Committee was comprised of:

- BJ North, TMCC IAC Chair, Committee Chair
- Sabra Newby, Community Leader, Committee Member
- Micaela Rubalcava, Faculty, Committee Member
- John Thurman, TMCC IAC Member, Committee Member

The Committee facilitator was Jennifer Schultz, DRI Director of Human Resources.

The Committee first reviewed President Hilgersom's self-evaluation and related documents, then interviewed the President about her performance and that of the College. They then conducted interviews with campus personnel, students, and community members interested in the College. The Committee was provided the results of the faculty survey conducted on the President's performance in accordance with Board policy. The Committee also held one open forum for faculty, staff, and students to provide feedback.

With the benefit of those interviews, the open forum, and survey results, the Committee met again with President Hilgersom to discuss their findings and observations and to receive her feedback. The Committee then produced a report, which they submitted to me, concluding their service. I, along with Vice Chancellor Nate Mackinnon, met with the Committee to discuss their findings. That report is attached to this memorandum (Appendix A), along with President Hilgersom's self-evaluation (Appendix B).

Though the Committee had the complete results of the faculty survey, in accordance with Board policy, that is not included in the materials since it is not deemed a public document.

Overview of Performance

TMCC continues to do well as an institution when reviewing the metrics and Board's strategic goals. President Hilgersom has done a good job of connecting TMCC to the communities it serves. Her passion for the College is evident and she exemplifies a positive attitude towards continual improvement for TMCC.

President Hilgersom has spent considerable energy furthering the image of TMCC, with robust marketing during times of declining enrollment and an emphasis on international partnerships for the College. She is perceived as innovative and entrepreneurial in her approaches to everyday challenges. As president, she has had a strong focus on diversity at the College, as well as sustainability.

There are also important areas that, with additional focus, will help improve President Hilgersom's performance as the College's leader. In particular, challenges with academic faculty relations with President Hilgersom have persisted, as have concerns around communication and listening.

Summary of Evaluation Metrics

Among the Board's metrics for evaluation, the Committee rated President Hilgersom favorably in most. Areas for improvement were raised specifically in institutional well-being and management effectiveness.

1. Fundamental Productivity

The Committee notes that, while enrollment trends have been flat or slightly declining, this current year had a very slight increase. Additionally, under President Hilgersom's leadership TMCC's graduation rate and number of degrees and certificates awarded have continued to rise. This trend verifies the President's focus on improving educational outcomes for TMCC students.

Under her leadership, TMCC was recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). President Hilgersom also developed the "Diversity and International Student Center and Office" (DISCO) which further emphasizes the focus she's placed for the institution on diversity and inclusion.

President Hilgersom successfully relaunched intercollegiate athletics to TMCC, bringing men's and women's soccer to the College in the Fall of 2019. This has aided the College in recruiting students as full-time enrollees.

An increase in international partnerships has also helped diversify and add revenue to TMCC, particularly with Japan, Costa Rica, and Peru.

2. Institutional Well-Being and Management Effectiveness

President Hilgersom received high marks for her availability to faculty, staff and students. Her open-door policy and regular office hours and newsletters have been favorably received by most. Her work bringing faculty and administrative leadership into

the same room has increased communication and problem-solving approaches at TMCC. Sharing this newer structure more broadly will help increase both input and buy-in from campus constituencies.

President Hilgersom has had a strong focus on improving TMCC facilities, with a new library and learning commons, redesigned meeting and student common spaces, and new office suites and furniture. The new health center provides students access to state-of-the art fitness equipment.

While President Hilgersom receives good support from administrative faculty according to the faculty survey, there is less support from the academic faculty on multiple metrics. This dichotomy seems to play out in many of the comments received in the open-ended section of the survey as well. President Hilgersom will need to spend more time working directly with academic faculty to hear and address their concerns where appropriate.

As it relates to President Hilgersom's management effectiveness, some members of her leadership team perceive favoritism is shown by her to some colleagues over others. It is important that all employees at the College feel comfortable and respected for the professional contributions they bring to their roles.

3. Institutional Relations to External Communities

The Committee gave President Hilgersom high praise for her visibility in the Greater Reno/Sparks communities. She is consistently working with business and community leaders to tell the TMCC story. Partnerships with technology companies, such as Apple, Switch, Tesla, Panasonic, and more have led to new innovative opportunities for TMCC students, while also benefitting area employers.

Under her leadership, TMCC became an approved apprenticeship provider, something typically not done by an institution. This has led to dramatic increases in the number of registered apprentices in the communities TMCC serves. Additionally, TMCC's applied technology programs have flourished, particularly in the area of advanced manufacturing. The President has found multiple grants that were awarded to the institution to support investments in state-of-the-art technology that allows students to hit the ground running after completing their training at the College.

An area President Hilgersom will need to work on in the future is the relationship between TMCC and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). As the only public four-year institution in the area, the large majority of students transferring out of TMCC go into a degree program at UNR. The relationship between the two institutions has, seemingly, been more competitive than collaborative, and President Hilgersom and TMCC leaders, along with UNR leadership, should work to identify more opportunities to work together.

4. Achievement of Strategic Goals

As mentioned above, TMCC has continually improved upon their metrics for both access and student success. She has put an emphasis on student completion and found more ways to create a campus environment that keeps students engaged. She has also worked to install supports for minority students, such as the TMCC Men of Color program, or the Students of Color mentorship program. She has also placed much effort to further Latinx student enrollment and success. A future challenge for President Hilgersom to address is increasing the overall diversity of faculty at the College to better align with that of the students.

Workforce alignment has been a priority for TMCC under President Hilgersom's leadership. Her membership on the Economic Development Authority for Western Nevada (EDAWN) Board has proven to provide a critical connection for business leaders and the College.

5. Other

President Hilgersom is widely perceived as energetic and passionate in her role as TMCC's leader. She is accessible and works hard to improve the TMCC experience for students.

In her previous periodic evaluation, concerns were raised around the faculty discourse with President Hilgersom and her leadership team. As a result, all parties agreed to participate in a Relationships by Objectives (RBO) training tailored to TMCC from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). While the training helped both sides, there still appears to be some faculty frustration.

When it comes to communication, President Hilgersom has made notable improvements, including the aforementioned joint meetings between faculty and administrative leadership teams. Yet, on the faculty survey, communication was a clear concern, particularly from academic faculty. The Committee further identified active listening as an area that President Hilgersom should continue to focus on improving. In particular, not just *hearing* others, but adapting plans and actions based on feedback received. This area is exemplified in the faculty survey where academic faculty are split as to whether the President seeks input and acts on the recommendations of the Faculty Senate. More than half of the academic faculty disagreed that the President is effective at involving faculty in the planning process. Inversely, more than half of the administrative faculty agreed that she was effective at this.

On a few occasions there have been missteps in President Hilgersom's communications that have at times strained her relationship with some NSHE system staff and Board members. We have discussed these concerns. It will be important for the President to work to rebuild these relationships in the coming year and to also seek advice and input from others before making public comments.

Chancellor's Recommendations:

Based on the Faculty Survey results, the Committee Report, and my own observations reviewing President Hilgersom's self-evaluation and in working with her, I recommend that her contract be renewed for a period of four years, and the recommendations, as written in this document and in the Committee report, be fully implemented. She has effectively met the evaluation metrics set by the Board of Regents, is a visible advocate for TMCC in the community and is fully committed to the College and its students.

I concur with the Committee on the areas of opportunity for improvement identified, specifically around her relationship with the academic faculty, communication, and listening. More specifically concerning communication, President Hilgersom should work to improve active listening and adapting her leadership accordingly. I expect President Hilgersom has already begun to think about how to take these opportunities and embrace them fully as she continues leading TMCC.

Given her successful review, I would normally expect to recommend a pay increase for President Hilgersom. However, given the current fiscal climate, I would ask the Board to defer an appropriate salary adjustment at this time. Should conditions allow at a point during the contract term, I would ask that the Chancellor be able to adjust President Hilgersom's compensation at that time for merit.