

*Board of Trustees*

December 19, 2019

Ms. Paulette Howarth, President  
MCCC-BrCCC Chapter  
c/o Bristol Community College  
777 Elsbree Street  
Fall River, MA 02720

Dear Ms. Howarth:

Thank you for your presentation at the December 9, 2019, Board of Trustees Meeting. The Board of Trustees takes your concerns seriously and wants you to know that an engaged and productive faculty is a matter of great importance to us.

The Board believes that all college constituents need to keep the students at the center of all that we do. Our mission as the leading resource for education and workforce development in southeastern Massachusetts promoting individual opportunity, sustainability of resources, and the region's economic growth must always be kept as top of mind. It is imperative that the community works together to address concerns and collaboratively develop effective solutions that will move Bristol Community College forward and ensure our employees have a positive work environment.

The presentation and the documents provided to the Board did raise a number of questions that we are presenting in this letter. Your answers will help us gain a better understanding of the situation and help us determine next steps.

Included with the 2019 BrCCC and AFSCME Climate Survey material sent to the Board of Trustees was a *Background and Summary of the Vote of No Confidence* document. This document stated that from November 18 - 25 an electronic vote of AFSCME and MCCC members was solicited via Survey Monkey. "The results are as follows:

1. For the vote of no confidence in Bristol Community College President Dr. Laura Douglas 253 members of AFSCME and MCCC were present.
  - a. 192 engaged in voting; an additional 61 abstained from voting.
  - b. Of that 192, 88% (167) voted yes on no confidence; 12% (25) voted no on no confidence.
  - c. Majority vote carries.
2. For the vote of no confidence in Bristol Community College Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Suzanne Buglione 251 members of AFSCME and MCCC were present.
  - a. 188 engaged in voting; an additional 63 abstained from voting.
  - b. Of that 188, 90% (169) voted yes on no confidence; 10% (19) voted no on no confidence.
  - c. Majority vote carries.

3. For the vote of no confidence in Bristol Community College Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management Dr. Ed Cabellon 244 members of AFSCME and MCCC were present.
  - a. 175 engaged in voting; an additional 69 abstained from voting.
  - b. Of that 175, 89% (155) voted yes on no confidence; 11% (20) voted no on no confidence.
  - c. Majority vote carries.

Percentages provided are rounded to the nearest decimal per standard practice. The complete percentages are enclosed.”

From the *Quorum Vote of No Confidence* document, these “complete percentages” are:

Q1 President Dr. Laura Douglas

Total = 253; Yes = 66.01% or 167; No = 9.88% or 25; Abstain = 24.11% or 61

Q2 Dr. Suzanne Buglione

Total = 251; Yes = 67.33% or 169; No = 7.57% or 19; Abstain = 25.10% or 63

Q3 Dr. Ed Cabellon

Total = 244; Yes = 63.52% or 155; No = 8.20% or 20; Abstain = 28.28% or 69

In the December 9, 2019, PowerPoint presentation to the Board of Trustees, it was stated the following figures on votes of no confidence on slides 11, 12 and 13:

Slide 11. Q1 President Dr. Laura Douglas: 157 votes, Yes = 87.9% and No = 12.10%

Slide 12. Q2 Dr. Suzanne Buglione: 157 votes, Yes = 89.8% and No = 10.2%

Slide 13. Q3 Dr. Ed Cabellon: 157 votes, Yes = 89.2% and No = 10.8%

We respectfully request clarification on the differences between the above sets of results. Also, please explain why the vote results of November 13, 2019, were listed in the PowerPoint presentation instead of the vote results of November 18 - 25, 2019.

In addition, please provide us with the breakdown in votes by MCCC and AFSCME for both surveys conducted, noting vote analysis between full- and part-time members. Also, please provide us with the total number of MCCC and AFSCME members at the college according to full- and part-time status, as well as the exact number of MCCC and AFSCME members the voting surveys were sent to according to full- and part-time status. For your convenience, please see the attached spreadsheets with the requested information.

Again, we thank you for sharing the outcomes of the climate survey. We were pleased to see that there are many things that employees feel good about, such as acceptable classroom facilities, overall facilities, communications with supervisors, treatment of respect from supervisors, supervisor considers input, goals and expectations are communicated clearly, that there is open and honest communications within divisions, there is a spirit of cooperation within divisions, there is adequate technology, employees are encouraged to participate in professional development, contributions are valued within the department, ethical and cultural diversity is valued, employees feel safe on campus, and the modernization of campus by administration. Of concern, of course, are the parts of the survey that describe morale, communications and respect.

The slides from the December 9 presentation describe some of these concerns, but also lead us to some questions. The questions that we have are as follows:

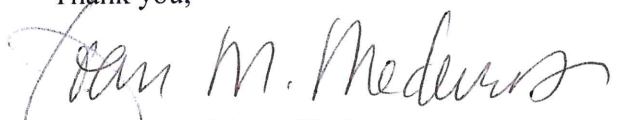


- On Slide 3 of the climate survey presentation, it states that there is “Unreasonable pressure to get short term results at expense of the long term strategies.” Please explain how this was determined.
- In Slide 4 of the climate survey presentation entitled Change in Advising Workload, its states an “Increase in number of advisees from 120 to 250 students per advisor.” Please explain the research conducted of the advising workloads of academic advisors at the other 14 community colleges, along with the source of information. Also mentioned in Slide 4 is “Addition of ‘proactive advising’ initiative to include career counseling and job preparation instruction in addition to academic review without training or input from professional advisers.” If this implies a change to an agreement or MOA, please provide a copy of that MOA and describe how it was changed.
- On Slides 6 and 7 of the climate survey presentation, is listed a number of causes of stress. Please direct us to the survey question that identifies the causes of stress identified in the presentation.
- On Slide 6, it is mentioned that “In the last 3 years, approximately 65 individuals were terminated or have resigned, and 23 part time advisors terminated.” Please clarify how this information was collected. Also on Slide 6, it states that “Unfocused change and lack of vision were identified as the most frustrating factors for employment at Bristol.” How was this determined?
- On Slides 8 and 9 of the climate survey presentation, it lists effects of stress. How were these effects captured from the survey? Please direct us to the survey questions that identify how union members responded to the effects of stress.
- On Slide 10 of the presentation it states “Adhere to contracts and MOAs” as a way to put a stop to excessive job and workplace stress. Please describe how and when contracts and MOAs have not been adhered to. Please identify any formal or informal grievances, and if applicable, provide written copies of the same, that have been submitted under the terms of the MOA or any applicable bargaining agreement or personnel policy.

We would like to understand how the aforementioned concerns addressed by the MCCC and AFSCME unions have been raised to date with President Douglas and Vice Presidents Buglione and Cabellon. Providing a description of the approach to communicating with our college leadership is therefore respectfully requested. In addition, we invite you to propose how the unions intend to work with President Douglas and Vice Presidents Buglione and Cabellon in the future to resolve the concerns.

At your earliest convenience, please forward to me the answers to the above questions and items that require further clarification and explanation. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Thank you,



Joan M. Medeiros, Chair  
Bristol Community College Board of Trustees