

**From:** [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)  
**Subject:** Employee Engagement Update  
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**MONTGOMERY COLLEGE**  
Office of the President

May 18, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Montgomery College Colleagues  
**From:** Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President  
**Subject:** Employee Engagement Update

Strong employee engagement with the College's mission is one of the fundamental building blocks of a high-performing organization. When we are at our best, we can best empower students to change their lives. To that end, the College began tending to and measuring employee engagement eight years ago through a survey. The survey results have been reviewed by an Employee Engagement Advisory Group, which has made recommendations to me regarding methods to improve employee engagement.

With surveys running every other year, we are poised to implement the next survey this year and will do so in the fall semester. I hope for every employee's participation! In the meantime, I write today to update you on progress since the last survey and set of recommendations. My 2015 memorandum can be reviewed [here](#).

The first thing I will note is that the 2017 survey will use a new standardized instrument that will allow us to benchmark ourselves against other colleges and organizations. Previously, we have used in-house instruments. The survey selected is from Quantisoft, a firm that produces employee surveys for private and public organizations, including higher education institutions.

Attached please find the 2015 recommendations by the Employee Engagement Advisory Group, my disposition on each (from my December 16, 2015, memorandum), as well as an update on what has occurred since that time. This update demonstrates how we hold ourselves accountable.

Finally, let me thank you for all you have done in the current year. I appreciate your dedication to students and to their success. Every day, you continue to empower our students to change their lives.

Attachment

Update on Employee Engagement Advisory Group's Recommendations for 2015

May 18, 2017

### Recommendation 1, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum

**EEAG Recommendation 1: After the examination of the governance system concerning the size of governance, the overall functionality, and the overlap in council oversight, the EEAG recommends to remove the four functional councils from the participatory governance system:**

- **Academic Services and Quality Council;**
- **Employee Services Council;**
- **Operational Services Council;**
- **Student Services and Success Council.**

**Adopted in part.** I recognize the intentions of the EEAG in this recommendation to ensure a continued successful governance system. However, Montgomery College's governance system is designed to be inclusive of all employee groups, as well as students; efforts to reduce its size require deliberate thought and review. The current number serving in governance is a small number in comparison with the total number of employees and students. Additionally, each functional council has student representatives, and I would be hesitant to reduce the student voice in governance without consultation with students. To that end, I do not endorse the reduction of the size of governance or removal of the four functional councils in question as presented. A recommendation of this scope should be dependent on a broader review of evidence and data than just the employee engagement survey, including, but not limited to, the annual governance survey, the functional councils' goals and outcomes, and interviews with functional council leadership and previous College Council leadership. I will, therefore, task Director of Governance, Presidential Projects, and Institutional Initiatives Tacy Holliday to work with the College Council to explore this issue more fully to make recommendations regarding potential improvements to the structure of our governance system.

### Progress Update

A review of the governance structure was completed with the College Council during the 2015–2016 year. It was decided not to recommend any changes in the structure of four functional councils.

### Recommendation 2, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum

**EEAG Recommendation 2: The EEAG recommends that it will provide appropriate feedback and ownership regarding the Employee Engagement Survey with an annual report to the Senior Administrative Leadership Team.**

**Adopted.** I support this recommendation and believe this provides a level of accountability for employee engagement success.

### Progress Update

While I applaud the intention of this recommendation and my own desire for a regular, annual report, we must look at how such a report is produced. That leads to the larger question of how we manage the employee engagement survey process. While I applaud the Employee Engagement Advisory Group for its willingness to take on such a report, the reality is that it is not the EEAG's responsibility to produce it, nor do its members have the time and resources to do so. The College needs and I definitely want regular reports, and we will examine how best to do so in the coming round of review and recommendations.

### Recommendation 3, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum

**EEAG Recommendation 3: The EEAG recommends schedule alternatives that may permit for increased opportunities for all employees to participate in College activities. An example is to have a schedule structure similar to other higher education institutions such as a Common Hour. The Common Hour would be designated one day a week for a certain time to allow all faculty, staff, and administrators to participate in College related activities.**

**Adopted.** I support this recommendation and I have participated in similar programs at other institutions. Though a weekly model may be challenging given the size and complexity of our organization, these types of “common experience moments” for employees and students are critical as they provide opportunities for all employees at the College to participate. I, therefore, charge the College Council to work with the senior vice presidents and the chief of staff/chief strategy officer to develop a model for consideration by the broader College community.

#### Progress Update

Finding a Common Hour has proven to be a vexing challenge. Our understanding of why has become clearer in recent months as a task force has begun focusing on scheduling as part of the Academic Master Plan efforts. The task force has integrated this into its review. We have a complicated schedule with many needs, and improving it for students is our top priority. Within that context, the idea of a weekly Common Hour may not fit well, though I hope for an alternative that accomplishes the same goal.

### Recommendation 4, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum

**EEAG Recommendation 4: The EEAG recommends the governance webpage provide examples in each council of typical constituent concerns to assist constituents in correctly addressing their concerns.**

**Adopted.** The governance website is an important tool for Montgomery College employees to interact with the governance system. I will task the director of governance, presidential projects, and institutional initiatives to work with the councils on this effort.

#### Progress Update

This has been completed. I invite everyone to review the governance website resources at <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/MCgovernance/>. In addition, the director of governance, presidential projects, and institutional initiatives has created a constituent toolkit and member toolkit to provide guidance.

### Recommendation 5, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum

**EEAG Recommendation 5: The EEAG recommends a document or process of who and where to address concerns in the College.**

**Adopted.** I support this recommendation and task the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM) with the implementation of this process.

#### Progress Update

This recommendation is still in progress and will be completed by July 1, 2017.

### **Other Recommendations, from December 16, 2015 Memorandum**

I also discussed the frequency of the survey with EEAG and, as a result, the next employee engagement survey will be conducted in 2017, and it will continue to be administered every other year. I am also charging the EEAG to work with the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis to identify a standardized employee engagement instrument from an external survey organization that we can use in the future.

### **Progress Update**

Several standardized instrument were examined and, through a recommendation of the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and an Employee Services Council representative, I have selected the Quantisoft instrument. In addition, we will commit to it for at least three cycles (2017, 2019, and 2021) with response reports to be distributed to the College community as soon as possible after the survey is completed.