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Your Attention Required: Faculty Salary System Changes

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Faculty Colleagues,

On Friday, December 9, 2016, I received official notification from the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources (VCHR) regarding proposed changes to the faculty salary system as part of the Compensation Study (a part of the ongoing Classification and Compensation Study). The proposed change is to move from a step system to an open range system.

In light of this communication, FEC devoted the December 13th meeting to a discussion of our next steps. FEC and the Faculty Association are committed to representing faculty interests and engaging District Administrative leadership to identify solutions that provide for a sustainable salary advancement system. Additionally, the VCHR will be attending an FEC meeting in January to address this issue in more detail.

Of significant concern is whether this decision to move to an open range system aligns with the interest-based philosophy of decision making promoted and utilized District-wide. While the Governing Board, and by extension the Chancellor and her staff, have the statutory authority to unilaterally make this decision, this shift to an open range was not an interest-based decision. The benefits of engaging in an interest-based approach allow for creative and innovative decisions that are often better than either party can come to on their own, and have the added benefit of ensuring both sides are advocates for the decision to their constituencies. Working outside of the interest-based process (Meet & Confer) undermines the partnership that both faculty and administrators depend upon to support shared governance at the District and College levels, and threatens the very nature of the relationship between faculty and administration.

In the interest of assuring the faculty voice in our compensation system, FEC identified questions and concerns that must be addressed. Faculty leadership is already seeking answers to the following questions from District Leadership:

1. When and who made this decision? What evidence exists that demonstrates this is a better system? What evidence exists to demonstrate that this will both attract and retain faculty?
2. Can they clarify what is meant by an open range system? What are the perceived benefits of an open range system?
3. Are there other compensation systems that meet or exceed these benefits?
4. How will this transition from a step system to an open range result in more regular/sustainable salary increases for faculty? If we change from one system to another and our salaries remain static, what is the purpose and how does it support retaining and attracting faculty?
5. Last year, FEC analyzed District-wide faculty salaries. It demonstrated that the current step system would be sustainable if the salary system was a closed system (salaries of retired/separated faculty remain in the faculty salary pool and are allocated to new hires and continuing faculty). Why is this not a sustainable system?
6. There is a perception that our step-based salary system requires that all faculty (regardless of performance or workplace behavior) must receive a step every time one is approved by the Governing Board. FEC perceives this as a management issue, and not a weakness of the current salary system. RFP §4.6.2 already allows for the withholding of a step when poor performance or other issues merit it. Given that management does not currently

exercise this right, what problem is the proposed move to an open range system an attempt to remedy that could not be addressed in the current RFP?

7. The step system assures that initial faculty salary placement and salary advancement is based exclusively on educational attainment and professional experience. How will an open range system continue the current non-discriminatory placement and advancement of faculty?

8. Our step system prevents internal divisiveness; will this shift harm the collegiality and collaborative nature of the faculty?

9. Will this new open range system provide opportunities for individuals at the top of the salary system to advance? Will the "floor" for our lowest paid colleagues be raised?

We know that fair, equitable and sustainable compensation is a priority of all Residential Faculty.

Faculty Leadership is aware that there are additional concerns that need to be addressed and we are requesting your feedback. Please complete the [survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HWYKMW5) (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HWYKMW5>) no later than January 13, 2017. We also encourage you to discuss your thoughts and concerns with your Senate President and Faculty Senators.

If you are a current Faculty Association member or looking to become a member, we are thankful for your continued support as we look to fully join the District Office and administration in shaping the future of MCCCCD. Now is the time to stand strong as one solid and unified body. Your membership in our organization is about strengthening our presence and power in the negotiation process. We believe that decisions affecting salary advancement need to be made by the Meet and Confer Team and considered by the faculty at large, thereby honoring the process that we as faculty have been told to believe in.

These are unprecedented times, and as a united community, we will come out of this a stronger community of faculty, and most importantly, better positioned to support both our peers and our students.

We appreciate your feedback and your support.

Respectfully,

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