

August 2, 2017

To: Chancellor Devinder Malhotra  
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities  
30 East 7th Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Chancellor Malhotra,

Inver Hills Community College is in a crisis of leadership. For years Inver Hills was known as an innovative two-year school committed to providing a high quality liberal arts education in an open-access environment. It was widely recognized that academics wanting to pursue groundbreaking work in the classroom fostered by a collaborative administration could find such an institution in Inver Hills.

As a result, Inver Hills was a national leader in teaching and learning. For example, faculty at Inver, working with administrators, developed a learning-community program that provided a liberal arts experience normally seen only at high-priced, private schools. The potential of Inver Hills to continue to be a pioneering community college, however, has been severely diminished during the presidency of Tim Wynes.

Since President Wynes began his tenure in 2010, a closed door, top-down style of management has replaced the collaborative and mutually respectful relationship between faculty and administration. Communication from administration about the college's direction has all but ceased. As a result, top-down decisions have undermined many of the things that gave Inver Hills the success it once enjoyed. Programs such as the learning communities are now fractions of the robust initiatives they once were. Faculty and staff morale have plummeted.

By 2015, President Wynes ordered a climate survey, which revealed that 90 percent of respondents felt he was unqualified to lead the college. And in 2016, deeply concerned about future of Inver Hills, all three unions representing faculty and staff voted "no confidence" in the leadership and administration of Tim Wynes.

Within higher education, change is often necessary – and often, leaders encounter resistance to that needed change. This is not the situation at Inver Hills. Our loss of confidence stems from a lack of direction and vision from the administration itself, as well as the president's unwillingness and inability to work collaboratively with campus stakeholders. We recognize that these are challenging times and that Inver must evolve to survive and once again thrive. Without innovative and collaborative leadership, Inver Hills will continue to fail to live up to its fullest potential. The loss to our students, our community, and to our state is incalculable.

Inver Hills needs a better direction. As your faculty, we are asking for your support in restoring a collaborative, mutually respectful, *functional* relationship between administration and campus stakeholders. We are asking you to look closely at deeply concerning trends, including raises in excess of \$400,000 given to 10 administrators in the midst of a declared "financial crisis," and five key administrators appointed without a search or any vetting. We are imploring you to help us save Inver Hills, which during President Wynes' tenure has had no enrollment management strategy and has seen heavy declines in both enrollment and student success.

We hear that you're planning to visit Inver Hills soon and tour our community garden – one of those campus-enriching initiatives that faculty and staff have worked to maintain, even as support has been undercut. Know that we are eager for change to come to Inver Hills, and our doors are open to you.

Sincerely,

IHCC Faculty