

2025 Employee Survey (Districtwide) Report

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Response Count

The total number of participants showed a drop from 2024. However, when analyzed by work location, there was a decrease in the number of participants of the “Location Not Reported” group compared to the previous year (see Table 1a). Among the group of “Location Not Reported” (N=11), 45% work remotely, 36% prefer not to share, and 18% work on multiple campuses.

The 2025 survey made a minor change on the work location options to include all possible locations including Harbor Island Training Center at Vigor Industrial, Health Education Center at Pacific Tower, Seattle Maritime Academy, Wood Technology Center, Georgetown, and New Holly Learning Center. The detailed info can be found in Table 1b.

Table 1a. Response Count: Primary Work Location by Year

	2022	2023	2024	2025
District Office	32	44	34	23
North	134	139	142	100
Central	175	188	202	129
South	107	137	115	105
Location Not Listed or Reported	48	63	20	49
Total Response	496	571	513	406

Table 1b. Response Count: Detailed Work Location of 2025

	Response #	%
District Office	23	5.7%
North	100	24.6%
Central	114	28.1%
South	99	24.4%
Harbor Island Training Center at Vigor Industrial	0	0.0%
Health Education Center at Pacific Tower	8	2.0%
Seattle Maritime Academy	4	1.0%
Wood Technology Center	3	0.7%
Georgetown	4	1.0%
New Holly Learning Center	2	0.5%
Location Not Listed or Reported	49	3.0%
Total Response	406	100%

Responses disaggregated by employee type and primary work location reveal that classified and exempt staff are the two largest groups contributing to the survey participation (see Table 2).

Table 2. 2025 Response Count: Employee Type by Primary Work Location

	District Office	North	Central	South	Location Not Reported or Not Listed
Full-time Faculty	0	20	27	17	1
Part-time Faculty	0	13	15	13	2
Classified Staff	8	18	35	37	5
Exempt	8	21	24	19	3
Exempt Pro Staff	7	17	17	12	4
Part-time Hourly	0	6	6	5	0
Other	0	5	2	1	2
Not Reported	0	0	3	1	32
Total Response	23	100	129	105	49

Satisfaction

Overall employee satisfaction at Seattle Colleges and at employees' primary workplaces has decreased compared to the past couple of years. The data indicates that employees are more likely to recommend both Seattle Colleges and their primary workplaces as a place to work (see Table3). Employees at the District Office report the highest satisfaction scores among all work locations, except for the recommendation rating for the statement, "I would recommend my primary workplace as a place to work." Additionally, employee satisfaction has decreased for all work locations compared to last year (see Table 4).

Table 3. Seattle Colleges Employee Overall Satisfaction

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Overall satisfaction at Seattle Colleges	3.08 (N=443)	3.48 (N=508)	3.58 (N=508)	3.27 (N=403)
'I would recommend Seattle Colleges as a place to work.'	2.91 (N=446)	3.30 (N=508)	3.43 (N=506)	3.09 (N=403)
Overall satisfaction at your primary workplace	3.39 (N=444)	3.60 (N=507)	3.63 (N=508)	3.48 (N=404)
'I would recommend my primary workplace as a place to work.'	3.12 (N=447)	3.36 (N=507)	3.45 (N=508)	3.23 (N=405)

Table 4. Overall Satisfaction by Workplace

	Primary work location	Average Score			
		2022	2023	2024	2025
Overall satisfaction at Seattle Colleges	District Office	3.75 (N=32)	3.41 (N=44)	3.94 (N=34)	3.91 (N=23)
	North	3.00 (N=134)	3.35 (N=139)	3.60 (N=140)	3.40 (N=100)
	Central	2.90 (N=170)	3.54 (N=188)	3.52 (N=200)	3.12 (N=129)
	South	3.26 (N=107)	3.56 (N=137)	3.68 (N=114)	3.13 (N=105)
'I would recommend Seattle Colleges as a place to work.'	District Office	3.47 (N=32)	3.34 (N=44)	3.79 (N=34)	3.52 (N=23)
	North	2.89 (N=134)	3.19 (N=139)	3.50 (N=139)	3.27 (N=99)
	Central	2.69 (N=173)	3.31 (N=188)	3.36 (N=200)	2.98 (N=128)
	South	3.14 (N=107)	3.38 (N=137)	3.50 (N=113)	2.92 (N=104)
Overall satisfaction at your primary workplace	District Office	3.66 (N=32)	3.30 (N=44)	3.85 (N=34)	4.00 (N=23)
	North	3.47 (N=133)	3.51 (N=138)	3.74 (N=140)	3.69 (N=100)
	Central	3.23 (N=173)	3.65 (N=188)	3.52 (N=200)	3.21 (N=129)
	South	3.50 (N=106)	3.72 (N=137)	3.76 (N=114)	3.50 (N=105)
'I would recommend my primary workplace as a place to work.'	District Office	3.19 (N=32)	3.07 (N=44)	3.32 (N=34)	3.09 (N=23)
	North	3.24 (N=134)	3.32 (N=139)	3.64 (N=140)	3.53 (N=100)
	Central	2.87 (N=174)	3.34 (N=187)	3.35 (N=200)	2.95 (N=128)
	South	3.37 (N=107)	3.54 (N=137)	3.57 (N=114)	3.34 (N=105)

Employee Retention

The average score for the statement “I love my job” slightly increased compared to last year, while the average score for “I want to quit my job” decreased. This suggests that fewer Seattle Colleges employees are considering leaving their jobs, although the overall employee satisfaction decreased this year (see Table5).

The top reasons employees leave Seattle Colleges are: 1) Inadequate salary/benefits, 2) Lack of staffing support, and 3) Work not being appreciated (see Table 6a). Detailed information on specified other leaving reasons and reasons for leaving by workplace can be found respectively in Table 6b and Table 7.

Table 5. Employee Retention by year

	2023	2024	2025
I love my job.	3.74 (N=219)	3.74 (N=494)	3.78 (N=393)
I want to quit my job.	2.55 (N=205)	2.51 (N=470)	2.48 (N=375)

Table 6a. Reason for Leaving – Districtwide.

	Districtwide
No career advancement opportunities	25.84% (N=100)
Salary / benefits are not adequate	46.77% (N=181)
Family relocation	2.58% (N=10)
Offered a job elsewhere	8.27% (N=32)
Co - worker tension	19.90% (N=77)
Work not appreciated	35.92% (N=139)
Feeling of not belonging	19.90% (N=77)
Harassed or bullied at work	13.70% (N=53)
No sense of belonging in the surrounding community	12.14% (N=47)
Insufficient childcare services on campus	4.39% (N=17)
Pregnancy	0.26% (N=1)
Lack of staffing support	37.21% (N=144)
I have not considered leaving.	18.60% (N=72)
Other	34.88% (N=135)

Table 6b. Summary of other reasons for leaving

Specified Other Reasons for Leaving	
Poor Leadership & Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of Vision & Direction: "Absence of leadership and direction," "Lack of planned processes to accomplish our missions," "Complete dysfunction as a system, top-down authority."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incompetence & Mismanagement: "Poor administration and leadership," "Incompetent leadership at the VP level," "Mismanagement at VP level and above," "Poor decision making and fiscal responsibility." • Lack of Transparency: "No transparency or warning re: major budget cuts," "Lack of transparency from leadership," "Lack of transparency from the District office." • Micromanagement & Lack of Autonomy: "Hostile workplace, micromanaging," "The division of responsibility from authority has created an impossible workplace." • Bias and Unfair Treatment: "Supervisor has a bias; it tends to show in the decisions they make," "Being treated differently than other members on the team."
Toxic or Hostile Work Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Toxicity: "Toxic and hostile environment," "Toxic Work Culture," "Highly dysfunctional and toxic work environment." • Disrespect & Not Feeling Valued: "employees not being valued or respected," "Feeling Disrespected," "coworkers not appreciated or appropriately recognized." • Lack of Psychological Safety: "Work bullies are not held accountable," "no respect for my seniority or my experience or expertise," "Agree 100% or you are on the outside." • Siloing & Poor Collaboration: "No team spirit or school spirit. Siloing! Poor communication between departments," "Lack of interdepartmental communication."
Chronic Understaffing & Excessive Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Workload: "Constant pressure to do more with less, working 50 hours a week," "Combination of overwork & exhaustion," "Currently doing the job of 3+ people." • Inefficiency & System Issues: "inefficiencies within the work. Feeling like I am constantly doing other people's jobs," "Systemic inefficiencies," "inefficient systems, too many barriers to be effective at my job." • Picking Up the Slack for Others: "Lack of basic student services. Constantly taking care of student needs... because they are not available," "Administrator has too much workload they cannot focus on supervising."
Budgetary Instability & Job Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of Job Loss: "Threat of layoffs," "As part-time faculty, I never know quarter to quarter if I will be employed," "Job Security!" • Budget Mismanagement: "Continued YEARLY district level financial mismanagement," "Budget deficit/layoffs/furloughs," "Ongoing budget issues are concerning." • Direct Financial Impact: "Thanks for cutting my pay by 5%," "Proposed budget plan affects my department... accepting more work for less QOL in lower pay."
Poor Physical Work Environment & Safety Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsanitary & Unmaintained Facilities: "Classroom/laboratory is never serviced by custodial," "overflowing garbage bins, walking through glass and human feces," "The condition of the campus is basically what I would expect from a 3rd world country." • Safety Concerns: "SAFETY ISSUES ON CAP HILL," "not feeling safe at the work location," "The neighborhood is unsafe, and the facility is run down." • Inadequate Workspace: "Physical workspace is inadequate/depressing," "Building and office space is not nice."

Lack of Support & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Management Support: "Lack of Management Support," "Lack of support from administration," "administration not listening to staff." • Insufficient Training: "Lack of structural and systematic support... sufficient training," "program-specific training manuals... usually either don't exist or are very outdated." • Lack of Institutional Support: "Lack of awareness of employee's job duties," "no follow through," "no accountability for management."
Work-Life Balance & Commute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Commute: "Time of daily commute," "Length of commute is challenging," "No good transit options." • Desire for Flexibility: "Would love more autonomy for telecommute options," "If I had more opportunity for teleworking, that would be great."
Retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned Retirement: "Getting to be the time to think about retiring...", "retirement", "Early retirement".
Individual & Isolated Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination/Illegal Actions: "I was 'contract non-renewed' due to my disability accommodation," "Antisemitic incident." • Specific Grievances: "My job was given to someone else," "Issues with my supervisor," "Work Study Program ending for me."

Table 7. Reason for leaving by workplace.

	District Office	North	Central	South
No career advancement opportunities	4	21	35	26
Salary / benefits are not adequate	8	50	65	40
Family relocation	0	2	0	6
Offered a job elsewhere	2	6	10	7
Co - worker tension	2	18	32	19
Work not appreciated	4	25	56	43
Feeling of not belonging	1	13	29	25
Harassed or bullied at work	1	8	21	18
No sense of belonging in the surrounding community	0	10	17	16
Insufficient childcare services on campus	0	1	9	7
Pregnancy	0	0	0	1
Lack of staffing support	4	28	55	46
I have not considered leaving.	7	23	15	17
Other	8	26	46	41

Anti-Bias, Anti-Racist Professional Development

Table 8. Anti-Bias, Anti-Racist Professional Development Experience

	Overall	District	North	Central	South
I participated in professional development activities (refer to examples above) that have promoted multicultural understanding/competency, equity, diversity, or inclusion.	71.99% (N=275)	65.22% (N=15)	83.84% (N=83)	63.28% (N=81)	73.79% (N=76)
I participated in professional development activities that strengthened my skills in collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds.	62.53% (N=237)	65.22% (N=15)	69.39% (N=68)	57.48% (N=73)	62.14% (N=64)
I participated in learning opportunities and/or cultural celebrations that enhanced my understanding of diverse cultures and experiences.	68.97% (N=260)	65.22% (N=15)	82.47% (N=80)	59.84% (N=76)	70.87% (N=73)
I participated in cultural learning opportunities facilitated by various departments, including TRiO, AANAPISI, LSAMP, MESA, Umoja, Project Baldwin, Disability/Accessibility Services, Workforce Education, International Programs, the Academy of Rising Educators, Student Leadership and Multicultural Programs, United Way, Urban Native Education Alliance, United Tribes of All Nations and others.	63.73% (N=239)	56.52% (N=13)	76.29% (N=74)	56.35% (N=71)	66.99% (N=69)
I participated in training that helped me create and maintain an inclusive and respectful environment.	68.72% (N=257)	65.22% (N=15)	77.32% (N=75)	66.67% (N=84)	65.69% (N=67)
I engaged in robust conversations that facilitated the sharing of best practices, strategies, and tools to support our increasingly diverse and intersectional communities.	61.39% (N=229)	69.57% (N=16)	67.71% (N=65)	54.76% (N=69)	65.05% (N=67)
I learned strategies to create a welcoming and respectful space of nourishment, support, and authentic ways of being for all individuals.	63.96% (N=236)	52.17% (N=12)	74.74% (N=71)	57.60% (N=72)	63.37% (N=64)
I learned new tools for communicating effectively across diverse communities.	59.84% (N=222)	65.22% (N=15)	64.58% (N=62)	55.20% (N=69)	60.78% (N=62)
I improved my ability to foster positive and respectful interactions with others, regardless of their background.	74.05% (N=274)	69.57% (N=16)	81.25% (N=78)	71.20% (N=89)	74.26% (N=75)

Sense of Safety

Table 9. Sense of Safety by Workplace

	Average score across district	Primary work location	Average score by location
I feel safe physically.	3.72 (N=389)	District Office	2.91 (N=22)
		North	4.00 (N=98)
		Central	3.44 (N=129)
		South	4.00 (N=104)
I feel safe psychologically.	3.39 (N=386)	District Office	3.67 (N=21)
		North	3.85 (N=97)
		Central	3.12 (N=129)
		South	3.30 (N=104)

Sense of Belonging

Table 10. Sense of Belonging by Workplace

	Average score across district	Primary work location	Average score by location
I feel comfortable being myself at work.	3.71 (N=385)	District Office	3.86 (N=22)
		North	3.87 (N=98)
		Central	3.59 (N=129)
		South	3.76 (N=103)
I feel valued and respected by my colleagues	3.69 (N=386)	District Office	3.64 (N=22)
		North	4.01 (N=98)
		Central	3.53 (N=129)
		South	3.67 (N=104)
I feel like part of the community.	3.51 (N=386)	District Office	3.14 (N=22)
		North	3.83 (N=98)
		Central	3.36 (N=129)
		South	3.57 (N=104)
I feel our leadership supports a culture of belonging.	3.07 (N=385)	District Office	3.18 (N=22)
		North	3.45 (N=98)
		Central	2.83 (N=129)
		South	2.99 (N=103)

Communication on Decision Making

Table 11. Employee Ratings on Communication on Decision-making

	Overall average score	District Office avg	North avg	Central avg	South avg
Regarding decisions made by the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet.					
Timeliness: Information is provided within a reasonable timeframe after a decision is made.	2.86 (N=371)	3.00 (N=23)	3.09 (N=100)	2.71 (N=127)	2.84 (N=105)
Understandability: The rationale and implications of the decision are presented in a clear and easily comprehensible manner.	2.80 (N=368)	3.10 (N=23)	3.15 (N=98)	2.65 (N=127)	2.64 (N=104)
Accessibility: The information about the decision is easy to locate and access.	2.84 (N=370)	2.95 (N=23)	3.20 (N=100)	2.75 (N=127)	2.66 (N=104)
Regarding decisions made by the President's Executive Cabinet.					
Timeliness: Information is provided within a reasonable timeframe after a decision is made.	3.03 (N=368)	2.93 (N=23)	3.43 (N=98)	2.82 (N=127)	2.95 (N=104)
Understandability: The rationale and implications of the decision are presented in a clear and easily comprehensible manner.	2.97 (N=367)	2.93 (N=23)	3.34 (N=97)	2.74 (N=127)	2.94 (N=104)
Accessibility: The information about the decision is easy to locate and access.	2.89 (N=367)	2.80 (N=23)	3.40 (N=98)	2.75 (N=126)	2.64 (N=104)

Demographics

Table 8. Employee Demographics

Demographics		Districtwide
Race/Ethnicity	Asian or Asian American	11.9% (N=43)
	Black or African American	5.8% (N=21)
	Hispanic, Latino or Latinx	6.7% (N=24)
	Middle Eastern or North African	0.8% (N=3)
	Multiracial	6.1% (N=22)
	Native American or Alaska Native	1.1% (N=4)
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.8% (N=3)
	White	50.8% (N=183)
	Prefer not to answer	23.9% (N=86)
	Other	2.8% (N=10)
Gender	Woman	54.0% (N=194)
	Man	23.4% (N=84)
	Non-binary/conforming	3.1% (N=11)
	Transgender Man	0.8% (N=3)
	Transgender Woman	0.3% (N=1)
	Genderfluid	0.8% (N=3)
	Genderqueer	2.0% (N=7)
	Prefer not to answer	18.1% (N=65)
	Other	1.1% (N=4)
Year of Service	Less than one year	13.4% (N=48)
	1 to 3 years	23.7% (N=85)
	4 to 5 years	8.4% (N=30)
	6 to 9 years	15.1% (N=54)
	10 or more years	39.4% (N=141)
Age Group	24 or under	2.2% (N=8)
	25-30	9.2% (N=33)
	31-40	20.3% (N=73)
	41-50	20.3% (N=73)
	51-60	18.1% (N=65)
	61 or over	11.4% (N=41)
	Prefer not to answer	18.6% (N=67)
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	6.7% (N=24)
	Gay	4.2% (N=15)
	Lesbian	2.2% (N=8)

	Pansexual	2.0% (N=7)
	Queer	8.1% (N=29)
	Heterosexual/Straight	51.4% (N=184)
	Prefer not to answer	26.8% (N=96)
	Other	1.7% (N=6)
Military Veteran	Yes	4.2% (N=15)
	No	95.8% (N=340)

Open-Ended Response

Table 9. Open-Ended Response Summary

Themes	Response Summary
Leadership & Accountability	<p>Major Themes & Criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Mismanagement & Lack of Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a significant budget deficit, and leadership is blamed for a lack of transparency about how it happened and no accountability for the "disastrous financial situation." ○ The district administration is seen as "top-heavy" and bloated, with too many Vice Chancellors and a high administrative overhead that drains resources from students and frontline staff. ○ There is a strong desire to dismantle or drastically reduce the district office (Siegal Center) and return budget control to the individual colleges. • Inadequate Employee Compensation & Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Salaries for faculty and staff are consistently described as too low, not keeping pace with the cost of living, and making it difficult to afford life in the area. ○ Employees are angry about furloughs, missed increments (raises), and a lack of acknowledgment or explanation for these financial hardships. ○ Jobs are becoming more difficult with increased responsibilities, but compensation does not reflect this. • Poor Communication & Decision-Making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership is criticized for making critical decisions at the "eleventh hour" with little communication or time for consultation. ○ Communication that does happen is described as "ever-changing" and not reflective of reality. ○ Decisions are perceived as being made without data or input from the employees who do the work and understand student needs. • Lack of Trust and Low Morale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A pervasive sense that leadership is not competent, does not understand its own systems (e.g., problems with ctcLink), and is unable to plan strategically. ○ The prevalence of "interim" and "acting" personnel in key roles erodes trust and stability. ○ Leadership is seen as defensive, dismissive of concerns, and quick to "play the victim" rather than take responsibility. • Toxic Leadership and Bullying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple specific allegations of bullying, intimidation, harassment, and unprofessional behavior by managers, deans, and administrators. ○ Complaints about hostile work environments and a culture where those who speak up are targeted or ignored. ○ A perception that there are no consequences for leaders who abuse their power or fail to perform their duties.

	<p>Key Recommendations & Requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Change: Numerous explicit calls for the Chancellor to be removed and for ineffective members of the leadership team to be replaced. • Increased Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hold leaders financially accountable for the budget deficit. ○ Implement consequences for managers who do not complete required trainings or who engage in toxic behavior. ○ The Board of Trustees must be held accountable for its governance role. • Structural Reorganization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drastically reduce the size and cost of the district office. ○ Move to a shared services model for business operations to reduce redundancy. ○ Standardize policies and procedures across campuses to reduce confusion and waste. ○ Complete the shift to a single accreditation model and redesign the leadership structure. • Transparency & Data-Driven Decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be transparent about the causes of the budget crisis. ○ Base decisions on comprehensive data rather than anecdotes or "wishful thinking." ○ Formally communicate which positions have been cut and what the plan is for the redistributed work. • Focus on Students and Frontline Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Re-prioritize all decisions around how they support students. ○ "Put the money where it is needed most," which is identified as instruction, advisors, tutors, and support staff—not administration. ○ Listen to frontline staff ideas for improving student retention and services. • Improved Professional Conduct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership must model respect, stop bullying, and treat employees with dignity. ○ Provide mandatory and accountable training on issues like gender-based discrimination and antisemitism. ○ Improve follow-up on complaints and conflict resolution.
Communication, Transparency, & Collaboration	<p>Major Criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Transparency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The budget crisis is the primary example. Communication has been "unstable," "unclear," "misleading," and perceived as sugar-coating harsh realities like layoffs and furloughs. ○ There is a strong demand for honest, direct, and timely communication about financial decisions and their impacts, rather than messages that feel out of touch (e.g., saying "Happy Teacher Appreciation Week" after announcing furloughs). ○ Key bodies like the President's Cabinet and Chancellor's Cabinet do not share their notes or decisions widely, making their work seem opaque. • Ineffective and Overwhelming Communication Channels:

- **Email is ineffective:** The volume of emails is overwhelming, yet important information is still missed because only a select few have broadcasting privileges.
- There is **no efficient, centralized system** for sharing important updates, events, or works in progress across the district.
- Communication from district to campus is **slow and inconsistent**, with employees finding it very hard to get responses from district offices compared to their own campus.
- **Lack of Collaboration and Shared Governance:**
 - Employees feel **deliberately excluded from decision-making processes**. Faculty and frontline staff report that decisions are made behind closed doors and then announced as final, with no meaningful consultation.
 - **Districtwide committees have become defunct or invisible**, reducing opportunities for cross-campus collaboration and input.
 - A **rigid hierarchy and siloed structure** prevents collaboration. Some leaders are accused of ignoring emails from those "below" them, stifling innovation and making it "nearly impossible" to start new projects.
- **Structural Barriers to Unity:**
 - The district model itself is seen as a **primary obstacle to clear communication and collaboration**.
 - The current structure creates **confusion for students** (e.g., Nursing Program funding issues) and **fragmentation for employees**, preventing the colleges from feeling like a "cohesive organization."
 - There are calls to dismantle the district and return to individual institutions or become branch campuses to improve coherence.

Key Recommendations & Requests:

- **Radical Honesty:** Leadership must **stop sugarcoating bad news**. Be real, direct, and timely, especially regarding budget impacts, layoffs, and furloughs.
- **Improve Transparency Mechanisms:**
 - **Publish notes and decisions** from President's and Chancellor's Cabinet meetings.
 - Provide a **clear, strategic vision** that explains how budget cuts and layoffs align with long-term priorities.
 - Create a **simplified, interactive system** for communicating important work happening across campuses.
- **Revive Shared Governance:**
 - **Include faculty and staff in decision-making** *before* decisions are final. Create advisory cabinets with frontline employee representation.
 - **Re-establish and support districtwide committees** and ensure their work is visible and impactful.
- **Fix Communication Tools:**
 - **Re-evaluate the email strategy** to reduce volume and ensure important information isn't lost.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consolidate communications and send them at set intervals for better clarity. • Break Down Silos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership must actively work against a hierarchical culture by listening to and acknowledging all employees, regardless of title. ○ Prioritize unification so every decision moves the colleges closer to being a cohesive organization, not a fragmented one. • Clarify Roles and Boundaries: Clearly define the decision-making authority of the district versus the individual campuses to reduce confusion and inefficiency.
Community & Culture	<p>Major Criticisms & Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived Inequity and Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific and strong criticism of the ACO (Access, Equity, and Community Engagement) office for only supporting "one or two demographics" and failing to acknowledge or support the Latinx community, including a lack of solidarity during current events. ○ A feeling that the declared "culture of caring" is hollow and not backed up by actions, especially when staff are mistreated. ○ A sentiment from some white female staff that they feel unfairly stereotyped and excluded by diversity and equity efforts, creating "bad feelings." • Toxic and Unaccountable Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The environment is directly described as "toxic" and plagued by "leadership manipulation culture." ○ There is a fundamental lack of accountability, with no consequences for negative actions and a sense that leadership does not hold itself or others responsible. • Lack of Vision and Morale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no clear, inspiring global vision or concrete plan for the future of the colleges beyond budget cuts. ○ The constant focus on financial crises is crushing morale and leaving no space for hope, healing, or positive connection. ○ Campuses feel empty and disconnected due to remote work and a lack of in-person classes and gatherings, hindering community building. • Physical Campus Disconnect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The physical campuses are not seen as inviting "places." They feel disconnected from their natural assets (e.g., arboretums, greenbelts). ○ There is a desire for more welcoming physical spaces (e.g., covered outdoor areas, better pathways, more food options) to encourage people to stay and connect. <p>Key Recommendations & Desires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster a Truly Inclusive and Safe Community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue and expand cultural celebrations and affinity groups. ○ Ensure equity efforts are inclusive and supportive of all communities, specifically calling for better support for the Latinx community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make campuses safe for immigrants, queer people, women, and people of color. • Rebuild Trust and Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop using the phrase "culture of care" if actions don't support it. ○ Hold people accountable with clear consequences for actions. ○ Address the underlying "toxic" and "manipulative" cultural elements. • Create Opportunities for Connection and Healing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Actively create more in-person opportunities for staff and faculty to connect, cowork, and build community, moving beyond Zoom. ○ Re-purpose development days to be inclusive of staff, not just faculty, and dedicate time to healing and fun, not just work challenges. ○ Make satellite and off-campus locations feel like a integrated part of the community. • Develop a Shared Vision and Improve Physical Space: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership must provide a compelling, positive vision for the future to give people hope and a common goal. ○ Invest in the physical campus to make it a destination with better amenities, security, and access to nature.
Work Environment & Facility	<p>Major Criticisms & Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe Understaffing and Overwork: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Every department is described as "understaffed, undertrained, and overworked." ○ Employees are exhausted from doing multiple jobs, leading to burnout and high turnover. ○ Specific calls for more Facilities and support staff were highlighted, with Facilities being "gravely overlooked" and "severely neglected." • Unsafe and Unsanitary Physical Conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic cleanliness is failing: Multiple reports of a persistent lack of essential supplies like toilet paper and neglected custodial work. ○ Significant safety hazards are reported, especially at district offices, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drug paraphernalia, human waste, and broken glass around building entrances. ▪ Presence of individuals experiencing homelessness causing disruptive behavior. ▪ Security concerns about anyone being able to enter buildings unchallenged. ○ Poor office conditions are common, including windowless rooms with only one exit (a fire hazard), unpleasant odors, and disruptive construction noise. • Toxic and Unprofessional Department Cultures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple reports of "toxic" departments where faculty are pitted against each other due to budget constraints. ○ Harassment, exclusion, and long-held grievances are allowed to fester without resolution. ○ A culture where retaliation from management is tolerated and speaking up leads to being targeted or manipulated into feeling they did something wrong.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A sense that HR protects administration rather than supporting employees. • Lack of Professional Agency and Respect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Faculty feel their professional expertise is not valued or respected, forced to conform to top-down initiatives that stifle their teaching style and creativity. ○ A feeling of being blamed for student failure and retention issues despite their hard work, which is "exhausting" and "beyond the pale." • Systemic Neglect and Disconnect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A profound sense that employees and their work "do not matter" to leadership. ○ There is a clear disconnect between decision-makers and staff; one response starkly noted that if district leadership had to work in the same conditions, changes would be made immediately. <p>Key Recommendations & Requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate Action on Health and Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Address unsanitary conditions and ensure basic supplies (e.g., toilet paper) are always available. ○ Improve security and building access to create a safer environment. ○ Clean and monitor grounds and garages regularly. • Invest in Staff and Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hire more staff, particularly in Facilities and support roles, to alleviate crippling understaffing. ○ Invest in facility maintenance and address deteriorating classrooms and labs. ○ Provide better office spaces with natural light and proper safety exits. • Address Toxic Culture and Hold Leadership Accountable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide oversight of HR and management decisions to prevent retaliation and protect employees. ○ Remove toxic managers who have created high turnover in multiple departments. ○ Honor and take seriously employee concerns when they are voiced. • Improve Basic Amenities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide better dining and coffee options on campus. ○ Create more inviting social and cultural spaces on campus grounds to encourage community. ○ Consider support services like daycare for employees and students. • Restore Trust and Professional Respect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support faculty agency and respect their professional expertise in teaching. ○ Stop blaming faculty for systemic problems like student retention. ○ Keep promises and discourage disillusionment by following through on commitments.
Work-Life Balance & Flexibility	<p>Major Themes & Opinions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Advocacy for Remote/Hybrid Work:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A significant number of employees highly value the option to work remotely and see it as a major benefit and key reason for staying with the colleges. ○ They argue it promotes work-life balance by eliminating commutes, saving money, reducing carbon emissions, and allowing more time with family. ○ It is framed as a critical tool for retention and a benefit that has "tangible monetary value" for employees, especially during furloughs when commuting costs hurt. ○ There is a feeling that the current mandate for 3 days in-person (for some roles) is an "unproductive practice" that doesn't actually increase collaboration and contributes to burnout. • Desire for a Return to On-Campus Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A opposing viewpoint calls to "Bring back staff on Fridays" and end remote work. ○ This perspective wishes for more people on campus full-time to rebuild the connections and community that existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. • Request for More Flexibility and Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a call for more schedule flexibility where the position allows for it, arguing it directly supports work-life balance. ○ Requests are made for more admin support, more staffing, and more sick leave to alleviate overall workload pressure. <p>Key Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Re-evaluate blanket in-office mandates. Consider whether mandates are achieving their goal of community building or are simply seen as punitive. ○ Adopt a more flexible, role-specific approach. For roles with no student interaction, consider reducing in-office requirements to 1-2 days a week instead of 3. ○ Recognize remote work as a powerful tool for retention and savings. It reduces facilities costs and is highly valued by employees, making it a low-cost, high-impact benefit. ○ Address the root causes of burnout, which are also linked to understaffing and heavy workloads, not just location of work. • For Employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community is split, with some advocating for maximizing remote flexibility and others advocating for a return to a fully on-campus environment to rebuild community.
Professional Development & Support	<p>Major Criticisms & Gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Structured Onboarding and Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The onboarding process is weak, making it difficult for new employees to understand their roles and navigate the college system. ○ Training is overly reliant on specific individuals, creating a high risk of knowledge loss if those people leave.

- There is a need for more **role-specific and program-specific training** guides and resources.
- **No Clear Pathways for Advancement:**
 - There is a strong desire for **clear career advancement opportunities** and **internal promotions**.
 - Employees feel stuck, with no system to evaluate and promote people after a certain tenure or provide growth options across different departments.
 - Requests are made for titles that reflect leadership (e.g., "lead," "associate") with a corresponding increase in compensation.
- **Ineffective and Inaccessible Professional Development:**
 - Current PD offerings are seen as **geared more towards faculty**, leaving staff with fewer relevant opportunities.
 - The **format of training is a barrier**; requiring pre-work for online sessions discourages attendance from already overworked employees.
 - Part-time faculty needs are often disregarded, with last-minute schedule changes being called "disrespectful" of their time and other jobs.
- **Understaffing Undermines All Support:**
 - The pervasive issue of **every department being understaffed** is reiterated here.
 - **Burnout is cited as a primary reason** employees cannot engage in additional committees, projects, or training, despite pressure to do so.

Key Recommendations:

- **Revamp Onboarding & Training Systems:**
 - Develop a **structured, consistent onboarding system** with clear, easily accessible information that is not dependent on any single person.
 - Create a **centralized online library or a drop-in, staffed location** on each campus for tech tool primers and resources.
 - **Eliminate mandatory pre-work** for trainings to make them more accessible.
- **Create Career Growth Opportunities:**
 - Establish **clear pathways for advancement** with defined steps, titles, and compensation increases.
 - Implement an **HR system to evaluate and promote** long-term employees within their vertical or discuss lateral moves.
- **Improve Communication and Operational Support:**
 - **Condense overwhelming email** into a weekly digest.
 - **Fix essential operational systems** (e.g., 25Live room booking, student ID machines) that, when broken, hinder employee and student success.
 - Provide **quarterly updates** on who holds key student-facing roles to improve internal coordination.
- **Invest in Meaningful Development:**
 - Offer more **internal networking workshops and events**.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide training on systemic racism, anti-racist practices, and inclusive management for all staff, especially HR and hiring managers. ○ Include senior leadership (e.g., President's Cabinet) in new hire orientations to make employees feel valued from the start.
Compensation & Financial Support	<p>Major Criticisms & Gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate and Unfair Compensation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wages for classified staff and faculty are not considered a "living wage," forcing some employees to live an hour away from work. ○ Raises have not kept pace with inflation, effectively reducing purchasing power. ○ There is a stark and resented contrast between high administrator salaries and the struggle of frontline staff. The perception is that those at the top are overpaid (e.g., mentions of an associate vice chancellor showing off expensive items) while those doing the core work suffer. • Financial Mismanagement and Lack of Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees feel they are being asked to "shoulder the costs of your incompetency" through furloughs and pay cuts, which is seen as a "kick in the gut." ○ There is zero trust in the district's financial planning, which is described as unstable and lacking vision. ○ The budget crisis is blamed on top-heavy administration, "useless" positions, and misguided spending on initiatives that don't directly support core needs like childcare, retention, or outreach. • Sacrifice Not Shared by Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A major point of outrage is that furloughs and cuts have targeted deans, directors, and staff, but there have been "zero VP and above level cuts. Zero cuts at district level." ○ This creates a powerful sense that leadership is protecting itself at the expense of the employees and students. • Use of Flexibility as a "Bargaining Chip": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hybrid work, a critical benefit for work-life balance, is reported to be "used as a bargaining chip" to manipulate and threaten staff. This is described as "disrespectful and harmful to people's lives." <p>Key Demands & Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate Financial Justice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Raise pay to a living wage for all employees, especially classified staff and part-time faculty. ○ Provide job security and pay for part-time faculty to participate in campus life. ○ Raise the budget for student workers. • Structural Financial Reform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demand better funding from the state.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce district operations and return budget control to the individual colleges where funds would be put to "better use." ○ Cut top-heavy administration and reallocate those funds to direct student support and employee salaries. • Leadership Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administration should take a pay cut to share in the sacrifice. ○ Leadership must take accountability for the "disastrous financial situation" and present a clear, competent vision to resolve it. ○ Stop using hybrid work as a threat and recognize its value for retention.
Employee Retention	<p>Primary Reasons for Low Retention & Morale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Job Security and Stability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The budget crisis, furloughs, and Reduction in Force (RIF) threats have "greatly shaken" faith in the institution. ○ Employees no longer believe they can build a career or retire here, feeling that "people are expendable." ○ A constant "shadow" hangs over offices as staff fear future cuts. • Feeling Expendable and Unvalued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a pervasive sense that "employee retention is not important to leadership." ○ Employees feel targeted, noting that cuts consistently impact classified staff and lower-paid workers while Vice Chancellors and Vice Presidents face "zero cuts." ○ The loss of benefits like free parking and remote work feels "detached and uncaring." • Sacrifice is Not Shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A major point of anger is that lower-paid employees are bearing the brunt of financial mistakes made by past and present administration. ○ There is a strong demand for a "progressive furlough plan" where upper leadership takes more furlough days as an act of good faith to restore a sense of shared accountability. • Poor Communication and Lack of Respect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The process feels "corporate and cold," with reports of positions being eliminated or reassigned without any direct communication to the affected employee. ○ "Mixed and competing messages" from leadership have caused significant damage to trust. <p>Key Recommendations to Improve Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Shared Sacrifice: Leadership, especially at the VP level and above, must visibly share the financial burden through progressive furloughs or cuts to prove they are accountable. • Protect Frontline Staff: Stop using classified staff as the primary "money savers." Instead, cut top-heavy administrative positions and reduce the number of Vice Chancellors and VPs. • Restore Trust Through Transparency:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide concrete plans on how the district will support colleges in recovering from the budget crisis. ○ Create safe, anonymous channels for employees to give feedback on their department leaders and the overall climate. • Preserve Meaningful Benefits: Protect benefits that have a huge impact on quality of life but low cost to the district, such as remote work flexibility and free parking, rather than cutting them first. • Compensate for Extra Duties: When classified staff are forced to assume the duties of eliminated positions, automatically grant them the corresponding new title and extra money.
Other	<p>Core Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial & Leadership Crisis: Employees blame a top-heavy, bloated district administration for the budget deficit and are outraged that cuts target frontline staff and faculty while VPs and above face zero reductions. This is seen as a profound failure of leadership and shared sacrifice. • Broken Trust & Communication: Communication is inconsistent, misleading, and often delivered too late. Decisions are made opaquely without input from those doing the work, eroding all trust. • Toxic Culture & Lack of Support: Many report toxic departments where bullying, harassment, and retaliation are tolerated. HR is perceived as protecting the institution, not supporting employees. Basic facilities are unsanitary and unsafe. • Inadequate Compensation & Workload: Wages are not a living wage, failing to keep pace with Seattle's cost of living. Severe understaffing forces remaining employees to do multiple jobs, leading to exhaustion and high turnover. <p>Primary Employee Demands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Radical Financial Accountability: Cut top-level administration, not frontline staff. Demand transparency on how the budget crisis happened and a credible plan to fix it. 2. Shared Sacrifice: Leadership must take proportional furloughs and pay cuts to restore trust. 3. Protect Core Mission & Flexibility: Prioritize funding for instruction and student services. Preserve remote/hybrid work options, a key benefit for retention. 4. Treat Employees with Respect: Listen to frontline staff, invest in staffing and facilities, and create safe channels for anonymous feedback without fear of retaliation. <p>In short, employees feel undervalued, overworked, and betrayed by a leadership structure they see as self-serving and incompetent. They demand a complete overhaul of priorities to focus on the core educational mission and the well-being of the people who deliver it.</p>

** For direct quotes, please see Appendix A.