

To: Montgomery College Community

From: Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, President

Subject: Tragedy of the Texas Massacre

Date: May 25, 2022

Yesterday's horrific shooting in the Uvalde County elementary school has left families grieving and communities shaken. The trauma of another mass shooting at a school—this one predominated by Hispanic students—creates anxiety and stress even among those not in close proximity to the location. Schools are supposed to be sanctuaries for our students and laboratories for personal growth and development. It is heartbreaking when any one of them is the target of senseless violence. Montgomery College students can [reach out for assistance](#) with this or other counseling matters, and faculty and staff in need can [seek help](#), as well. There are also several upcoming [mental health awareness](#) sessions for faculty and staff that may be useful in processing the impacts of such tragedies.

This latest event—also in the wake of violence in Buffalo, New York, and Orange County, California, which targeted people of color—leaves me personally angered and determined. If our society claims to reject violence against anyone in our communities, we must ask ourselves how we can do better. We must ask ourselves what must be done differently. The hate fueling these horrific tragedies should have no place in our society. Montgomery College has long been a bastion of diversity and inclusion. It has demonstrated a powerful bent towards social justice. A robust civil society marries these two elements so that all of our members are engaged and supported. I encourage all members of our community to look for ways to engage in dialogue and critical thinking about violence, racism, and exclusion. The Office of Equity and Inclusion will host a [Let's Talk](#) event on racism and violence on June 7. I urge faculty and staff to consider how their expertise may add to these discussions, and I invite students to collaborate with one another in advancing new strategies and solutions to the pressing problem of violence.

Institutions of higher education, community colleges in particular, must play an active role in crafting solutions that protect our communities.