Request to modernize the college (perhaps the District) phone system.

The COVID-19 crisis and the move to remote work has accelerated many changes in the way our work gets done. The college has had to find more ways to be available to students using technologies that meet them where they are and make our Faculty and staff more directly available. One critical system that has proven to be significantly impacted by the situation is the Mitel phone system. Arguably, the Mitel system already lacked several features that have become common place among modern and popularly accepted methods of communication such as SMS, unified messaging, remote access to features, and mobile device apps. Many campus members have adopted other applications (such as Microsoft Teams or Google Voice) or devices (smart phones) to fill-in communication gaps in our existing technology. This problem is also compounded by policy as not all faculty and staff are assigned the same level of access to Mitel today. We should not place the burden of solving these technology challenges on individual faculty and staff and should instead evaluate how we can adapt or replace our systems which are inadequate.

We suggest adopting a communication system with the following feature set:
- Standard (traditional) voice calling with the access/ability to make or receive calls for all college employees. All employees should have service that can directly connect to their client device and not require a "handset" to function.
- Voicemail with easy access to messages and unified messaging capabilities including but not limited to software-based and call-in mailbox management, message forwarding to email, and other features we have today.
- Caller id, blocking, holding, conferencing, with integration of user address books
- Short Message Service (SMS) popularly known as text messaging. Available to all users of the system.
- Text and graphics-based Chat with One to one or many.
- Call queueing, hunt groups, branch call menus, and other similar features as available today.
- Ability for incoming communication to appear on multiple devices sequentially or simultaneously.
- Easy configuration and administration tools available at the campus-level.
- These services should be easily accessible on or off campus using any popular computing device, readily available software, and/or an app.
- All features should be also be accessible in a BYOD scenario.
- Client software of any sort should not require "administrator" access to install.
- VPN or similar technology should not be required to use these services.
- System traffic should be encrypted for security.
- Broad support for CRM integration.