

Dear Peralta Board, Chancellor, faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

I appreciate that your job is difficult right now, as all of ours is. I implore you to keep our economically hardest hit students in mind as you make your decisions. The services of the Laney College CalWORKs program are unique and essential in helping students access community college education to rise up from poverty to self-sufficiency. I ask for you to please preserve this crucial program, and other categorical student services, at a time that students need these most.

We at Laney College CalWORKs have had to break the news to our students that our services are decreasing for next semester, and that we cannot take new referrals for Spring. Over half of Laney College CalWORKs employees have been laid off. Student ask me: what about supervised tutoring for my county hours and childcare, progress reports, books and supplies, and will the program be here for me? I don't have an answer for them. Please make it possible for us to serve the over 300 students already in our program, who need our help to continue.

I know that the funding situation is dire, and that you may not have the power to replace all of the funds that have been cut. However, every little bit counts in preventing the door from slamming shut entirely while we're asking the State to restore funding. At the October board meeting, the board directed the District to come up with 1 Million in backfill to lessen the impact of the cuts, and I thank you for that. I respectfully ask for that support to come through, so that we can continue ^{at least} some of the services that are essential for students' access, equity, and success.

Please consider all the human lives caught in the waves of these cuts – and allow us to keep making a difference. Thank you.

Irina Rivkin, M.S. Laney College CalWORKs Counselor

p.s. Request for budget to be discussed after classes have resumed, to honor the shared governance process & allow input from students & faculty