

May 10, 2010

To the Administration of Laney College, Peralta Community College District and the Board of Trustees as well as the Governor of the State of California:

We the undersigned object to the cutting of the budget in education, as education helps all members of society. We sign as well to witness the negative effects that making these cuts to education and specifically our class will have on individual lives and therefore the entire community.

Members of the Laney College Administration, having planned to eliminate our specific class, Art 50 (i.e., Painting, Beginning level through Special Projects), are, with this elimination, in fact cutting the second of three painting classes which every semester have generally been full to capacity and each necessitated waiting lists. Because of this planned cut, our instructor, Margaret Chavigny, will lose her position. It will also leave a single painting class left to serve the entire school and community at large—a school which not only has long been respected for its excellent Art department and talented faculty, but which is located next to a major art museum, has its own art gallery on campus, and boasts a relatively new Art building.

We know that this situation is happening because of the massive state government budget cuts. But if fewer people are able to take this core subject class, fewer people will be able to realize goals of working in the Arts or, at the very least, be able to keep creating amidst these economically difficult times. Lacking accessibility to a core subject class means fewer of us will be able to transfer to a four year university in a timely manner and fewer members of the community will be able to learn in an arena where students benefit in as many ways as there are students themselves. Margaret Chavigny's painting class brings people together in a "one room schoolhouse" way and offers something fine, if intangible, and boosts achievement to students of all levels, where less might have been expected.

In 2009, our instructor Ms. Chavigny was awarded "Best Painter" status by the East Bay Express. Which further begs the question: why build a new Art building, then slash out core classes like painting, while depriving the community the chance to learn from an award-winning painter? Art breathes new life into everything; it arguably stimulates intellectual development and cultural sensitivity in the otherwise less-advantaged urban student. Many such learn art skills in order to express themselves in a positive way that may be difficult to deal with in

a challenging urban environment.

We hope you decide not to get rid of this painting class since both painting classes at Laney this semester (down from the previous semester already) are filled to capacity, therefore are both needed (we need more of these classes, actually!). Also, we hope that you will keep Margaret Chavigny because she is a great teacher and we need to continue learning from her.

Joan Haefele

Beichen Li

~~AME Cordell~~
Sean Hay

~~Autumn Sue~~

Larise Nu

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OO Hafele

Rico Marcelli

~~Juliana Dyle~~

Karen Ban

Barbara Heber

Solomon Russell

Vic Coffey

Dmitry Sypstun

Rachel Ed

~~Brittney Port~~

Kim Berto
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Vivian Jacobs

Tracy Foss
Tracy Dutz

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