

Heather Manes
(510)814-9422
Fax (510)814-1974
Program Manager

H.A.T.C.H.*

Phyllis Kaplan, Ph.D.
(415)641-9176

Director

535 South Shore Center PMB #142 Alameda, CA 94501

December 3, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Education
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

We are responding to the cuts in State funding which have affected the Peralta District concerning charges to EOPS, DSPS and other student services. We also are aware of your financial responsibility and the need to balance the budget.

To balance the budget "on the backs" of those students in most need is unfair and illegal, as I am sure you are aware. The specific services provided to disabled students at College of Alameda and other sites within your District have been reduced or cut beyond legal entitlement that provides students with disabilities minimal accommodations, at best.

Also being an agency that focuses on service to the disabled, we understand the dilemma you are facing at this time of the State's budget crisis. At the same time, we must be in compliance with the Federal and State laws. The students you serve through EOPS and DSPS are unable to achieve success or reach their goals without full support of the District policies, faculty and staff.

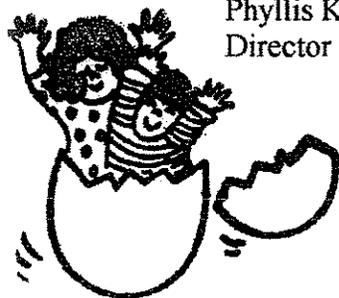
Your programs have, for decades, reflected that which is considered best practices. It is our hope that you will reconsider any further budget cuts to these services and programs and meet the needs of your students who face severe and serious learning, social and emotional challenges.

Thank you for your consideration and concern regarding these matters.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Kaplan, Ph.D.
Director


Heather Manes
Program Manager



*Help Another Toward Creative Happiness

Dear Board of Trustees

Hi my name is Leah Renee Shulgold-Albert and I'm a College of Alameda Student. I am Twenty one years old. My complaint is about the DSPS program at my School ~~being~~ cut. When I heard the information I was shocked.

In my opinion I think we should help College of Alameda and all of the other colleges that are para/ta too get the programs to not be cut and atleast give back alot of the programs and give more money to all of the schools.

I use the DSPS programs for my goals that I'm trying to reach so that I can become a better student during the time that I have left. The goals that I am working for involve computers to type not only Essays and Research papers, but also to make goals for what I also need in life that involve more than typing.

I am going up to Taft College for the next two years and I hope that I can have that success and achievement.

I'm hoping to get a lot of good grades. My progress shows how hard I worked for the grades that I earned.

I'm graduating in May and hopefully I'll get a certificate of completion that will move me up to the next level.

Thank you for listening to me. I hope to be back to another Board meeting soon.

December 2, 2010

President Guillen & Board of Trustees
Peralta Board of Trustees
338 E.8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

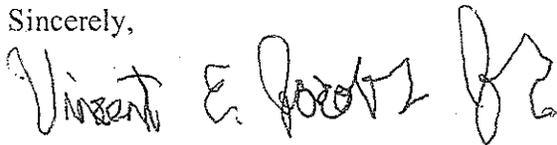
Dear President Guillen & Board of Trustees,

Hello I've been a long-time student at the College of Alameda & I'm writing to express my concern about recent discussions & reviews that's pending the decisions to cut to remove the DSPS & EOPS at all the Peralta Colleges. I understand that the decision's being considered to enabling these programs that will accommodate decreasing.

However, I don't believe that the benefits should be cut from these four colleges funding & benefits then us (the DSPS & ESPS students) should be able to keep our funding so that we can succeed in economy today. Consider: That these programs is helping me & many more like me to make something better of ourselves & have a future for us, my kids, family plus many more families like mines because I'm trying to do more in life to succeed & not less to just fail so therefore that's just less stress for all students. The sight of this that I'm looking at is saying that we can't succeed in life & just fail then on the other hand it isn't pleasant & it's just gone leave us the feeling of being more stressed. Furthermore, I'm trying to work towards my goal. More goal is to own my business & become a real estate agent but how am I gone get somewhere in life when the board is constantly just cutting everything, wasn't there a law pass saying there shouldn't be no child left behind so can you please tell me howthats gone happen when yall keep on cutting everything & leaving us helpless.

I can only ask you the trustees to make sure that we have enough funding for & in DSPS & EOPS because I'm disable then I can only use one hand then I can barely speak so I do need a person to write & speak for me then I am qualify & legally entitled to receive all the accommodations that I'm qualified for so that I can receive all these accommodations that we need to succeed & get where we want to get in our life's plus we all have a that legal right to receive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent E. Jacobs Jr." followed by a stylized flourish.

Vincent E. Jacobs Jr.
3246 E.27th Street #4 Oakland, CA 94601
Phone: Cell-(510)978-5535 Home-(510)842-3730
Email: urlilmixloverboy@yahoo.com



December 7, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am writing to express the deep concern we at the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) have over the recent and proposed reductions in services and supports for students participating in the Disabled Students Programs in the Peralta Community College System. DREDF is a leading national civil rights law and policy center directed by individuals with disabilities and parents who have children with disabilities. Our mission is to advance the civil and human rights of people with disabilities through legal advocacy, training, education, and public policy and legislative development. Our vision is a just world where all people, with and without disabilities, live full and independent lives free of discrimination.

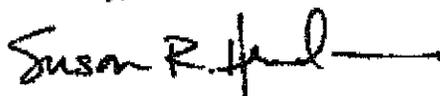
DREDF recognizes the critical importance of community college programs to expanding equality of opportunity and increasing the ability of students with disabilities to take advantage of vocational and educational resources so that true equity is achieved. While we understand that the State of California is in a difficult financial situation, this is not a basis for reducing or eliminating services and programs that provide essential accommodations in order that students with disabilities can participate in and benefit from higher education. As you know, Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"

The Office of Civil Rights enforces Section 504 in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from ED. Recipients of this Federal financial assistance include institutions of higher education such as the Peralta system. The regulations implementing Section 504 in the context of educational

institutions appear at 34 C.F.R. Part 104. Put simply, a school may not discriminate on the basis of disability. According to the Office of Civil Rights, the Peralta Community College System must insure that its programs are accessible to students with disabilities. This can be achieved in a number of ways: by providing architectural access, providing aids and services necessary for effective communication, and by modifying policies, practices, and procedures. Qualified interpreters, assistive listening systems, captioning, TTYs, qualified readers, audio recordings, taped texts, Braille materials, large print materials, materials on computer disk, and adapted computer terminals are examples of auxiliary aids and services that provide effective communication. **Such services must be provided unless doing so would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens.** [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>] Also note that according to a 1992 publication on the ADA and postsecondary education by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), the Department of Education has never accepted an argument for undue financial burden under Section 504.

We appreciate the wide range of opportunities that the Peralta Community College System provides for its students, and for our communities. We expect that these opportunities will continue to be provided to ALL students, including those with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan R. Henderson" with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Henderson
Executive Director

December 6, 2010

Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 East 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Re: Opposition Letter Regarding Budget Cuts in Disabled Student Programs and Services

Dear President Guillen and Trustees

The Center for Independent Living (CIL) is writing to respectfully urge you to take direct action to advise the community college campuses in your district about the need to protect funding for Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS). This issue has been scheduled as an agenda item at the December 7, 2010 public hearing of Peralta Board of Trustees.

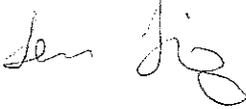
The Center for Independent Living provides direct services, information referrals, and advocacy to individuals with disabilities living in Northern Alameda County. CIL was founded in 1972 on the principle that individuals with disabilities know best what their needs are, and should therefore be in charge of the services designed to meet those needs. Our mission is to provide recourses which empower people to live independent, self directed lives.

This year we have been made aware of numerous complaints from disabled students enrolled in community colleges that their campuses are delaying or drastically reducing funding necessary to sustain disabled student accommodations. The affected programs and services include, among others, mobility assistance services, alternative formats for instruction, sign language interpretations, and assistive computers. **Most alarmingly, the data indicates that while the community college system has imposed budget cuts averaging 2.5 percent, system-wide Disabled Student Program Services have been cut by 40.5 percent.**

As you are aware, the fundamental civil right to equal educational opportunities for people with disabilities is protected by both Federal and California law (see Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Section 11135 of the California Government Code). Budget cuts do not offer a strong enough reason to relieve either the State of California or the California Community College system from its legal obligations to make reasonable accommodations for disabled students. These actions are placing the academic and professional careers of disabled students at serious risk because many of these students may be forced to drop classes or no longer pursue their desire to make the academic and career advancements that instruction or graduation from a community college makes possible.

Accordingly, we urge you to take immediate and necessary action to inform campuses about their legal obligations and to cease and desist from continuing to make these disproportionate and legally indefensible cuts in DSPS. Indeed, these actions are in direct contravention to the stated goal of your community college district to "advance student access, equity, and success."

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren Steinberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lauren" and last name "Steinberg" clearly distinguishable.

Lauren Steinberg
Systems Change Advocate

cc: Honorable Jack Scott, Chancellor of the California Community College

December 6, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, Ca 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Alameda College and I use DSPS services including assistance by the staff and instructors in the class for Traumatic Brain Injury Survivors. I'm a student with a traumatic brain injury. I also attended Laney College where I graduated with an AA degree in sociology and as a result have been able to be employed full time.

I know I have succeeded with my educational goals because of the services received at the DSPS program at Laney College and now at Alameda College. I can't think I would have succeeded without the program's supports. I'm also thankful and grateful with the instructors that have dedicated themselves to make sure students like me have an opportunity to succeed with their education and in society.

I am a tax payer and a productive citizen in our society because I had an opportunity to get an education. Honorable Abel and board of trustees, I would like to let you know that through my work at the Center for Independent Living, Inc. I am able to help people with disabilities to become productive citizens by providing guidance and information for them to use education as a tool for their career goals.

I would like my consumers and people with disabilities to have an opportunity to succeed in all aspects of life including higher education in order for them to reach their maximum potential.

Fortunately, we have laws that guaranteed this protection for Americans with Disabilities. Therefore, I would like to urge Honorable Abel Guillen and the Board of Trustees to protect these rights and services that are crucial and greatly needed to ensure the success of people with disabilities in higher education and employment opportunities.

Sincerely,



Leticia Escalera
2900 International Blvd #D
Oakland Ca 94601
lescalera@cilberkeley.org



California
Foundation
for Independent
Living Centers

Chair

Sheri Burns

Community Resources for Independent Living
Hayward

Vice Chair

Terry Pieltt

Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living
Modesto

Treasurer

Robert Hand

Resources for Independence Central Valley
Fresno

Secretary

Sarah Triano

Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
San Jose

Development Chair

Eli Gelardin

Marin Center for Independent Living
Marin

State Independent Living Council

Representative

Louis Frick

Access to Independence
San Diego

Immediate Past Chair

Elsa Quezada

Central Coast Center for Independent Living
Salinas

FREED Nevada City

PIRS Auburn

DSLCL Santa Rosa

ILR Concord

CIL Berkeley

ILRC San Francisco

CID San Mateo

ILRC Santa Barbara

ILCKC Bakersfield

WCIL Los Angeles

CALIF Los Angeles

DRC Long Beach

SCRS Downey

SCIL Claremont

RSI San Bernardino

DMC Garden Grove

CAC Riverside

Teresa Favuzzi

Executive Director

1234 H Street, Suite 100
Sacramento CA 95814

(916) 325-1690

(916) 325-1695 TDD

(916) 325-1699 FAX

www.cfild.org

December 7, 2010

Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 East 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Re: Opposition Regarding Budget Cuts in Disabled Student Programs and Services

Dear President Guillen and Trustees

The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) is writing to respectfully urge you to take direct action to advise the community college campuses in your district about the need to protect funding for Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS). This issue has been scheduled as an agenda item at the December 7, 2010 public hearing of Peralta Board of Trustees.

CFILC is a disability rights advocacy organization that represents 24 Independent Living Centers statewide that offer programs and services to over 350,000 Californians with disabilities.

This year we have fielded numerous complaints from disabled students enrolled in community colleges that their campuses are delaying or drastically reducing funding necessary to sustain requested student accommodations. The affected programs and services include, among others, mobility assistance services, alternative formats for instruction, sign language interpreters, and assistive computers and technology solutions. **Most alarmingly, the data indicates that while the community college system has imposed budget cuts averaging 2.5 percent, system-wide DSPS services have been cut by 40.5 percent.**

The fundamental civil right to equal educational opportunities for people with disabilities is protected by both Federal and California law (see Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Section 11135 of the California Government Code).

Fiscal expediency is legally insufficient to relieve either the State of California or the California Community College system from its legal obligations to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

These actions are placing the academic and professional careers of disabled students at serious risk. As a result of a lack of accommodations, students face not performing and receiving grades that are accurate reflections of their knowledge, some will drop classes altogether, while other will simply drop out of college completely.

Accordingly, we urge you to take immediate and necessary action to inform campuses about their legal obligations and to cease and desist from continuing to make these disproportionate and legally indefensible cuts in DSPS. Indeed, these actions are in direct contravention to the stated goal of your community college district to "advance student access, equity, and success."

Respectfully,



Teresa Favuzzi, MSW
Executive Director

cc: Honorable Jack Scott, Chancellor of the California Community College

Members of the Board of Trustees of the Peralta Community College District:

Honorable William Riley, Vice-President

Honorable Bill Withrow

Honorable Cy Gulassa

Honorable Marcie Hodge

Honorable Linda Handy

Honorable Nicky Gonzalez Yuen

Honorable Loni Hancock

Honorable Sandre Swanson

December 2, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services like the DSPS computer lab; for I could use the program that reads my work back to me. It also helps me correct and edit my mistakes in my work. It makes my work more understandable and easy for me to hear my mistakes. I also use the internet for I could get my homework done and printed for I could turn it in the next day. I also go to the DSPS counselors office; Ron Nelson the DSPS counselor helps me with my classes and give me advise on what I should do better to get the grades I want this semester. As this being my first semester in college he has given me a lot of information that could help me become successful the rest of my years in college and as I go to a university. All of these DSPS services helped me to make my first semester be a successful one.

My goal is to graduate from Merritt with a 4.0 in paralegal. I want to take my general education in a year in a half if possible for I could have one semester of all paralegal classes at Merritt College before I transfer to a university. After I graduate with my associate degree I am going to New York University to obtain my Bachelors and Masters Degree in paralegal.

Enrolling in the DSPS Programs have help me a lot because the instructors and assistance take the time to help you with your homework and make sure I understand it. Without the DSPS services I don't think I would be doing well as I am now. I say this because the technology they have really help you with work you don't understand, and if you can't read and find your mistakes they have programs like kurzweil3000 that would read your work back to you. This program has helped me a lot!

Sincerely,



Dameisha Patterson
351 H ave, Building 442,
San Francisco, Ca 94130
510-461-4050
dameishapatterson@yahoo.com

Date November2-2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I Jerald Hightower am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services that Includes computer lab in order to communicate, email, also, early registration, assistance with financial aid. D.P.S. tram service carries me to my classes Reason ,liver, kidney transplant, five bypass heart surgery, back surgery. Moreover, D.P.S.Offers me an opportunity to learn more about computer and to advance my skills.

My goal is _Graduate from Merritt College with AA Degree to transfer to Cal. state University bachelor degree in social service to give back to the community.

DSPS services have helped me to work towards my goal and my success.

If some of the DSPS services have already been reduced or cut, say what they are and describe what effect that has had on your schooling.

You can remind the trustees that as a student with a disability, you are legally entitled to receive accommodations.

Finally, ask the trustees to make sure that there is enough funding in DSPS so that you can receive the accommodations that you need to succeed and that you have a legal right to receive.

Sincerely, Jerald Hightower

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerald Hightower Student". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Name Jerald Hightower
Address Post office box 8351
Emeryville California 94662
Phone 510-927-8165
Emailjerald.hightower@yahoo.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

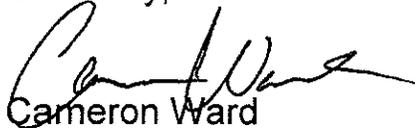
Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including counseling and guidance, early registration, computer access, learning lab for my education at Merritt College. My goal is to obtain an AA degree in criminal justice at Merritt College before entering in the work force.

DSPS has been very helpful for me in that I can discuss my educational plan with my DSPS counselor and to come up with appropriate classes. They also help me getting the accommodation I need to be successful in my classes such as more time for my assignments and final, Instructional assistant in my basic computer class, and computer learning class in a small, comfortable environment where I can learn and be successful in my pursuit of my career goal.

As a student with disability, I am legally entitled to receive accommodations in a higher educational institution. The peralta Board has stated that the #1 goal is to advance student access, equity, and success, I am holding you to that pledge, and urge you not to cut any further funding from DSPS so that I can receive the accommodations that I need to be successful in my educational pursuit which I have the legal right to receive.

Sincerely,



Cameron Ward
2132 Curtis Street
Oakland, CA 94607
510-692-5218
Cameroncmoney@gmail.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including computer lab in order to communicate, email, and also it's an opportunity to learn more about computer and advance my skills.

This computer lab program has helped me advance my computer skills, and gives me access to my email, and helps me to keep in touch with people.

I am disabled and can't imagine not having this resource connection. The teacher is very reliable and always willing to assist in every way possible. I am legally entitled to receive service and hope that there is a way that DSPS will be able to continue.

I hope that as trustees you can figure out a way that will allow me and my group to continue to take advantage of this class, and once again legally we are entitled to be accommodated of these services.

Sincerely,

Alex Lee
Email:alee1113@yahoo.com

Alex P Lee

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including computer lab in order to communicate, email, and also it's an opportunity to learn more about computer and advance my skills.

This computer lab program has helped me freshen up my reading and typing skills, and provides me with the sources to check email, and helps me to keep in touch with people.

I am disabled and I need this resource connection. The teacher is very understanding and always provides us with assistance... I am legally entitled to receive service and hope that there is a way that DSPS will be able to continue.

I am legally disabled and come to DSPS class twice a week, I once again legally obligated to accommodate to this facility.

Sincerely,

Anthony Cavaness

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Cavaness". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and 'C'.

Email:cavanessanthony@yahoo.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including counseling and guidance, early registration, computer access, and computer learning lab for my education at Merritt College. My goal is to obtain basic educational skills before I entering in the work force.

DSPS has been very helpful for me in that I can discuss my educational plan with my DSPS counselor and to come up with appropriate classes. They also help me getting the accommodation I need to be successful in my classes such as more time for my assignments and final, Instructional assistant in my basic computer class, and computer learning class in a small, comfortable environment where I can learn and be successful in my pursuit of my career goal.

As a student with disability, I am legally entitled to receive accommodations in a higher educational institution. The Peralta Board has stated that the #1 goal is to advance student access, equity, and success, I am holding you to that pledge, and urge you not to cut any further funding from DSPS so that I can receive the accommodations that I need to be successful in my educational pursuit which I have the legal right to receive.

Sincerely, 

Josh Raminarine
2416 8th Ave., #301
Oakland, CA 94606
510-375-1881
Joshraminarine@yahoo.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

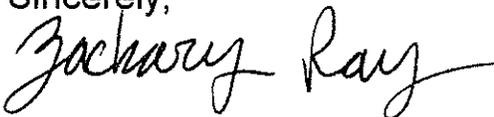
Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including helping me with my assignments.

My goal is to finish college and make sure I receive my degree at Cal State East Bay University. My major would be hospitality if I make it to that university. DSPS has been making sure I understand my work very well and also make sure I get my work done on time.

DSPS has been helping me in the past, without them, it would effect for next semester and I would have a hard time learning my materials for my assignments. Please find a way for you to help DSPS with their financial issue because I like having them around to help me and other students who have learning disabilities.

Sincerely,



Zachary Ray
2437 East 26th
Oakland, CA 94601
510 536-0398
Ray.Zachary@yahoo.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including counseling and guidance, early registration, computer access, learning lab for my education at Merritt College.

My goal is to obtain an AA degree at Merritt College before transferring to U.C. Berkeley majoring in Business Administration.

DSPS has been very helpful for me in that I can discuss my educational plan with my DSPS counselor and to come up with appropriate classes. They also help me getting the accommodation I need to be successful in my classes such as more time for my assignments and final, books on tapes, and computer learning class in a small, comfortable environment where I can learn and be successful in my pursuit of my career goal.

As a student with disability, I am legally entitled to receive accommodations in a higher educational institution. The peralta Board has stated that the #1 goal is to advance student access, equity, and success, I am holding you to that pledge, and urge you not to cut any further funding from DSPS so that I can receive the accommodations that I need to be successful in my educational pursuit which I have the legal right to receive.

Sincerely,

Ron Urrutia 
475 Christine Drive
San Pablo, CA 94806
510-837-2450
RURRUTIA411@hotmail.com

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at Merritt College and I use DSPS services including computer lab in order to communicate, email, and also it's an opportunity to learn more about computer and advance my skills.

This computer lab program has helped me with my class work and I have gained knowledge in being computer literate. Without this computer lab, I would not have not succeeded in my classes.

I am disabled and I need this resource connection. The teacher is very understanding and always provides us with assistance and go the extra mile to make sure I understand what I am doing. I am legally entitled to receive service and hope that there is a way that DSPS will be able to continue.

I am legally disabled and come to DSPS class twice a week, I once again legally obligated to accommodate to this facility.

Sincerely,

Angel Lurry

Angel Lyette Lurry

a.lurry@hotmail.com

December 6, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Good Evening,

First I hope this Holiday season has found you all in good health and I apologize for not being able to be here in person this evening.

My name is Stephanie Culhane and I am a learning disabled student at Merritt college in Oakland Ca. I was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder and Dyslexia when I was 9 years old in the Orinda school district, for the next 9 years the powers that be within that district told me that "due to my hyperactivity college would be an unrealistic goal." Imagine telling a nine year old that no matter what that child wanted to do she was too distractable to be a productive member of society on an academic level.

after a failing high school career I set out in the world as a working class individual, my disabilities following and holding me back from advancement in my professional life. when I turned 20 I decided to take a crack at college even though I was always told it would be impossible for me.

I met with the only full time DSPS councilor at Merritt college, Peggy Decoursey, who explained to me the accommodation I could receive in order to make my college dream a reality. Peggy, who has been my mentor every step of the way helped me gain the confidence needed to tackle the challenges in the classroom. I began first by taking a study skill taught by Barbara Dimopoulous at Merritt.

Barbara taught me first how to have confidence in what I could do, teaching me my learning styles and how to accommodate my learning limitations for the first year I accepted my accommodations of being able to take tests in a distraction free environment with a proctor in the room. this sole accommodation was the biggest key to my success! being able to sit by myself and read the test out loud allowed me to understand the exam before me and learn how to deal with my distractability, not necessarily to myself but to the other students in the room had I taken the test in the classroom. Now I

am so aware of my learning style that I do not even accept this accommodation unless it is for a math class even though I am granted more accommodations than just extra time on tests and a distraction free environment, because of Mrs. Dimopoulous class and mentoring I no longer NEED to accept all that I have access too because we as students with learning differences know that there always comes a time when you cannot get help and need to just do the work. Please let that happen in the real world not in our educational world where we are cultivating the confidence to accept the challenges of the real world.

because of Mrs. Dimopoluous and Mrs. Decoursey personal help and ability to teach students to take it one step at a time I now pull a 3.5 overall GPA and will be going into psychology with an emphasis in forensics at UC Berkeley. I am a success. however if these programs are cut the educational world will be deprived of some of our potentially brightest minds, after all Albert Einstein could barely read or cross a street without assistance because of his dyslexia and we all should be aware of what he has done for history and humanity. Please consider this vote carefully, our world and country is in dire straights and this decision will have a rippling effect on our country as a whole, for our education system is just a microcosm for a larger macro problem in our country and world today and we need EVERYONE who is willing to get an education to have the opportunity to do so, so that our country can again be a world force in the future.

thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Culhane, Student, Merritt College

12/2/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a teacher with Oakland Unified and my students use DSPS services including counseling and guidance, early registration, computer access, and computer learning lab for their education at Merritt College. My goal for them is to obtain basic educational skills before entering in the work force.

DSPS has been very helpful in that they can discuss their educational plan with DSPS counselors and come up with appropriate classes. They also help get the accommodations they need to be successful in their classes such as more time for assignments and the final, an Instructional assistant in their basic computer class, and computer learning in a small, comfortable environment where they can learn and be successful in their pursuit of their career goal.

As students with disabilities, they are legally entitled to receive accommodations in a higher educational institution. The Peralta Board has stated that the #1 goal is to advance student access, equity, and success. I am holding you to that pledge, and urge you not to cut any further funding from DSPS so that my students and other students with disabilities can receive the accommodations that they need to be successful in their educational pursuit which they have the legal right to receive.

Sincerely,


Jen Matsuoka

Lisa Trass, DSPS Student, College of Alameda

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President

Peralta Board of Trustees

333 E. 8th Street

Oakland, CA 94606

Dear Honorable Guillen,

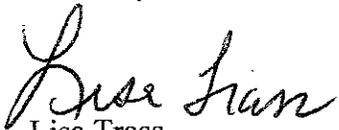
I am a new student at Alameda College and I use DSPS services. I use services including math and lab support. My goal is to obtain my associates degree and transfer to a state college to receive a bachelors degree in criminal justice. It has taken me twenty plus years to obtain the confidence to return to school, largely in part to my learning disability. I struggle math and English comprehension as a result of my documented learning disability.

Some of the DSPS services have already been reduced and cut. I am looking forward to services like note taking and counseling to succeed in my college experience.

If I didn't have any of these services I do not believe I would be successful in what I can achieve.

I am asking that you find a way to continue funding these programs so that I can receive the accommodations that are needed. I have a legal right to receive them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Trass".

Lisa Trass
Student, College of Alameda

December 3, 2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at College of Alameda and I use DSPS services including Math Support classes, Note-taking, Kurzweil 3000 reading program, accommodations for testing and in class issues, and counseling to help me succeed in my classes.

I use the Math Support class for my troubles in understanding mathematics. This class has greatly helped me succeed so far in my education. I have improved greatly because of the helpful instructors who will tirelessly and happily explain difficult equations as many times as I need. They are very enthusiastic about mathematics and will help me and other students to any point that they can. This class means so much to my academic career and without it, I am not sure how I would progress. The note-taking services have benefited me greatly during my time at College of Alameda. I have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder. During times I am unable to pay attention to the lecture and also take notes, it is comforting to know that another student is writing down the information that I will need later on to study.

The Kurzweil 3000 reading program has benefited me to a great extent when I need to study and read texts for my classes. I have troubles successfully reading a textbook and having the words read aloud to me while seeing them in highlighted colors across the computer screen promotes my understanding. The services of getting enrolled into classes and testing accommodations has proved to be so useful for my success in the classroom.

My academic goal is to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology with a concentration of Zoology. At the moment, my major is Biology. I plan to transfer to a 4-year university, preferably San Francisco State.

DSPS services have helped me so much that I do not know how I would be progressing in college now without them. If I did not have these services, especially the Math Support class, I do not know how I would be able to defeat my difficulties with mathematics. I do know that I would be unable to succeed in my education the way I would like.

As a student with a disability, I am legally entitled to receive these accommodations to become a well-rounded member of society. Please make sure there is enough funding in DSPS so I am able to receive the accommodations I need to succeed and follow through with my goals that I do have a legal right to receive.

Sincerely,



Kelsey Salter
2829 Fillmore Street, Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 523-6585
ksalty1991@comcast.net

Dear President Guillen & Trustees, December 2, '10

I am a student at College of Alameda and I use DSPS services including Math Support. I come in every Tuesday and Thursday for close to two hours of wonderful, easily accessible math tutoring. I find the supportive and encouraging math environment invaluable to my advancement in Math.

My goal is to get an A.A. degree and then transfer to possibly Cal State East Bay to pursue a degree in psychology.

DSPS services have been a priceless tool in the comprehension of math for me. Mike, the math support tutor, has been very patient and is gifted at breaking down the formulas and processes of math. He explains it in such a way that makes it non-threatening and easier to swallow. So far, I am getting an "A" in the class. If not for these services, I am certain my grade would

not be such and I would be floundering.

As a student with bipolar disorder, who has had her share of ups and downs - to say the least - I ~~and~~ am now trying to make a go at having a normal life. I want to excel in school, and it is extra, specialized services like these [that I am legally entitled to receive] that help me keep going.

Please, Please Please make sure there is enough funding in DSPS so that I can receive the accommodations I need to succeed. We're counting on you!!

Sincerely,

Maria Barci

2054 A Lincoln Ave.

Alameda, CA.

94501

415-596-8793

Magneticmaria@hotmaill.com

11/30/2010

The Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a student at C.O.A and I use DSPS services including the Math, English, and other services. As a disabled student here my grades have greatly improved in my studies with all the support from these programs. And I feel that it would be a great shame to cut any of them from the schools services. My main goal here is to acquire my State Certification Certificates as a Spanish Translator and Interpreter.

If these services were not here I could never had improved in my grades from a barely C student to an almost A student.

The Peralta Board has stated that the district's # 1 goal is to "advance student access, equity, and success." I am hoping that you will make good on the promise and support DSPS and student services. These programs make a huge difference in my ability to achieve my goals.

Thank you,

Sincerely,



Robert Fernandez
3974 Edgemore Place
Oakland, Ca. 94605

December 2, 2010

Honorable Abel Guillen, President
Peralta Board of Trustees
333 E. 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear President Guillen and Trustees:

I am a DSPS student at College of Alameda. I use the DSPS services that I need to succeed in my goal to finish and get an AA Degree in Liberal Arts. DSPS service helps me because I am a vision impaired student that needs their services to succeed in my education.

DSPS helps me in making my assignments enlarged so I can see it better. I also use note takers that I depend on in my classes like my math class, since I cannot see the board. I also use the math support class that helps me understand better the material that I am learning. The tutors like Mike help me understand the concept of the problems for my math class. Another DSPS service I also receive gives me extended time on my tests and sometimes I need to have the tests read to me. I am legally entitled to receive all these accommodations and services. Without DSPS I will not be able to finish my education successfully.

There are some DSPS services that have already been affected, like my class Improving Cognitive Skills that has lost funding to get new software to help students get the skills that they need to be successful in their education.

I am asking you, the board of trustees, to make sure that there is enough funding in DSPS so that I as a student can receive the accommodations that I need to have to succeed in my goal. **We the students have suffered enough!**

Sincerely,



Patrick De Guzman
1311 Webster Street
Alameda CA 94501
Pzdeguzman@yahoo.com