

DAS President's Report to the Board of Trustees for December 7, 2010
Karolyn van Putten

Thank you, Mr. President. Good evening trustees, chancellor, all district administrative center staff, college presidents, colleagues and members of the public.

At tonight's meeting, your last of the semester and of the calendar year, near the end of the first half of this academic year, it seems appropriate to address the subject of service area and student learning outcomes and their assessment.

Some board trustees will recall the resolution you passed in June 2009 recognizing and affirming the importance of providing appropriate resources to support the colleges in meeting the ACCJC's expectation of "proficiency" in SLO assessment by 2012. Your resolution upped the ante on this deadline with the expectation that we, Peralta, would function at proficiency level by December 2011. I mention this tonight because that date is 12 months from now and the need to make rapid progress is becoming increasingly urgent.

A couple of weeks ago, I took up about an hour of the chancellor's time explaining both the expectation and the processes involved in meeting it. Chancellor Allen understands what we're dealing with and forces are in motion to determine what the costs will be of meeting the 2011/2012 accreditation deadlines.

While the board wisely saw the need to supportively address this situation, it will be helpful for you to remember this resolution as you receive budgetary recommendations from the chancellor for approval. We are aware that difficult conversations and hard decisions about how we spend money are ahead in the near future as we struggle to remain viable educational institutions. The additional costs associated with assessment processes will further strain our resources, but these expenditures are neither optional nor can they be postponed.

At its last meeting, the Merritt College Academic Senate passed a motion directing me to inform board trustees during tonight's meeting of the lack of mental health and medical support services at Merritt College. Their motion states that students at Merritt have paid \$17 this academic year for health services that they are not yet receiving. Further, despite numerous requests over the past year, neither the academic senates nor ANY shared governance committees have yet received any documentation of a planning process for what health services will be delivered and how, their organizational and management structure, projected costs, expenditures, or anything related to this major initiative.

Notwithstanding the complete absence of a written plan, Peralta has already entered into agreements with external agencies, over which we have no control, to provide some forms of health services to our students. Representative of a major disconnect between how the board functions and the shared governance processes that provide opportunities for faculty engagement and advisement, something is terribly wrong with this picture . . .

Finally, many of us are relieved to know that the board has decided to reopen the chancellor search process and the District Academic Senate strongly urges that the second time around be conducted in a manner that faculty fully supports and is engaged by, from the formation of a search committee through the process event time lines and concluding with site visits prior to another candidates' forum.

That concludes my report for tonight. Thanks for your thoughtful and responsive attention to these remarks.