

April 10, 2013

Hon. John Rizzo, President Board of Trustees
City College of San Francisco
50 Phelan Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94112

RE: Board restrictions and policy violations; request for larger meeting room

Dear Trustee Rizzo:

We wish to raise a number of concerns about recent Board of Trustees meetings. The continued lack of access to the meetings, new restrictions on the constituency group reports and severe time limits on public comment, and the lack of transparency in Board processes (as with the Tentative Budget) are unacceptable. We call on the Board both to allow for more public and constituency input through comment and transparency and to schedule Board meetings for a larger venue.

During the March 21, 2013 CCSF Board of Trustees meeting, the Board violated or appeared ready to violate a number of its own policies. We wish to register our protest that the Board attempted to adopt a Tentative Budget without a "first reading" in violation of Board Policy 7001. The Tentative Budget deserves sunshine, scrutiny, and input, as the Board's own policy seems to recognize. Yet it was made public and available to AFT 2121 and others only 24 hours in advance of the Board meeting.

We call on the Board to respect the rights of members of the public, union representatives, students and others to speak at Board meetings. The continued shrinking of public comment is inconsistent with Board policy. According to PM 1.05L, a copy of which is included at the front of the Agenda distributed at the meeting, speakers who submit cards "shall have up to three minutes for comments." Yet speech has been repeatedly cut off. Further, the Policy states that other speakers "may grant his or her speaking time on any time" for a maximum of six minutes. Yet the Board restricted public comment on the Tentative Budget to 60 seconds and only allowed additional time under protest. Additionally, the "yellow cards" for requesting public comment appear out of compliance with public comment policy; they reference two (2) minutes not the three (3) minutes stated in PM 1.05L.

The policy also states that when necessary to "facilitate the completion of District business, the Presiding Officer may also limit the total length of time allotted to the speakers on a given topic or agenda item which may reduce the individual speaker's time on that topic or item." We question the necessity of reducing public comment on something as crucial as the CCSF budget to ten (10) minutes so that District business could be completed.

In yet another restriction of speech, your own memo of February 25 restricting reports from college constituent groups appears aimed at muzzling the voices of labor at the college. We insist that the Board return to the longstanding practice of allowing the Academic Senate President to

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cede time to the AFT 2121 President, who have shared responsibility in keeping their remarks within a reasonable time.

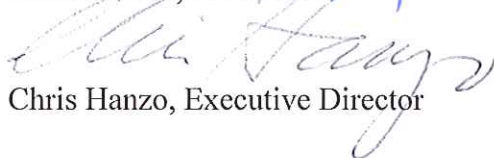
Failing to allow for sufficient comment is one grave issue; another is the lack of access to the Board meeting itself. CCSF police have regularly turned people away from meetings in the MUB (or alternatively to an “overflow” room) claiming fire code restrictions, even though access to meetings had not been similarly restricted at Board meetings over the last several decades. These restrictions are unbecoming for any public institution, and particularly for CCSF at this crucial time. To allow for access and enable participation in Board meetings, we request that meetings be moved to a larger venue, such as Diego Rivera Theater or the Wellness Center auditorium. The voices of students, faculty, staff, and members of the public must be heard.

We look forward to engaging you on these issues and to your response to our requests.

Sincerely,



Alisa Messer, President



Chris Hanzo, Executive Director

Cc: Vice President Anita Grier
Trustees
Special Trustee Robert Agrella
Interim Chancellor Thelma Scott-Skillman
Constituent Groups
Robert J. Bezemek, Esq.