

August 25, 2020

Dear United Faculty Leaders and Members:

Thank you for your letter to the 4CD Trustees dated August 14, 2020. I commend you for your dedication to our District and interest in its well-being. While the two District administrators you referenced in your letter are not represented by you, I appreciate your interest in the situation. While personnel matters are often difficult decisions, they are even more difficult for outside groups to evaluate that do not have all of the often-confidential information that goes into making these decisions. I would like to point out some facts that you may be unaware of (there are many other facts that are confidential and cannot be shared) and bring your attention to a few matters that I believe should be of far greater concern for you and your members than these two positions.

As you may know, I have been a member of 3 teacher unions. At 22, I joined the Teaching Assistants Association at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as an economics graduate teaching assistant. I also have been a member of two Contra Costa County K-12 teacher unions. In between, as a financial economist at the Wisconsin utility regulatory commission, I was a member of AFSCME. Thus, I have a long and proud history of being a union member and have consistently strongly supported unions and their members.

I ask that you review the attached analysis of the 35 Trustees who have served on the Contra Costa Community College District Governing Board. You will immediately notice a very pronounced trend in the "5-Year Rolling Average Years of Service" rising steadily from 1953 to 1970 when it was at 10 years until it began rising again in 1982 topping out at 16 for 1988-1990. I am very concerned that "5-Year Rolling Average Years of Service" began a steady decline to a low of 5 in 2002-04. We must understand the reasons for that dramatic plunge and also why it was below 10 until dropping to 5 now. I firmly believe the deaths of 3 Trustees especially Trustees Reyes and Grilli were not a random occurrence.

While the College District has dramatically increased students and personnel between the opening of Los Medanos College in 1974 it has maintained the same number of 5 Trustees while then also adding 2 centers. The population of our District has also substantially increased during this time. Your members must have some thoughts on why the number of Trustees was not increased. It is also impossible to justify that with 5 campuses and 5 Trustees, each Trustee does not have just one campus in the Trustee's Ward. My Ward 5 has Los Medanos College and the Sand Creek Brentwood Center with no campus in Ward 2. Why has this happened? In January 2021, Trustee Andy Li will have both the San Ramon Campus and the Trilogy Brentwood Center.

Let's widen our view of the District. You clearly speak on behalf of your 1,500+ full-time and part-time faculty. Have you increased the number of leaders since 1974? If so, why have those leaders not advocated for an increase to 7 Trustees as is typical of other districts of our size/population.

I dispute your statements in your letter's first and second paragraphs. The failure to increase the number of Trustees to 7 is a major mistake and the cause of the issues you raise.

Unlike your Union with a narrow charge to represent its 1,500 members from a narrow group, the Trustees each must represent not just the 200,000 residents in each of their 5 Wards, they must also represent the diverse 800,000 residents living in the other 4 Wards. Without the authorizations granted by those 5 Trustees (and the Student Trustee who represents the District's 50,000 students) it is unlikely the achievements you list in your 3rd paragraph in your letter would have occurred.

All 5 Trustees have been elected by their voters. Let's remember the voters in Contra Costa County authorized the creation of the District in 1948 (not the Legislature) and thus the residents of the District are the owners of the District and the 5 Trustees are their duly-elected representatives. But both the number of residents and students at CCCC have increased dramatically since 1948 but the number of Trustees has remained at 5. If each college were in its own District, each District would have 5 Trustees or 15 for the County. Thus, it is clear that anyone expecting the same results from 5 Trustees that could have been achieved by 15 is being highly unrealistic.

Now, let me speak for myself and the 200,000 owners I represent in Ward 5 who have made me the only Trustee on the Board who has been elected twice (in 2012 and 2016). I also was a candidate in Ward 3 in 2006 and 2010. Thus, I have been in as many elections as the rest of the Trustees combined thus having far more interactions with those residents.

You "urge the Board to start addressing the issues of your self-evaluation reflected and to reconsider at the earliest opportunity renewing the contracts of Vice Chancellor Dio Shipp and Vice Chancellor Jonah Nicholas so we can get back to solving the multitude of matters that need addressing during these difficulties without distractions and with the confidence that our Board fully supports good labor relations and productive, interest-based collaboration among constituency groups."

Here are my comments on that paragraph:

1) Who failed to notice that the position titles are both incorrect? They are Associate Vice Chancellors.

2) By law, the Trustees are in-charge of the District but delegate that authority to act to the Chancellor (which we do not have now because the Chancellor Search has been delayed and must resume as soon as possible to assure a new Chancellor is hired as soon as appropriate).

3) Will the United Faculty send another letter to the District urging that the Board immediately create an ad hoc committee to assure increasing the number of Trustees from 5 to 7 as would be appropriate to be done in conjunction with the re-Warding which will be required by the 2020 Census data becomes available? Quite frankly, that ad hoc committee should both increase the Trustees to 7 and do the re-Warding. It is crucial to recognize that the number of constituents each Trustee has will decline from 200,000 each to about 140,000. Also, with 7 Trustees, there could easily be 2 Trustees sharing each college (rather than just one now) and still have a Trustee have a center in a Ward. Given the clear implications of the plunging years of service, is the United Faculty is willing to strongly advocate for 7 Trustees to share the burden of the current 5 Trustees?

4) I need to explain why I cannot justify voting to extend the contract of Associate Vice Chancellor Dio Shipp. Here is the over-riding example of why. Mr. Shipp asked me to meet with him in 2018 to discuss my attendance at a dinner event in 2015 at a community college conference. He did not tell me there was an anonymous letter received by the District addressed to "Chancellor, Board of Trustees, Human Resources." He clearly deliberately withheld that letter from me knowing I was a Trustee. That is completely unacceptable to me. I only learned of Mr. Shipp's decision to withhold that letter from me when our then-Executive Vice Chancellor-Administration (now Interim Chancellor) unintendedly released Mr. Shipp's 3-page report stating that a full investigation was needed. Now that I have read the letter and his "Preliminary Investigation Report" it is clear to me that had I been allowed by Mr. Shipp to read the anonymous letter I would have convinced him that nothing unusual occurred at the dinner. Why? Because I remembered 3 attendees of that dinner, two of whom I have known since 2012 and are lawyers both agreed with me that nothing unusual happened. As you can read in the attached **East Bay Times** editorial, our Trustees have been attacked (similar to the United Faculty letter's first paragraph) without any justification because Mr. Shipp failed to show me the anonymous letter. Thus, Mr. Shipp's highly inappropriate dealing with me (and thus the Board) on this anonymous letter matter, among other actions, has created a lack of my confidence in his ability to continue with the District and serve it with integrity in my opinion. Thus, I cannot vote to extend his contract.

5) I would be willing to support a contract extension of up to 2 years (not one) for Associate Vice Chancellor Jonah Nicolas (from my personal finance professional experiences) but only if the following major improvements to our top executive staff occur. I want to emphasize that it is far more important, using your own logic and goals, that the Board direct the Interim Chancellor to hire an Interim Executive Vice Chancellor-Administration* as soon as possible to serve until the new Chancellor is fully prepared to assume all the Chancellor duties to allow the Interim Chancellor to continue in that office until the new Chancellor is ready. As I have stated many times, our new Chancellor must not have any duty other than to visit all 5 campuses and the District Office to allow all of the District's 3,500 personnel the opportunity to interact either virtually or in person with the new Chancellor. I expect a minimum of 3 months to allow the new Chancellor to become fully familiar with our District. It is highly likely that the new Chancellor would want to have an Interim Deputy Chancellor (as other large multi-college districts have done) to assure a smooth transition and allow the Interim Chancellor to return to being Executive Vice Chancellor-Administration. The most likely individual to assume that Interim Deputy Chancellor position would be the individual who served as Interim Executive Vice Chancellor-Administration. It is most likely that the Interim Deputy Chancellor position will not be made permanent though that is a decision to be made by the new Chancellor and Trustees.

*The minimum requirements for this position will be the following based on qualifications not held by one or both of the current top CCCC Administrators:

1) PhD 2) College teaching 3) College level administrative experience 4) CPA to review all financial matters 5) Law enforcement experience to guide the needed reviews of police training done by the District.

I have other concerns I will describe in a future Open Letter. I hope to receive responses from you and your faculty members, from our District's "owners" – especially the activists who are asking for improvements, and others.

Sincerely,

Greg Enholm

Greg Enholm

Ward 5 Trustee

Attachments

DRAFT Contra Costa Community College District Trustee Service Data 1949-2020

East Bay Times Editorial: After sex, drug issues, change coming to Contra Costa Board