



LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
Dr. Tyree Wieder, Interim Chancellor

December 18, 2009

The Honorable Leland Yee
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Yee:

I would like to thank you for your letter expressing concern regarding the Collegian newspaper at Los Angeles City College (LACC). As the Chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) we appreciate your interest in the welfare of our students and faculty. I am writing this letter to express my support of the faculty and administrators at LACC. I have taken the time to review the events at LACC and I have not found any violations of the first amendment or any attempt to hinder students' rights to free press.

Los Angeles City College is one of the nine colleges in our district experiencing a huge budget deficit, at close to \$8 million. Like all California Community Colleges, LACC has suffered dramatic reductions in state funding beyond their control and as a result every program has received dramatic cuts. The 16% cut to the Collegian's printing budget (not their total budget) is well below the 26-50% in cuts suffered by other programs and services at the college and when calculated as part of the total cost of running the Journalism program, represents an overall reduction of only 3%. The truth is that this is a budget issue not a first amendment matter.

Working through their shared governance process, the President and the faculty have acted responsibly in tackling the budget deficit. Los Angeles City College made cuts across the board including the largest hit to instruction with a \$5 million reduction. I think you received inaccurate information regarding the college and their budget process as their cuts were not an act of retaliation.

As the state is facing another year of a double-digit deficit, community colleges across the state will once again, be negatively impacted. As a result, the entire LACCD district, not just LACC, will be forced to make difficult budget decisions. In an effort to avoid situations of misinformation or needless reactions, I think it is imperative that we all work together to keep lines of accurate communication open.

As someone who is deeply involved in the business of running the state, I am certain that you can understand the difficulties that increasing funding cuts are causing for all colleges. I think it is vital that we all continue to work together to support students, faculty and staff during these difficult economic times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tyree Wieder".

Tyree Wieder, Ed.D
Interim Chancellor

cc: Board of Trustees, Los Angeles Community College District
Jamillah Moore, President, Los Angeles City College