

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Youth Commission
FROM: Derek Evans, Assistant Clerk
DATE: March 10, 2014
SUBJECT: REFERRAL FROM BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Board of Supervisors has received the following request for hearing, which is scheduled to be heard at the March 14, 2014, Neighborhood Services and Safety Committee special meeting. At the request of the Youth Commission, this item is being referred as per Charter Section 4.124 for comment and recommendation. The Commission may provide any response it deems appropriate within 12 days from the date of this referral.

File: 140123

Resolution urging State Community College Chancellor Brice Harris to restore the voice of San Francisco voters and bring democratic decision-making, transparency, and public accountability back to City College of San Francisco by restoring the duly elected Board of Trustees.

Please return this cover sheet with the Commission's response to **Derek Evans, Clerk, Neighborhood Services and Safety Committee.**

RESPONSE FROM YOUTH COMMISSION Date: _____

No Comment

Recommendation Attached

Chairperson, Youth Commission

1 [Urging State Community College Chancellor Brice Harris to Restore City College of San
2 Francisco's Duly Elected Board of Trustees]

3 **Resolution urging State Community College Chancellor Brice Harris to restore the**
4 **voice of San Francisco voters and bring democratic decision-making, transparency,**
5 **and public accountability back to City College of San Francisco by restoring the duly**
6 **elected Board of Trustees.**

7
8 WHEREAS, For the past 78 years, City College of San Francisco (CCSF) has been
9 crucial to the economic and social development of San Francisco and has been widely
10 acknowledged to be one of the best community colleges in the country, providing a rich array
11 of academic and vocational programs such as nursing, radiology, culinary and hotel
12 management to many thousands of students per year, most of whom come from working
13 class, people of color, and immigrant communities and for whom CCSF represents one of the
14 only options for affordable higher education; and

15 WHEREAS, Each of California's community colleges has an elected Board of Trustees
16 responsible for establishing rules and regulations that guide the local community college
17 district, and until July of 2013, CCSF actively had such a duly elected, democratic body, which
18 held policy discussion in transparent, open, live, and videotaped monthly meetings including
19 opportunities for reports and public comment from faculty, staff, students, and community
20 members; and

21 WHEREAS, This democratic body was stripped of its power through two emergency
22 actions by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors (BOG), who first changed
23 BOG rules by adding "threats to accreditation" to the former sole criterion of "financial
24 insolvency" necessary to remove a sitting Board of Trustees and install a Special Trustee with
25 Extraordinary Powers (STWEP), and second, immediately installed such a Trustee; and

1 WHEREAS, Installation of a STWEP puts nearly unilateral power in the hands of a
2 single, unelected individual, forgoing checks and balances and, in the case of CCSF, has also
3 resulted in the discontinuation of open board meetings and all public participation and
4 dialogue; and

5 WHEREAS, Under the STWEP's direction, CCSF has made significant fiscal decisions
6 regarding the use of voter-approved public funds (e.g., Proposition A funding as well as funds
7 from two voter-approved bonds to build a Performing Arts and Education Center) without
8 accountability to the will of San Francisco taxpayers; and

9 WHEREAS, In a recent example of unilateral decision-making at CCSF resulting in an
10 alarming lack of transparency and possible damage to CCSF's accreditation status,
11 unpublished and off-schedule pay increases for top administrators have come to light, while
12 faculty have suffered a 4% wage cut, staff have been laid off, some classes and student
13 services have been eliminated, and student workers continue to be paid \$1.74 below the
14 City's legal minimum wage; and

15 WHEREAS, The recent successful court injunction that forbids disaccreditation of City
16 College before the City and County of San Francisco's lawsuit against the Accrediting
17 Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is heard, as well as growing support
18 for CCSF and calls for investigations of the ACCJC's actions and impact by elected leaders
19 statewide and nationally indicate that the damaging disaccreditation threat hanging over
20 CCSF likely will not be substantiated; and

21 WHEREAS, San Francisco is a city with a deep commitment to democracy and
22 transparency, and losing transparent and democratic input into one of the city's most
23 democratic and inclusive institutions is a travesty; and
24
25

1 WHEREAS, restoring the Board of Trustees will return the voice of San Francisco
2 voters and their ability to hold their elected officials accountable by proceeding with the
3 regular elections process, including in November 2014; and

4 WHEREAS, Assemblymember Tom Ammiano has announced legislation to eliminate
5 arbitrary actions to disempower an elected board by clarifying or restricting the process and
6 conditions for the Board of Governors taking control; now, therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges State Chancellor Brice Harris to
8 provide a timeline and take concrete steps to restore transparency, administrative
9 accountability to the will of San Francisco's voters, and democratic process at CCSF by

- 10 • immediately restoring to the duly elected CCSF Board of Trustees the right to
11 convene, discuss, and make decisions regarding CCSF's direction and
12 progress; and
- 13 • fully restoring the duly elected Board of Trustees to CCSF by removing the
14 Special Trustee With Extraordinary Powers by July 2014.