

September 5, 2017

Dear DACA Students, Students, Faculty and Staff:

After the election of President Donald Trump, the District Board of Trustees took a very active stance supporting our Undocumented Students and all students who had reasons to be concerned about any potential unjust actions of the Trump administration. Today, we are saddened that the administration has taken the position to end, within six months, the protection provided by DACA.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a program that represents the decency of America. DACA protects children who were brought to this country and who have grown up as Americans in all the sense of the word. Often called “dreamers,” these children have been integrated into the culture of our schools and have embraced our values: America is *their* country. DACA students have demonstrated their commitment to be productive citizens and to keep our country strong and great. Some have served in our military, some have earned degrees, and many have filled jobs that in our country that have strengthened our economy. We recognize the many accomplishments of DACA students and acknowledge their role in our democracy and their contributions to our society: they are lawyers, physicians, teachers—they are productive members of our communities.

At Peralta, we have hundreds of students who fit the DACA category, and they are among the best citizens we have. The Trump administration’s abrupt decision to end DACA is unwise and appeals to a political base that has proven out of step with the majority of America. For this reason, we need to do everything we can to provide the immediate support needed for our students. In fact, community colleges throughout the State of California are stepping up to be supportive of all DACA students.

The Peralta Community College District is committed to supporting DACA students in the best way we can and are committed to the following actions:

- We will schedule legal workshops at the Colleges as soon as possible so that DACA students can learn about their rights and seek legal protection.
- We will advocate through Congress and the White House to develop a permanent, fair, humane, and smart solution to making every “dreamer” a documented and respected citizen of the United States.
- We will encourage our local legislators and community leaders to join us in lending their public support to this effort.
- We will assure that all PCCD students-- and especially the DACA students-- know they are not alone in these troubling times.

Most importantly, our students need to know that their Faculty, the Staff, the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor and the College Presidents are watching out for them and that everyone in the United States is protected by the U.S. Constitution. The rights of DACA students are not exceptions to these protections.

As part of our commitment, we want all to know that the District:

- Will not allow federal immigration officials on campus absent legal authority;
- Will not act on behalf of federal agencies to enforce immigration laws or aid in deportation;
- Will not share student records containing confidential information without written consent, a court order or other legal mandate, and,
- Will not allow College police to participate in any voluntary program of immigration enforcement.

PCCD remains deeply committed to all of our students and will do everything we can to ensure their success and safety. Currently, we are witnessing a troubling period in our history and we will do everything in our power to win back the values and ideals that make our country the beacon of hope and opportunity for the entire world.

Finally, we aim to beat the deadline to end DACA that has been thrust upon us. There are presently two bills before Congress (one of which is bi-partisan), which would preserve DACA; therefore, Congress is not starting from scratch and hope is not lost: 1.) the Bridge Act was introduced by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham on December 9, 2016 and co-sponsored by Senators Feinstein, Durbin, Murkowski, Flake and Schumer. 2.) The American Hope Act was introduced by Representative Gutierrez on July 28, 2017 and has 116 Democratic co-sponsors. The legislative process could result in a successful bi-partisan effort supporting the Bridge Act, which is currently before the Judiciary Committee, or the American Hope Act. We are not giving up hope to continue to support DACA!

Sincerely,

Julina Bonilla, Board President, Peralta Community College District  
Jowel Laguerre, Chancellor, Peralta Community College District  
Rowena Tomaneng, President, Berkeley City College  
Timothy Karas, President, College of Alameda  
Tammeil Gilkerson, President, Laney College  
Marie-Elaine Burns, President, Merritt College