

Resolution Calling for the Resignation of President Ojakian, a complete halt to "Students First"; and Full Funding for Public Higher Education in Connecticut.:

Whereas Pres. Ojakian's plan for Community College Consolidation has been rejected by NEASC as unrealistic for its planned two year implementation, disrespectful of faculty control of curriculum, unjustified in eliminating department chairs, and unclear as to how multi-campus programs would be overseen;

Whereas Pres. Ojakian's reaction to this rejection of his ill-considered plan is to threaten that he now "cannot hold the line on tuition and keep all campuses open" (email of May 24 to faculty), rather than admit that the serious and costly mistake was his and that of the board;

Whereas we cannot permit Pres. Ojakian to act in retaliation against students and their campuses, with the consequent irreparable loss of institutions of public higher education in Connecticut, or the unjustified increase in tuition in order to maintain a bloated bureaucracy on Woodland Streets, with its succession of failed plans;

Whereas "Students First" also includes a component whereby "back office" staff at CCSU and other CSU universities would be "consolidated", which is demeaning and harmful to our support staff who perform valued and essential roles on and for our campus, detrimental to our ability to run the university based on the role of Departments, Chairs, and Senate; and undermines the integrity of our university as an institution of higher education;

Whereas there is a clear indication in "Design Thinking" and elsewhere that consolidation would also apply to programs and courses offered at both the community colleges and universities, in conflict with the role of departments to determine curriculum; and that the "Students First" plan for the community colleges proposed eliminating chairs elected by faculty and replacing them with administratively appointed Associate Deans, in contradiction to shared governance;

Be it Resolved that the CCSU Senate

(1) calls upon Pres. Ojakian to resign and that Board name no permanent replacement until after the Nov. elections when a new governor and legislature in place can reconsider the role and structure of CSCU in light of the the costs and problems in its seven year history;

(2) calls upon the Board to refuse any proposal to increase student tuition or close any community college; and instead to seek to fully fund public higher education through the state budget and fund raising;

(3) calls upon the Board to commit to no further plans of "systemization" such as Transform 2020, "Design Thinking", or "Students First"; and in particular, to stop any plans or ongoing efforts to consolidate support staff, eliminate chairs, or consolidate programs and courses across the four CSU universities or CSCU-wide;

(4) calls for consideration by the legislature to abolishing the Board of Regents to be replaced by a structure or structures that will respect the distinct missions of the community colleges and universities and reduce to a minimum the overgrown bureaucracy on Woodland Street, thereby saving tens of millions of dollars, and assuring the autonomy and integrity of the community colleges and the state universities; and

(5) calls upon all candidates for Governor and the legislature to declare for the full funding of public higher education in Connecticut, and to immediately upon election stop the decline in the percentage of state funding to public universities and colleges.