

May 20, 2026

To the Clackamas Community College Budget Committee and Board of Education:

My name is Trisha Torgerson, and I am writing to you today as both a community member and a college employee. I was born and raised in Oregon City, I continue to reside in Oregon City, and about five years ago, I accepted a position as an Administrative Assistant II here at the college.

Since I started, I have consistently heard about budget concerns—specifically, a structural deficit. And yet, over the past five years, I have not seen a single cut or reduction made at the top executive level. In fact, we have only seen an increase in the percentage of our budget going to top administrators. Meanwhile, the current proposed budget primarily targets Classified staff positions, staff programs, and the overall student experience—all of which sit near the bottom of this hierarchy.

When I was growing up, my dad worked in construction. He taught me that while you have many options for a roof, the roof won't matter one bit if the foundation isn't solid. From my perspective, the Classified staff is the foundation of this college. We are the people who keep things running, safe, and operational. We maintain the heating and cooling systems, clean the facilities, prepare classrooms and class schedules, and we help students register for classes. Cutting Classified staff means cutting into the very foundation of this institution, which will only weaken the college over time. I strongly encourage you to look to the top of the organization for reductions, where resources are vastly greater and the impact on daily operations is less severe.

Additionally, I would like to remind the Board of the directive you gave this administration back in 2023: to work more closely with our unions. Since then, we have only seen an escalation of grievances and multiple lawsuits against the college. While those lawsuits are from community members, I encourage you to look at the overall relationship that this administration has with both the community members who take classes here and the staff who work here.

In April of this year, the ACE union won an arbitration ruling—yet we learned yesterday that the administration has no intention of honoring that ruling. From where I stand, this is not 'working closely' with unions; instead, it is a blatant disregard of our current contract and the continuous waste of taxpayer resources on a matter. I urge the Board to hold the administration accountable to this legal ruling and to our union contracts, as well as to look

more closely at the relationship the administration has with the community members and staff here at the college.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of these critical matters.

Respectfully,

Trisha Torgerson
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