

Statement of Support for Permanent City College Chinatown Facility

We the undersigned affirm the urgent need for expanded adult education opportunities in Chinatown, and state our support for the construction of a permanent City College campus to meet this need.

As individuals, families, and organizations that have for generations worked and lived in Chinatown, we know first hand that City College's educational programs are critical to immigrants, low-wage workers, and limited-English proficient individuals. A permanent campus will help future generations of Chinese Americans achieve economic and social mobility, and pay homage to the importance of education in the Chinatown community.

Each year over 6,000 students take classes at the Chinatown / North Beach campus; another 700 are placed on waiting lists. Most students work or live in or near Chinatown, earn less than \$11,000 a year, and face a range of social and economic hardships. In order to survive in a new country and obtain living wages, they enroll in City College classes to learn English, prepare for the U.S. citizenship exam, and gain job skills in housekeeping, hospitality, and entry level office work.

The current Chinatown/North Beach campus building on Filbert Street, leased from the San Francisco Unified School District, has crumbling ceilings, deteriorating walls, leaky pipes, and smelly bathrooms designed for small children not adults. Due to classroom shortages, the campus has had to rent shared space located in over a dozen community facilities. These shared facilities - in church basements and community centers - are scattered throughout Chinatown, North Beach, and the Marina District, and are often not available during class hours due to competing community needs. Because the Filbert St. building and shared spaces are leased, state funds can not be used for renovations.

Construction of a permanent campus will centralize classrooms and bilingual support services, and provide the community with access to new computer and language labs, a library, assembly space, and modern facilities specially designed for culinary and home health aide training. A permanent campus will accommodate the existing demand for classes, especially during evenings and weekends, and restore programs that have been lost due to space constraints.

Though voters have passed three separate bond measures since 1990 to provide funding for a permanent campus, this funding is at risk and is likely to be re-allocated if this project does not proceed quickly. As City College solicits and obtains feedback from the public, we are committed to a permanent City College campus for Chinatown to meet the urgent educational needs of our community.

Friends of Educational Opportunities in Chinatown
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