



News

2-Year College to Reinstate Teams

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Four months after deciding to [suspend six sports teams](#) at Diablo Valley College for budgetary reasons, the College District has agreed to reinstate the squads to resolve federal gender bias complaints filed against the

In an interview Wednesday night, Gene Huff, associate vice chancellor for human resources at the Contra Costa College District, said that its officials had reached an agreement with the U.S. Education Department's Office for Civil Rights under which the district would reinstate the men's and women's track and field, cross country, and tennis teams; put employees through compliance training; and by July 2013 that the athletics programs at Diablo Valley and the district's two other colleges are in compliance with Title IX Education Amendments of 1972, which bars sex discrimination at educational institutions that receive federal funds.

In exchange, the federal office will drop plans to investigate Title IX compliance at the three Contra Costa College District colleges. "In exchange, we will concede any wrongdoing, Huff said. "Honestly, we don't want to go through an OCR investigation and review."

Contra Costa cut an equivalent number of men's and women's teams to "try to remove discussion of gender bias from the curriculum of colleges that play football (as Diablo Valley does) often run into Title IX trouble because that sport typically throws a way out of whack."

Huff said that the decision to reinstate the teams would require the district -- which, like virtually all of California's community colleges, has seen sharp funding cuts, with no relief in sight -- to cut an equivalent amount (he could not say exactly how much). While ending the teams would have saved some funds that are spent on travel and equipment, he said the money saved by eliminating the teams would be derived from ending the six course sections in which the roughly 600 students participate. (At the district's colleges, each sports team is essentially a physical education class.)

"So when we reinstate six sports teams, we will have to find other things to cut from the instruction budget -- we will not be able to offer English or math or other courses to," Huff said.

While the agreement with the Office for Civil Rights may resolve Contra Costa's current troubles, the coaches of the track and field teams -- who brought the original complaint to the attention of federal officials -- say they have been wronged. The track and cross country teams for both genders, said that he and Peter Benko, the former tennis coach, were told by the college's athletes that the district had decided to restore the teams. But he said both men had been told by the district that they would not be returning with their squads.

The institution is punishing them for having brought the matter to the attention of federal officials, Cruz said. "They're retaliating against us, of course they are," said Cruz, who said he would take the matter to union of