

April 11, 2025

Dear Palomar College Community,

At the recent Governing Board Meeting, three board members cast a deciding vote to remove the Land Acknowledgement from their regular agenda and it will no longer be read at their monthly meetings.

Our colleagues and community who spoke with such decisiveness, clarity, and passion to the significance of the Land Acknowledgement, and the value in preserving its spoken presence on campus, will not be forgotten and are deeply appreciated by the American Indian Studies (AIS) Department.

The Board's decision is disheartening and contradicts many of the opinions expressed at the meeting. More than just regrettable, this non-courageous act sends an important message: even a symbolic gesture, like a Land Acknowledgement, can threaten a fragile sense of authority and control. These kinds of acts remind us that California Indians have endured centuries of erasure and dispossession in their homeland. The reluctance (in the name of "efficiency") of a few elected officials to acknowledge that Indians were here first, perpetuates this embattlement but also spotlights the unwavering resiliency and continued presence of the Luiseño, Kumeyaay, Cupeño, and Cahuilla people who continue to call this place home.

While the Land Acknowledgement will not be read during Governing Board meetings at this time; it's still an accessible resource for students, faculty and staff. An additional resource on Land Acknowledgments for all California Community Colleges, can be found [here](#). This resource includes a link to a Land Acknowledgement Toolkit provided by the CCC's Chancellor's Office, and provides direction on how, when and why a Land Acknowledgement is shared. The CCC also provides an online training titled, "California Land Acknowledgement and Tribal Consultation Toolkit for Serving AIAN Students".

The American Indian Studies Department reminds the campus that the Land Acknowledgement serves as a call to action. Like you, we are committed to continuing the work called for in the current Land Acknowledgement, including creating learning environments supporting Native students and engaging respectfully with tribal nations.

The American Indian Studies Department is marking its 50th year at Palomar College. We were one of the first AIS Departments at a community college in California and in the country. Our Department was built on a foundation of education, advocacy and outreach. The Board's uninformed decision is a reminder that there is much work to do to continue this legacy championed by the founding American Indian Studies faculty and staff. We ask the Palomar College community to continue to support Native students, Native people and tribal sovereignty.

American Indian Studies | Palomar College