[Thanks to those that worked with/tolerated me for the last 2 years. I didn’t enjoy “[**DAS Life**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LM0CZZ9Uw8)” and wasn’t nearly as effective at promoting a better District/DAS as I had hoped to be, but [**I did learn a lot**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThDwS79HPhs), even if [**I achieved little**](https://youtu.be/6bNzAgJMYVE), and I hope that [**whoever follows me**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwQW3KW3DCc)—I’m writing this in late March—[**can do and be better based on my example**](https://youtu.be/H9fqZlo60_8?t=3); both positive and negative. [***Après moi, quoi que*.**](https://youtu.be/e0oeY1KMY9U?t=18);)]

[**When Laney Meets the District: Faking “It” (It=A functional relationship)**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdJm3DVg3EM)

**Problem**: Laney’s relationship with the District Office and Central Services has been broken for quite awhile with the District Office operating as a parasite to the College and Central Services proving costly, inefficient, and frequently ineffective while Laney suffers from an ongoing inability to maintain its own effective structures, processes, and systems for service, assessment, and improvement at the College or to effectively communicate and work with the District on an ongoing basis.

[**5 Steps To Solve the Peralta Math Problem (4+1=1?)**](https://youtu.be/-0bOH8ABpco?t=41)**:**

1. To create effective and common structures, processes, and systems between the College and District that are mutual and commensurate to allow for even the possibility of a functional relationship Laney needs to invest more of its own time and energy on substantiating/integrating its own structures, processes, and systems that are already supposed to exist, but really don’t, and are more often theoretical rather than practical. (This is in process and it needs to continue.)
2. These structures, processes, and systems at the College level then need to connect more clearly and effectively at an intra-college level—Laney has to get it together regarding its own planning, implementation, assessment, and iteration.
3. Laney’s structures, processes, and systems should then connect with the District’s own structures, processes, and systems (which themselves need to be actually functional/existent—they’re not). Again, in theory there is already supposed to be a connection but in practice there’s no functional connection.
4. The relationship between Laney, the other Colleges, and the District Office and Central Services has to be [**MUTUALLY**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLg1k4I9fqk) defined via the only structures that exist at a “common” level: faculty, classified, and students need to step up in the planning, implementation, assessment, and iteration processes instead of complaining a lot and doing relatively little (for their part admin needs to decide to either get out of the way completely or play an actual functional role…).
5. The end-result here should be that the coupling between College and District participatory governance structures and shared governance structures needs to be cleaner, closer, and more meaningful—everything is currently “siloed” so that there’s little practical connection between, for example, College Faculty Senates and the District Academic Senate and, for example, no connection whatsoever between College Budget Advisory Committees and the District Planning and Budgeting Council. Eliminating the many spaces/holes that currently exist is necessary to sustain the bizarre/challenging structure we have of 4+1=???

**5 Modest Proposals for the “4+1=1 Plan”**

[**Proposal 1: Stop “Faking It.”**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I95xCjQe6Jg)Peralta, at all levels, consistently relies on our version of “[**deus ex administrative**](https://youtu.be/wDYNVH0U3cs?t=4)” (mostly upper admin and mostly at the District) to cobble “decisions” or “results” from the shambles of our lack of actual process or shared decision-making because of “deadlines” and ever-present “[**Peralta Crisis!**](https://youtu.be/ZnJcZ-5P8hE?t=73)” and then calls this a “process” or a “plan” or “strategic.” (Tip: It’s never any of these things.) This kind of “disaster decision-making” is pernicious because a) it doesn’t fix what’s broken, b) it prevents accountability or improvement, and c) it corrupts everyone involved by creating a general culture of complicity in the broken system.

[**Proposal 2: Truth and Reconciliation.**](https://youtu.be/vlxuezfW3M8?t=41)Peralta is dysfunctional and poorly run because the Peralta community (faculty very much included) allow it to be amidst a lot of pointing fingers, a tremendous amount of passive-aggressiveness, a fair amount of bad faith, some denial, more than a dash of incompetence or lack of training, and general apathy/burn-out—the recipe for the “[**Peralta Way**](https://youtu.be/iPz5bJa9eOI?t=16).” We need to come together and acknowledge that we are all complicit in allowing Peralta to be as dysfunctional as it is and we need the District “[**Leadership**](https://youtu.be/JJ9CS0KUZvY?t=7)” to actually speak to our many problems and openly plan with us toward actual solutions. Pretending things are fine or that it’s any person or department’s fault, or bad luck, that Peralta is dysfunctional is pointless and gets us nowhere. We are all at fault.

[**Proposal 3: Stop Expecting Rescue (Save Ourselves).**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb4C7vSByMM) A sure sign of a dysfunctional institution is the desperate expectation that someone else will “save us.” Whether that’s a pricey independent consultant brought in to tell us what we already know and will ignore immediately ([**cough-BRJ&Associates-cough-CBT-wheeze-Ferrilli**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8_7Orhey-g)-choke-that’s literally about $2 million in the last 4 years right there) or a new administrative hire proclaimed to be the latest “fresh start” that will last, maybe, 2-3 years before they jump ship for that, maybe, bigger and better position at a more functional, or less dysfunctional institution, the continuous investment of time, energy, and most damagingly soon-to-be-thwarted half-faith or at least attention creates a depressing atmosphere of passive resignation in our own mediocrity by creating the impression we can’t actually do/be better ourselves. (We can! Frankly, we’re “bad enough” at enough things that it wouldn’t even be that hard to improve—a dying institution bounce if you will...)

[**Proposal 4: Danger! High Voltage!**](https://youtu.be/wbIXlf22qnM?t=5)Trust building has to start somewhere if there’s ever going to be a legitimate internal effort to improve Peralta and, obviously I’m biased but, faculty—especially tenured faculty—have a very privileged space to make the first move…faculty should absolutely begin to ACTIVELY and MEANINGFULLY engage with the College and District admin to cultivate accountability, transparency, and positive iteration in our structures, processes, and systems. This is more than the same handful of faculty basically trying to cover everything (badly) and acquiescing and rubber-stamping pretty much all “[**Peralta Crises!**](https://youtu.be/USu8vT_tfdw?t=8)” “responses” (because “what choice is there?” they tell themselves as they’ve done absolutely nothing to create an alternative…I love you academic senates…) and this is why DAS and the PBIM (that’s Peralta’s fake planning and budgeting integrated management that we pretend exists because of accreditation and hope that the ACCJC will pretend exists as well because it’s just easier…) is actually worse than useless right now—it’s actively making the District worse. We can do better if we’re just willing to actually try…

**Proposal 5:** [**Inertia creeps...**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3mn7EC-skg)Another aspect of a failed institution is its own protectiveness/resistance to any change because that would require both the actual labor of trying to improve as well as the real costs of change and the abstract cost of acknowledging both that things suck AND that they could be better but collectively we’ve not worked to make the effort to improve things—not many people want to acknowledge “we’re the problem” and it’s a lot more fun to blame structural and systemic issues, which absolutely exist, rather than think about things like, for example, 1 in 3 of our black students and 2 out of 5 of our Latinx students qualify as a “success” in state metrics over 6 year cohorts and that number is essentially unchanged over a decade of supposed targeting and equity “planning” at a College level. (So not even [**coin flip odds**](https://youtu.be/gOwLEVQGbrM?t=90)). So maybe inertia shouldn’t be our friend when “success” for us is currently defined as less than half of about 45% of our students complete a course of study or getting a job we know about. (Note: there’s plenty of problems with the state data—and our own—but when you need to quibble with the data you know you can’t win the actual argument…). So what is there besides inertia?

[**5A: Force equals mass times acceleration**.](https://youtu.be/1SUzcDUERLo) This means that “change” (disrupting inertia) requires actual action, not incessant “discussion” about action or pretenses about actions that will never happen or that are meant as cover to avoid other actions, to act as mass (the institution/people in this sense is the acceleration or “constant”). This is what would create change. When we have no action (just “discussion”) we have no force or change. This is the central Peralta conundrum right now: there’s no “mass” (or, like Oakland, “there’s no there there…”).

[**5B: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction**.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QJsljIDKkk) And yet! There is a “there,” and the people “there” deserve better than our inertia…so it’s really up to all of us to act if we want to disrupt our ongoing inertia of mediocrity and act for positive change for ourselves, our institution, and our community…

Or, more simply: Peralta’s going to remain a mess until there’s an ongoing internal good faith effort to follow the rules, systems, structures, and processes that already exist in theory so that they can be measured, assessed, and improved upon in practice over time to generate the changes necessary to develop a functional District. It’s not complicated and, to varying degrees, you can get pretty much everyone to acknowledge it but, as Peralta has long shown, there’s a big difference between talk (or “[**robust discussion**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8Hwq4V2dm0)”) and [**meaningful action**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vwHuCC6nP8)…