

OUR OPINION

Majority rules

October 11, 2013

We call it depressing to learn, via Thursday's front page piece by Daily Press staffer Brooke Self, that the teachers union at Victor Valley College is holding out for the elevation of trustee Dennis Henderson to chair the school's board of directors.

It's depressing for a couple or three reasons. The most important to us is that the board's current system of automatically rotating the chair (we almost said "chairmanship," but in deference to political correctness, we deleted "manship") among trustees seems to be a lousy way to run VVC's ship. It would elevate, for no particular reason except longevity, whomever's "turn" it is to the top spot, regardless of qualification.

We prefer merit to longevity, even if, as Dennis Henderson worries, it could be a "corrupt" system in that a majority of trustees (three) would control the board. Well yes. That's what the democratic process entails — the majority rules.

Our second reason is that, frankly, we don't believe Mr. Henderson should be the new head of the board. The argument that it's his turn because he's been a board member for the past 16 years is precisely our reason for objecting to his elevation. It's during those 16 years — particularly the last five or six — that the board has made decisions about finances (teachers salaries and benefits come to mind) that have led to the school's being placed on accreditation probation. It was those decisions, in which Mr. Henderson was a voting participant, that now has VVC in accreditation trouble.

We prefer Lorrie Denson's solution, supported by fellow trustee Joseph Brady, which is to revert to a process in which a majority of trustees select the chair — um, person. We don't have much doubt that the school's fulltime teachers — union members all — prefer Mr. Henderson. And that's our third reason for preferring a majority vote by the board to select its leader.

Steve Williams