



## Leader of new CFT local applies classroom lessons to unionism

Ann Marie Wasserbauer found that if she could learn how to be an effective union advocate, she could teach those skills to others—just like in her language classroom.

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## Revolving door between for-profit colleges and USDOE

Corporate leaders regularly swap places with executives in regulatory agencies meant to oversee their practices. But the Department of Education?

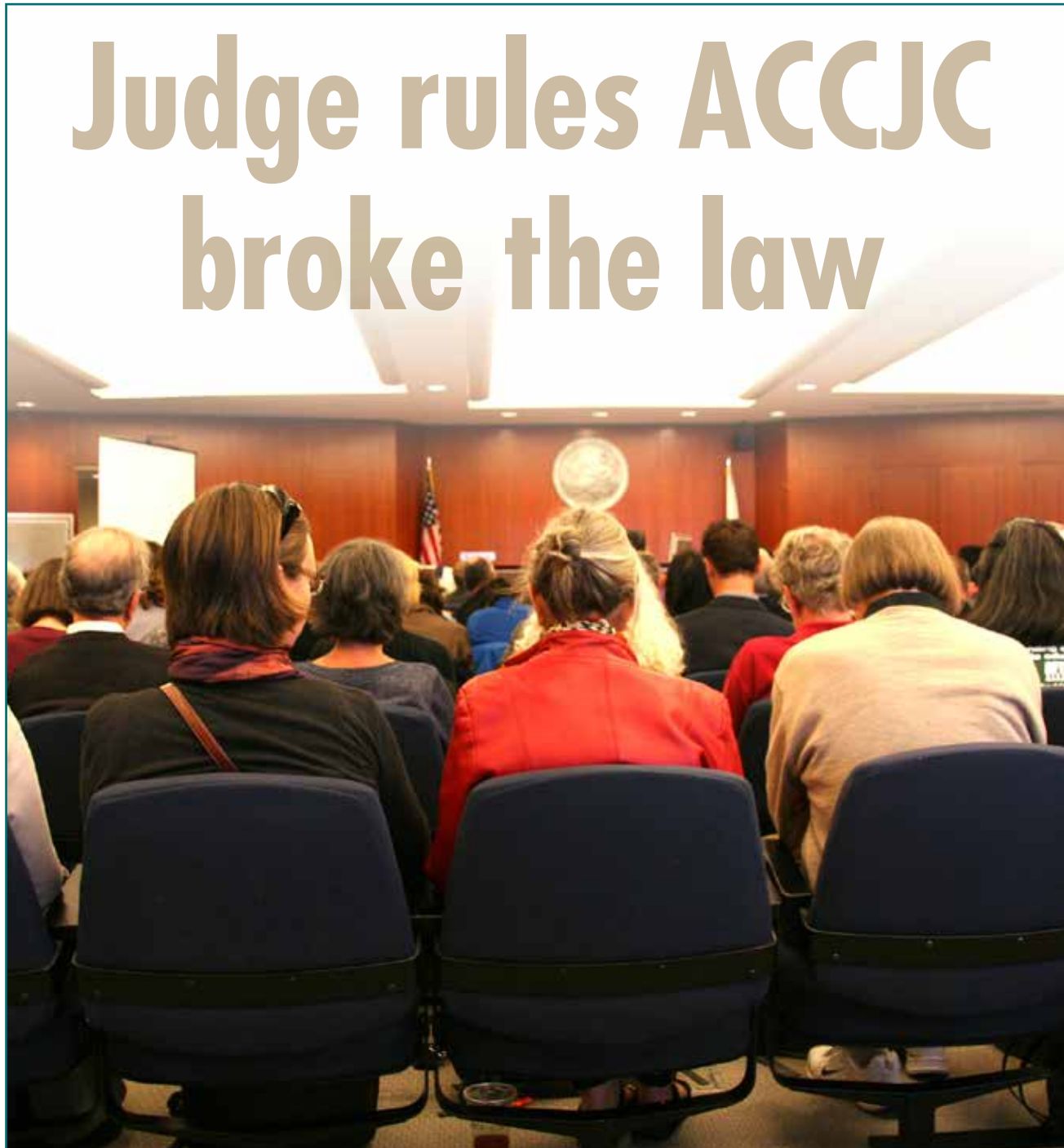
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## Interview with Chair of Assembly Higher Ed Committee, Jose Medina

"The most pressing issues facing community colleges at this time are affordability and accessibility of higher education," says Jose Medina, the new Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee.

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# Judge rules ACCJC broke the law

# Rogue accreditor losing ground, but not fast enough

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## President's Column

Jim Mahler, CFT Community College Council president

# ACCJC broke the law, says judge

Now we have confirmation in court: ACCJC broke the law. It's been a long time coming but the ongoing struggle to save City College of San Francisco (CCSF) just got a huge boost from the courts. Yes, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) was delivered a major smack-down by the judge in the San Francisco lawsuit that took the agency to task for its ongoing rogue behavior.

On February 17, San Francisco Superior Court Judge Curtis Karnow issued a ruling in the case of "The People vs. the ACCJC." During the weeklong trial, witness after witness presented strong evidence that the ACCJC

accreditation standards in 2013 (34 CFR 602.18) and

- Failed to provide sufficient opportunity for a written response to deficiencies identified by the ACCJC in 2013 (34 CFR 602.25 and

the ACCJC. Specifically, we call for the California state Legislature to fix our broken accreditation system; for the Department of Education to rein in this unfair accreditor; and for the California Community Colleges Board of Governors to return democracy and local control to the college by immediately reinstating its elected CCSF Board of Trustees.

If we are able to turn the tide in San Francisco, it will improve the quality and usefulness of the accreditation process for every college in California. As we all know, the accreditation process should ultimately serve as a tool to make us all better, not as a political bludgeon in the service of a totally unaccountable agency. ☐

**"We call for the California state Legislature to fix our broken accreditation system; for the Department of Education to rein in this unfair accreditor; and for the California Community Colleges Board of Governors to return democracy and local control to CCSF by immediately reinstating its elected Board of Trustees."**

engaged in unlawful practices in pursuit of closing City College of San Francisco.

Karnow's ruling found that the ACCJC violated the law in 2013 when it moved to disaccredit CCSF and that the ACCJC is "liable for violations of the Unfair Competition Law, specifically the law's ban on unlawful business practices."

The judge cited four laws broken by the rogue accrediting agency. The illegal actions that Judge Karnow found the ACCJC committed:

- It failed to maintain adequate controls against the appearance of conflicts of interest in the Commissioner selection process (34 CFR 602.15)
- It failed to include sufficient academics on the 2013 evaluation team (34 CFR 602.15)
- It failed to provide a detailed written report clearly identifying deficiencies in CCSF's compliance with

common law fair procedure) before discrediting CCSF.

Two key things were made clear by this case. First, the ruling showed that ACCJC broke the law in its handling of the City College of San Francisco accreditation review. Second, the ruling confirms that the State of California clearly has jurisdiction over ACCJC—despite the agency's smokescreens and protests to the contrary—and its practices can and should be subject to state law.

This opens the door for the state Legislature to reform the rules for accreditation or simply replace ACCJC as the sole accreditor for community colleges in California. It also puts pressure on the State Chancellor to do something to rein in the ACCJC and restore governing authority over CCSF to the elected college board rather than a "special trustee."

This is all good news but we must continue the work to move forward with essential next steps in the struggle against

### Part-Time Faculty Budget Advocacy Continues

While the Governor's January budget proposal was a bit dismaying for lack of specific inclusion of categorical funds for increased part-time faculty pay equity, paid office hours, or conversion of part-time to full-time positions, his budget message *did* refer, for the first time, to increased funding for full-time faculty positions.

Last fall, following two all day planning meetings, CFT advocates made two separate trips to Sacramento to meet with the State Chancellor's office and the Department of Finance in the hopes of influencing the Governor's spending priorities. While our voices were definitely heard, there is still more hard work ahead of us.

The Governor's January budget proposal is the very first step in the budget process which will culminate in June. Between now and the Governor's May Revision of his budget proposal, we will continue our advocacy efforts in the Capitol with the leadership in both the Senate and Assembly, in addition to continuing our dialog with the Department of Finance and the Governor's staff.

Locally, all CFT members can help with this effort by participating in the National Adjunct Action Day on February 25. We are using this day as a means to raise awareness of the inequitable conditions under which part-time faculty have to work. The goal is to capitalize on the current national media attention surrounding this issue, and create local messaging opportunities so that the general public and local media pick up on these local stories, raising the profile and importance of these issues with the decision makers in Sacramento.

If you would like materials to distribute in your local, sample letters to send the Governor and the Sacramento policymakers, or just ideas on what to do locally, please email CCC President Jim Mahler at [aftjim@mac.com](mailto:aftjim@mac.com).

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**March 20 - 22** CFT convention, Manhattan Beach Marriott

**April 21 - 2** CFT Lobby Day, Sacramento

**May 2** Community College Council, Westin LAX, Los Angeles

**May 3** CFT State Council, Westin LAX, Los Angeles

## Perspective

The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

The CFT represents over 120,000 educational employees working at every level of education in California. The CFT is committed to raising the standards of the profession and to securing the conditions essential to provide the best service to California's students.

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## Ann Marie Wasserbauer

## “A whole world opened up”

For Ann Marie Wasserbauer, the skills involved in teaching and learning languages can be applied in ways that go far beyond languages themselves. She describes her role as a facilitator: “I create an environment in which people can learn. If I can learn something, then I can teach it as well.”

The process of learning languages is very basic. “It is an all-encompassing experience,” she suggests. “It determines how we learn other things as well, as we’ve found out from research on the brain itself. It determines the way people get confidence in any new skill.”

In the last two years, Wasserbauer has used this approach in her work as a union activist and rank-and-file organizer, helping to guide faculty in the process of leaving an ineffective organization and forming a new local of the California Federation of Teachers at West Valley College in Silicon Valley.

**Learn one-on-one, teach one-on-one**

“If I learn how to organize one-on-one meetings with people to bring them into our group, then I can teach this also,” she says. “We use the same basic techniques in teaching languages; you role play a conversation, you practice it together with other people.”

Wasserbauer traces this open way of learning to her own history in learning languages. She grew up in Lakeview, Ohio, the daughter of a NASA engineer. Through the fourth grade she went to a Montessori school, before transferring to public schools.

All the way through she studied German and French. Her German teacher taught the language primarily through writing and translation. For French, however, she had a teacher who used more modern techniques, creating an immersion environment in which students spoke only that language in the classroom. The experience stuck with her.

Wasserbauer enrolled at Xavier University, studying languages and music, and found a program that sent her in her junior year to the Brecht University of Augsburg, in Swabia, then part of West Germany. “I have an Eastern European background,” she explains, “with Czech and Polish grandparents, and I found that I felt very much at home in Europe.”

She stayed for two years—long enough so that her German could convince people

she’d been born there. “I could see that the difficulties I’d previously had in learning weren’t about me, but about the methods of teaching. I became intrigued, not just in the language itself, but in

**“I saw what the CFT had done in getting Proposition 30 passed. I learned about the way it has organized faculty to resist pressure from the ACCJC. I could just see it was a better way for us to be plugged in.”**

how people learn it. It was an exhilarating experience, one that I wanted to share with people.”

Nevertheless, on finally graduating from Xavier, she was unsure about what she wanted to do. She spent an extra semester getting a teaching credential and practicing in a local middle and high school. On graduation, that ensured that she was offered a job immediately at a local high school, where she taught German and history.

**Popular teacher**

“I was a popular teacher,” she laughs, “because I took all the rejects, and used very modern techniques of teaching languages with them.” One she describes as “caring and sharing—lowering the affective filter.”

Through a workshop she became familiar with the second language acquisition theory of Stephen Krashen, emeritus linguistics professor at the University of Southern California. “Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill,” he teaches. “Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language—in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding.”

For Krashen, “The best methods are therefore those that supply ‘comprehensible input’ in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear.”

Wasserbauer connects this

method with the way children learn a language in their first years. “Parents speak to children when they want them to do things, and the kids listen and respond.” From this, she continues, comes the total immersion physical response method, which can be used in a classroom.

“First I’d ask students to listen and respond, using just

three words, teaching them to recognize the words, and to learn how they have to respond to them,” she recalls. “We’d use simple ones like ‘sit,’ ‘stand,’ or ‘turn around.’ The idea is to get them to listen, know how to respond, learn to say the words, before teaching students to produce language itself. It was fun—I could see the kids’ faces light up. Later I’d even hear them giving these commands to each other in the hallways and laughing. Then I

could begin to show them the alphabet and start writing.”

**Move to California**

After a few years, however, it was hard not just to spend the time teaching, but to find the time she felt was also needed to intervene in the lives of her students. She began to look for related work, and eventually went to the Monterey Institute of International Studies (now the Middlebury Institute) to get a degree in teaching English to non-English speakers. Getting a job afterwards meant moving to California where most of the jobs were.


In California she discovered community colleges, teaching first in Modesto. “I really like the idea of lifelong learning and the focus on teaching,” she says. A permanent position opened at West Valley College, and she’s taught there for twenty years.

Wasserbauer’s theories of language acquisition have dovetailed with her increasing activity as a faculty advocate and union activist. At Modesto she spoke at academic senate meetings about part-time issues. “When the old union at West Valley was effective years ago,” she says, “I helped when we’d refuse to go to certain committee meetings, like accreditation or academic senate, to put pressure

on the district. I put up signs to let students know why we couldn’t do certain things with them because of it.”

Finally, when fellow faculty member Mel Pritchard began talking with her about affiliating the faculty organization with the CFT, she jumped in. “We were all fed up by then,” she says. “We hadn’t had a raise in 12 years, there was no transparency in negotiations, and we were sick of the way the district was treating us.”

Among the skills that helped her, she believes, was openness to differences. “Having dealt with people from all over the world, I know that people come from many perspectives, and you can’t take things for granted. So with faculty I assume a positive intent, and watch to see if we can actually agree, because I also assume we’re coming from different worlds.”

When Wasserbauer met CFT staff and leaders in nearby community college locals, “I felt a whole world opened up for me. I saw what the CFT had done in getting Proposition 30 passed. I learned about the way it has organized faculty to resist pressure from the ACCJC. I could just see it was a better way for us to be plugged in.” 

By David Bacon



Ann Marie Wasserbauer, right, with ESL student Sara Debas at West Valley College, helped lead an independent faculty association into affiliation with the California Federation of Teachers Community College Council.

## Judge finds ACCJC broke the law

# Two steps forward, one step back for CCSF

Ongoing efforts by supporters of fair accreditation practices for City College of San Francisco (CCSF) and elsewhere in California were heartened by legal and regulatory successes in January. But in the same flurry of events, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), responding to mounting pressures to step back from discrediting CCSF, instituted a deceptive new policy, placing CCSF on “restoration status,” a little understood but dangerous precedent for community colleges in California.

### Court ruling

The biggest news was the tentative ruling issued on January 16 by San Francisco Superior Court judge Curtis Karnow in “The People vs. ACCJC” that the accreditor had broken the law. [As the *Perspective* went to press the judge issued his final ruling on February 17, essentially reaffirming the January decision.] The trial, held in late

imposing this disastrous sanction on the college. The team had unanimously proposed placing the college on the lesser sanction of “probation.”

California Federation of Teachers president Joshua Pechthalt said, “The judge’s decision is important. It says clearly that the commission broke the law. But the broader meaning is that the ACCJC

a commission that has shown by its disregard for fairness, for law, for its own policies, and for the educational future of 80,000 students, that it cannot be trusted, and does not deserve to hold that position any longer. Chancellor Harris and the Board of Governors acted responsibly in putting this building block to accreditation reform in place.”

### “Restoration Status”

Amid these welcome developments, the ever-creative ACCJC threw another wrench into the works. In tacit recognition of the growing effectiveness of the campaign by AFT Local 2121 and the CFT to explain the real nature of the rogue commission and the meaning of its actions to legislators, regulatory agency personnel, the media and the broader higher education community in California, the ACCJC came up with a new policy at the beginning of summer: “restoration status.”

It announced that CCSF could apply to be covered under this new policy, and implied the college would receive an extension of its accreditation for two years. Under public protest, the college’s administration did so. Why the protest? Because in the fine print of “restoration status” we learn that it leaves CCSF with no right of appeal or review, and allows the college to be shut down at any time at the whim of the ACCJC even if it meets a standard of “substantial compliance.” “Restoration status” demands “full compliance” with all standards, while other colleges can remain open if they meet the “substantial compliance” standard.

Carrying through on the charade, at its January meeting the ACCJC announced that it had granted “restoration status” to CCSF. Knowledgeable observers speculated that the timing of

**“The judge’s decision is important. It says clearly that the commission broke the law. But the broader meaning is that the ACCJC is not a fair and constructive overseer of accreditation for California’s community colleges. It demonstrates the need for reform of community college accreditation in California.”**

October for five days, was followed in December with a day of closing arguments. Each day of the proceedings the courtroom was filled to capacity by CCSF supporters.

In a vindication of the CFT’s longstanding contention that the ACCJC acted illegally in its decision to terminate City College of San Francisco’s accreditation, Judge Karnow found the ACCJC violated federal regulations and common law fair procedure, and committed “significant unlawful practices” in its handling of CCSF’s accreditation review.

To remedy the violation of City College’s due process, the court ordered the ACCJC to revisit the discreditation decision and provide the college with the opportunity to respond to ACCJC actions that it had been denied previously. The judge also ordered the ACCJC to increase its transparency, to make its documents and decision-making publicly available this time around, and to hold CCSF harmless in its “restoration status” if it seeks to avail itself of the judge’s offer.

As discovered by the *Los Angeles Times* in papers filed for the trial, the Commission, behind closed doors, overruled its own site visit team in unfairly

is not a fair and constructive overseer of accreditation for California’s community colleges. It demonstrates the need for reform of community college accreditation in California.”

### BOG acts to end ACCJC monopoly

A few days after Judge Karnow’s initial tentative ruling, on January 20, the California Community College Board of Governors deleted language from Title 5 regulations that gave ACCJC sole authority over accreditation of the state’s community colleges.

This regulatory change was recommended last June by State Auditor Elaine M. Howle. In a scathing report, she said, “... inconsistent application of the accreditation process and a lack of transparency in that process are weakening the accreditation of California’s community colleges.”

While further steps will need to be taken before another entity might be able to perform the complex and important work of accreditation of California’s community colleges, this regulatory change was a necessary prerequisite. CFT president Pechthalt said, “It was past time to end the monopoly over accreditation exercised by



RED GLASS PHOTO

CCSF Board of Trustees member Rafael Mandelman, left, turns to talk with Assemblymember Tom Ammiano, in the overflow crowd at the San Francisco Superior Court during closing arguments on December 9 in “The People vs. ACCJC.” AFT 2121 political director Alisa Messer looks on.

the announcement, days before the decision was to be rendered in “The People vs. ACCJC,” was meant to say to the judge, ‘Look, there’s no need to punish us, we’re letting CCSF stay open.’

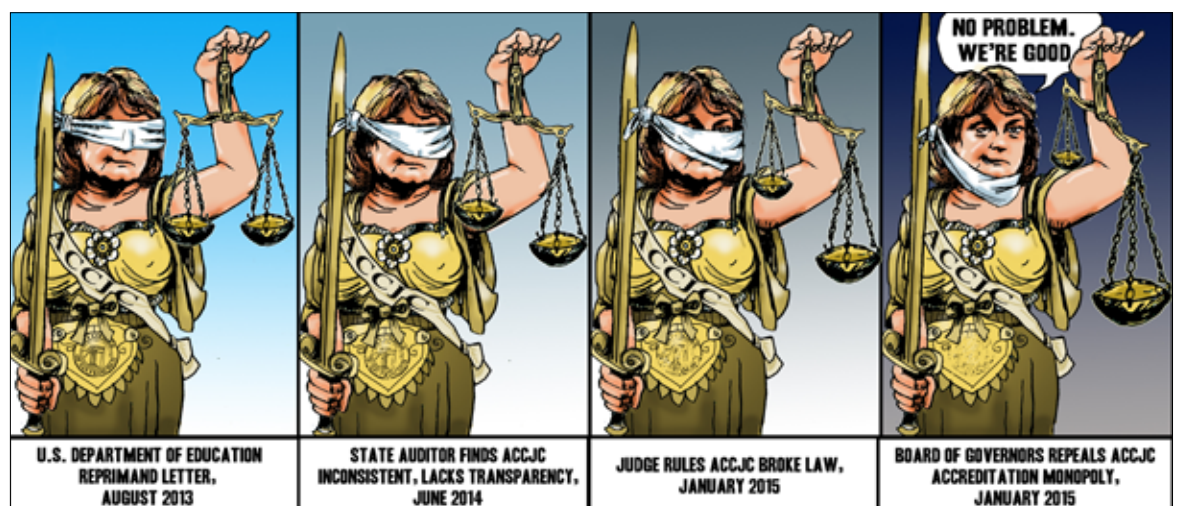
### Casualty: democracy

One of the casualties of the ACCJC’s illegal actions was democracy in San Francisco. Despite having turned in a balanced budget and overseen the stringent internal reforms and financial sacrifices demanded of the college by the Commission, the elected CCSF Board of Trustees was removed by State Chancellor Brice Harris at the urging of ACCJC president Barbara Beno in summer 2013. A “supertrustee,” retired community college administrator Bob Agrella, was imposed in its place. Agrella’s unpopular regime was marked by unilateral and opaque decision-making and the spectacular failure of the one mission he was appointed to accomplish: preventing the discreditation of the college by ACCJC.

Harris later stated in a court deposition that if he had known that Beno would doublecross him and discredit the college, he would not have agreed to the removal of the Trustees.

CCSF supertrustee Agrella resigned during the eventful month of January. The Board of Governors is considering a timeline for reinstating the Board of Trustees. But the Chancellor is also considering appointing a new “supertrustee.” AFT Local 2121 president Tim Killikelly said, “Recent developments demonstrate that the justification for imposing a “special trustee with extraordinary powers” and displacing the democratically elected Board of Trustees at CCSF was wrong. There is no need for a special trustee at CCSF. We call upon the State Chancellor and the state community college Board of Governors for the immediate return of the Board of Trustees.” CCC

By Fred Glass



## Revolving door for privatization

# The corporate roots of the attack on community colleges

As the fight for the continued accreditation of City College of San Francisco has unfolded over the last two years, activists have undertaken a pioneering investigation into the roots of this crisis, including faculty from AFT Local 2121, and members of the Save City College Coalition. They have uncovered not just the corporate links that motivated the attack on the college, but a web of money and influence that seeks to downsize the public community college system to allow for expansion of a growing industry of private, for-profit institutions.

“The people who manufactured extreme accreditation sanctions in California are now on the payroll of corporations and lobbyists that stand to gain from the downsizing of public community colleges,” according to Allan Fisher, who with others, did the digging that unearthed the connections.

The investigation profiled several key players in a revolving door system in which public officials in the Federal government promote policies favorable to private for-profit colleges, and then go on to take high-salaried positions with those corporations and their lobby groups. They include:

**Margaret Spellings**, former Secretary of Education under President Bush, was a champion of the “No Child Left Behind” law and the growth of the standardized-testing, education reform establishment. Working with investment banker Charles Miller, Spellings promoted “student learning outcomes” (SLOs), a system of corporate management objectives imposed on community colleges despite a lack of research evidence that SLOs improve education. SLOs lay the groundwork for the introduction of standardized testing in the community college setting, through the Degree Qualifications Profile—a standardized curriculum framework now under development, similar to the Common Core in K–12. Lack of “sufficient progress” on SLOs was a major ACCJC criticism of City College of San Francisco. Spellings also pressured accreditation bodies to “get tough” on public community colleges. When Bush left office, Spellings went on to direct education and workforce programs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the oldest lobby group for U.S. corporations.

**Sally Stroup**, former assistant secretary of education appointed by President George W. Bush, oversaw accreditation. Stroup then joined the staff of House

Speaker John Boehner working on the same issues. Boehner is the largest recipient of campaign contributions from the student loan industry, and Stroup drafted legislation favorable to that industry. Today she is vice-president of the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities, the main lobby group of for-profit colleges.

**“The people who manufactured extreme accreditation sanctions in California are now on the payroll of corporations and lobbyists that stand to gain from the downsizing of public community colleges.”**

**Vickie Schray** was in charge of “accreditation rule-making” at the Department of Education, where she worked for 13 years. After leaving DOE, she became vice president of the second-largest for-profit college corporation in the US—Bridgpoint Education Inc., at a salary estimated at between \$1 and \$3 million annually.

**Arthur Rothkopf**, a former vice president of the US Chamber of Commerce, from 2010–13, co-chaired the Department of Education’s National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, (NACIQI) which advises the department on issues of accreditation and certification for receiving Federal student aid. He now belongs to the governing board of the Educational Testing Service, a pillar of the testing industry that stands to profit if the Degree Qualifications Profile is adopted as a curriculum and measuring system at the community college level.

The revolving door operates in both Republican and Democratic administrations. Early in the current administration, private for-profit colleges were threatened by proposed Congressional regulations that

would cut off student aid from some institutions that burdened students with debt, and then failed to help them get meaningful jobs in the fields for which they were being educated. Of the lobbyists who sprang into action to kill the regulations and protect corporate profits, most were Democratic political operatives.

They included Joel Packer, for many years a lobbyist for the National Education Association; Tony Podesta, brother of John Podesta, who headed President Obama’s transition team in 2008; Dick Gephardt, former Democratic House leader and presidential candidate; and Lanny Davis, former special

counsel in President Clinton’s White House, along with numerous former staffers from the Department of Education and the education oversight committees of Congress.

The beneficiaries of this lobbying effort are well-connected wealthy corporations and executives, some of which have become the darlings of hedge funds. Andrew Clark, the chief executive of Bridgpoint, brought home more than \$20 million in compensation in 2010. The Kaplan chain of for-profit colleges was headed by CEO Jonathan Grayer, who pulled down \$76 million in 2008, when he resigned under fire. Kaplan gets 86% of its income from student loans. Its lobbyist is Steve Elmendorf, who organized Secretary of State John Kerry’s 2004 presidential campaign.

Corinthian Colleges, Inc. is a corporation that owned more than 100 colleges across the nation, operating under such brands as Everest, WyoTech and Heald. Corinthian saw profits increase from \$4.5 million in 1999 to more than \$146 million in 2010, and received \$1.4 billion revenue annually from student loans. Last year the corporation collapsed when the



ISTOCK/CHUMU

Department of Education found fraud in reporting student outcomes, and forced it to sell 85 of the campuses and close 12, leaving 72,000 students in 26 states still on the hook for making payments. Thirteen Democratic Senators demanded that DoE forgive the loans, which the Department is resisting. The system of private, for-profit colleges itself remains protected by its army of lobbyists and political influence.

The City College of San Francisco researchers identified one other key corporation in the for-profit network—the Lumina Foundation, set up by the Student Loan Marketing Corporation (Sallie Mae), the nation’s largest student loan company. Lumina has set the “Big Goal” of having 60% of adults having degrees or credentials by 2025, with a major emphasis on students carrying 15 credits per semester, so that they can’t hold down jobs. This goal would require a major expansion in student loans.

“The flip side [of the growth in for-profit colleges and the student loan industry] is sharply declining public funding for California community colleges, and aggressive hyper-regulation by the ACCJC,” the committee study found. “The statewide Chancellor’s website counts a stunning decline of students from 2.9 million in 2008, to 2.1 million in 2014, with a loss of 24% of all classes—but with hardly a whimper of protest

from system leaders at this abandonment of low-income students and students of color... Having a radically over-priced, inferior product, the for-profit colleges and their partner—the student loan industry—can only get a bigger share of California’s huge market IF they can shrink the nation’s largest community college system.”

This, the research committee believes, is what led to the attack on the accreditation of City College by the ACCJC. The ACCJC claimed repeatedly that it must disaccredit and effectively close the 80-year old City College of San Francisco because of the “two-year rule,” an obscure regulation of the US Department of Education, elevated in importance by DOE officials in 2008—the same officials who have now gone through the lucrative golden revolving door.

“The dominant question in the media and officialdom is: ‘Has City College met the standards set by the ACCJC?’ the study asks. “The presumption is that the standards are fair, and fairly enforced by an even-handed group of peers... So this presentation examines a different question: Who sets the standards and their enforcement, and who stands to gain from the ACCJC’s strikingly aggressive and disproportionate sanctioning of California community colleges?”

By David Bacon

Go to [saveccsf.org](http://saveccsf.org) for a slide show of this information with sources and references. The slide show and the research described in this article is the work of the Research Committee serving the struggle to Save City College, comprising students, faculty, retirees and staff from City College, SF State, and UC Berkeley, with friends and colleagues in community organizations and several other campuses. Send comments or suggestions to [ResComm11@gmail.com](mailto:ResComm11@gmail.com). Contact: Allan Fisher.

## New chair of Assembly Higher Ed Committee

## An interview with Jose Medina

The new legislative session has begun and there are a number of new committee chairs. CFT Political Director Kenneth Burt, on behalf of the *Community College Perspective*, talked with Assemblymember Jose Medina, from Riverside, the new chair of Assembly Higher Education.

**Perspective:** Congratulations on your appointment as the new chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee. It is great to have a chair with first-hand experience with community colleges. What made you decide to become a teacher?

**Assemblymember Medina:**

Earlier on in my career, I was able to work with adolescent kids and I quickly realized I enjoyed working with young people. Teachers can have such a lasting impact on the lives of their students and I am grateful for the experience.

**Perspective:** What drove your academic interest in Latin American history?

**JM:** I went to high school in the Panama Canal Zone and that enhanced my interest in Latin American history and culture. Although I was in Panama, we were taught U.S. and World history, so I was interested in learning more about Latin American studies.

**Perspective:** I understand that you taught at three different

community colleges and later were a community college trustee. How did those experiences shape your outlook and prepare you for this post?

**JM:** As a part-time instructor, I was able to gain first-hand knowledge of what it's like to teach in California community colleges and the challenges faced by students and teachers. My experience as a trustee helped me understand what it takes

**"As a part-time instructor, I was able to gain first-hand knowledge of what it's like to teach in California community colleges and the challenges faced by students and teachers."**

to run a community college district. All of these experiences combined gave me an excellent foundation for chairing the Assembly Higher Education Committee and understanding the real world challenges faced by our community college system.

**Perspective:** What do you think

of the Board of Governor's change to the Title 5 regulations rescinding the ACCJC's monopoly over accreditation and what do you see as the next step in the spirit of that decision?

**JM:** I am pleased to see the Board of Governor's looking at the issue of accreditation. Any decision to change the community college accrediting agency should be viewed through the lens of how that change affects students. It is important that any accrediting agency that works with California's community colleges is thorough, fair and consistent.

**Perspective:** The community colleges lost 600,000 students during the Great Recession, and only gained 100K back since. How do you think we can bring them back?

**JM:** Ensuring that our colleges can meet the needs of their communities requires a multifaceted solution; one that

includes funding for faculty and courses, support of services and success programs, and financial aid so that students can cover the non-tuition costs associated with college completion. I think our colleges are on the right track. After four years of decline, the funding increase provided to community colleges in 2013-14 allowed colleges to offer additional course sections. In the same academic year, community colleges awarded a record number of certificates and degrees. With the additional funding proposed for California community colleges in the 2015-16 budget, I think we are on our way to fully restoring access for our communities.

**Perspective:** What do you see as the most pressing issues facing community colleges and what are the issues on which the committee will focus its attention?

**JM:** The most pressing issues facing community colleges at this time are affordability and accessibility of higher education.



As Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, I will continue to prioritize affordability for California families, through support for the BOG Fee Waiver Program, Cal Grant restorations, and the Middle Class Scholarship.

We cannot overestimate the importance of the teacher. One of my community college priorities this session will be to look at the support provided to our faculty. Teachers directly impact a student's ability to be successful and we must recognize these important contributions.



## Legislative Update

## CFT legislative priorities for 2015

At this time of year in the legislative session, each legislator's office is trying to determine which bills they will carry and what their priorities will be for this session. Here are the highlights of bills CFT is hoping to get placed that reflect previous CFT Convention resolution priorities:

- **Close the classified service "loophole" in the Ed Code.** If passed, this bill would put more stringent requirements on Districts, closing existing loopholes in the Ed Code which allow Districts to hire "temp" workers year after year, rather than place them in the Classified Service as was the initial intent of the Legislature. *Author: Asm. Gonzalez*
- **Strengthen 75/25 Full-Time/Part-Time CC Faculty Regulations.** The intent of the Legislature in passing the omnibus Community College Reform Bill, AB 1725 in 1988, was to increase the number full-time faculty until 75% of credit courses were taught by

full-time faculty. Sadly, in the intervening 27 years, the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty has actually decreased to approximately 56% currently. This bill would require Districts to hire only full-time faculty if they want to expand their course offerings from their current size. *Potential Author: Seeking an author*

- **Accreditation/ACCJC reform.** Several legislators have expressed an interest in carrying some type of legislation to rein in the rogue actions of the ACCJC. We are waiting to see final bill proposals until we decide which bills CFT should support or sponsor. *Potential Author: Several potential authors*

- **Job Security Model for Part-Time CC Faculty.** We have had very productive discussions with the new Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair, José Medina, regarding authoring a bill that would seek some form of statewide job security for part-time faculty. CTA/CCA is also interested in co-sponsoring this legislation with us. As this goes to press, we are waiting for final bill language to emerge and the final "green light" from Medina's office that he will carry this important bill. *Potential Author: Asm. Medina*

The deadline for bill introduction is February 27. By that time, the field of competing bill concepts will have solidified and we will have more information to pass on.

## Need to make Prop 30 permanent

# A positive state budget brings an unprecedented opportunity

Governor Jerry Brown presented his 2015-16 budget proposal to the legislature on January 9, 2015. The budget by any measure is positive, with the increase in state revenues due to the recovery of the economy and Prop 30. General Fund revenues have been projected to increase from \$108 billion in 2014 to over \$113 billion in 2015, nearly a 5% increase. Even better is that the Legislative Analyst's Office predicts that the revenues for 2014-15 will exceed \$2 billion above current estimates, which will predominantly go toward Prop 98. In addition, the 2015-16 budget is projected to be \$1 billion above the revenue estimates Governor Brown used for his 2015-16 budget proposal.

Despite the optimistic revenue forecast, Governor Brown takes a conservative approach to the budget that focuses on paying down the debt and contributing to the rainy day fund as directed by Prop 2. Prop 2 captures 1.5% of general fund revenue (\$2.4 billion) and deposits \$1.2 billion into the budget savings account; the other \$1.2 billion is used to pay down existing debt.

### Need for budget priorities

California Community College funding has increased significantly the past few years. However, much of the increase has gone toward paying down deferrals. So those budgets have not translated to faculty priorities like more access, Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), hiring of more full time faculty, or part-time equity.

The 2015-16 budget proposal

has community college Prop 98 funding increasing to \$7.62 billion, a 10.6% increase over last year. Here is how most of the funds will be allocated:

#### Deferrals: \$94.5 million.

This payment would completely retire the deferrals. However, if the General Fund revenues for this current fiscal year are indeed \$2 billion above the forecast, then the deferrals will be retired this year, leaving this \$94.5 million available for other priorities.

#### COLA: \$92.4 million.

This satisfies the statutory COLA of 1.58%. Governor Brown has made it clear that he would not fund above the statutory COLA throughout his administration.

**Base Allocation Increase: \$125 million.** This would be continuous funding, not one-time-only. It is critical that

locals negotiate how these funds will be spent in each district. These funds can be used to pay for STRS/PERS increases, healthcare, part-time office hours, hiring more full-time faculty, facilities, professional development, or other general fund expenses.

**Access/Growth: \$106.9 million.** This equates to 2% or an addition 45,000 students.

## Recent polls indicate that the majority of Californians favor making Prop 30 taxes permanent and approve of commercial property tax reform

We don't yet know which formula will be used to distribute the Base Allocation and Access/Growth funds to college districts. Governor Brown has favored targeting more funds to districts that serve low income students. The State Chancellor's office has been developing a formula, but whether it is ready to implement for this budget cycle remains unclear.

**Student Success: \$200 million.** These funds will be equally divided between

the Student Success and Support Program, and Student Equity Plans. This program has been a high priority for the Chancellor's Office, but faculty groups worry district administrators won't utilize these funds for hiring more counselors to service assessment, orientation, and equity plan needs of students, convert part-time positions into full-time, and

to the state. This will provide significant revenue to the districts, but districts vary in how those funds are utilized.

**Adult Education: \$500 million.** This is not a specific budget item for community colleges, but can have significant consequences for your district.

This is a positive budget for community colleges and the outlook is favorable for the next few years. However, we have lingering concerns about STRS/PERS increases through 2019 and the expiration of Prop 30 funding in 2018. Unfortunately, Governor Brown has not advocated making any part of those taxes permanent.

Recent polls indicate that the majority of Californians favor making Prop 30 taxes permanent and approve of commercial property tax reform (separating commercial from residential and allowing commercial to move to full market value). We have an unprecedented opportunity for Governor Brown and the state Legislature to extend Prop 30 and reform Prop 13 property tax inequities. Now is the time for us to do the work necessary to make positive economic and budget reform in California. ☐

By Dean Murakami



Flyer for community meeting on "repeatability."

## "Repeatability" regulations Continued from page 8

### What you can do:

Sign up for email alerts by sending an email to [ccft@ccftcabrillo.org](mailto:ccft@ccftcabrillo.org); please include "repeatability advocacy" in the title. You can also contact Maya Bendotoff or Sharon Took-Zozaya at 831-464-2238.

Sign our online petition at: <http://chn.ge/1m4ICET>

The statewide community college Academic Senate passed a resolution in November 2014, stating its intent to:

Gather information from local senates about the impact at the program level of the 2012 repeatability regulation changes and hold a breakout session at the Spring 2015 Plenary;

Research the impact at the program level of the 2012 changes, use the research to inform possible future actions or guidance regarding this issue, and present the research at the Spring 2016 Plenary Session.

Followup is needed in your local senates. If your program faculty are affected, please be sure to get local senates on board! Encourage your organizations to support rescinding or modifying these regulations. In particular, we need support from student senates and clubs, Legislators, and local governing boards. ☐

by Maya Bendotoff

# Local Action

## San Luis Obispo

### Cuesta College AFT wins Measure L, Bond Measure

Due to November's election, Cuesta College will soon hold classes in new buildings. Voters in San Luis Obispo County approved a bond measure that will make \$275 million available for repairing buildings in poor condition, and replacing the worst with new ones.

"The portable buildings we've been using for instructional and office space are no longer suitable," says Debra Stakes,

president of the Cuesta College Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 4909. With the first of four bond issuances, for \$70 million this spring, construction will start on a new instructional building at the main campus in San Luis Obispo, and a campus center in North County. In 2018 another \$70 million issuance will build a campus center in San Luis Obispo, and an early childhood center in North County. The third and fourth issuances in 2021 and 2024 will be spent on technology upgrades and other repairs.

Stakes says that the first two issuances are especially important

to faculty because they will retire the district's \$1.3 million debt, which is currently paid from the general fund. The money now used for those debt payments, presumably, will become available for badly needed salary increases.

### Many endorsements


"Our union worked hard on this election, with the Tri-County Labor Council," she explains, covering the entire district with campaign signs. Stakes herself wrote an op-ed piece favoring the bond issue published in the Tribune, the local paper. She helped

get endorsements from the Democratic Party and the California Faculty Association chapter at the nearby Cal Poly campus.

The campaign was preceded by a survey of district residents that found support for the additional funding. Although the college's accreditation was challenged in the last few years, two-thirds rated the district's spending policies as responsible. Eighty percent of potential voters credited the college with training the area's first responders.

The Measure L effort built on the union's previous success

in carrying the county for Proposition 30, a remarkable achievement in a conservative area. "We won because we walked precincts, talked with people door to door, and got the word out," Stakes says. "Even Republican voters want Cuesta College to be here when their kids are ready to go, and they recognize that the education we provide is excellent."

The first emergency roof repairs begin this April, and ground will be broken for the new buildings by the fall. 

By David Bacon

## AB 86 Update

# A unique opportunity for adult education

The Governor's budget proposal allocates \$500 million to adult education. \$300 to 350 million goes directly to the K-12 districts to provide maintenance of effort of their adult education programs for 2015-2016 school year. The balance goes to the seventy consortia to implement their plans. Adult education is not part of the Local Control Funding Formula for K-12 Districts. This \$500 million will practically be the sole support for these adult education programs, whereas for community colleges this money will be a small part of their total funding.


By creating linkages between K-12 Districts and community colleges, AB 86 has provided a unique opportunity for expanding and improving adult education. The 2013-2014 State Budget

allocated \$25 million to the California Community College Chancellor's Office to fund two-year planning and implementation grants. All 72 community college districts applied for and received grants based on the size of their consortia.

The scope of the planning grants was limited to elementary and secondary basic skills, ESL and citizenship skills programs, programs for adult with disabilities, short-term career technical education and apprenticeships programs. The planning grants are for an inventory of current programs, to identify gaps, create seamless transitions from current programs to post-secondary education and the workforce, identify ways to accelerate progress, and coordinate professional development.

### CFT demanded teacher involvement

Lack of teacher involvement has been a concern at all levels of AB 86 planning. CFT's adult education commission, with the support of CFT's Secretary-Treasurer, Jeff Freitas, demanded more teacher involvement. Progress in involving teachers has been slow, but the Statewide AB 86 Work Group recently expanded to include members from CFT, CSEA, CTA, the Academic Senate and students, as well as administrative groups. A statewide two day summit in Sacramento brought administrators and instructors from every consortium together. Teachers are still struggling to have a voice at the local consortium level.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> the draft Regional Comprehensive Plan was due to the state with the final plan due to the legislature on March 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been a lot of hard work done by all. The process of getting community college and adult school teachers together has created a better understanding of each other's programs. The planning process has brought some great results, but more needs to be done to insure adult students have access to the education they need. 



KATHY JASPER PHOTO

The South Bay Consortium for Adult Education (San Jose) as the teachers report back to the whole group from their program area groups at one of the all day planning retreats.

By Kathy Jasper

## Narrow vision undermines student access

# "Repeatability" regulations take the community out of our colleges

In the summer of 2012, prior to the passage of Prop 30 and at a time when California community colleges were turning away hundreds of thousands of students due to budget shortfalls, the Community College Board of Governors passed regulations severely limiting repeatability of coursework. The stated goal was to focus on and prioritize basic skills, certificate and degree attainment, and transfer preparation. The regulations went into effect in fall of 2013.

Under the recent regulations a student can only successfully complete a course one time in most cases. There is an additional factor for students in the arts and kinesiology: students may have no more than four enrollments in any given group of active participatory courses that are related in content (commonly known as a family of courses).

This is a huge blow to anyone serious about art, especially those students who didn't (and don't) have access to private music, theater, or other arts classes. Other areas significantly impacted by these changes include kinesiology and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs such as Journalism, Digital Media, Welding, and many more.

### Narrow vision

The changes to repeatability align with a narrow vision of colleges that focuses on

academic transfer and CTE certificate or licensing programs and allows students two years to get through the system. It does not take into account those updating skills for jobs not associated with licensing requirement or students attempting to pursue goals outside of transfer.

These regulations have gone too far. From what we are hearing, students in numerous programs across the state are, and will continue to be, severely impacted by these regulations.

We would love nothing more than to get back to a California Master Plan vision of education that provides quality education for all Californians. In the meantime, we'd like to save our art programs and bring back access for students who may need to repeat a course for a reason other than (low level) transfer or a certificate. We hope you will join us.

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