



## AFT Local 2121 and the CFT Sue Accrediting Commission to Block Closure of City College of San Francisco

The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and the AFT Local 2121 filed a lawsuit against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to block the planned closure of City College of San Francisco (CCSF).

The ACCJC announced on July 3, 2013 that CCSF had been disaccredited and would be closed in a year sending a wave of shock spreading across California.

The adverse impacts from ACCJC's actions were obvious: San Francisco losing its only public college and a lack of adequate alternative placements for its then 90,000 students. All of these dire consequences when the facts show that none of the



From Left: CCSF Student Trustee Shanelle Williams, SF Supervisor David Campos, CFT President Josh Pechthalt, President of SF Community College District Federation of Teachers, Alisa Messer, SF Supervisor Scott Wiener, and other CCSF supporters.

140 vocational programs, and nearly 150 academic and related programs, had any deficiencies!

Last June's ACCJC meeting where it considered CCSF's fate was accompanied by a number of shenanigans - ACCJC effectively prevented most members of the public

who came from entering the meeting room and ACCJC adopted, unlawfully in violation of its bylaws, a new policy requiring that team evaluators, and other Commission members, either shred documents related to their accreditation reviews, or turn them over to ACCJC President

*"...the ACCJC must be held accountable for their reckless, irresponsible and illegal actions."*

-Josh Pechthalt, CFT President

Barbara Beno.

On August 13, 2013, the US Department of Education (DOE) issued its ruling on the Complaint Local 2121, the CFT and others had filed on April 30. It sustained the Complaint in three important areas.

First, the visiting evaluation team had been improperly formed, without sufficient faculty. Second, the appointment of Peter Crabtree (Commission

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### The CFT Welcomes Life Chiropractic College West Faculty Federation, AFT Local 6538



From left: CFT Organizing Director Sandra Weese, Organizing Staff Alayna Fredricks, Life West Local Members Loretta O'Brien, Susan Hilliker and Hari Khalsa.

Moving quickly last spring, a strong and representative Faculty Organizing Committee (OC) at Life Chiropractic College West (LCCW) was formed. Within a couple months the OC assessed the unit for interest, collected authorization cards, and turned out their votes for a successful National Labor Relations Board election on July 10 and 11. A strong majority of faculty voted to join the CFT. A victory party was held to welcome over 50 new CFT members. Work on the plan for the contract campaign began immediately thereafter. A special thank you to CFT field representative Daryl Hemenway and Organizer Alayna Fredericks for their work on this effort. Since July, CFT Organizers have continued to work with the faculty at LCCW to develop their internal union structure, expand their member base and begin their first contract campaign. With a constitution drafted and union officers elected, they have begun to draft their first bargaining survey. An intensive membership drive is underway as they work to build the power of the bargaining unit and continue to better understand the issues affecting members.

# Quality Public Education Campaign Moves Ahead with Local Engagement and Training of Organizers

Foundational meetings were held over the summer with all of the sixteen locals awarded Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizing (SCIO) program grants -- a key part of the CFT's emerging Quality Public Education Campaign (QPEC).

The QPEC is committed to working with community partners on issues of equity, access, pedagogy, funding, and other elements needed for progressive educational improvements. Our general campaign goal is to foster solutions that work locally, consider the needs of a school's surrounding community, and defend the integrity of educators in the process.

These summer meetings with Organizing Director Sandra Weese and Political Field Director Jessica Ulstad were detailed goal setting engagements. Among other things, they focused on membership growth and emphasized the importance of establishing an efficient and



SCIOs Stacy Carlson-Finkenthal, Elaine Franciso, and Sarah Henne share the exciting work their locals have been doing.

Jessica Ulstad

*“We’ve been working on community organizing for some time, but not until now – with the receipt of the SCIO grant – did we have the capacity to realize our dreams.”*

--Stacy Carlson-Finkenthal, SCIO from Palomar Faculty Federation, Local 6161

high functioning worksite leadership structure.

These sixteen SCIO grantees are planning a number of exciting organizing projects, including: recruiting candidates to contest school board elections, constructing alliances with parent advocates, and deepening ties with labor councils, interfaith councils and other community partners.

At the end of the summer a two-day intensive training session was held where participants discussed the SCIO grant program and its role within the QPEC and

focused on the concrete steps for building community partnerships.

These SCI Organizers strengthened their skills and learned how to develop a campaign strategy. They used an interactive module on the concepts and steps to building power to win on our issues including a planning framework, power mapping and analysis, identifying targets, developing a strategy, and an introduction to tactics. Participants also heard a presentation on the corporate influences in education policy.

Asked to describe her experience at the SCIO

training Stacy Carlson-Finkenthal, SCIO from Palomar Faculty Federation, Local 6161 said: “We’ve been working on community organizing for some time, but not until now – with the receipt of the SCIO grant – did we have the capacity to realize our dreams. This training validated our beliefs that we should be reaching out to labor and community groups to build political power. We got a lot of good feedback on our efforts and how we can keep it going to make a progressive stand in North San Diego County.”

*“This training validated our beliefs that we should be reaching out to labor and community groups to build political power.”*

--Stacy Carlson-Finkenthal, SCIO from Palomar Faculty Federation, Local 6161



Political Field Director Jessica Ulstad leads a portion of the SCIO Training.

Sandra Weese

# Greater Santa Cruz Federation of Teachers Fight for a Fair Contract



Teachers of Soquel High gather for an action in front of the district office of Santa Cruz City Schools, wearing black to signal their frustration with the pace at which the district has moved toward honoring their commitment to teachers.

*“The district needs to do the right thing. The teachers here are so dedicated. When times were tough we did our share...”*

-Casey Carlson, SCIO from Greater Santa Cruz Federation of teachers, Local 2030

Over 400 teachers in the Santa Cruz City Schools (SCCS) are engaged in struggle to gain their fair share of increased district revenue.

Working without a cost-of-living raise since 2008 teachers in the Greater Santa Cruz Federation of Teachers, Local 2030 (GSCFT) and the SCCS had previously reached agreement to bargain a pay increase for teachers if there was any unrestricted revenue that exceeded what was budgeted for the 2012-13 budget year.

When the district found it would indeed get more money than anticipated from the state’s redistribution of former city redevelopment funds – how much was in dispute – they reneged

on their agreement. Local 2030 began working aggressively to compel the district to meet with them and adhere to its promise and give them their fair share.

The meeting finally occurred on August 26. The district said there was an additional \$450K in the 2012-13 budget and offered a 1% retroactive pay raise and then abruptly ended the meeting. GSCFT contended there was more available and that they should get a share equal to their percentage of the district’s payroll, which would equal about a 5 percent retroactive raise.

The union continued to organize and has received tremendous community support.

Local 2030 decided to halt all voluntary work and be at school only when their contract requires. These work-to-contract actions have been a symbolic protest against the district’s unwillingness to give teachers a fair share of unanticipated revenue.

Teachers also decided to wear black on Fridays as a signal of their frustration with the pace at which the district has moved toward honoring the agreement.

Over 120 teachers turned out to a recent Board meeting where a large group of parents, SEIU, the trades, and the president of the local labor council and representatives from various community groups joined them. At

that September 11 Board meeting the district revealed that there was actually at least \$1.1 million in unallocated reserves.

On September 26 hundreds of high school students walked out in support of the teachers.

Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizer Casey Carlson said: “The district needs to do the right thing. The teachers here are so dedicated. When times were tough we did our share whether taking furlough days or buying school materials. Now they need to honor their commitment to our teachers so that we can once again come together as an educational community.”

President Beno's husband) was improper and constituted, at a minimum, the appearance of a conflict of interest. Third, ACCJC had not indicated in 2006 or after (prior to 2012), that CCSF had deficiencies.

DOE ordered ACCJC to immediately correct the violations, but it clearly indicated it cannot order an accreditor to reverse any disaccreditation or sanction action.

Local 2121, CFT and others immediately demanded that ACCJC reverse the

improper disaccreditation and show cause orders, as they flowed directly from these violations of Federal regulations. ACCJC refused.

Alisa Messer, president of AFT Local 2121, said, "The decisions made and processes used by the ACCJC were flawed, not just at CCSF but in numerous other cases as well."

Soon after, the City Attorney of San Francisco filed suit on the issues in the DOE letter, and now so have CFT and AFT 2121,

but this suit goes beyond the City Attorney lawsuit, and covers far more ground.

"The students of CCSF deserve the highest quality education we can provide, and the ACCJC must be held accountable for their reckless, irresponsible and illegal actions," said CFT president Joshua Pechthalt. "Our lawsuit seeks to reverse the terrible effects of this rogue agency's ill-conceived sanctions by restoring full accreditation to City College."

The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The CFT represents faculty and classified workers in public and private schools and colleges, from early childhood through higher education. 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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*Get Organized!* is produced by union workers in the CFT Field Representatives Union and the Office and Professional Employees International Union.

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## El Camino College Police Officers Association Affiliate with AFT Local 6142

On September 26, the El Camino Police Officers Association (POA) filed authorization cards with the Public Employment Relations Board to officially affiliate with the CFT.

Luukia Smith President of the El Camino Classified Employees Local 6142 said: "We are

excited about the prospect of working with the police officers to get them the respect they are due."

Overall, this process moved quickly. After an initial meeting was held to discuss the process and benefits of affiliation, POA forwarded their unit infor-

mation early this summer and a dues analysis was prepared. Then, meetings were held so the entire unit of 24 people could ask questions and express any concerns.

Following up on the meeting last month with El Camino POA leaders, Local 6142 president Luukia Smith, CFT Field Rep Karen Curtis and Organizing Project staff Alma Soto and Sandra Weese participated in a POA membership meeting on September 11 to discuss affiliation with the CFT. Members were strongly supportive of joining our El Camino local.

"We are excited about joining El Camino Classified Employees and becoming part of a larger family," said El Camino POA Secretary Erika Solorzano.



El Camino POA members Francisco Esqueda and Erika Solorzano sign authorization cards in support of affiliation with the CFT.