



California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, October 5, 2012

Contact: Steve Hopcraft, 916/ 457-5546; steve@hopcraft.com; Twitter: @shopcraft

**Statement of Carl Friedlander
President of The California Federation of Teachers
Community College Council**

Statement presented before the California Community Colleges Board of Governors Special Meeting on Community College of San Francisco

October 4, 2012

Sacramento -- My name is Carl Friedlander. I am the president of the Community College Council (CCC) of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) 2121, the local representing faculty at Community College of San Francisco (CCSF), is one of the locals that comprise CFT's CCC.

All of us in CFT are deeply concerned about the June decision by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to put CCSF on "show cause." We know there are many serious challenges that the San Francisco Community College District (SFCCD) must address and are confident that they will do so. We are all here today to discuss those challenges. But I believe the Commission's decision to issue the most severe of sanctions to an institution, which, after its last accreditation cycle six years ago, received several recommendations but **no** sanction, was misguided. The Community College Board of Governors should understand that huge segments of the California Community College system believe, though reluctant to publicly express it, that the decisions of ACCJC regarding institutional sanctions tend to be overly severe and even adversarial. And, after several years of deep budget cuts, we fear that a dozen California community colleges, facing fiscal stresses comparable to San Francisco's, could soon join CCSF on the list of institutions required by ACCJC to "show cause."

Regardless of any concerns, the CCSF community is putting its collective shoulder to the wheel to address all of the recommendations made by ACCJC. It's a huge

undertaking. The district must make some very hard decisions involving mission, facilities, personnel, collective bargaining, participatory governance, etc. This must be done very quickly, while simultaneously developing plans to implement a threatened but unimaginable closure.

I want to comment on one area discussed in the Financial Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) report. Our AFT national, state and local leaders are very proud of our local at CCSF because, through 35 years of collective bargaining, CCSF has emerged as the clear national leader in the fight for equity and respect for part-time faculty and for the protection and preservation of the college's fulltime faculty core. CCSF is admired throughout American higher education, and has been appropriately honored for its extraordinary accomplishments in these areas.

The college, through bargaining, has made bold choices. In San Francisco, closing the parity gap between full-time and part-time faculty has been a very high priority. Full-time salaries have fallen and are below the state median in San Francisco, California's highest cost city. When course offerings were drastically reduced, full-timers and retirees teaching part-time lost assignments before part-time faculty because of the district's commitment to treating part-timers as equal partners in the college's faculty. Other districts have coped with budget cuts by not replacing retirees and by negotiating retirement incentives, thus downsizing their full-time faculty; at CCSF the full-time/part-time ratio is close to what the State has enshrined in law as a goal, while other districts are nowhere near the goal and moving backwards. Faced with fiscal challenges, CCSF employees have sacrificed to keep the college afloat with five years of pay freezes and three years running of furloughs and salary reductions. Faced with an operational deficit in the district, AFT 2121, along with other unions in SFCCCD, agreed to further reduce salaries this year by almost 3%.

Some may question the choices CCSF has made in the name of educational quality and sustaining and supporting those who do the college's work. But in the California Federation of Teachers we view some of these same decisions as an example of how CCSF has let policy drive budget, not the other way around. And the policy of treating part-time faculty with real respect is part of what uplifts the quality of instruction and services at the college and ensures that *all* the college's faculty – and not just a small group of full-time faculty – will be fully engaged in facing the challenges of getting the college's "show cause" sanction removed.