

**Emergency Resolution: Support Fair Accreditation and the Fight to Save Our City College of San Francisco**

WHEREAS, although events of the last month have left many with the impression that City College of San Francisco (CCSF) has been saved from closure, the accreditor's attacks continue to make college's future highly uncertain and recent events in fact make clear that this ongoing struggle requires renewed vigilance and action; and

WHEREAS, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), the only accreditor for community and junior colleges for the western region, has reneged on its responsibility to uphold the quality of education, holding institutions of higher education hostage to its agenda of austerity and inequality in the guise of "accountability"; and

WHEREAS, even though the high quality of education offered to more than 80,000 students each year has never been questioned, ACCJC illegally sanctioned (2012) and subsequently acted to disaccredit (2013) City College of San Francisco (CCSF), an action which has garnered an outpouring of community support and organizing on behalf of CCSF; and

WHEREAS, at the behest of the ACCJC, the California State Chancellor and Board of Governors removed CCSF's democratically elected Board of Trustees and replaced them with a \$1000-plus a day "Special Trustee With Extraordinary Powers" who makes college decisions behind closed doors, an arrangement that on July 7, 2014 was extended for another year so that the San Francisco voters will continue to have no voice at their college; and

WHEREAS, the ACCJC has blatantly denied its mandate to ensure quality public education, as its illegal actions at CCSF have led to the loss of educational opportunity for thousands of San Franciscans, particularly from low-income and immigrant communities, displaced workers, veterans and the disabled, first-generation college attendees, full- and part-time students in need of second—and third—chances, and students transferring to four-year institutions; and

WHEREAS, ACCJC continues to promote an agenda of inequality, mandating policies that bloat administrative pay; reduce faculty and staff wages, benefits, and rights; diminish the full-time faculty core; interfere in collective bargaining; reduce access for students who need it the most; and set aside excessive reserves; and

WHEREAS, ACCJC's actions at CCSF have led to a dramatic decline in the quality of life for faculty and staff at CCSF, who have been forced to take on increased workloads and depressed wages while fighting at many levels for the survival of the college or have simply been driven away; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco City Attorney, AFT 2121, and the California Federation of Teachers maintain that ACCJC's decisions on CCSF should be rescinded due to improper procedures, conflicts of interest, bias, and violations of federal law; and

WHEREAS, effective collaboration between the local (AFT 2121), state affiliate (CFT), and international (AFT), including significant commitments of financial resources and person hours, has been essential to the progress achieved so far, made possible as San Francisco and other California communities have supported CCSF and helped turn increasing scrutiny on ACCJC's misdeeds; and

WHEREAS, the US Department of Education concurred with AFT findings in August 2013, ordering ACCJC to fix violations or face deauthorization, adding another dozen violations in December 2013, while state and federal legislative inquiries have led to further scrutiny, pressure, and calls for investigation; and

WHEREAS, on June 26, 2014, the CA State Auditor confirmed numerous problems, noting that ACCJC: is inconsistent in applying accreditation standards to different colleges; lacks transparency; has an inadequate appeals process; does not observe standards in composing site visit teams; and sanctions colleges under its jurisdiction at a much higher rate—54.5% vs. 12.4%—than other accreditation agencies do; and

WHEREAS, in recent weeks, responding to nearly universal pressure to reverse the disaccreditation of CCSF, ACCJC has instead of rescinding its decision invented an unnecessary, convoluted, untested, and legally suspect new policy, "Restoration Status," likely to push CCSF further under ACCJC's control; and

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2014 ACCJC announced increased sanctions on additional CA community colleges, while continuing to violate site team composition standards with administration-heavy teams; and

WHEREAS, saving City College of San Francisco and stopping the unaccountable ACCJC is inextricably linked to defeating the inequality agenda, defending student access, democracy, and collective bargaining rights at all California community colleges:

RESOLVED, that AFT redouble the fight to save CCSF and CA's community colleges and reclaim the promise of quality public education for all, as well as continue the fight against ACCJC's unjust actions in the legislature, in the courts, in the schools and in the streets to ensure that attempts by ACCJC to promote an inequality agenda, avoid accountability, and violate collective bargaining rights do not spread to other states and other accreditors, dedicating continued financial, personnel, and other resources; and

RESOLVED, that AFT take all measures to ensure that the ACCJC remains under severe scrutiny, including demonstrating to the DoE that it is not "widely accepted" by educators and should be de-authorized as a regional accreditor; and

RESOLVED, that AFT convene a taskforce on fair accreditation in higher education to study ACCJC and other accreditors in order to make recommendations for fair and appropriate accreditation practices.