

union action

VOICE OF AFT 2121



Free City and Access for All
Growing the college that San Francisco deserves

4-5



San Francisco
 Community College
 Federation of Teachers

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Lessons learned and truths that can't be ignored any longer

By Tim Killikelly

For the last 4 1/2 years the City College of San Francisco community, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and Board of Trustees have endured an accreditation crisis imposed on us by the unaccountable and outrageous ACCJC.

This crisis never should have occurred. The prime focus of accreditation, which is to ensure high-quality education for students, was ignored. AFT 2121 stood up and told the truth—that the quality of education at CCSF had never been questioned, that the ACCJC's attack was never motivated by a concern for students or for educational quality.

The visiting team that came in 2012 voted unanimously, 14-0, to put CCSF on a lower sanction than "show cause." They too were ignored. AFT 2121 and San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera revealed that truth and it could no longer be ignored. The court ruled that the ACCJC acted illegally.

In 2012 San Francisco voted for a City College parcel tax with provisions for oversight. But the

ACCJC's action stripped the powers of our elected Board of Trustees and replaced them with a "special trustee with extraordinary powers," who never established the oversight that the public had demanded. Once again, the will of the voters was ignored. It was not until AFT 2121 threatened to withhold its support for a new parcel tax that an oversight committee was finally created.

When the threat to our college was greatest, we organized ourselves, our community allies, and our elected officials. We spoke the truth that couldn't be ignored any longer. We fought back, and we won.

This past year we went on strike to win a strong contract, saw our fight against the ACCJC end in CCSF's full accreditation, and established the Free City program—a model for the rest of the nation, and by far the country's most progressive free community college program. Paid for by taxing our wealthiest citizens, its scope is not limited to high school students, or certain majors, or those with certain grades, or those chosen by billionaire philanthropists. Rather, it proclaims that higher edu-

cation should be available to everyone, that the education of our society is not just an individual benefit, but a benefit to the entire community.

When we work together and organize and tell the truth we can accomplish great things. That lesson is needed more than ever in the era of Trump.

But there are also truths here at CCSF that we cannot ignore. With the great victories of our accreditation and Free City College the time is now for the Board of Trustees and the administration to press the pause button on further cuts. The educational opportunities of thousands of San Franciscans are at risk. This is a truth that we cannot ignore and, working together, we will not ignore.

Love Forever
Forward Ever
Backwards Never

(tkillikelly@aft2121.org)

Tim Killikelly joins CCSF students in voicing resistance to Trump's actions against immigrants.

On the cover:

SF Supervisor Jane Kim, sponsor of Free City legislation, speaks to City College supporters at a City Hall rally.

Photo: Chris Hanzo

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Special thanks to

Ivy Lee (Supervisor Jane Kim's office)



Accreditation fight can help us survive in the Trump era



Khaled Sayed

in 2013, AFT 2121 was forced into concessions under the shadow of ACCJC sanctions and post-recession budget cuts. Remember the January 2014 Salarygate incident? Then Chancellor Art Tyler secretly signed in 20% pay raises for top admin – a day after faculty swallowed the bitter pill of our pay cuts. In 2016, negotiations became so strained by the lack of clear budget data, the unreasonable demands that faculty with underloads going back years had to "repay" the district, misrepresentation of the February 2016 salary offer and other acts of bad faith bargaining, that AFT 2121 filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge and members came out in force for a historic one-day ULP strike last April.

Democracy Threatened

The Board of Trustees had passed a balanced budget before it was disempowered in July 2013, but ACCJC nevertheless claimed it was dysfunctional. Former CCC Chancellor Brice Harris made a deal with ACCJC President Barbara Beno, who claimed the way to save CCSF was by axing the powers of the board—a publicly elected board. A Special Trustee with Extraordinary Powers ran the show for over two years, and until spring 2014, even public board meetings had been suspended. The commission, along with groups like California Competes, have attacked the governance structures of our community colleges. We hear familiar echoes of disdain in Trump's tweets criticizing the U.S. district judge who issued a stay of his illegal and outrageous travel ban on refugees from majority-Muslim countries vetted to enter the U.S. His executive order came down swiftly on a Friday afternoon in January, causing chaos and confusion at the airports. As we've seen, corruption cannot stand up to the scrutiny of light, and so these bad actors will silence public dissent when it can. At this writing, Trump's revised travel ban is taking effect March 16th.

Those in power with unsavory agendas thrive from imposing drastic and sudden changes that threaten the social order. Here's what we've learned; the way out of chaos is to get organized. We need to respond by rallying others to the cause and overcoming apathy. We must find our

allies in community groups, other locals, and elected officials with the conscience and courage to step up.

How we resist: Stand up to the lies

ACCJC lied in court about City College's finances. The commission lied about CCSF's response to the sanctions (at the 2014 trial, it made one's blood boil to hear the claim that we did not take these sanctions seriously). They lied saying the college had deficiencies since 2006 when this wasn't the case until ACCJC issued Show Cause in 2012; Superior Court Judge Curtis Karnow actually called them out on the lie. And ACCJC lied saying no due process was needed when they issued their order in 2013 to terminate CCSF's accreditation. The college won this accreditation fight because of those who brought the truth to light and stood up to those lies—lies perpetuated through the media until the tide turned. Along the way, more people woke up to the realization that the ACCJC was a bad actor, issuing sanctions up and down the state and keeping colleges under tabs with an inordinately high rate of sanctions. In the Trump era, let's call them out on the lies, encourage the media to do so, and keep pushing for transparency so that we expose conflicts of interest and attempts to infiltrate our democratic process.

Be a member, an engaged member

So many rolled up their sleeves to fight the battle on many fronts: challenging the ACCJC in court, engaging concerned local and state officials and community college leaders around the state, educating the public through speaking up and writing letters, ensuring that we had met the standards through meticulous reports and documentation.

Membership in our unions is even more critical as we anticipate a Supreme Court ruling on "agency fee," whether fee payers can be allowed to opt out of paying dues while enjoying the benefits of collective bargaining. With right to work as the law in many states, this is a ploy to decimate unions; we saw that in *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* which got derailed with Justice Antonin Scalia's death. So fill

(Continued on page 7)

CCSF students confront Guy Lease (seated at right), appointed to replace Robert Agrella in Feb. 2015 as the Special Trustee With Extraordinary Powers.

By Li Lovett

Our victory is heartening; City College is fully accredited for seven years and the scarlet letter of sanctions is gone. Now we must roll up our sleeves to face the onslaught of Trump administration actions. For those who feel battle weary, it's understandable that City College faculty, staff and students need a breather from the drama. From another vantage point, the trials of the last four years have inoculated us to withstand the tactics of the far right as they attempt to slash and burn our social institutions. There are striking parallels between the ACCJC's mandates and Trump era dictates that give City College an edge in facing this new fight.

Access to Public Education

The ACCJC sanctions contributed to huge declines in enrollment—City College lost one-third of its students over the past four years. It appears from declining enrollments at neighboring community colleges that many of the students we lost just did not go to college. During this time we rallied again and again to oppose cuts, starting with the delivery of handwritten "bricks" that represented what our students need to Susan Lamb, then Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs, in August 2014. Last fall, AFT

2121 organized members and students to speak about the necessity for classes and programs at the Board of Trustees meetings. With corporate reformers trained by the likes of Eli Broad and extremists at the helm of Trump's education department, it's incumbent upon us to stand up for student access.

We must be vocal and we need to be vigilant. Keep in mind that what goes on in K-12 and the other higher education systems is part and parcel of our struggle. Charter schools siphon funds from traditional public schools. Some are part of a profit-driven enterprise in an industry making billions. Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers, AFT 2022, successfully fought a takeover by the charter school chain Rocketship by organizing parents and the community, and appealing to elected officials.

Austerity and Upheaval

Naomi Klein's concept of the Shock Doctrine described the ACCJC's actions to the T—recall the house cleaning of administrators that destabilized the college's governance once Show Cause was imposed, leaving us in a catch-22 around meeting accreditation standards? This ushered in an era of conflict between administration and faculty. The past two contract bargaining cycles were unprecedented:

Why sanctuary campuses matter

By Alan D'Souza

Well in advance of his inauguration, Donald Trump's xenophobic, anti-immigrant rhetoric had state and local leaders recommitting to the promise of serving and protecting all people equally. The SF Board of Supervisors reaffirmed our status as a Sanctuary City. Our Board of Trustees followed suit and declared City College a "sanctuary campus" and outlined policies the College would implement. Soon after, the California Community College Board of Governors joined the chorus of voices standing in defiance to Trump. In his State of the State, Governor Brown reiterated California's promise to "defend everybody—every man, woman and child—who has come here for a better life and has contributed to the well-being of our state."

On January 19, AFT 2121 organized an action at the Mission Campus opposing Trump's proposed border wall where over 250 students, community and union leaders along with the Chancellor and members of the Board of Trustees linked arms around the campus in solidarity. A week later, when Trump made good on his threats against refu-

gees and immigrants with an Executive Order to ban travel from seven majority-Muslim countries, we were ready. Tens of thousands descended on airports nationwide, protesting the detention and threat of deportation based on an individual's religion or national origin. In early February, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a federal judge's block on this order. The Trump administration issued a revised executive order March 6th, based on equally shaky claims of protecting Americans from terrorism, that will be also challenged in the courts.

So what does all of this mean to our students and coworkers? Pronouncements from state leaders, while well intentioned, don't do anything for those who live in fear of deportation and the uptick of racism. Amanda Ramadhani, President of the CCSF Muslim Students Association (MSA), says, "It's all very concerning and sad. It grows our anxiety. Trump has made discrimination legal again." As an institution, we can help allay fears with concrete policies enacted at the local level.



In its December 15th "sanctuary campus" resolution, the CCSF Board of Trustees offered the college community assurance with the inclusion of these policies:

- Not allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers onto campus without a warrant
- The refusal of campus police to enforce immigration law
- Not sharing student immigration status with ICE
- Not gathering information on immigration or citizenship status
- Providing tuition support, including in-state tuition rates at public universities to students with DACA status

- Providing distance-learning options for [deported] students to complete their degrees
- Providing confidential legal support to students with immigration law questions and issues

Building on these policies, Campus Chief of Police Andre Barnes assured the college community on February 8th that the federal immigration directives are "not binding on local or campus law enforcement agencies" and that campus police will continue "dispensing our public safety services without regard to individuals' nationality, ethnicity, religious or immigration status." Students at an MSA event the same week reacted positively to this news and were hopeful that legal representation would be made available soon. These are the practical safeguards a sanctuary campus offers, providing tangible proof of protection to our students and campus community. Meanwhile, Ramadhani wishes all students would be treated equally and not seen for their differences: "We are you, you are us."

A FREE CITY COLLEGE



Above: Vice President Jenny Worley leads chants with the crowd forming a human wall at Mission campus.



Right: Newly elected Trustee Tom Temprano speaks at the January 19th rally, flanked by fellow board members.

San Francisco takes another big step toward making higher education free

By Ivy Lee & Li Lovett

In San Francisco, people seeking higher education may receive respite from student debt sooner than the rest of the nation. Last November, San Francisco voters approved a 0.25% increase to the real estate transfer tax paid on luxury buildings

sold for \$5 million or more. A portion of the revenue will be set aside to support SF residents in attending City College for free.

Behind the scenes, AFT 2121 organized members and community allies to rally support and attend hearings at City Hall for Free City. Our union worked closely with Su-

pervisor Jane Kim who authored the Free City legislative package. Despite a number of resolutions passed by the SF Board of Supervisors over the past half-year, Mayor Ed Lee only decided to commit \$5.4 million to Free City in early February, just in time for the college to begin implementation for fall 2017.

The Free City College Program will cover tuition for SF residents not receiving federal or state aid, as well as grants of \$500 for full-time and \$200 for part-time students receiving the BOG fee waiver to cover books and other expenses.

Supervisor Kim said, "The difference between what you can earn if you graduate with a degree from City College or if you graduate with only a high school degree is almost \$1000 a month. In the Bay Area where we see an increasing economic gap between the ultrarich and the rest of us, we can and we should make those extra dollars a reality for the families and households that are struggling to make it. We can and we should make higher education free

because we know that's the way to lift more people to the middle class and beyond."

While the majority of CCSF students qualify for financial aid, in an era of skyrocketing student debt in one of the most expensive cities in the world, students often are forced to face choices between enrollment and rent, between textbooks and food on the table. CCSF serves more than 60,000 students, including parents, recent high school graduates, seniors, career changers, and many of San Francisco's low-income students pursuing their dreams of higher education and workforce skill development.

"This is groundbreaking, game-changing legislation. We've worked with so many groups all across the City on this idea. It's good for our economy, for our communities, for our college, and for the movement to return all our community colleges across the country to the students who need this access," stated Alisa Messer, English instructor at CCSF and AFT 2121's Political Director.



Above: Community members sing for a free City College at the October 5th kickoff supporting Prop W as the funding source.

THAT WELCOMES ALL

Debunking "Facts" – Onslaught of cuts doesn't rebuild our college

By Kate Frei

When City College administration first announced their plan to cut the college by 26% over the next five years, people were shocked. Why would our own administration intentionally inflict more harm than we had already suffered at the hands of the ACCJC? Their rationalization goes like this: The money from the Leno Bill isn't going to last forever. When that stops coming in, what if we fall short? Instead of waiting until the last minute and finding ourselves with insufficient funds, isn't it more fiscally responsible to begin making a series of cuts now? No! On the surface, this might seem somewhat logical—avoid the possibility of drastic cuts later by making smaller ones along the way. Unfortunately, this thinking is utterly faulty.

Because our funding is based on the number of students we have, what is actually needed is the complete opposite of cuts—a massive effort to grow enrollment—up until the very last moment we receive funding from Senator Leno's bill SB965. Instead, the administration has been slashing course offerings so severely that it is hard to imagine ever recovering. Even with accreditation reaffirmed and Free City College on the horizon, the administration repeats its tired refrain: cuts and more cuts.

Let's do some fact-checking of some of the administration's claims:

They say only small classes are being cut; this is patently false. High-demand classes with healthy enrollment have been cut. In spite

of high demand, Chinatown campus was forced to cut 50 non-credit hours from the Fall 2016 schedule. Not only was this a nonsensical move to shrink instead of grow, it had additional negative impacts on student learning: Well over 60 students of mixed ESL levels were forced to cram into one class. A fully enrolled Japanese class was also cut from this semester's schedule—even after students and faculty wrote over 130 letters and spoke directly to the administration. TRST classes of over 20 students have been cut from the Fall 2017 schedule. Not only does the administration cut full classes;



Above: SF Supervisor Jane Kim, sponsor of Free City, speaks with ESL instructor Venette Cook.

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Debunking "Facts" – Onslaught of cuts doesn't rebuild our college

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they also blatantly ignore students' voices. Administration calls these "accidents" and "exceptions." But it's actually built into the policy that these classes get cut. And many of the "accidents" don't get corrected, even when students and faculty point out the "mistake."

Administration claims classes are cut because they are "low-enrolled" – yet they close many prematurely. Many classes have been cut before the first meeting, a blanket policy which makes no sense in many cases. For instance, a Chemistry C class was cut last semester before its first meeting. Students are referred to this class at the first meeting of the lecture class (Chemistry 101A), so they cannot register before classes start. Last semester, by the time students were referred to this class for extra support, it had been closed, and the only remaining section was filled beyond capacity. This was a cut to a necessary, in-demand class, which supports vulnerable students and helps them succeed. Chemistry is also an essential class for science majors at CCSF and those transferring to universities. Other classes also require a bit more time to fill, and closing these classes before the first meeting ignores the realities of many of our students—students who travel to their home countries and return at the start of the semester, or those who register in the first few weeks for myriad reasons. Administration claims that cuts policies are "data-driven." But when they simply erase a class from the schedule, students cannot enroll and there is no enrollment data. We can never realize the growth potential of Free City as long as administration persists in cutting classes before they begin.

The administration insists that cuts do not negatively impact students. Cancelling classes with no notice wreaks havoc on many of our students, like those who are paying for their education through the GI Bill. One such student, Matthew Barker, had carefully laid out his education plan to ensure he could to complete all of his coursework with the allotted funding, and a last-minute class cut ruined his plan and affected his benefits. Once a student experiences this kind of disruption, they lose trust in our school and go elsewhere, or worse, drop out entirely. With the steady whittling down of course offerings, many students are unable to get the classes they need.

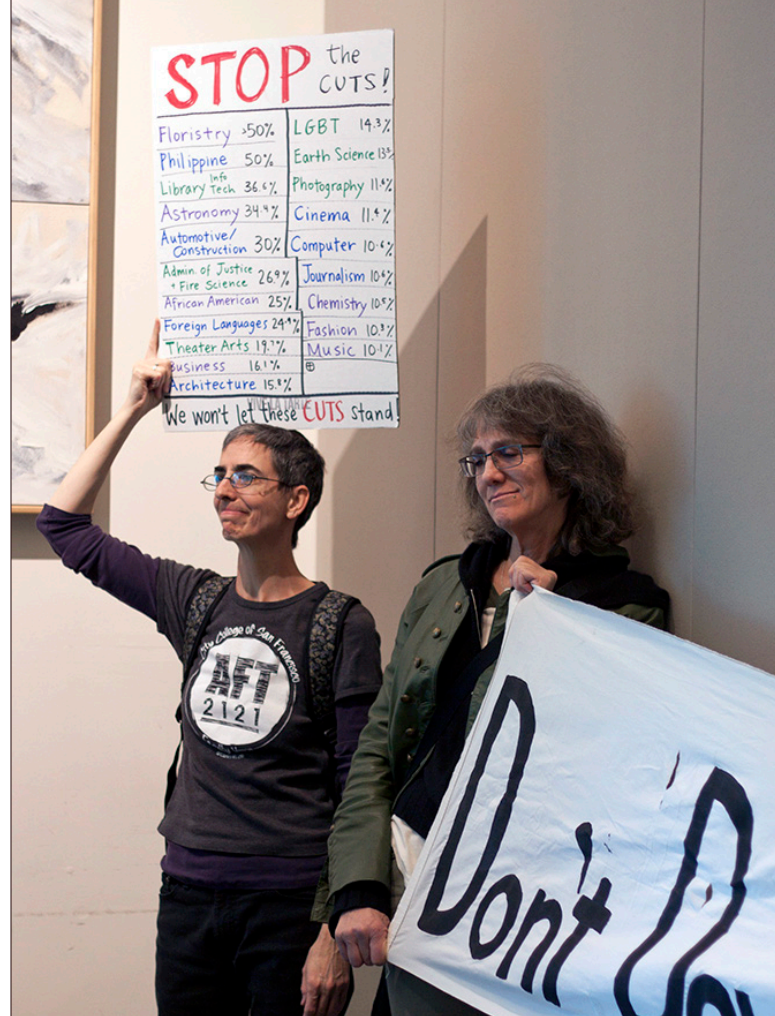
Administration claims they allow additional sections when there

is demand. This is only partly true. Everywhere you look in the city, there is construction—an obvious area of demand with potential for growth, yet the administration refused to open an additional welding class when there was demand and an available teacher. Evans Campus is gravely under-supported and under-resourced, in spite of the demand for all types of trade skills in San Francisco. Fire Science faces a similar situation: When Oakland, Marin, & Cal Fire were all hiring, we were not able to send them enough graduates. In the sciences, too, with full classes and room for growth, department chairs are being told they must cut. Regardless of demand, departments are forced to make tradeoffs in their course offerings; essentially the administration has created a rationing system that does not help the college grow.

We are told that faculty are being consulted in order to mitigate negative impacts. The district is ignoring advice from those who are in the best position to understand the ramifications of these cuts. They are slashing classes with a willful ignorance of the broad impacts they will have on our students' ability to attain certificates, and the capacity of our programs to meet their needs. Many decisions, like the one to close the Language Center at the end of the current semester, were made unilaterally, without consultation or warning. When department chairs are ordered to make a cut, they have to choose between damaging alternatives. Then administration can claim the cut was planned within the department.

Students are being denied access in numerous other ways. CCSF is responsible for the barriers to online registration, inappropriate prerequisite enforcement that deters qualified students, refusal or extensive delays in hiring or replacing faculty, etc. We all know of many more examples.

The administration has insisted for over a year that they needed to make cuts to protect us from a "fiscal cliff." Using fear and false logic, they have claimed that they need to "cut in order to grow." They have capitalized on people's fatigue and demoralization to undermine the college's potential to rebound. Rather than using the stability funding for its intended purpose—to stabilize the college while we weathered the storm of unjust actions by the ACCJC—they have been cutting not only small classes but also healthy ones. In spite



of their claims to the contrary, they have failed to grow where there was room. Administration has ignored students' demands, making them feel unheard and undervalued. They have ignored faculty expertise and input. They have cast the blame on the accreditation crisis, not admitting that they are now the ones actively carrying out the ACCJC's stated goal: shrinking the college.

How can we fight the cuts? We must call the administration to task for these cuts, which go against the mission of the college and the needs of our students and our city. We fought to keep our college accredited, and we can't allow it be slashed beyond recognition. We are weary, but we know that this college is worth fighting for. We have a new Board of Trustees; we need to connect with them and hold them accountable to advocate for our school. We need to support each other and our students around what is happening in our departments and on our campuses. We need to reach out to our communities and our city, which have continued to show their strong support for CCSF.

It's time for us to come together and put our considerable talents toward rebuilding this school.

- Come to the next Delegate Assembly meeting and bring your ideas about how we can fight back and grow our school.
- Help us organize a meeting with your department chair to stem the tide of cuts affecting our students and programs. Contact Tim Killikelly, tkillicelly@aft2121.org.

Instructors Kate Frei and Wynd Kaufmyn protest cuts to classes and programs at the October 2016 board meeting.

Call to restore good faith bargaining at CCSF

Quality education, decent working conditions

By Chris Hanzo

Background

Before 2012, AFT 2121 and City College administration enjoyed a more collaborative approach to contract negotiations. But with the unprecedented financial crisis, sanctions by ACCJC in 2012 and 2013, fiscal monitoring and take-over by the State, we saw a dramatic shift to a profoundly dysfunctional, deeply adversarial process, including management's imposition of a unilateral 9% wage cut, along with a litany of proposed takebacks. While our Union was able to beat back the most draconian of these proposals (e.g. elimination of class size minimums and caps, a 10% cut in pro rata pay, cuts in employer contributions to medical and dental coverage, elimination of sabbaticals) our 2013 contract included ongoing wage cuts only partially restored by 2015 from 5% below to 3.5% below the 2007/08 salary schedule.

Election and court victories

Conditions improved dramatically for CCSF in 2013. First, voters approved two measures in the November 2012 election, the SF parcel tax and statewide Prop 30, restoring CCSF revenues to pre-recession levels. Then, when the ACCJC moved in July 2013 to yank CCSF's accreditation, legal action by the City Attorney and AFT/CFT blocked the action.

ULP strike and contract settlement in 2016

These victories did little to change District negotiating tactics with AFT, however. When the parties returned to the bargaining table in 2015 to negotiate a new contract, management arrived with a team of lawyers. Our union team persevered for months while members organized an increasingly public campaign for a decent contract, culminating in the April 2016 unfair labor practice strike that shut down the College. Finally, a mediated settlement in July restored faculty salaries to 2007/08 levels plus a 5.7% increase for 2015/16.

Implementation of new contract stalls

Since the contract victory, the District has been slow to implement many contract provisions, resulting in months-long delays in retroactive pay to faculty, restoration of frozen pay steps and new salary step placements, even the publishing of the new pay schedules and contract. "Lookback" negotiations, designed to allow the parties to take a look back at the actual expenditures and ending balance from 2015/16, with the possibility for further wage increases, have also been delayed by the District. With a newly elected Board of Trustees, the restoration of CCSF's accreditation, and the milestone Free City agreement, will the District alter its course and return to good faith negotiations with the faculty union at CCSF?

Administration hostility towards AFT, faculty

Much of the hostility of the administration toward the faculty and the Union stem from its determination to implement the austerity program of the State's Fiscal Management & Assistance Team (FCMAT) and the dictates of the ACCJC. When management first announced to AFT 2121 that it was changing how it bargained, i.e. adversarial imposition of cuts and demands for takebacks, it followed the FCMAT/ACCJC script. As management put it in 2012, they sought "significant fiscal and structural reforms it needed to make to sustain fiscal solvency as called for by FCMAT and required by the Accrediting Commission." AFT's challenges to District budget assumptions, our information requests, our alternative budget scenarios with reference to new revenues from Prop A and Prop 30, have all been viewed as intransigence. The Union defended pay equity and medical benefits for all faculty and the higher full-time/part-time faculty ratio at CCSF. These practices were expressly targeted by FCMAT, and the administration and Board reversed their previous support for these policies to outright opposition. Moreover, anyone who challenged their austerity program, cuts to classes and programs, or the diminishment of shared governance, was viewed as obstructionist.

Which way forward?

For the administration, the take-away from the accreditation battle is about meeting or exceeding ACCJC's

standards, including following the course laid out by FCMAT and the State-imposed trusteeship. The casualties along the way – the damage to collective bargaining, the massive cuts to classes and programs, the huge tolls on employees' livelihoods – do not even merit mention in their playbook. It seems clear that we can expect the exigencies of the austerity program will remain paramount for the administration while efforts to challenge them will be opposed.

The focus of our organizing must be on moving the needle back, from unilateral imposition to collective bargaining, from relentless cutting to rebuilding classes and programs, from demanding sacrifice to restoring employee livelihoods. Whether it's by supporting Free City, or preparing for our next campaign for a fair contract, the fight for quality education and decent working conditions at CCSF go hand in hand. (chanzo@aft2121.org)

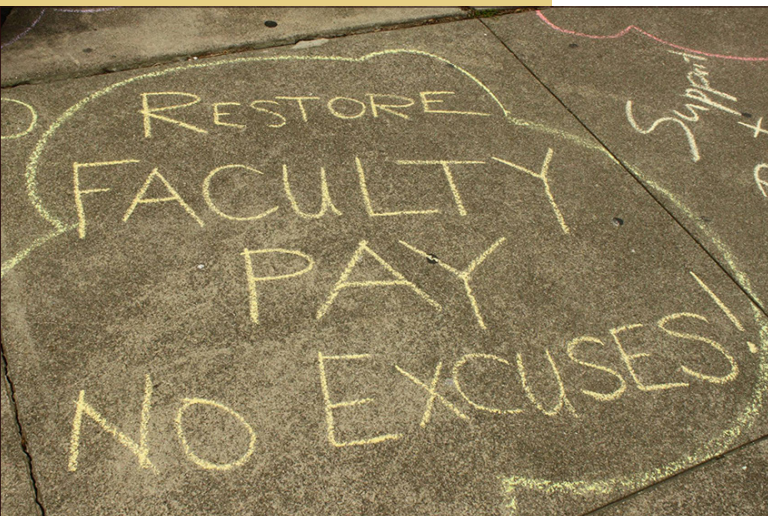
Accreditation fight can help us survive in the Trump era

(Continued from page 3)

out the form to join if you're not yet a member, and build the power we need to stand up to corporate powers backing the Walmart model of employing workers who are low-paid, disenfranchised, and dispensable.

Engage our allies in Congress, state and local government

Elected leaders stepped up to defend City College: SF supervisors like Eric Mar and David Campos, State legislators Mark Leno, Tom Ammiano, and Phil Ting, U.S. Senators Jackie Speier and Nancy Pelosi. The California State Legislator's audit issued findings in June 2014 that the ACCJC treated colleges unfairly and inconsistently, and its sanction rates were really out of step with the rest of the nation. Community college CEOs began advocating for change. A few members of the CCC Board of Governors began pushing for greater transparency, and eventually replacement of the ACCJC. This took leadership, patience, and intestinal fortitude. As we continue dealing with the travesties of the Trump administration, we need to find our allies to defend our rights, our students, our professions and livelihoods. (editor@aft2121.org)



Faculty chalk their demands at Ram Plaza early in the 2015-2018 contract campaign.

**Friday-Sunday,
Mar. 31 - Apr. 2**
CFT convention
Sacramento, CA

Tuesday, April 4
Executive Board
Union Office
3:00-5:00 pm

Tuesday, April 25
Delegate Assembly
Civic Center, room TBD
3:00-5:00 pm

Tuesday, May 2
Executive Board
Union Office
3:00-5:00 pm

Tuesday, May 23
Delegate Assembly
Ocean, MU 140
3:00-5:00 pm

Organizing Matters More Than Ever

By Jessica Buchsbaum

**What do we want?
A fair contract!
When do we want it?
Now!**

**No cuts, no fees...
Education must be free!**

These are just a few of the many chants we've called out on picket lines, in board meetings, and on the steps of City Hall over the last several years. Bringing our power to the public, to elected officials, and to our administration starts with the basics of reaching out to each other.

Our victories in the last year—contract gains, accreditation, Free City, a board back in power with new members Tom Temprano and Shanell Williams—have been the result of all of us getting out our comfort zones to mobilize for the college we love.

This mobilization is the result of years of one-on-one conversations, house visits, phone calls and emails. With a renewed, democratically elected team of precinct reps, more faculty have become engaged and involved in the work of our Union. These reps reach out to members, bring ideas and concerns to the Delegate Assembly, and make decisions on Union priorities and actions. They also ask members to participate in completing surveys, signing petitions, phone banking, attending rallies and marches, voting in Union elections and all the other actions that we take to demonstrate power and engagement.

Through the individual actions of members like you, our Union has gained a stronger voice at the college, in San Francisco, and within our state and national unions. Because of our organizing efforts, we have become a model for other AFT locals in the state of California. Vice President Jenny Worley recently presented our experiences to the faculty at West Valley and Mission Colleges, where they are on the verge of striking over wages and working conditions.

Although we have much to celebrate locally and in our state, we

face a new existential threat under a Trump administration and Trump-appointed Supreme Court. As ever, there is still more organizing to be done. We face more fights: the fight against the ongoing austerity narrative of preemptive class cuts at our college; the effort to grow rather than downsize at CCSF; the struggle to enforce our current contract and to prepare for the next cycle of negotiations this fall; and the fight against the chaos that Trump is creating in our country on so many fronts. These ongoing struggles require that we continue to organize and mobilize and exercise our collective power.

New faculty

At AFT 2121, we are continuing our focus on member organizing. In particular, member organizers Audrey Wallace and Cyndi Augsjoost (both from ESL) are working to welcome recent and newly hired faculty by creating a streamlined HR information packet and "Welcome" page on our website, and reaching out to new hires by email, phone and in person. We'd like new faculty to feel personally connected to members of our union. Through this connection, we hope new faculty will see the value of Union membership and the important role that AFT 2121 plays in defending not just our wages and working conditions, but quality public education for all. It should be easy and welcoming for new hires to become Union members and to engage right away.

Organizing training

Along with welcoming our new members, we will continue to reach out actively to our faculty. Member organizers Marco Mojica (LALS) and Jessica Buchsbaum (ESL) will work with our precinct reps to ensure that they have the knowledge and capacity to represent and organize our members. Marco will be training reps at Delegate Assembly meetings, and working with reps one-on-one to support them in their roles. We also continue to work to fill out the precinct rep structure, as there are some precincts without a rep.

Contract enforcement

As elected leaders, precinct reps also have the authority to represent their faculty and to enforce our contract. We'd like to see our members and reps take more ownership of problems that have a shared basis and similar impacts on faculty, such as payroll. Jenny Worley, Malaika Finkelstein, and Wynd Kaufmyn, grievance officers at AFT 2121, will be heading up the Contract Enforcement team, and training reps and faculty on checking paychecks and monitoring ongoing contract issues.

No cuts/Yes growth

Many faculty have turned out and brought their students to actions protesting class cuts. Kate Frei (ESL) and Tim Killikelly (Social Science) will be working to continue our mobilization against downsizing and in support of growing CCSE.

We are always looking for more participation. Come to a Delegate Assembly meeting or call the Union office to find out how you can step up and join us.

