

Presidential POV

RECENTLY, I joined representatives from California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and City College of San Francisco (CCSF) at a hearing in Washington D.C. before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Along with 29 other third-party speakers—including students, other local union officers, and two state representatives—we argued that ACCJC’s contract not be renewed because it has caused undue and unnecessary hardship for colleges, faculty, and students. Of all the accreditors in the country, ACCJC has issued the highest percentage of sanctions!

Prior to the hearing, ACCJC placed President Barbara Beno on leave and removed antagonistic board members. New ACCJC board members have promised to be open, fair, and transparent. Ultimately, NACIQI cited the lack of an available accreditor to supplant ACCJC as the main reason they renewed the contract.

President Donald Trump’s selection of Betsy DeVos as head of the



RESIST! PFT resists the Betty DeVos nomination at the Federal Building in Oakland, January 31, 2017. See **Devos Report** on back page.

Department of Education has created new challenges for educational unions. DeVos has long advocated for non-union private and charter schools, and during U.S. Senate hearings claimed that vouchers would give families a “choice” to give money to private, for-profit schools. One Democratic senator lauded her utter lack of experience in education as an asset because she’s not a part of the “educational establishment.”

The nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch will likely form a Court that will return to a five-to-four conservative tilt. While *Freidrichs v. California Teachers Association* was not successful because of the passing

of Judge Scalia, similar suits are already prepared to bring “Right to Work” cases to the highest court in the country. We could very likely see a case being accepted by the Court and a verdict reached by July 2018, and legislatures are already drafting bills that will cripple unions’ ability to organize and recruit members.

Our parent unions, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and CFT, had prepared to fight a *Freidrichs* verdict, but despite the short reprieve, our collective efforts must continue as we face an even tougher battle. PFT and its members will need to organize to fight these new adversarial threats.

Last December, PCCD Trustees passed a resolution in support of our undocumented students. The resolution provides guidelines for faculty and staff on what information, if any, they might be required to provide to federal authorities. This resolution is on the Peralta website.

In solidarity,

Ed Jaramillo,
President, PFT, AFT Local 1603



Executive members discuss strategies for strengthening our union in difficult times.



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Peralta Federation of Teachers,
AFT Local 1603 represents over 1,000
teachers, counselors, librarians, and
nurses at the College of Alameda,
Berkeley City College, Laney College,
and Merritt College. PFT is an affiliate
of the California Federation of Teachers
and the American Federation of Teachers,
AFL-CIO. AFT represents more than
1.5 million members nationwide.

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Diving into the Details

Grievance Update

Jennifer Shanoski

PFT Grievance Officer

IT IS ALWAYS the goal of the PFT to resolve conflicts prior to filing grievances, but when that cannot be accomplished, we follow Article 19 in the CBA, which outlines the formal grievance process.

The first step in the process is to work with the college or district administration to reach an informal resolution. A formal, written grievance is filed when such a resolution cannot be found. The grievance proceeds from the College President to the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources to the Chancellor, moving up if and when an agreement cannot be reached at each step. If a resolution cannot be obtained with the Chancellor, then the union can, under certain circumstances, bring the grievance to arbitration.

It's been a very busy Spring 2017, but a lot has been accomplished.

- 1. Long-Term Subs:** PT faculty with loads of 1.0 or higher were given salaries and paid benefits equal to that of any Long-Term Substitute (LTS). Further, new contract language will mandate the classification any PT faculty member as an LTS if they receive a load of 1.0 or higher.
- 2. Investigations:** A new MOU on faculty investigations has been signed. This policy strengthens faculty rights when complaints are filed with the district against them.
- 3. PT Salary Step Advancement:** Automatic step advancement for PT faculty has eluded the district for years. We now have an agreement that such advancement will occur automatically each semester and is set to begin in Fall 2017.
- 4. Evaluations:** The evaluations handbook has been revised for clarity and to ensure that it is consistent with other parts of the contract.




Brad Balukjian and Jennifer Shanoski deliver signatures to the Chancellor in support of increasing compensation for PT office hours.

- 5. Column Advancement:** The conflicting statements on the use of lower-division courses for column advancement was clarified and revised. Faculty who had previously received written approval for such courses are to be granted column advancement credit. In the future, faculty can use up to 20 units of approved coursework at the lower-division undergraduate level.

And, of course, much remains to be done. We are working diligently to:

- 1. Clarify** policies and procedures for office privacy.
- 2. Refine** step advancement for substitute assignments.
- 3. Ensure** a fair tenure process that does not encroach on academic freedom.
- 4. Improve** the evaluation process.
- 5. Develop** conflict management strategies that will avoid faculty investigations.
- 6. Enforce** contract and Ed. Code through clear course cancellation policies.
- 7. Ensure** that the District addresses Laney College facility needs.

The PFT continues to build an organized, activated model of union leadership that will find many of you engaged in the coming months and years! 

Ann McMurdo

Each issue, The Peralta Teacher will highlight one member of PFT. This spring, Laney elected Ann McMurdo to join Helen Curry as the PFT Campus Representative. Previously, Ann participated in counselor negotiations.

Ann McMurdo
Laney College Representative

GREW UP in Oregon and moved to California after undergraduate studies. Like many of our students, I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted to do. After working in a job I didn't like for a couple years, I decided to go back to school. While in grad school, I did a counseling internship at Merritt. I worked part-time at Merritt and then got a full-time Counseling position at Laney College.


Community colleges are a great place to work as most people are here to learn and improve their lives. I like counseling and teaching students in order to help them achieve their goals. Like others, I wish we had more resources to support our students.

I've also done one-on-one and group therapy in an agency. At the agency, I worked with dual diagnosis clients as well as high school students who

were in trouble at school. One of my favorite clients told me he wasn't going to live past 18. Another one told me he didn't have any problems because he had the biggest gun.

Over the years, various faculty suggested I run for Laney College Rep. Previously, I participated on the negotiation team as a counseling representative, and this time when a couple of faculty suggested it, I decided to run. As a union member, I'm concerned about the current national political climate, including the privatization of public education. I have two children and both attend(ed) OUSD. I've also volunteered at several Oakland schools.

As a union rep., I'm here to represent all faculty and their concerns as well as advocate for them. One of my goals is to have a more active union presence on campus and improve communication. As a faculty member at Laney College, I'm concerned about shared governance, administrative turnover, and our outdated facilities. I also wonder if we are doing the best we can with our money to educate and support students.

Hopefully, we can all work together to improve PCCD! 



Reps from Laney, (left to right) Ann McMurdo, Peter Brown (CTE Rep), and Helen Curry, have been working hard to address faculty concerns, especially the leaks that appeared during the storms.

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Reminders

► **Is it true that I can apply for unemployment between terms?**

Yes! PT faculty can earn State unemployment benefits between terms. PFT recommends that faculty apply for benefits on the last day of class for fall, spring, and summer terms.

► **How do I know if I'm in the PT preferred hiring pool?**

To enter the pool, PT faculty will need to have received assignments for 6 of 10 semesters and earned a "surpasses requirements" evaluation rating or higher. Once in the pool, they will need to have been assigned 6 out of the last 10 fall and spring terms and have earned at least a "meets requirements" rating. Contact your division dean or other college administrators, Department Chairs, or PFT or Academic Senate representatives with questions.

► **My evaluation is done, what should I do with the documents?**

Hold on to them! You should receive complete copies of your evaluation. Please keep them on file for your own records.

► **I'm headed to a protest—can I get one of those cool orange shirts?**

Of course! Contact your reps or stop by the PFT office to grab a shirt to show off your union spirit. Take a selfie and send it to PFT!

Improvements are coming but slowly

Part-Time Faculty Update

Cynthia Mahabir

Part-time Faculty Representative

HAD THE HONOR and privilege to lead a delegation of 15 elected Peralta faculty members to the California Federation of Teachers Convention March 11-13 in San Francisco.

Embedded inequality engulfs us as part-time/contingent faculty members, but it can—and should—be uprooted. Faculty unions are essential for making this happen by actively working towards equity and a workplace in which all faculty are considered faculty, eliminating the sub-class status of faculty members who work part-time. Achieving equity and equality takes time, commitment, and continuous action on the local and state levels. Against much adversity, the PFT, with tenacious part-time faculty advocacy, has won some important gains over the past ten years. Still, there is much left to do to reach our goal of equity.

Current contract negotiations promise agreements that will further improve our working conditions in the areas of office-hour compensation, job security, and, we hope, some movement, albeit miniscule, towards salary parity. Ultimately, we're aiming for a single-faculty salary schedule.

On the subject of job security and seniority for part-time faculty, statewide organizing has been critical. The enactment of AB 1690 and SB 1379 ("Community College: Part-time, Temporary Employees") was the result of sustained advocacy by faculty organizations—including the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), California Teachers Association (CTA), United Professional and Technical Employees (UPTE), the California Community College Independents (CCCCI), the Faculty Association of

California Community Colleges, and the California Part-Time Faculty Association—as well as individual faculty members across the state.

Governor Brown signed this legislation on September 30, 2016. It requires the following:

- ▶ Districts must negotiate job security in order to receive Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) funding.
- ▶ Districts "shall negotiate in good faith" with the collective bargaining representative of part-time faculty
- ▶ The District shall establish minimum standards for reemployment rights. These standards "shall include" the following: years of service, number of courses taught, evaluations, availability to teach and policies for termination, among other things.


Currently, Governor Brown's budget contains no increases in allocations for part-time faculty—although we comprise about 75% of community college faculty in the state. Can you imagine?

How do we respond? Well, one call-to-action is a letters-to-the-governor-and-legislature campaign to persuade Governor Brown to include part-time faculty funds in his "May Revise" budget. The plan is to collect 5,000 personal-story letters from part-time faculty members by May 1 and deliver them in person to the Governor and legislature shortly after.

I have signed on to that campaign and am inviting all our part-time faculty members to participate by sending in letters by May 1. If you haven't yet received a flyer from me by e-mail, please let me know right away at cmlaney2003@yahoo.com. Also, look for an e-mail invitation soon to a social hour for chit and chat... and maybe an open mic.

Another bit of good news:

A single-payer health care bill, sponsored by the California Nurses Association, has been proposed for the state. SB 562, the Californians for a Healthy California Act.

In the meantime, let's keep our eyes on all that matters as contract negotiations wind up. 

DeVos Report

TUESDAY, January 31, 2017—At high noon, PFT members gathered in front of the Federal Building in downtown Oakland to protest the confirmation of Betsy DeVos as Education Secretary. The matriarch of one of Michigan's wealthiest families, DeVos has advocated for "school choice," which means supporting vouchers for private schools and the creation of more charters. While "choice" sounds positive, it is a thinly veiled attempt to divert funds from public to private schools and undercuts the power of faculty and teachers. Charter schools are notoriously under-regulated and non-unionized.



Vouchers do not cover the full cost of private education costs and tend to benefit those that have means over those who cannot afford "choice."

Later that day, DeVos was confirmed with a 51-50 vote. V.P. Pence was required to cast the tie-breaking vote. The fight against the privatization of public education must continue. 