



# STANDING ROOM ONLY

CSEA CHAPTER 579 RANCHO SANTIAGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

This space is being dedicated to all employees, not just CSEA members, but to all of the Rancho Family, who have joined us in supporting our efforts to assist Pat Carpenter, who lost her home and its contents to a fire.

Pat, her daughter, and three grandchildren did not ask for our help. We, as employees of the greatest district in the nation (also referred to as 'the Ranch'), came together as one unit and are making a difference in the lives of this family.

I am so proud to be a member of the Rancho family. How can a person not feel pride when a fellow classified employee says I can give \$5 and you know it is coming from the heart and it may be all they can afford? Or when a classified employee walks up, pulls out their wallet and hands you \$100 and says this is for Pat!! I have certainly found out that we are working with some incredible people.

May we always consider the needs of others and offer them that helping hand.

God Bless You All and Thank You.

Marti Reiter

### CHAPTER 579

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## **Economist says Jerry Brown's Budget underestimates revenue**

At least one prominent economist says Gov. Jerry Brown is underestimating the strength of the recovery in his new budget proposal. Chris Thornberg, a Los Angeles consultant who advises State Controller John Chiang, said today he believes tax revenue in the upcoming fiscal year could top Brown's forecast by around \$4 billion. Thornberg, head of Beacon Economics, called the governor's forecast "bizarrely low". Brown's official economic outlook, released along with the budget Thursday, calls for a "guardedly positive" outlook but says unemployment rates will average 12 percent throughout the next year. California's unemployment has already fallen to 11.3 percent as of November. Thornberg acknowledged that he's misjudged state revenue projections in the past. When the Legislature approved a budget last June based on a predicted \$4 billion surge in revenue, Thornberg said "they're out of their minds." As it turns out, revenue did grow, but by only \$2 billion.

## **CSEA responds to Governor's pension proposals**

Last October, Gov. Brown unveiled a sweeping plan to rollback pension benefits for public employees. His 12-point proposal includes raising the retirement age for new employees from 55 to 67 and forcing new hires into a 401k-style plan instead of the defined benefit plan that school employees and other public service workers have depended upon for decades. "CSEA has been pushing for responsible reforms to prevent abuse and fraud in our pension system," said Association President Allan Clark. "However, some of the governor's proposals go too far and run the risk of undermining retirement security for thousands of California school employees and their families. "Pension costs amount to just 3 percent of the state budget—a percentage that has actually fallen \$600 million over the past two years. In fact, the State of California pays less as a percentage of payroll today than it did in the early 1980s.

"There is no Armageddon looming for our pension fund and no reason to question the long-term sustainability of CalPERS," Clark said. "Despite a ruthless campaign by out-of-state billionaires to generate sensational headlines based on faulty assumptions, CalPERS is not bankrupting the state. "The average state retiree has a pension of about 50 percent or less of their pay—or about \$25,000 a year—after serving the state for what is typically two or three decades. The average classified employee pension is \$1,197 a month. While 401k plans serve as a valuable supplement to employee pensions, they should not replace the defined benefit plan. Anyone with their pension savings locked into insecure 401(k)-type defined contribution plans knows how precarious it is to be at the mercy of the increasingly volatile markets. For school employees and other public workers, pensions are part and parcel of a larger wage and compensation structure, and collective bargaining must remain central to the process.

Public employers and the unions that represent their workers must maintain the authority to negotiate over pensions. "We support tough action to curb pension spiking and to pound down the pensions of the small number of public workers—mostly senior officials—with oversized pensions," Clark said. "But it's unfair to ask the rest of California's public employees to shoulder the burden caused by Wall Street's greed and recklessness. CSEA has been pushing for responsible reforms to prevent abuse and fraud in our pension system," said Association President Allan Clark. "However, some of the governor's proposals go too far and run the risk of undermining retirement security for thousands of California school employees and their families."



## **Chapter 579 news**

It's been great to see all of you at our Chapter meetings. Attendance has increased dramatically during the last 3 months, probably due to the issues we faced during the closing months of 2011. It was literally "Standing Room Only" at every site. It would be great to see this continue. We are a stronger Chapter when we know what everyone is experiencing.

Besides the obvious news of a really good settlement with the District last December, several important new things have happened. First, we approved the 2012 Chapter Budget at the January meeting. This budget included a new line item—the Chapter 579 Humanitarian Fund. This fund was established last year by our members, and will soon be active. We are in the process of finalizing the application form, and we will send out an announcement when it's ready. Donations will be accepted from members, along with a new meeting protocol. If your cell phone rings during a meeting, you will be assessed a \$5 dollar fee which will be put into the Humanitarian Fund. Our hopes are to see this fund grow and help out members who are having troubles and are in dire straights. This "cell phone fee" is the same at local and state levels when meetings are in progress. Remember to turn them off, or put them in silent mode.

The Chapter also approved our representatives to submit a resolution to the CSEA conference this summer regarding state policy 610. Changes in state leadership have caused a much stricter enforcement of this policy. Our current contract has language that prevents abuse of the reorganization process but greatly increases the speed at which we can process the changes. The new enforcement of policy 610 requires our field director to approve all such changes, which could (and already has) greatly increased the time to process these changes. Our resolution will allow us to continue to process these changes for our members as we have done in the past.

## **Elections for Area Directors**

### [2012 Area Elections \(Area Directors B, D, F, H and K\)](#)

#### **Democracy in Action**

Whether it's electing local officers or their board representatives; ratifying the latest collective bargaining agreement or establishing the rules that govern the association, CSEA members always have a voice and a vote in decisions affecting our union. Each spring in chapters all across the state, members vote to elect the CSEA Board of Directors. The CSEA Board of Directors consists of five Constitutional Officers and 10 Area Directors, each of whom is democratically elected by CSEA members. The constitutional officers are elected biennially at CSEA's annual conference and the ten Area Directors and Alternate Area Directors are elected for two-year terms in alternate years in local chapter elections. Special elections are conducted when necessary to fill vacancies.

All Board members are volunteers who work regular classified jobs. Only the Association President is granted full release time from his/her classified job.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

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Carolyn Everett  
**Region 94 Representative**  
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**CSEA's success is a testament to its members**

Today, CSEA represents more than 215,000 workers, making it the largest classified employee union in the nation. The union's success in legislation, contract negotiations, retirement benefits, safety measures and employee rights is a testament to the hard work of all CSEA members.

**CPRO'S Corner**  
**(opinion)**

A new year, 2012. An election year. The end of the world (according to the Mayans). New Year's resolutions. If you made no resolutions, or wanted to add one, try this- **I will get out of my comfort zone in 2012.**

Presidential politics, State politics, Tax increases, Chapter ratifications, Chapter Elections, State Propositions are all areas that will affect us now and in the future. Whatever your beliefs are, this is a year that demands that you participate by voting and becoming active at some level. This may sound like too much, but I would like to change the quote, "If you didn't vote, don't complain" to "if you didn't participate, don't complain." We can get out of our comfort zones this year by actively participating, and it's really very easy and quite painless.

Become informed. Listen to the news, read the papers, attend your children's school meetings, attend Chapter meetings, and talk to your friends and co-workers, and then **participate**. You can participate by calling all your local, state and federal representatives. You can participate by phone banking. You can walk precincts. You can participate by becoming active in your union and your community. And most importantly, you can participate by **voting**. Your vote counts, and is the most important part of a representative democracy.

Someone once said, "Vote once, Vote often". I think that this year it should be changed to, "Participate once, Participate often". Let's make 2012 the year of Democracy in Action, not Democracy inaction. Make your voice heard. Participate and Vote.

