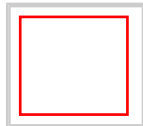


President's Monthly Message (archived)

- updated **May 28, 2004**

[President's Message, May 2004](#)



Learn more about the
< CCA President, Cathy
Crane-McCoy, [here](#).

President's Message, May 2004

A YEAR OF CHANGE

California Community Colleges have had a tumultuous year as the budget crisis has impacted many of the issues that we have taken for granted over the past few years.

The state has seen significant changes in the way we do business. The voters elected a new governor. The Chancellors office is under new management, and even the Board of Governors has had massive change.

All of these elements have created angst among college faculty. We have witnessed layoffs for the first time in decades, watched as classes were cut, salaries and benefits come under renewed assault, seen increasing turnover in local college management and a host of other disconcerting events.

While many of these issues seem to be settling down the Community College Association has not given up the vigil to protect our members from knee jerk reactions of a governor and legislature bent on slashing expenditures.

Although our new governor had given us concern as he first took office, he has been eager to meet with our leadership. Our parent organization the California Teachers Association met with the governor and was able to secure increases in Community College funding for the first time in years including COLA, Growth and Equalization. The clout that CTA displays in lobbying and political action on education issues is unmatched by any other educational group. Governor Schwarzenegger has met with CTA more often in the past few months than CTA was able to in the nearly five years in office of our former governor, proving his commitment to public education. As we all know successful local bargaining is only the second step of negotiations. The first element that must be achieved is to guarantee funding and that is done in Sacramento. CCA/CTA is clearly the major force in voicing community college concerns where it counts.

Strong communications with the governor is important but so is maintaining good relationships with the chancellor and the chancellor's office (soon to be referred to as the System Office). CCA maintains membership and representation on important task forces such as: Funding Formula Task Force, Budget Task Force, and Legislative Task Force to name a few. New leadership in the chancellor's office with the appointment of Mark Drummond has seen support for faculty issues and concerns. Chancellor Drummond has been very supportive of maintaining 75/25 ratios at our districts and is a strong advocate for the system as a whole, students, faculty, staff and administration. Additional changes will be forthcoming in the chancellor's office as a task force is under way which he created to review the functions of the office and make recommendations for restructuring.

Although gains were made this year in funding for community colleges college administrators

may still be working in a doom-laden scenario so challenges may still lie ahead for the coming year. Layoffs this year are almost non-existent in the community college venue. Unlike last year where colleges overreacted to gloom and doom budget forecasts and attempted to layoff significant numbers of college faculty the efforts of CCA/CTA lawyers reduced this number to just a handful.

Additional overreaction by college management led to the wholesale slaughter of part time sections of instruction and program discontinuance. Without much musing many districts lost sight of the fact that cutting classes and the students that attend them actually makes matters worse as funding declines with the loss of full time equivalent students. (FTES)

Salary settlements for college faculty in 2003-04 were the smallest in recent memory and increased costs for fringe benefits have made local negotiations an exercise in keeping what we have without losing what it has taken years to achieve.

Changes in the way community colleges are funded (elimination of some categoricals) may result in continued elimination of programs, increased stress on enrollments and cutbacks in gains made by part time faculty. CCA/CTA has been lobbying to support these categoricals in the budget hearings but the May revision still shows little awareness of their importance for their maintenance. We must be vigilant to educate the governor and the legislature the significance that they play in our budget.

Your union however is up to the challenges that lie in our future and pledge to you our members that we will use our considerable resources to maintain and enhance the life of the community college instructor. After all that is our sole purpose for existence. Keep the faith and be assured that CCA/CTA is diligently working on your behalf.

Any questions? Call the CCA office at 916/726-4207.

