

## **Cindy Patterson, CETPA CTO Mentor Candidate**

The Fiscal Management seminars were packed with high level overviews to provide big picture understanding in addition to deep dives in critical information for a successful CTO. Fiscal Management was presented on Friday evening and all day Saturday. The class participated in several interactive exercises over the two days. These exercises included the California State Accounting Manual (CSAM), and Standard Accounting Code Structure (SACS), negotiations, identifying your personal power profile, conflict resolution, negotiations and ethics.

Peter Skibitzki, Director of Administrative Operations for the Placer County Office of Education began with a very helpful overview of historic changes in school funding for California. With this background set, Peter delved further into more current topics such as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Peter also presented several models to assist the CTO Mentor Candidates with strategic thinking. The Iceberg model used in system thinking demonstrated that the visible portion of a system only represents a small percentage of the whole. The processes, structures, culture/commitment are unseen but represent the majority of the whole. The class reviewed the SWOT model; determining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Peter also presented the Logical Framework Approach which is widely used in problem solving and project management. This breaks projects down to interrelated components; activity, outputs, purpose and goal.

The Business Principles and Concepts for Technical Managers portion of the seminar included several aspects of managing operations. Peter presented information on decision making tools; return on investment (ROI) and total cost of ownership, TCO. The seminar also included a discussion and comparison of Indirect compared to Direct costs. Process planning and Process Improvement were also covered. A key take away was two ways to create improvement; improve a process or solve a problem. Saturday included a presentation on E-rate. E-rate is an important revenue opportunity for schools that every CTO must be familiar with. The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) manages the Schools and Libraries Program. The seminar including information on the program and recent funding structure changes that will impact schools ability to obtain funding.