



November, 2019

Volume 33, Number 3

Inside this Issue:

- **President's Message**
Page 1 & 3
- **UniServ Director's Message**
Page 2
- **State Council Report**
Page 4 & 5
- **BTA Happenings**
Page 6 & 8
- **Region 3 Conference**
Page 6
- **Why I Teach**
Page 7
- **Member Milestones**
Page 7
- **Site Reps**
Page 8
- **Political Activist Workshop**
Page 9
- **Parcel Tax Launch**
Page 10
- **Guy Meyers**
Page 11
- **TGIF** Page 12

President's Message by Diana Abasta

Justice Prevails

October was a long month but there were good things that occurred locally and across the country. First, the House of Representatives approved a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide. The vote on the bipartisan resolution was 405-11 and although there are no plans to bring the resolution up in the Senate, Congressman Adam Schiff, who has worked diligently to get the government to acknowledge the genocide, affirmed that it sent a strong message. At this time, because of economic sanctions and its treatment of the Kurds, Turkey finds itself with fewer allies. Finally, after twenty years of opposition, justice prevails.



On a local level, one of our own, former BTA/CTA member Manolo Lopez won the good fight with the help of BTA and CTA. Manolo was an auto shop teacher at Burbank High School who was accused of theft. The District even tried to have his credential taken away but to no avail. Five years later, the District settled and compensated Manolo for his losses and damages. Recently an article was written about Manolo in the October California Educator where he said, "CTA went above and beyond for me. Know that if you are right, CTA will stick with you."

Parcel Tax Update

The Committee is going strong. Volunteers have been out in force at different venues. They are trying to give the community accurate information regarding the parcel tax. The next step will be the hiring of a professional consultant to take help with next steps as we rally to get out the vote. In the meantime, keep December 15 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. for a fun winter fundraiser with food and drinks all for \$20.00 a ticket. Your Rep should be talking about this at your next faculty meeting and you should also be receiving an email with more information soon.

Professional Autonomy and Student Discipline

An area of concern has been the erosion of our professional autonomy. When we do not stand up and voice our concerns and insist on being respected for our teaching mastery and insight, we succumb to the status quo of having others tell us what is right for our students.

When it comes to student discipline, the passage of SB 419, to expand laws that restrict a principal from suspending a student for willful defiance, becomes effective July 1, 2020. However, the legislation does not change a teacher's right to suspend a student from class for the day and the following day due to willful defiance. As professionals, we know the importance of having a progressive discipline plan which entails documentation and of course, the option of using other means of correction such as referrals, parent conferences, SST, PBIS, or restorative practices.

Students who receive special education services are subject to the same suspension rules as students who do not receive special education services, except that the suspension may not exceed ten days without an IEP "manifestation determination", which is a formal procedure used to determine if a student's behavioral issue was an expression of that student's disability.

Continued on Page 3



Every child
deserves quality
public education,
regardless of
their ZIP code.

#RedForEd



**BTA Benchmark is published
nine times per school year by the
Burbank Teachers Association**

3021 W. Burbank Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91505
(818) 846-1304

Editor, Kim Allender
kimallender@earthlink.net

UniServ Director's Message by Nate Banditelli

With the passage of SB 419, laws that restrict a principal from suspending a student for willful defiance will expand effective July 1, 2020. The legislation does not change a



California
LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

teacher's right to suspend a student from class for the day and the following day, though. This change first became law in 2015, when AB 420 amended the California Education Code by removing willful defiance as a reason that a principal may use to suspend or expel a student in kindergarten through third grades. AB 420 expired on July 1, 2018 but was made permanent in last year's budget legislation. With the passage of SB 419, the prohibition is permanently extended to fourth and fifth grades and will extend it to sixth through eighth grades until July 1, 2025.

Rights of a Principal to Suspend or Expel

A principal may still suspend or expel students for any of the reasons that are enumerated in Ed. Code Sec. 48900: causing physical injury, using force or violence (including hate violence), possessing firearms, firearm replicas, knives, explosives, drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol, robbery or extortion, damaging property, stealing, receiving stolen property, hazing, bullying (including electronic), use of tobacco or nicotine, habitual profanity or vulgarity, obscene acts, sexual harassment, sexual assault, harassing or intimidating witnesses, or making terroristic threats.

Students in fourth through twelfth grades may be suspended or expelled when a principal or superintendent "determines that the pupil has intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against school district personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual or reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment."

The right to suspend or expel is not unlimited, though. The Ed. Code requires that other means of correction be used for a first offense, except when a student causes physical injury, causes a danger to persons, for possession of a firearm or other dangerous object, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of a controlled substance, or commits or attempts to commit robbery or extortion

Students who receive special education services are subject to the same suspension rules as students who do not receive special education services, except that the suspension may not exceed ten days without an IEP "manifestation determination", which is a formal procedure used to determine if a student's behavioral issue was an expression of that student's disability.

Rights of a Teacher to Suspend from Class for the Day and the Following Day

SB 419 does not impact a teacher's right to suspend a student from class for the day and the following day due to willful defiance. Before suspending the student from class, though, you should document the use of other means of correction. Other means might include parent conferences, referral to support personnel, student study teams, PBIS, or restorative practices.

SIGN THE PETITION FOR 2020 BALLOT

The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act will restore over \$11 billion per year to California's schools, community colleges, health clinics, and other vital local services.

<https://schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org/>



President’s article continued:

You may have heard of the Schools and Communities First Measure and want to know the difference between the Parcel Tax we are trying to pass March 2020 versus the other initiative that is set to go on the November 2020 ballot. This is a chart to help you know the differences.

Initiative	State or Local	Election Date	How it helps
Burbank Quality Teachers, Staff, and Schools Measure	Local	March, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners in BUSD will pay 10 cents per square foot on improved property. • Exemptions for seniors and disabled. • Ends after 12 years. • 100% of money goes to BUSD (about \$9.1 million annually)
Schools and Communities First Measure	State	November, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closes loopholes and reassesses commercial property at current market value. • Small businesses, farms, and residential property are exempt. • Will raise \$11 billion per year for public services in California. \$4.5 billion will increase LCFF funding across the state but will not structurally change the LCFF. • Most LA County school districts will benefit more than BUSD.

In closing, I would like to leave you with a stanza from Max Ehrmann’s prose poem “Desiderata”

Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
 It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
 Exercise caution in your business affairs;
 For the world is full of trickery.
 But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
 Many persons strive for high ideals;
 And everywhere life is full of heroism.

I see acts of heroism daily in you and among all of our colleagues who continue to do more with less. As always, we are vigilant and live to fight another day in public education.

In unity,
 Diana

Is this you??
 We are here to help.

Stress Reduction Yoga 4 BUSD
 Mondays 4 - 5pm
 no experience necessary
 \$10 Cash Class • Starts 12/2

Special Teacher Pass
 4 Class Pass \$40 • good for one month
 (not sold online, BUSD ID req'd)

We have early morning classes available now.
 Power Yoga MWF @6am
 Pranayama and Meditation T TH @6am

Self care is not self indulgence.

Self care is self respect.

- gateway -
 women.com

3008 W. Burbank Blvd.
 Burbank, CA 91505

Planet Namaste

www.PlanetNamaste.com
 818.859.7909

October 2019 CTA State Council Report

By Alexis Weiner and Darlene Crain

The first CTA (California Teachers Association) State Council kicked off October 26, 2019, at the Bonaventure Hotel in downtown LA.

What is State Council? Over 800 educators and union members are elected by their members to represent their locals at a quarterly representative assembly. For the 2019-2020 school year, the Burbank Teachers Association representatives are Alexis Weiner (JBHS) and Darlene Crain (Bret Harte), with an alternate, Bridget Highfill (Disney). Your representatives attend three general assemblies during the course of the weekend, in addition to a regional caucus meeting (District I) and a statewide committee meeting. During these general assemblies, there are multiple speeches (generally from the CTA president and the executive director, along with other special visitors), committee reports, and discussion/voting on New Business Items proposed by the representatives regarding actions CTA should take or policies CTA should add to its platform. Any BTA/CTA member is welcome to visit and observe the proceedings; if you ever wish to come downtown, let one of us know to expect you and we'll get you set up!



Bonnie Shatun, Alexis Weiner & Darlene Crain

At the October Council, the focus was to get the **Schools and Communities First initiative** on the November 2020 ballot, and CTA and our partners kicked off the effort with a press conference on Sunday. This initiative is designed to reclaim money for public schools and their communities by closing corporate loopholes created by Proposition 13 in 1978. This initiative, if passed, will NOT affect property taxes for homeowners and renters, small businesses, or agricultural land. Per-pupil funding for California students has dropped steadily over the 40 years since the passage of Proposition 13, and this initiative looks to reclaim \$12 billion every year for schools and communities. Find out more about this initiative at cta.org/taxfairness.

In order to get the initiative on the ballot, CTA and its partners must collect 1.6 million signatures from registered California voters by March 2020. If you are interested in helping this effort, see your site rep to find out more or text "our future" to 97779.

Speaking of elections, you have probably been hearing a lot about the 2020 presidential election. The National Education Association has set up an informational website so you can compare any and all of the candidates. Go to strongpublicschools.org to do side-by-side comparisons of any presidential candidate, sign up to host a house party, or post questions for NEA President Lily Eskelson-Garcia to ask candidates in interviews.

Several people addressed Council this weekend: new CTA President E. Toby Boyd celebrated recent victories for California educators, including new laws regulating charter school growth and successful teacher strikes around the state. He also introduced new CTA Executive Director Joe Boyd (no relation), who has been involved in educators' unions for decades and is returning to CTA after spending time as executive director of the California Federation of Teachers. Finally, NEA President Lily Eskelson-Garcia spoke to Council on Sunday about why the 2020 presidential election is so critical for educators and why we MUST be knowledgeable and involved.

You should have some say in how CTA spends your dues! Please take the CTA Budget Survey for 2020-2021 at <https://ctago.org/budgetsurvey/>.

Even though Read Across America isn't until March, the California Reads table was jam-packed. BTA has purchased books to donate to sites, but the committee's recommendations by grade levels are listed at cta.org/californiareads for your perusal.

It was a fairly quiet session for policy and legislation, but CTA finally passed policy language for Net Neutrality. The body also endorsed a school facilities bond (AB48) that will be on the March 2020 ballot, took positions on state legislative candidates, authorized up to \$6 million to support CTA positions on the 2020 ballot, and took a moment to stand in solidarity with striking Chicago educators. There were also several elections to fill vacant positions. Hilary Hall, a current Newhall teacher and BUSD graduate, now serves as our service center chair and represents our district on the CTA/ABC committee. (This committee reviews applications for and grants funding to local chapters to run political campaigns.)

CTA offers a number of scholarships, grants, and awards for members, their dependents, and their students. All of the details can be found at www.cta.org/scholarships. Application deadlines start coming up in January, so look online to see if any of these apply to you!

Again, if you are interested in observing a State Council meeting, like member Mark Norberg (Muir) did this weekend, reach out! We look forward to seeing you. The next State Council will be January 25-26, 2020, again at the Bonaventure Hotel.

Ladies and Gents' Night on Magnolia

The Committee to Support the Quality Teachers, Staff, and Schools Measure 2020 set up a booth on October 25th from 5:30 to 9:00pm in our own UME Credit Union parking lot. Steve Frintner, Nate Banditelli, our UniServ Executive Director, and Nicole Drabecki, our BTA VP kicked off the event by taking the first shift and handing out Parcel Tax Information flyers. Steve Frintner and Nicole Drabecki took a lap up and down the street and managed to put flyers in the hands of a few hundred Burbank residents. Char Tabet, Emily Weisberg, President of the Burbank Democratic Club, Colleen Elkins, PTA parent and her two children also handed out flyers. Steve Ferguson and Jacob Flores took the evening shift amid the pre-Halloween activities that showcased people and their pets in Halloween costumes and handed out flyers as well. Diana Abasta, BTA President, joined the crew as well and answered questions at the booth as people walked by on the way to the yummy catering trucks present along the streets. She said she was not surprised by the level of support shown and was pleased that people were asking where they can donate to fund the measure.

If you would like to contribute any amount, please go to the Facebook link. Every dollar counts!



<https://www.facebook.com/BurbankQualityTeachersStaffandSchoolsMeasure/> and if you are interested in any volunteer opportunities, please sign up. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805054aa4a62caafa7-parcel>

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If you are called into a meeting, you can request a union rep by saying:

“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative be present.”

SCOTUS Decision: *NLRB v. Weingarten, Inc.* 420 U.S. 251 (1975)

Know Your Rights

You have a right to union representation when you find yourself in a meeting that you reasonably believe may result in discipline. Your supervisor doesn't have to inform you of these rights, though. These are called your Weingarten Rights. The employer does not get to choose who represents you, either. When you would like union representation, contact the BTA office or your Site Rep and you'll be sure to have the best possible representation.

BTA joins UME in the spirit of "People Helping People"

BTA asked UME members to help collect donations for the 7th Annual Thank-A-Soldier Care Box Assembly project, an event that BTA participates in every year. Our Reps collected goods from our sites and then dropped them off at UME so that volunteers could pack the goods and get them ready to ship. This year the event was held on Saturday, October 19 from 10:00am to 2:00pm in the UME parking lot. Hundreds of volunteers showed up to enjoy the entertainment and food as they packaged boxes filled with donated goods for our soldiers.



BTA would like to thank our members who stepped up and donated several bags of sundries, snacks, books, socks, and other personal items for our soldiers. In addition, Rm. 22 at McKinley Elementary wrote some wonderful letters to the soldiers and thanked them for their service. It was an added touch that is much appreciated by the men and women who serve. BTA hopes to continue in the spirit of giving next year.



The annual Walk to End Alzheimer's, which took place on Saturday, November 2nd, at the LA Zoo, raises money and awareness in hopes of one day finding a cure for this devastating disease. The 2-mile walk was preceded by a touching flower ceremony which honored loved ones who have passed away from Alzheimer's and patients who have been diagnosed with the disease. This is the first year BTA participated as a team which included Diana Abasta (and son, Logan), Stacey Bowren, Darlene Crain, Amy Fuhr, Heather Good, and Robin Hatch. Together, the team achieved their goal of raising \$6000. Thank you to all who supported our efforts. We hope to encourage more participation with next year's Walk.



The 42nd Region III Leadership Conference

By Darlene Crain

The 42nd Region III Leadership Conference's theme was "Membership Matters." While in attendance, the area of my focus was the topic of Alternatives to Student Discipline and I wanted to share my experience with the rest of our members.



Darlene Crain with BTA Treasurer Jerry Mullady

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) seems to be a hot topic among other union members from around the state. While I was sitting in a room of over fifty teaching professionals, from pre-k to 12, the following question was asked, "How many schools in here have a successful PBIS program?" Only one hand went up and all eyes were focused on the individual, eagerly waiting on the bits of wisdom this person could pass along to the rest of us. Their advice was helpful, but not a surefire way of paving a path to success. Of course, they had a budget which allowed for staff training, a counselor, and an in-house suspension room. Most importantly, the entire staff was on board with

making the program successful, but they also used Restorative Practices before the problem escalated to in-house suspension.

The goal of restorative practices is to keep students engaged in the classroom while addressing the root cause of misbehavior. PBIS shifts from punishing and excluding, to teaching and acknowledging appropriate behavior with a positive message; while restorative practices encourages accountability, personal reflection, and healing for students. As a whole-school model approach to discipline, these two programs can be used hand and hand to emphasize prevention and positive outcomes for student behaviors.

Part of the restorative practice involves connection circles. Connection circles is a relationship building process used to promote understanding, share experiences, and build relationships. We use these circles to transform the culture and community of our classroom. Those who currently participate in this process advise that most failures in the system happen when the teacher is not involved in the small group circle.

There's so much more to this process than I can explain in a newsletter article. If you would like more information, then I encourage you to visit www.ousd.org/restorativejustice.

WHY I TEACH... Ruby Mazur

I can't believe I'm in my eighteenth year of teaching. Over these 18 years, I've accumulated several reasons on why I teach and continue to come back year after year.

One reason is because in one way or another, whether it is big or small, I feel that I am making a difference in a child's life. I just know it when I see their little faces light up when they understand something and it just clicks. It's definitely rewarding to see their growth over a course of a school year.

Another reason I teach is that I feel that I'm inspiring young minds. On a daily basis, it is my job to encourage them to do something they think they can't and change their mind to a growth mind set. Many times, they just need to hear it from someone and know that someone believes in them in order for them to make a change in the right direction and try something new.

In addition, as a teacher, I sometimes feel like a celebrity, but only in a positive role model type of way. You know that feeling when you've been absent and your students just give you all the love in the world or they see you at the local store and get so excited to see you outside of the classroom even though, you try to hide? I love that feeling of knowing as a teacher you mean a lot to them and we are considered another positive role model in their life for many and perhaps the only one for a few.

However, as I've gotten older and have experienced different stages in my life, I've added a new reason, balance. As a single mom, I saw my career choice in a different light. I've realized how fortunate I am to have an amazing career in which I am able to make a positive contribution to society, be financially independent, provide for my eight-year-old daughter and myself and have quality family time with her.

I believe many teachers can agree with the aforementioned reasons on why we teach; to make a difference, inspire, be a positive role model and overall have a rewarding career in where you see all that growth and effort come to its fruition by the end of the school year. In addition, realizing that having a balance of being career driven and a mom is the icing on the cake! For these reasons and perhaps more as I continue my journey as a teacher, I will continue to come back year after.

Have a wonderful remaining school year and happy holidays to all! I'm truly grateful for my career choice, the opportunity to make a difference in your child's life and my own.



Member Milestones

Luka Sevan Franco
was born on
September 29, 2019.

Proud & tired
parents: Tony (BHS)
and Kristine Franco

Congratulations!

Diane Grair (BHS)
married her best friend
on October 19, 2019



2019-2020 BTA Site Representatives

- ADULT SCHOOL** — Julie Grair, Fred Rivas
- BRET HARTE ELEM.** — Dahlia Dobbertin, Darlene Crain
- BURBANK H.S.** — Bob Shaw, Gina DiFrancesco, Dawud Akram, Natalie Setaghian, Caroline Sasorski, Laura Messian
- BURROUGHS H.S.** — Robyn Russon, David Hedin-Abreu, Jeil Salem, Alexis Weiner
- COMMUNITY DAY** — Trevor Rapp
- DISNEY ELEM.** — VACANT
- EDISON ELEM.** — Sandy Solis, David Engel
- EMERSON ELEM.** — Margarita Tubbs, Jamie Davis
- HORACE MANN CHILDCARE** — Cathi Zsupnik, Rosie Riveria (Alt)
- INDEPENDENT LEARNING ACADEMY** — Heather Good
- JEFFERSON ELEM.** — Kris Uribe, Anna Basinski, Chris Copeland, Rebecca Boccuzzi (Alt)
- JORDAN M.S.** — Amy Fuhr, Dana Ragle, Anna Rodriguez, Amanda Stratton
- LUTHER M.S.** — Lisa Raluy, Nick Lundy, Lucas Gattuso
- McKINLEY ELEM.** — Dug Gutierrez, Ruby Mazur
- MILLER ELEM.** — Cynthia Madera, Erica Dent
- MONTEREY H.S.** — Tanase Petrenco
- MUIR M.S.** — Kathy Gallego, Corey Howard, Mark Norberg, Shelly Burish
- PROVIDENCIA ELEM.** — Kate Bailey, Brian Collins
- ROOSEVELT ELEM.** — Rhonda Wright, Bridget Murphy
- SPED** - Janice Gresham
- STEVENSON ELEM.** — Sandi Sutter
- TOSA** — Eric Carter
- WASHINGTON ELEM.** — Chandra Collins, Brandy Ellingsworth



BTA Business Buddy **The Ugly Mug** displays artwork of local student artists during the month of October! Proudly displayed in their coffee shop were “Monster Mugs” created by Bret Harte’s second graders from Ms. Crain’s class.

Evie's
HOLIDAY
BOOK
DRIVE

Benefiting
Children's Hospital
LOS ANGELES
LITERALLY HEALING

Accepting *NEW* Book Donations

OCTOBER 16
thru
DECEMBER 8

EVIE LOVED READING AND ALWAYS HAD A BOOK IN HER HAND. WHEN SHE WAS ADMITTED TO CHLA ON MAY 30, 2018, SHE WAS GREETED BY A VOLUNTEER FROM LITERALLY HEALING, WHICH OFFERS NEW BOOKS TO PATIENTS. EVIE'S FAVORITE VISITORS MOST DAYS WERE THE LITERALLY HEALING VOLUNTEERS. THE PROGRAM'S GOAL IS TO GIVE EVERY CHILD A NEW BOOK EVERY DAY THAT BEST SUITS THEIR AGE AND INTERESTS.

Drop Off Locations

DARLING NIKKI'S SALON 1022 N Hollywood Way
Burbank, CA 91505

DARK DELICACIES 822 N. Hollywood Way
Burbank, CA 91505

TEAM MUIR



Tour de Cure was a great experience! Thank you all for supporting TEAM MUIR by contributing financially, running, riding, and cheering us on. Team Muir consisted of Muir staff Eric Blinder, Mary Brooks, Ted DeVirgilis, Barbara Felipe, Nancy Kim and her husband David, Janet Lam, Robert Lee, and Lori Musicant Kozubek. By pulling together, we raised \$3570 for the American Diabetes Association. Way to go everyone!!!

Political Activist Workshop

During the weekend of October 4th-6th I had the privilege of attending the CTA Political Activist Academy near LAX. The entire weekend was dedicated to learning about and planning how our teachers' unions can help pass the Schools and Communities First Act, more formally known as the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act. As our BTA President Diana Abasta thoroughly explained in last month's Benchmark, this Act will restore over 4 billion dollars to our local K-12 schools and community colleges, and over 7 billion dollars to support other community services such as health clinics, trauma care, emergency rooms, parks, libraries, and public safety. How will it do this, you may wonder? Let me try to explain.

When Proposition 13 was passed in 1978 it limited property taxes to no more than one percent of a home's assessed value. Assessments of property values couldn't rise by more than two percent per year, unless a property was sold. This is the loophole for big businesses that the Schools and Communities First Act is trying to close. If businesses are not sold, and instead are passed down to or transferred to more than one person or company, then their property taxes are not reassessed for their current value. Thus, many large and very prosperous California businesses are not paying their fair share, while middle class families are expected to pay the current property taxes on their homes. The Schools and Communities First Act would NOT affect homeowners or many farmers, and it would exempt owner operated small businesses from reassessment until they are sold.

Being in the bottom 20 states of per pupil spending, while we have the highest grossing state economy, is concerning and eye-opening. As educators, we all know the value of a quality public education. We all realize that giving our students a good foundation will lead to a thriving state, and a continued strong economy. This belief will hopefully drive you to be a supporter of the Schools and Communities First Act.

But what can you do? What can BTA do? At the Political Activist Academy the CTA President E. Toby Boyd, and special guests, like Governor Newsom, spoke about the power that

California teachers' unions have in their communities and in state politics. They spoke about us conveying and communicating the importance of this Act passing to our families, our friends, and all of our union members. We gathered in state district areas and brainstormed ways that we can make sure our union members understand and support the Schools and Communities First Act. I met with other union members from District 3 and our CTA Board Member, Chris Bushee, to share ideas about the best talking points to use in each of our school districts. As soon as petitions are available, we can all gather signatures in order to get it on the ballot in the November 2020 election. Together, we can make a difference in our communities, for our schools, for us and our colleagues, and especially for our students.

I'm sure many of you have gathered signatures for petitions before. I have not, but was trained at this Political Activist Academy how to do so. As soon as BTA gets them, I hope we can all take part in changing the course of the current inequality in property taxes and put our Schools and Communities First.

For more information about this Act, you can look it up at:

info@schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org

Chandra Collins
Special Education Teacher
BTA Member and
Representative CA District
43 Democratic Delegate



LA Mayor Eric Garcetti



Relay For Life
Save the Date
Saturday May 2, 2020

Please join our team, donate or dedicate a Luminaria.

Go to www.relayforlife.org

In middle of the page go to:

Search- Click on team

Type: Burbank Teachers Association

Select Burbank Teachers Association



Follow us on Twitter

@BurbankTchrAssn



Find us on
Facebook

@BurbankTeachersAssociation

Website

www.burbankteachers.org

Parcel Tax Campaign Launch October 16, 2019

It's official! The Parcel Tax campaign is underway. Senator Anthony Portantino kicked off the event by speaking about the importance of having a parcel tax. He not only endorsed it but donated \$20,000 towards the campaign. Assembly member Laura Friedman also spoke on behalf of the importance of public education in Burbank. She too has endorsed the tax.



Because we will not have the official letter of the measure that will be on the ballot in March 2020 until December 2019, for now we are the Committee to Support Quality Teachers, Staffs, and Schools. It is a mouthful, but we are now a recognized name! The committee consists of BTA President Diana Abasta, Uniserve Director Nate Banditelli, and Nicole Drabecki, BTA VP and our community members are Dr. Armond Aghakhanian, Steve Ferguson, Steve Frintner, Roberta Reynolds, and Char Tabet. PTA District President Wendy Horvel as well as other PTA parents and District staff are involved on the committee which basically functions in three groups: communications, fundraising, and organizing.

BTA would like to thank BTA retired teachers Michael Hamell, Brad Frank, and Maryann Dixon who attended the morning event as well as Lew Stone, a former BTA member and now retired firefighter. In addition, thanks to retired teacher Brooks Gardner who helped us locate a podium for the event through BTA member Tim Wells and his wife Fran at the Methodist church on Glenoaks. Last but not least, Natalie Ohrt, BHS and Kelly Ohrt made the signs for the event. This is what makes our community great! Everyone comes together when it comes to our children.

Later that day, the Committee held a fund raiser at Urban Press on San Fernando. Our distinguished guests Senator Portantino and Assembly member Laura Friedman spoke and welcomed all who attended.



Nate Banditelli, Steve Frintner, Senator Portantino, Lisa Raluy, Diana Abasta, Sue Conway, Sarah Niemann, Laura Bauman, Alyson Edge, and Nicole Drabecki.

BTA members present were Sue Conway and Lisa Raluy from Luther, Nicole Drabecki from Edison/Jefferson, Kate Bailey and Kelly Ort from Providencia, Alyson Edge and Caroline Sasorski from BHS, Julie Grair, Adult School Counselor, and Eric Carter, TOSA.

BTA made a \$5000 donation from its PAC funds. We are committed to passing this tax. Burbank schools contribute greatly to the high property values in Burbank and many realtors have told us they are able to sell more homes because of the quality teachers, staff, and schools. We need to be united in our message and continue to educate others on the Parcel Tax.



Kate Bailey chats with Caroline Sasorski





Burbank's Own Guy Myers Named a California State Teacher of the Year

By Kris Uribe

"Be yourself on your best day!" October 4th, 2019 proved to be a good day for our own, Guy Myers. On that day, the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond named Guy Myers as one of the five state Teachers of the Year for 2020. Guy is a theatre teacher at John Burroughs High School. Prior to receiving this prestigious award, Guy was named B.U.S.D. Teacher of the Year in April. He has been with the District for 14 years. Guy is a graduate of Yale University where he was a Theatre Studies major. While at Yale, he was also President of the Yale University Dramatic Association. Guy traveled all over the U.S. performing, writing and directing. Guy was most inspired working with high school and college students in the theatre classroom. "It's magical. When nurtured

to express themselves creatively, students find their voices and shake off their fears. It was challenging and rewarding, and I knew I had to be a teacher." He obtained his teaching credential and masters degree at Mount St. Mary's College. He began teaching at Burroughs in 2008. Guy believes that all students can benefit from theatre classes. It helps to foster "life skills" and helps people to become better communicators. In Guy's classes, students learn to become comfortable with themselves as well as take risks and "find their [own] voices to be able to communicate who they are to the world."

Guy believes that his most important production at Burroughs was his 2017 production of *The Laramie Project*. This play depicts the true account of a young gay man who was victim of a brutal hate crime which led to his death. "The production brought our community together and had our students talking about bullying, and tolerance, and how to speak up when they need support. I don't think any of those students will ever forget that experience." His production went on to win Best Play and Best Ensemble from the California Educational Theatre Association.

Additionally, Guy started a weekly Improv Club that meets during lunch each Friday. The class is student run by advanced drama students who host fun acting games. The arts of successfully listening, responding and sharing the stage with other performers and possibly "failing spectacularly" are all skills that are fostered all while ending the week on a hilarious and positive note.

When he is not at school planning or working on a production, Guy loves to spend his personal time gardening, swimming, and hiking, and spending time with his husband, Brian, and their two dogs, Henry and Geoffrey. "We love to vacation at the beach in Cape Cod every summer with friends. I obviously love going to see plays to keep up with the most current trends in theatre and get inspired to bring new experiences to my students. I'm a theater geek – I always have been, and I always will be."

We thank you Guy Myers for being our favorite theater geek and our Burbank Teacher of the Year for 2020. Break a leg as you promote our profession and serve as an ambassador for California teachers everywhere!



TGIF

On Friday, October 18th BTA members enjoyed a relaxing evening of delicious tacos, delectable treats, and dandy drinks at the BTA Office. We were able to gather together on a Friday evening, let the school week go, and banter with our colleagues outside of our schools and offices. It was a nice opportunity for

members who are usually busy at different schools to catch up and decompress. BTA hosts a few Happy Hours a year so that we can get together in a casual way and remind ourselves how lucky we are to be a part of our union. We can take time to get to know each other in a more personal way, and celebrate our passion for education. This was the first BTA Happy Hour of the school year, perfectly timed before the festivities of the fall holidays began, as well as the report card crunch.

Congratulations to our raffle winners:

\$50 New Teacher Becca Thomas - Miller; \$25 Prob 2 Sarah Matsui Von Guetzow - Bret Harte; \$25 Member Tracy Sorensen - Jefferson

We look forward to seeing more of you at the next Happy Hour event!

