President’s Message by Diana Abasta

Where Do We Go from Here?

Helping students achieve is the cornerstone of what we do as teachers, counselors, nurses, and speech and language pathologists. In addition, it is also the responsibility of our parents and community. Teaching and learning is a home, classroom, and community team effort.

April 19th, 2018 was our march and rally to City Hall and BTA wants to emphasize this was a team effort. We were supported by our parents and sister unions and community people who joined us as we walked to City Hall to address our Board of Education.

As voters we gave these elected officials the task of finding the means for members and the District to work together to reach a fair settlement. A fair settlement that honors the people who day in and day out teach, counsel, help, and tutor our students. We must do what is necessary to bring about this needed change so that the District puts its employees in the forefront when it comes to creating their annual budgets and the projections that follow. Let your voices be heard!

In unity,
Diana
Executive Director’s Message by Sonya Lowe

Every once in a while, we need a reminder of the importance of solidarity and sticking together as union sisters and brothers. Our BTA members are fired up and our actions have been escalating, sending a strong message to the District about the lack of appreciation and respect felt by our members. Our strength lies in our numbers, at times like these we need to remember that.

Right now, the attention is on negotiations. It is through negotiations that BTA has been able to bargain salary increases in past years as well as increase the health benefits cap. While neither of these have kept up with the cost of living, or with surrounding districts, we have to remember that without the negotiations process, we would have no say at all in our salaries and benefits. Your BTA bargaining team also negotiates contract language to ensure you are treated fairly.

BTA also ensures you can advocate for your students freely as well as have a voice in curricular and professional decisions. With CTA, you have direct influence in legislation that impacts students learning, district funding and fair working conditions. CTA’s lobbying efforts support legislation such as the parental leave law that passed last year that we then bargained into our contract.

Being a union member also gives you the confidence to stand up for yourself and your colleagues. You are the expert in your discipline – you can express yourself knowing that BTA has your back. BTA will ensure your rights are protected. Being a member of BTA also gives you the right to support your colleagues without fear of retribution.

BTA protects you and will represent you if you are challenged in the workplace. CTA provides free legal support for job related issues when you are challenged by administrators, parents and students. CTA also provides free legal support and professional liability insurance, which is imperative in today’s educational environment.

While all of these reasons are very important, they aren’t the most important reason. The most important reason for sticking together as BTA is strength.

As BTA members we have a voice in how to make our students’ lives better. We have the right to tell a principal they are wrong when a poor decision has been made without being fired for saying it. We have bargaining power. We have the respect of the community.

We get this because everybody knows we do amazing work in our classrooms every single day and everybody knows there are over 850 professionals who speak with one voice. If you don’t participate in the union that voice is diminished.

Your voice is important, your work is important, and it is only when we all work together as a union that we remain strong.
Organizing activities in April included Lunch Lockout at the high schools which meant teachers were posting orange signs stating they were not available at lunch because lunch time activities are voluntary. Elementary teachers at Disney, Jefferson, McKinley, Miller and Stevenson participated in Pickup Picketing. They picketed after school and handed out informational flyers telling parents what was going on regarding negotiations with the District. Muir Middle School also participated in Pick up Picketing.
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND RECRUITING ACADEMY
By Nicole Drabecki

I attended the Membership Engagement and Recruiting Academy March 9-11 at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. It was absolutely the most amazing conference I have ever attended. I had the opportunity to meet sixty other union members across Southern California and four CTA trainers. We learned about Labor history and the Janus case that is being heard by the Supreme Court. If we lose the Janus vs. AFSCME Supreme Court case we can lose fair share. Every educator who enjoys the benefits and protections of a negotiated contract, should in fairness, contribute to maintaining the contract. Fair share fees are not used for political or ideological activities. Fair share does not force individuals to join CTA. In fact, Fair share protects the individual rights of educators to choose whether to join the Association.

We also learned the importance of one-on-one conversations with our current members and non-members. We need to develop relationships, identify leaders, and identify and validate concerns.

Trainers emphasized the need for a social media plan in our union. Some questions to answer are what is it we want to communicate, what resources do we need and how do we know it’s working? The power point is an excellent tool for a learning platform. We can put power points on a thumb drive and give it to all the reps to use at their sites. Generational targeting is also key for social media. What does it take to target the mass of members and non-members. How do baby boomers, generation X, generation and Millennials process this information the best?

I enjoyed learning about how to develop member recruitment and engagement activities. In recruitment we are trying to sign up non-members to become members whereas engagement involves building relationships with all bargaining unit members based on issues that are meaningful to them. Recruitment strategies are not about selling membership but it is about having a conversation about belonging and building something together. It’s important to focus on the positive and the issues that are important to the educators. We also want to summarize and share the association’s accomplishments throughout the year. We need to ask members what they would like BTA to work on next year and then continue to follow up with them often. Doing social activities like bowling nights, book clubs, happy hour, baseball outings and paint and sip are all good ways to involve potential new members. Community work like food drives, toy drives and helping local charities are also excellent activities to engage more potential new members.

Finally, the last part of the conference was about how to put an organizing plan together. The union’s goals are the union’s ultimate destination. The union’s objectives are the milestones that measure our progress on the way. The union’s strategies are the specific routes to the union’s destination. The union’s tactics are the specific actions required to produce progress on the road to each milestone and to the ultimate destination. What I learned the most is that being in a union protects our common interests and improves our wages and benefits. It gives our members the power to negotiate more favorable working conditions through collective bargaining.
I remember preparing for Open House on a soft spring night several years ago. I decided to stay at school and was not paying attention to the news. As parents began to arrive, the mood was hushed and somber. I finally asked a parent why everyone seemed so subdued and she told me the harrowing tale of Columbine High School. The shock of the Colorado school shooting reverberated for weeks. Little did any of us know that in the next two decades mass shootings would become so commonplace that the prevailing response would be a few days of meaningless platitudes followed by a collective shrug. However, after the death of 17 students and educators in Parkland, Florida maybe the United States has finally reached a breaking point on such senseless and preventable massacres.

The Florida school shooting created a different response than previous school shootings. High school students led the way in protesting lax gun laws and demanding change. Their activism inspired others to stand up and speak out. While gun control remains controversial, sensible laws to address the unique violence of mass shootings are supported by the vast majority of Americans. According to a Quinnipiac University poll from February, 97% of Americans support universal background checks to purchase a weapon and 67% support an assault weapons ban. Clearly, the new activists have brought the issue of gun violence front and center in the crowded arena of American political issues.

The students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, the victims of the latest school shooting terror, organized and mobilized fellow young adults. They created the March for Our Lives and managed to inspire a mass rally in Washington D.C. and sister marches around the country. Several Burbank educators marched with hundreds of their neighbors on March 24th on the Chandler bike path. State Senator Anthony Portantino and State Assembly member Laura Friedman addressed the large crowd after the march. Congressman Adam Schiff also attended and pledged to keep fighting at the capital for gun legislation.

There is no silver lining to the horrific loss of life at Stoneman Douglas High School. However, the awakening of a young generation to the power of their voices in our country is inspiring. One survivor of the shooting, Cameron Kasky, said at the Washington march, “My generation — having spent our entire lives seeing mass shooting after mass shooting — has learned that our voices are powerful and our votes matter. We must educate ourselves and start conversations that keep our country moving forward and we will. We hereby promise to fix the broken system we’ve been forced into and create a better world for the generations to come. Don’t worry, we’ve got this.” In this case, the kids will lead. Let’s hope Americans have the courage to follow.
The BTA negotiating team comprised of BTA’s Executive Director, Sonya Lowe, Lori Adams (BHS), Sue Conway (Luther), Kim Anderson (Jefferson), Heidi Lavitt (Stevenson), and Les Cohen (JBHS) met with the BUSD team, comprised of Sarah Niemann (Asst. Sup. Human Resources), Steve Andelson (lawyer), David Jaynes (Asst. Supt. Business Services), Laura Flosi (Edison), Sandra De Barros (Jefferson), and April Evans-Weaver (Jordan). Matt Hill (Superintendent) joined the meeting after lunch and Anita Schackmann (Human Resources Director) was unable to attend.

Hot Topics

- BTA expressed concerns about the violent behavior of students at the elementary level and the perceived lack of support from district administration. Principals in attendance discussed the difficulty in working with violent students who are as yet unidentified as having special needs. Sarah Niemann will discuss the issues with Sharon Cuseo and Tom Kissinger.

- BTA expressed concerns with the PIVOT study on the status of our Special Education Program and asked about the status of the study of the CLC program at various elementary schools.

- BTA expressed concerns about positions being flown when a hiring freeze was promised. The district stated that each vacancy goes to a committee where the need for the position is reviewed before it is decided if the position should be downgraded or eliminated. The position of Emergency Planning and Safety Coordinator is a downgrade of Safety and Compliance Coordinator, which is vacant due to a retirement. The Director of Facilities position is a downgrade of the position Chief of Facilities who resigned.

- BTA asked about the status of the copies of the 2016-2019 Collective Bargaining Agreement and an approved draft was provided.

Article 9 Hours of Employment (BTA) - BTA will present Article 9 on April 20th.

Article 4 Association Rights (BUSD) - Sarah Niemann and BUSD lawyer Steve Andelson had clarifying questions on BTA’s proposed changes to Article 4. BUSD will respond to the proposal on April 20th.

Budget Update - David Jaynes provided PowerPoint slides on recent suggestions and changes made by the Board of Education in an attempt to provide increased compensation to employees.

The District will save money in the following manner:
- No Reduction to Deferred Maintenance
- Freeze OPEB Contribution (General Fund portion only)
- Child Care Fee Increases-Loan Repayment
- No employee reductions
- Freeze and Review all vacation positions, no layoffs
- Transfer expenditures from the General Fund to the Supplemental Grant to be used for expenses related to targeted groups specified under the LCAP

Two potential new sources for revenue include:
- Potential Parcel Tax (10 cents/per square foot is polling well)
- State Senate Budget Proposal from our great Senator Anthony Portantino. Bill is likely to be approved and will provide approximately $2.6 million to BUSD.

Article 7 Wages (BUSD) Superintendent Matt Hill joined the meeting after lunch. A discussion about transparency, confidentiality and trust occurred.

A complex full-page proposal was provided. In short:
- 1% increase in salary on schedule retroactive to July 1, 2017
- 1% off schedule bonus (one-time) after the 1% increase
- 1% increase in salary on schedule effective July 1, 2018, if Senator Portantino’s proposal passes
- 1% off schedule bonus (one-time) by June, 2019 if the parcel tax passes.

Article 7 (Wages) and Article 8 (Benefits) will be closed for 2017-18, and 2018-19.

A discussion occurred about transitioning to settling wages and benefits in the year prior based on the governor’s January budget proposal and the 2nd Interim Budget with the goal of providing regular salary adjustments before the start of each school year, rather than always being behind.

Continued on next page
BTA acknowledged a big shift in the District’s philosophy toward unnecessarily building the OPEB account. The District will use the fund to pay the bill for OPEB benefits for one year. After that, they will freeze contributions to the account and pay-as-you-go. If the fund decreases below $5.5 million, they will resume contributions to the account. This amount will provide a cushion of at least several years to make corrections should the economy fail. This compromise is refreshing for past and current BTA leaders who have been frustrated with the district’s practice of unnecessarily locking up excessive funds.

BTA Executive Director Sonya Lowe provided both teams with a copy of the Report to the Board for Approval of the Second Interim Report for 2017-2018 Fiscal Year with many highlighted concerns. Sonya asked numerous questions about transfers from Unrestricted to Restricted accounts, unspent Restricted funds and when unspent funds would be available for employee compensation. These same concerns had been raised in the Budget Committee and Superintendent Matt Hill understood that we needed more transparency in order to trust the 2nd Interim Budget, which is, after all, only a mid-year estimate. Until we feel there is full transparency, BTA is hesitant to agree to transition to settling future negotiations in the prior year based solely on the 2nd Interim and the Governor’s proposal.

BTA’s negotiating team would like to thank all BTA members who have stepped out of their comfort zone to raise a unified voice for change. Your voices are being heard and changes are occurring. Now the negotiating finally begins. Thank you for your persistence!

BTA will provide a counterproposal to Article 7 on April 20th.

Bargaining Process

Many members have differing viewpoints on the tactics some use and the direction we are headed. We want to take this opportunity to remind you of the bargaining process. Both teams exchange proposals until agreement is reached or neither side wishes to compromise further. If no agreement is reached, one or both sides will declare Impasse. A state mediator will come to look at the budget and work with both teams to try to reach an agreement. The mediator will provide a report. The district may choose to ignore the report. If this occurs, the process can move to Fact Finding where a trio of mediators (one chosen by BTA, one chosen by BUSD and one chosen by the State) again hear positions argued by each side, render a decision and issue a report as to a Fair Settlement within 10 days. This report then becomes public record. The district can again choose to ignore the Fact Finders’s decision. After all of those remedies are exhausted a strike vote can be taken.

Of course, the best scenario is to reach an agreement and move forward; however, this can be a lengthy process so patience and mutual respect of those we will continue to work with in the future is encouraged. Having a union to represent us gives us a strong voice at the table. You can see many states with teacher walkouts occurring because they have diminished or completely lost their collective bargaining rights. A strong union is good for a healthy stable community. Thank you for playing your part.

Future meeting dates:
4/20/18 @ BTA, 5/17/18 @BUSD

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BTA MEMBERS
UNITE
TOGETHER
THE FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAY
OF EVERY MONTH
WEAR BLACK TO SHOW SUPPORT

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BTA March 1st
2018
ALWAYS HERE TO SUPPORT EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF BURBANK

A VARIETY OF RESIDENTIAL LIVING OPTIONS (INCLUDING SENIORS)

A VARIETY OF COMMERCIAL SPACES

MAKE BURBANK YOUR HOME!

www.BURCALAPTS.com
FREQUENTLY REQUESTED PHONE NUMBERS

BTA Office
Alice Holmes, Office Manager
818 846-1304

Questions Regarding Your Health Insurance?
Blue Shield - 1-800 334-5847
Kaiser - 1-800 464-4000
Blue Cross - 1-877 737-7776
Prescriptions - 1-877 542-0284

Mental Health
(Employee Assistance Plan)
1-800 554-6931

State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)
1-800 228-5453

The Standard
(Income Protection)
1-800 522-0406

California Casualty
Auto and Home Insurance
1-866 680-5139

CTA/NEA Retired
650 552-5355

CTA Member Benefits
(Insurance, Financial, Discounts, Travel)
650 552-5200

CTAMemberBenefits.org

NEA Member Benefits
1-800 637-4636

BTA Policy on Anonymous Letters
BTA would like to emphasize that we do not encourage or condone anonymous letters written for any purpose. The only appropriate use of anonymous communication would be to report fraud or malfeasance on the BUSD Fraud Hotline.
2018 BTA MEMBER SCHOLARSHIPS

Are you working on getting your clear credential? Are you pursuing an advanced degree in your teaching area? Then we have a great deal for you!

Applications for BTA Member Scholarships are now being accepted. Four (4) scholarships for $500 each will be awarded to members who are continuing their educational pursuits in their credential area to clear their credential, or who are pursuing an advanced degree or credential in their area of education and are continuing in BUSD in 2018/2019. This would not apply for any type of Administrative credential.

If you are interested in applying for one of the four scholarships, please return your application to the BTA office no later than Tuesday, May 8, 2018. A drawing will be held and we will call the winners. Go to www.burbankteachers.org for an application.

SAVE THE DATE
May 16, 2018
The Castaway
Our Retirement/25 yrs. Appreciation reception will be held on May 16th. This is a special event that allows the retirees and their colleagues to reflect on their careers. If you know of anyone who is planning to retire but has not “formally” announced, please let us know so that they may be included. Look for RSVP sign up sheet at your school site.

DATES TO REMEMBER
April 25 Rep. Council @ Luther 3:30
April 30 WHO Awards - Universal Sheraton
April 30 Communication Task Force
May 3 BOE 7:00 City Hall
May 3 CalSTRS 10-15 yrs Retirement Workshop - Glendale 4:00 - 5:00
May 5 Social Justice Conference
May 5-6 Relay for Life @ Robert Gross Park 9:00 am
May 8 Deadline to turn in Member Scholarships Applications
May 9 Eboard meeting 3:30 BTA
May 16 BTA Retiree Appreciation Event @ Castaway 3:30
May 17 Bargaining
May 17 BOE meeting LCAP Town Hall
May 25 Last Day of School

UCLA SUMMER INSTITUTE 2018
Instruction and Professional Development

July 29 - August 2, 2018
UCLA, Los Angeles

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND?
Author Zaretta Hammond will kick off our strand into high gear with a general session on her best-selling book, “ Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain”.

Kenneth Wesson will talk about “brain-considerate” learning environments.

We will spend the rest of the week diving deeper into brain research, growth mindset, culturally responsive teaching, and social-emotional learning.

WHO IS IT FOR?
K-12 teachers, school psychologists, counselors, higher education educators, PBIS coordinators, MTSS coordinators, instructional aides, instructional coaches, and any educator who wants to learn more about growth mindset and other brain-based research strategies.

Space is limited!
Visit etago.org for registration information

This year, NEA’s Annual Meeting is in Minneapolis, MN
June 30, through July 5, 2018.

Local Delegates representing BTA:
Jerry Mullady
Diana Abasta
Justin Riner
Robyn Russon
Bob Shaw
David Hedin-Abreu
Thank you all for giving your time.
REVITALIZED RETAIL + A NEW DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

New Neighborhood-Serving Retail and Restaurants

A Variety of Residential Living Options

A Walkable Neighborhood With Accessible Transit Connections

VISIT US AT OUR NEW UPDATED WEBSITE:

iheart BURBANK.COM
It’s with pride and pleasure that the Burbank Teachers Association honors Nicole Drabecki as our WHO recipient. Nicole grew up in a union family and learned the value of solidarity. She was hired in 2007 to teach PE at Burbank High. She also coached winning teams in softball. In 2012 Nicole was displaced due to declining enrollment. She successfully transitioned into an elementary setting and has been teaching PE to 3rd-5th graders for the last six years. Nicole is the epitome of service and advocacy. She is always the first to volunteer to do more than her share. She is dependable and dedicated. Currently she is our Relay for Life captain and has us in third place out of thirty-three. Nicole recently attended membership training to lead us in our fight against Janus. Having Nicole in our union has made a difference. We are proud to be her union brothers and sisters.

Nicole Drabecki