NARROW DEFEAT OF QS REVEALS STRONG SUPPORT FOR BURBANK SCHOOLS

Despite the obvious disappointment in watching Measure QS fail to get the needed two-thirds vote for passage, I am very encouraged by Burbank voters’ support of more than 61%. We knew the two-thirds hurdle was a nearly impossible task but we came tantalizingly close to climbing that mountain. More than six out of ten Burbank voters believe that spending more tax dollars on Burbank schools is a good investment. Moreover, since the ballot proposal specifically referred to attracting and retaining quality teachers, providing funding for low class sizes and expanded course offerings, it is fair to conclude Burbank voters fully expect teachers in this district to be competitively compensated.

As a reminder, here is the ballot language of Measure QS:

“To attract and retain quality teachers and staff, provide local funding to maintain low class sizes, expand college and career courses, increase mental health support, expand instruction in science, technology, engineering, arts and math programs, shall the Burbank Unified School District levy 10 cents per square foot of improved property annually, providing approximately $9,000,000 in annual local funding the state cannot take away until ended by voters, with senior citizen exemptions and independent oversight/audits”

We know that despite our recent 2% salary increase, we are not competitive among nearby school districts. While BUSD’s long-shot effort to give us an additional 3% increase through the passage of Measure QS has narrowly fallen short, it is clear that the school board recognizes that an additional 3% is what is needed to give Burbank teachers parity. It is also abundantly clear that Burbank voters support the necessity of greater investment in teachers and instruction.

Although the loss was disappointing because we only needed about 1146 more YES votes of the 40,000 who did not vote, we believe there was overwhelming support for our quality schools. Consequently, BTA is energized by this election and will continue working to engage the public in the need for our members’ additional salary increases as well as lower class sizes and expanded instruction in college and career curricula.

Our work is not done. We live to fight another day.

In unity,
Diana
UniServ Director’s Message by Nate Banditelli

NEGOTIATIONS Q & A

BTA is headed back to the negotiations table on November 30th and we’ll be seeking an agreement that recognizes that quality schools start with quality educators. I’ve assembled a Q&A that I hope will be a helpful reference as we begin negotiations.

What are we negotiating?
We’re negotiating the final year of our 3-year contract. Each year, we open up wages, health benefits, and two other articles that each side chooses. When we reach agreement, we’ll begin negotiations for the new contract. At that time, the entire contract is negotiable. The BTA Executive Board is considering what proposals the negotiations team will bring to the table. We weigh the results of the negotiations survey when deciding. When the E-Board has decided on priorities, we’ll share our proposals with you.

Why did BTA settle for only 2% last year?
Some members said that 2% was not enough. The negotiations team weighed the risks and benefits of holding out for a larger raise or settling for a small increase now and continuing to fight for fairer wages. If BTA declared impasse and insisted on 4%, we would likely still be without a raise and with a possibility of ending with less than 2% (even 0%), since the District could legally impose either its last, best, and final offer or maintain the status quo when impasse is done. The District could impose the terms after June 30, 2018, which is also the earliest that BTA can legally strike. BTA is solvent but does not have as much of a rainy-day fund as most surrounding districts.

While 2% seems small, it was higher than the average salary schedule increase for 2017/2018 in LA County (1.56%). Only one district agreed to increase wages by 4%. Remember that the District refused to move beyond its 1.25% offer for over a year and when they did move, they moved in the wrong direction. The District even agreed to slash its OPEB account in half, which they weren’t even legally required to discuss with BTA. The District’s willingness to agree to a 2% increase shows that when we stand together, we can make change. Everyone who wore black, came to a rally, and talked to BUSD parents about negotiations helped the negotiations team.

Couldn’t the District afford a higher wage increase?
No, not what we deserve or what we’re worth. Some of the financial issues are statewide and some are unique to BUSD. California has the fifth-largest economy in the world, but education spending isn’t even close to the top of the national average and most of our funding comes from the state. Under the current system, districts with higher percentages of disadvantaged students receive more funding than Burbank, which has one of the lowest percentages in LA County. Funding is based on enrollment and when enrollment stagnates or declines, costs continue to go up and the District can’t afford to spend as much on compensation. Other than wages, benefits costs are increasing. State law requires District to pay an increasing amount toward STRS retirement. The annual cost of health benefits is also increasing and generally outpaces our raises. Most of the cost of the increase is passed on to employees. We could negotiate a reduction in our health benefits premiums, which would decrease available funds that go toward salary increases. Finally, our class size averages are lower than most other districts in LA County. Hiring additional educators decreases funds that could go toward salary increases. The District doesn’t even have much money in the bank. State law requires BUSD to have 3% of its expenditures in reserve. BUSD only holds 6% in reserve. That money can be spent quickly and once it’s gone, the District is closer to being forced to make cuts in order to maintain its legally-required reserves.

Isn’t there some place where the District is overspending?
BTA and CTA are currently analyzing the District’s budget to find extra money. When looking at the budget, we look for additional funding, enrollment changes, historical overbudgeting in accounts like books & supplies or services, and budgeting patterns in major expenses like salaries and benefits. If we can find excess money, we argue about better ways to spend it when we negotiate. If our proposals are truly unaffordable, though, the District would need to make cuts to afford salary increases.

Continued on next page
What did the survey say?
You can still fill out the negotiations survey and we encourage you to give feedback. So far, though, members have ranked salary schedule increase as the #1 priority, with opinions evenly split between maintaining class sizes and increasing the benefits cap as the #2 priority. Members asked for a salary schedule increase between 2% and 5%. Other popular responses include adding more steps onto the salary schedule, automatic COLA increases, increasing wages to be on par with other districts, extra pay for extra duties, and a SPED stipend. Almost everyone asked BTA to increase the benefits cap. Many members have asked BTA to open Article 11 (Class size) and Article 9 (Hours). When asked to support negotiations, members are clearly willing to show unity. Almost all members will wear a black t-shirt in support of negotiations and a majority of those who answered said that they would strike.

Does BTA have a plan to negotiate a fair salary increase for this year?
BTA will prepare for negotiations, do research, and make fact-based arguments at the bargaining table. In every negotiation, we reach a point where the District is unwilling to compromise or agree to our proposals. When that happens, we’ll get a better deal if we continue to stand together & support the BTA Negotiations Team. You can help by participating in solidarity actions and talking about negotiations in the community. When the community supports educators, the District will agree to a fair contract.

Right now, you can:
• Fill out negotiations survey, online link or paper copy available at www.burbankteachers.org and ask your co-workers to do it as well.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018-19bargaining

• Wear black & wear the new button on the first day of negotiations 11-30-18
• Whenever anyone asks you about negotiations, say “Quality Schools Start with Quality Educators.”
Why I Teach...

by Julie Lambert

This is my 30th year of teaching. I have taught every elementary grade except for 5th, with most of my time being spent teaching Kindergarten. I am currently teaching Transitional Kindergarten but feel as if I am still teaching Kindergarten because the curriculum has changed so much over the years, even though, developmentally, the children have not.

I was first inspired to teach when I started working during the summers at the age of 15 as a lifeguard, swim instructor, and a synchronized swimming coach. I was a high school swimmer and synchronized swimmer, but the challenge of figuring out the best way to help my swimmers learn was exhilarating. I enjoyed watching the little ones learn to love the water and become water safe, and I reveled in the creative aspect of helping my synchronized swimmers choreograph routines and compete in meets.

My first teaching job was in New York City’s Spanish Harlem, at P.S. 192. I worked in a rough neighborhood, surrounded by crack houses and poverty and most of my students lived in welfare hotels. It was scary for a small town girl, but teachers were respected in the neighborhood and I never had a problem walking to or from school to the subway. There were times when my students couldn’t go outside for recess because of a drive-by shooting or a dead body on campus from an overdose of drugs. We had large class sizes and few materials, but if the students knew you cared they really tried hard to learn. I relished having a positive influence in the children’s lives, especially those that didn’t have a lot of positive role models or adults in their lives.

Teaching has enabled me to learn new things. My third year of teaching at Washington I was given the opportunity to co-teach with a teacher of the Deaf in a first grade co-enrollment classroom, which at the time was a world-renown program called TRIPOD where Deaf & Hard of Hearing students learned right alongside their hearing peers. We usually had 20 hearing students and 12 deaf or hard of hearing students. I learned sign language along with my hearing students (although they learned a lot faster than I did!) and discovered a lot about Deaf culture, which is quite fascinating. I still enjoy using sign language in my classroom to this day!

I take pleasure in the innocence, honesty, and enthusiasm of my young TK students. I like being a part of the process of my students figuring out how to do things for themselves and helping them become independent thinkers and workers. I am amazed at how much progress they are capable of in a mere 180 school days. But most of all, I love the sweet comments I get from my TK students when they say things like, “Mrs. Lambert, you are the best teacher I EVER had!” when I know, I am their first teacher – ever!
**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- Cigna)  
1-800 866-6534

**State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)**  
1-800 228-5453  
The Standard  
(Income Protection)  
1-800 522-0406

**California Casualty**  
Auto and Home Insurance  
1-866 680-5142  
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  
neamb.com/learnmore

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**2018-2019 BTA Site Representatives**

**ADULT SCHOOL** — Julie Grair, Fred Rivas  
**BRET HARTE ELEM.** — Dahlia Dobbertin, Allison Shaw  
**BURBANK H.S.** — Bob Shaw, Gina DiFrancesco, Natalie Setaghi, Caroline Sasorski, Laura Messian  
**BURROUGHS H.S.** — Robyn Russon, David Hedin-Abreu, Jeil Salem, Rex Bullington, Les Cohn, Alexis Weiner  
**COMMUNITY DAY** — Trevor Rapp  
**DISNEY ELEM.** — Bridget Highfill, Sonia Angulo  
**EDISON ELEM.** — David Engel, Sandy Solis  
**EMERSON ELEM.** — Samantha Robman, Margarita Tubbs  
**HORACE MANN CHILDCARE** — Cathi Zsupnik  
**INDEPENDENT LEARNING ACADEMY** — Heather Good  
**JEFFERSON ELEM.** — Kris Uribe, Anna Basinski, Chris Copeland  
**JORDAN M.S.** — Lori Pacino, Dana Ragle, Amy Fuhr  
**LUTHER M.S.** — Lisa Raluy, Nick Lundy, Lucas Gattuso  
**McKINLEY ELEM.** — Dug Gutierrez, Amanda Denney  
**MILLER ELEM.** — Brian Collins  
**MONTEREY H.S.** — Tanase Petrenco  
**MUIR M.S.** — Corey Howard, Brad Frank, Kathy Gallego, Mark Norberg  
**PROVIDENCIA ELEM.** — Kate Bailey, Lola Stewart  
**ROOSEVELT ELEM.** — Rhonda Wright  
**SPED** - Janice Gresham  
**STEVENS ELEM.** — Heidi Lavitt, Jasson Przebieda  
**TOSA** — Eric Carter  
**WASHINGTON ELEM.** — Chandra Collins, Dorothy Hernandez

**2018-2019 BTA Board of Directors**

**PRESIDENT:** Diana Abasta - BHS  
**VICE PRESIDENT:** Vacant  
**SECRETARY:** Dahlia Dobbertin - Bret Harte  
**TREASURER:** Jerry Mullady - JBHS

**HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS:**  
David Knatcal - JBHS  
Tony Franco - BHS

**MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR:** Jessica Wertlieb - Muir MS

**ELEMENTARY DIRECTORS:**  
Samantha Robman - Emerson  
Theresa Landin White - Washington

**AT-LARGE DIRECTOR:** Michele Dixon - JBHS

**STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:**  
Alexis Weiner - JBHS  
Justin Riner - Muir MS

**STATE COUNCIL ALTERNATE:**  
Bridget Highfill - Disney

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**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.
The CTA Scholarship Program offers scholarships in the following categories

**Dependent Children**
- A maximum of 34 scholarships of up to $5,000 are awarded.
- One scholarship is provided in Honor of Ralph J. Flynn and is awarded to the highest-scoring applicant.
- One scholarship is provided in Honor of Ruthie Fagerstrom and is awarded to the second highest-scoring applicant.
- One scholarship is provided in Honor of Susan B. Anthony and is awarded to the third highest-scoring applicant.
- Applicant must be the dependent child of an active member of CTA, CTA/NEA-Retired or deceased CTA member and be claimed as a dependent on the member’s current year's IRS form.
- High school grade point average should reflect a high unweighted average. College coursework should reflect high academic achievement. Explain any unique circumstances related to medical, physical or emotional difficulties that may have affected your grades.

**Members**
- A maximum of five scholarships of up to $3,000 are awarded.
- One scholarship is designated as the American Indian/Alaska Native Memorial Scholarship in Honor of Alice Piper and is awarded to the highest-scoring applicant.
- One scholarship is designated for an ESP member who wants to transition into the teaching profession, provided an ESP member applies.
- Applicant must be an active member of CTA (including members working on an emergency credential).
- College coursework should demonstrate high academic achievement. Explain any unique circumstances related to medical, physical or emotional difficulties that may have affected your grades.

**Dependent Children in Honor of Del A. Weber**
(Independent Children Attending Continuation High School/Alternative Education Programs)
- A maximum of one scholarship of up to $5,000 is awarded.
- Applicant must be the dependent child of an active member of CTA, CTA/NEA-Retired or deceased CTA member and be claimed as a dependent on the member’s current year’s IRS form.
- High school grade point average should reflect at least a 2.0 average.

If you have any questions, please call
Janeya Dawson
at 650-552-5446 or email
scholarships@cta.org

**Student CTA (SCTA) in Honor of L. Gordon Bittle Memorial**
- A maximum of three scholarships of up to $5,000 are awarded.
- One scholarship is designated as the Pacific Asian American Scholarship in Honor of Philip Vera Cruz and is awarded to the highest-scoring applicant.
- Applicant must be an active member of Student CTA (SCTA) and pursuing a career in public education.
- High school grade point average should reflect a high unweighted average. College coursework should reflect high academic achievement. Explain any unique circumstances related to medical, physical or emotional difficulties that may have affected your grades.
What To Do In An Employment Related Emergency

It is extremely important that in the event of any adverse action affecting your employment status that you immediately contact the BTA office at (818) 846-1304. Examples of adverse actions are: notification of dismissal, suspension, child abuse, non-renewal, transfer, demotion, civil or criminal charges, or any contract violation.

Assert your rights: If an administrator wants to meet with you concerning any adverse action, the appropriate response for you to use is: “I am a BTA member and I am claiming my right to union representation for this meeting.”

Until you are able to contact the BTA office:

DO NOT:

Admit Anything; Sign Anything; Make Any Verbal or Written Statement; Resign or Be Insubordinate. The above includes not speaking to your colleagues, principal, administrators, parents, or the police about the incident.

DO:

Remain calm and courteous.

Immediately upon receiving notice of any adverse action, contact the Burbank Teachers Association at: (818) 846-1304. Keep copies of all papers relating to the situation.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

Halt any conference already in progress if it becomes disciplinary. Reschedule when representation is available. Have the meeting at a time and date that is convenient for you and your BTA Faculty Representative.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Nov 12 - Veteran’s Day BTA office closed
Nov 14 - Organizing Meeting BTA office 3:30
Nov 14 - LCAP Meeting 6:30pm BUSD
Nov 15 - BOE Meeting 7:00 p.m. City Hall
Nov 21 - 23 Thanksgiving Break BTA office closed
Nov 26 - Edison site visit
Nov 27 - Vaping Presentation Luther 7:00-8:00pm
Nov 28 - Rep Council 3:30 MUIR
Nov 30 - Negotiations BUSD Wear Black & Quality Schools button
Dec 04 - Shakey’s Relay for Life Fundraiser 6pm -9pm
Dec 06 - EBoard meeting BTA office
Dec 12 - Rep Council 3:30 LUTHER
Dec 12 - LCAP meeting District office 6:30 pm
Dec 20 - BOE Meeting 7:00 p.m. City Hall

Winter Break Dec 22 - Jan 6

Tuesday, December 4th
6:00pm to 9:00 pm
BTA Relay for Life Fundraiser
To Benefit American Cancer Society

1300 N. San Fernando Road
Burbank, CA 91504

25% of total net food sales go to the American Cancer Society
Sign up to join BTA’s team or make a donation. Our goal is to raise $4000.

- Go to: www.relayforlife.org
- In the middle of the page go to: Search - Click on Team
- Type: Burbank Teachers Association
- Select Burbank Teachers Association
- You can either chose to Join Our Team, Donate or Dedicate a Luminaria

Thank - A - Soldier

For the third year, BTA has participated in the UMe Credit Union Thank-A-Soldier Care Box Assembly drive. BTA representatives at each site collected the requested donations of entertainment, snack, and personal supplies from our members. Some BTA members also attended the event to help pack the supplies and write letters to the soldiers. This year, the event drew more donations than ever from throughout the community, with over 1000 boxes packed.

Thank you, to all who participated and donated!
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MADE FOR YOU

Paid Advertisement
Beyond the thunderous chants of Tony Thurmond’s name, CTA’s first state representative conference of the year was fairly quiet. With very little legislative work to do, BTA’s State Reps, Alexis Weiner and Justin Riner, worked in their committees on issues revolving around supporting our local unions and ensuring the well being of our public schools for years to come - be it on the topic of elections or through the evaluation of changes to state standards.

The highlight of the weekend was Saturday afternoon’s political action in support of Tony Thurmond for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Hundreds of teachers from across the state took part in phone banking, text campaigning, and meeting with the candidate himself. In fact, Tony devoted hours to meeting with our members. We even had two pro-Tony hashtags trending nationally on Twitter. Anyone with doubts about who to support in this very important race had their mind made up by Saturday night. Tony Thurmond is, by far, the best choice to lead our public schools in Sacramento.

The state-wide meeting comes with a bounty of news from all parts of California geographically as well as every corner of public education. Burbank’s involvement in political action in our support for Measure QS was acknowledged by the Association for Better Citizenship Committee who assisted us by coordinating additional funding. This committee, the political arm of CTA, is an indispensable part of our state union. They support action by locals through funding, support, and experience.

Other news of note:

- Be sure to give BTA your updated personal emails! If you have not been receiving BTA news every few weeks, please take a moment to drop a line to office@burbankteachers.org
- There are a pile of great conferences planned for this year - everything from new teacher support to retirement planning. There are issue-oriented conferences for every interest and, quite often, grants available. Many teachers don’t realize there is a wealth of resources and professional development available from CTA. Check out https://www.cta.org/professional-development/events/conferences.aspx for more information. You can also email Justin Riner if you have questions - MrRiner@hotmail.com
- The CTA would like your input on how your dues are spent. Please take a few minutes and log into https://www.cta.org/en/About-CTA/Leadership/Treasurers-Corner/Strategic-Budget-Survey.aspx Let our treasurer know your priorities.
- Check with your school’s librarian and admin to make sure they know that the California State Library has made three major resource databases - Encyclopedia Britannica, ProQuest, and TeachingBooks.net - available to all California Students. Check out CSLA.net or more info.
- Next year, our state dues will go up ever so slightly: $20 for the whole year
- CTA has completed their guide and resources for implementing dual language immersion programs in compliance with Prop 58. Check out cta.org/prop58
- The body formally stated our support for teachers in LAUSD and Oakland who are progressing closer and closer to strikes.
- There is a tool kit for teachers on the topic of teacher and student privacy at www.studentprivacymatters.org

Just like BTA rep meetings, the State conferences are open to all members who are interested in attending and seeing how our union functions beyond Burbank. If you’d like more information, contact Justin or Alexis. The next meeting is at the Westin Bonaventure in Downtown LA on Jan 26 and 27.
Betsy DeVos, the Koch Brothers and their fellow anti-union, public school privatizers are aggressively working to dismantle the employment rights of public-school teachers in California and throughout the country.

The Freedom Foundation, a Washington-based anti-worker organization funded by out-of-state billionaires, wants to keep wages low, eliminate paid sick leave and slash critical funding for education. They have recently taken out Facebook ads targeting all our members to drop their union membership and have reportedly hired 80 full-time employees and sent them to California, Oregon and Washington to encourage people to quit their unions.

The Mackinac Center, the Freedom Foundation, the Choice for Teachers, The California Teachers Empowerment Network, all sound nice enough, but they aren’t. They may call themselves “think tanks” and operate as non-profits but they serve as fronts for public education privatizers who want to weaken our union.

There is a need to remain vigilant, as the Freedom Foundation and Mackinac Center for Public Policy (which is dedicating $50 million over the next three years to union-busting) are continuing their deceptive efforts to get members to drop out of their unions.

Say NO to Public Education Privatizers  
Say YES to your union!

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