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President’s Message by Diana Abasta

We Won’t Back Down

The Tom Petty song, “I Won’t Back Down” represents a strong anthem for where we are in our current bargaining stance. “There is no easy way,” is our recognition of the BOE’s position, but there is always a way to find a fair solution and that is what we are asking.

We have been told for decades that we are valued and appreciated. Teachers have been praised by the Board of Education and told that the District would work on getting us to the top quartile. This has not come to be. In The Benchmark last month, I mentioned the neighboring districts offering $100,000 or more at earlier steps than BUSD. Since then I have heard from fellow union presidents that these other Districts, Arcadia, (13 years); Alhambra, (23 years); and Lawndale Elementary, (19 years) are also in the $100,000 category.

We understand fiduciary responsibility. We know how to read a budget and have brought money to the District because we work on the premise that we are partners that all work together responsibly. However, we have not seen evidence yet that BUSD’s educators will be considered as the number one program when it comes to creating a real budget with real numbers. Instead, we hear misleading talk of “deficit spending” based on figures full of questionable assumptions.

We made it clear at the Oct. 5 BOE meeting that we want sincere discussion at the table on how Burbank teachers can be kept competitive in salary and benefits. Show us what you value from the way you create your budget. In the third year of a budget cycle, BUSD continues trying to create a mindset that envisions fear and peril. Even with competitive salary increases occurring just before the economic downturn of a decade ago (the most severe since The Great Depression) BUSD did not go bankrupt --- aided by employee groups that participated in budget cuts at that time. Let us work together now and seek solutions instead of assuming the worse.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

To facilitate this new mindset of solutions we, as professional educators, must be more involved in the budget making process called Local Control and Accountability Program (LCAP). Part of this plan involves the new California education law known as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) shown on page 3.

Continued on Page 3 ...
Executive Director’s Message by Sonya Lowe

Members often wonder what exactly CTA does politically. It is well known that CTA is a strong advocate for students and educators in California and here is one example of recent legislation that CTA had a direct impact on:

California Teachers Association President Eric Heins issued the following statement praising the signing into law of CTA co-sponsored AB 699 by Assembly Member Patrick O’Donnell and SB 54 by Senator Kevin de León which protect California students from discrimination based on their immigration status and require schools to take affirmative steps to eliminate such discrimination, and prohibit state and local agencies from enforcing immigration law.

“California is proud to be a place for Dreamers and, as educators committed to the safety and success of our students, we support safe-haven schools and sanctuary cities that reflect and embrace the diversity of our students and their families, as well as the rich language and cultural assets they bring to our communities. Social justice for all begins with a quality, free public education.

“That’s why we’re so pleased Governor Brown signed into law two key pieces of legislation that ensure our schools, as well as our public facilities, will remain safe places free of threats of deportation and removal for students and families regardless of immigration status.

“We’re proud to have worked with Assembly Member O’Donnell to co-sponsor AB 699 which will restrict access by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers to California schools and requires school districts to prevent discrimination based on immigration status. On behalf of thousands of their students, educators all over the state contacted lawmakers to ensure its passage. We deeply appreciate the work and commitment that led to Governor Brown signing this important bill today.

“We are equally grateful that the governor signed into law SB 54, which makes all California schools and public facilities safe spaces for immigrants and prohibits state and local law enforcement from engaging in immigration enforcement.

“We will continue to fight for the rights and secure futures of all California students, including Dreamers.”

In other legal news, unfortunately, what CTA has been predicting has come now come true. The United States Supreme Court has announced granting certiorari and taking up the case Janus v. AFSCME this term. This case is attacking fair share fees. Here is CTA President Eric Heins’ statement on the case:

“Janus v. AFSCME is a case with far sweeping implications for working families, our students and the communities we serve. Janus is simply the culmination of decades of attacks on working people by corporate CEOs, the wealthiest one percent and the politicians that do their bidding to rig the economy in their favor, and its outcome could further send our country in the wrong direction. The forces behind this case are the same forces that have pushed for privatizing public education and limiting voting rights, as well as attacked immigrants and undermined civil rights protections.

“Their goal here, as it was in Friedrichs v. CTA, is no secret: they want to use the Supreme Court to take away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions, because unions give workers a powerful voice in speaking up for themselves, our students, families and communities. Unions have played a critical role in building and protecting the middle class in America. They provide hard-working people economic stability for their families and give them the tools to build a good life, home and education for themselves and their children. For 154 years, CTA has been standing up for working people, our students and the communities we serve. No court case will stop our determination and advocacy for our students and our profession.”

It is more important than ever to unite and stay strong.
“The way California's public education system is funded has changed dramatically as the result of a law signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in July 2013. Its centerpiece is the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), designed to send additional money to districts where Gov. Brown believes “the need and the challenge is greatest.” For the first time, the law requires that parents, students, teachers and other community members be involved in the process of deciding how new funds are spent.

To make our voices heard we need BTA members to represent elementary and secondary teachers, counselors, alternative ed., speech and language pathologists, SPED educators, nurses, counselors, TOSAs and curriculum specialists at a sub-group meeting with John Paramo. We need to make sure that when we look at our LCAP we have time to reflect and recalibrate when necessary. We need to look at how other districts have been successful in tying in all members to a compensation piece for mutual benefit.

If you are interested in being on this sub-group committee, please let me know. We want representation from each group which makes for a manageable number. At the moment the LCAP meetings are being held bimonthly at 5:45 at City Hall right before a BOE meeting. I am not sure this is best for all, so John Paramo who leads the meetings said we can look at the date and time to see if it is the best for all.

We can do this. We have been through adversity and found that united we can rise.

In unity,

Diana
BHS AND JBHS HISTORY TEACHERS
COLLABORATE ON SDAIE STRATEGIES

By Jennifer Goldenberg, TOSA, ELD

BHS History teacher, Ernie McGinnis recently emailed me asking if I could meet with him and the other two US History teachers at BHS who had SDAIE clusters. They wanted help integrating ELD into the curriculum, and help with creating assessments that the ELs can complete that show what they have learned. I asked if I could invite JBHS teachers, too, and thus, this innovative team was created.

On the first day I went over the ELD standards, SDAIE strategies, and Integrated ELD with them. BHS ELD Coordinator, Laura Messian, also met with us and let the teachers know what the students in ELD 1 and 2 can do. The teachers were surprised that the students could write so much (she shared paragraph templates with them)! They were also surprised that certain grammatical and syntactical constructs are harder and can impede the students’ comprehension of tasks. Then, the teachers shared what they do, what has worked, what they need help with, and questions they had.

BUSD administrators John Paramo and Sharon Cuseo joined us to help answer the team’s questions. For example, both high schools would want to add hours to their part-time ELD Instructional Assistants, so they asked John about it. He talked to them about the LCAP and encouraged the teachers to attend the meetings having to do with English Learners so that they can let the committee know what the needs are at their sites.

The great thing to come out of this is that JBHS AP, Matt Chambers and BHS AP, Jacquie Day asked if I would work with their other departments, as well as the rest of the social science SDAIE classes. Of course, I was thrilled! I had been wanting to work with teachers on integrated ELD, curriculum writing, and assessment creation. So, Matt and Jacquie checked their school calendars, and told their SDAIE teachers what we were doing with the US History teachers, and that they could use the Educator Effectiveness Grant money to pay for the subs if they wanted to schedule some meetings with me. So far, I have days planned with World History, Econ, Government, Health/Careers, Bio, Algebra I and II and Geometry.

Ernie shared with his EL students why he was out for training/planning and they said that they hoped the other departments wanted to do the same kind of training/planning. By the time he passed on the word to me, I had already arranged days with those other departments. His students were really happy when they heard the news.

It makes me feel so great to hear from Ernie that the kids know we are really trying to make learning better for them. Ernie’s concern for his EL students has created a whole new instructional initiative. I love it. This is what makes my job so worthwhile!
**DID YOU KNOW ...**

**Article 9.11.6 Hours**

Having or going to a meeting before students are required to be at school shall not be called unless essential or by mutual agreement of site administrator and you. You do not have to attend a meeting before school!

**Article 9.11.7 Hours**

Principals and supervisors shall provide adequate relief time such as recesses, nutrition period, passing times in secondary schools, and during testing blocks. Make sure you ask for time especially when planning for testing blocks.

**Article 9.11.5 Hours**

Participation in IEPs, 504s, ILPs, SSTs shall not last any longer than 90 minutes in length and end NO later than 4:30 p.m., unless there is mutual agreement to continue. Don’t stay longer! Make sure the contract is being followed.

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**Teachers Share Ideas on Classroom Management**

By Diana Abasta

Classroom management is one of those things we hear about in our credential program, but it is something we only really learn with time and experience. On Wednesday, October 11, BTA held a networking session where teachers, both new and experienced, shared and exchanged ideas on what best practices look like when it comes to classroom management.

Dahlia Dobbertin, first grade teacher at Bret Harte, Jill Johnson, TOSA for BTSA and Program Improvement, Samantha Robman, second grade teacher at Emerson, and Carol Walcoff, third grade teacher at Roosevelt, shared their use of Classroom Dojo. These teachers have integrated technology as a means to focusing on behavior that starts with self-awareness and self-respect. Teachers who use Classroom Dojo find it is helping produce good outcomes for student accountability. Classroom Dojo also serves as a liaison between the teacher and the parent which enhances communication between the two.

John Pike, third grade teacher from Roosevelt and Debbie Riggs, second grade at Edison shared job chart ideas. Students are empowered when given roles or jobs in class. The jobs assigned are associated with tasks that bring results and that have value for the students. They found that this method of classroom management builds a vested interest for students in classroom success.

Other colleagues present were Marbell Payne, a first-grade teacher at Edison, who brought up doing appreciation circles and Jennifer Almer, TOSA, Gate, added to the discussion by talking about how she did these circles in her fifth-grade class. Also in attendance was Sandy Solis, first grade teacher at Edison. New Burbank teachers Eric Irigoyen, RSP teacher at Miller and Edison, and Vivian Zakarian, second grade teacher at Emerson, participated and added to the discussion.

All walked away with a little something even if it was just time to reflect and laugh because no matter how long we teach, there will always be times when we must recalibrate, reexamine, and refresh our classroom management techniques.
ALWAYS HERE TO SUPPORT EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF BURBANK

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A VARIETY OF COMMERCIAL SPACES

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Don’t Go in Alone!

One of the most needed benefits of Association membership is the right to have representation during any conference or interview regarding complaints or allegations of misconduct, neglect, abuse, or even criminal behavior. Too often members walk into rooms to be questioned by persons about matters which may or may not harbor career destroying potential.

BTA members need to understand that, a legal obligation does not always exist on the part of the investigator, (principal/administrator), to advise accused persons of their right to representation; nor is there any obligation to inform them of the severity of the accusations, its potential career impact, or even if they are focus of the investigation. Accused teachers, therefore, are often not clear on the specific purpose of the conference until it is well under way.

It is to the benefit of the member to have representation as early as possible in any meeting that may lead to discipline disciplinary process. Often the principal/administrator will let the member know ahead of time that he or she has a right to BTA representation should have a BTA Rep. there. However, it is the member’s responsibility to invoke their right to ask for representation. If you are called into a meeting with anyone seeking to ask you questions about some “incident,” you should follow these guidelines:

- Obtain information on who will attend the conference
- Ask if the conference may lead to discipline concerns any complaints or allegations about your performance or conduct. If the answer is “yes” then you should NOT continue the conference without representation. Stay calm and inform those present that you would be happy to cooperate, but that you will not speak further until you have an opportunity to speak to your representative. Even if the answer is “No,” be wary. If you find the focus of the questioning is your behavior or conduct, STOP the conference and arrange to have your site rep attend the meeting with you or call the BTA Office (818) 846-1304.

YES, you have the authority to refuse to be interviewed or stop a meeting until you can get some help from your Association. The Weingarten Rule allows for you to state “If the discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or discharged, I request that my Union Representative be present at my meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.”

Your employer can require you to cooperate in an internal investigation. In fact, refusal may constitute insubordination. So, a flat refusal to be interviewed is not an option, but you can delay any such representation until you have the chance to be represented. You have the ABSOLUTE RIGHT to representation if there is any way the discussion could lead to discipline.

Remember DO NOT GO IN ALONE!
WHY I TEACH

By David Knatcal, JBHS

Most "why I teach" stories begin with some noble variation on the excitement of seeing students learn, giving opportunities to every student, or the joy of imparting knowledge on our youth. All these stories are wonderful and amazing reasons to teach. However, my story is much less noble. And much more selfish. I am part of this community. I am part of this society. And our society, and more locally our community, will only survive if we do the very best we can to prepare our young people for the future. They will be the leaders, the movers and the shaker of tomorrow. If they are not ready for the task, then we have failed. Our society fails. Our community fails. I personally don't want to live in that world. So to insure my world, our world, is a better place - - - I teach.

Because children inspire me. Their creativity and unique minds warm my heart. I want to guide and support these students to be their unique, individual selves for the rest of their lives.

Isabel Santa Cruz, Edison

To advocate!
Also because every student is a puzzle to solve.

Julie Levi, Stevenson

Because I want to inspire students to be well rounded individuals and know that they can accomplish anything they put their mind to.

Cody Parker, BHS

To provide a safe, positive, and fun place for little people to learn.

Erin Marino, Disney

Contribute To Society
#socialresponsibility

Natalie Cabral, Miller

I teach because it's a small way to make a Big difference!

Cara Rousseau, Stevenson

Educational Archaeologist
Uncover Hidden Talents

Jen Fieweger, Stevenson

So any student has a chance to leave their mark on the world.

Caroline Blasi, Jordan

Robert Chidgey, CDS

I teach to make a positive and lasting impact on our future; to instill a life-long love of learning and a passion for curiosity and creativity...(shall I go on?)

Because children inspire me. Their creativity and unique minds warm my heart. I want to guide and support these students to be their unique, individual selves for the rest of their lives.

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818 846-1304

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The Benchmark wants to share the good things that are happening at your site. What special accomplishments have colleagues achieved that deserve recognition?

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Some News Worthy Ideas:
* Special Recognition
* Higher Education Degrees
* Grade Level or Dept. Accomplishments
* Performing Arts or Technology

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Even if Facebook is not your thing, here are a few compelling reasons to sign up and join our closed Facebook group:

• Staying Up-To-Date on Important BTA Information
• Sharing Photos and Celebrations of Events at Your School
• Giving and Receiving - Get or Give Classroom Items
• Building a Stronger, More Connected Union!

BTA Benchmark is a monthly publication of Burbank Teachers Association
3021 W. Burbank Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91506
(818) 846-1304
www.burbankteachers.org

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 District’s Fraud Hotline.
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### DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Oct. 17** Negotiations
- **Oct. 18** Eboard Meeting 3:30 BTA Office
- **Oct. 19** BOE Meeting City Hall 7:00 P.M.
- **Oct. 20** Site Visit Miller Elementary
- **Oct. 21** Thank a Soldier Activity with UME
- **Oct. 26** Political Action Committee meets w/ BOE members Char Tabet & Steve Frintner
- **Oct. 27** President’s Day at Roosevelt 10:30
- **Oct. 27** Meeting w/ Supt. 3:00
- **Nov. 1** Site Visit Emerson
- **Nov. 2** BOE meeting City Hall 7:00 p.m.
- **Nov. 6** PAC meeting - David Hedin-Abreu
- **Nov. 6** Site Visit Roosevelt
- **Nov. 8** Eboard 3:30 BTA Office
- **Nov. 9** Political Action Committee meets w/ Roberta Reynolds & Armond Aghakhanian
- **Nov. 10** Veteran’s Day BTA Office CLOSED
- **Nov. 15** Meeting w/ Supt. 3:00
- **Nov. 21-24** BTA Office Closed
- **Nov. 29** Rep. Council 3:30 BTA Office
SEND YOUR EMAIL IN SUPPORT OF BTA SALARY NEGOTIATIONS TO THE BOE NOW!

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SteveFerguson@burbankusd.org

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