Dear members:

We have been back to school for two months and yet somehow it feels like a year times seven. You have been doing more than you have ever done because planning a unit or a lesson online requires the synthesis of different pieces. Technology, more than ever, also impacts equity. We may have amazing resources but it’s hard to hear from students who are not able to access our presentations because of their bandwidth or Wi-Fi technology.

Likewise, it is hard to hear from colleagues who are not able to get students to attend class or do the work in class and at home, especially when there is inadequate support at home. It just adds to our stress when we have so few tools available with online learning that would be available to use in a school setting to improve student outcomes.

There is no solution to these frustrations simply because many of them are outside of our control. Psychologists will tell you that the highest stress levels occur from threats to our well being over which we have no control. The only answer we have available is to continue to do the best we can with a bad situation. It is extremely helpful to share our frustrations and successes with our colleagues. I also firmly believe that most parents understand the limitations we teachers have been dealt and they are willing to be patient with the inadequacies we deal with daily. The big picture suggest that we may be able to open more schools to in-class instruction by this spring, if our city and county can continue to improve on infection rates. Regardless of when we return to classrooms, we know that this will not last forever – it will end and we will get back to a more normal school experience. We have to push forward with our best efforts for our own sanity and the welfare of our students.

I’d like to conclude with a few thoughts about the uncertain times we are living in. We have had catastrophic wildfires, oppressive heat waves, terrible air quality, an ineffective government response to COVID-19, unrest in our streets, and a chaotic election process. Added to all this is the new aggression against Armenia which directly affects many of our students and their families. It’s important to realize that these events are not happening in a vacuum. They all palpably add to our stress and anxiety. While we also have little or no control over many of these realities, it is important not to internalize them too deeply, but rather identify those things where we do have a measure of control.

At this time of political crisis it can be both useful and stress reducing to participate in the election process. Consider volunteering for GOTV (get out the vote) activities at BTA or for a
local candidate. Also, consider taking a break from TV and social media news for a week or two. I think you’ll be surprised at the calming effect. The British had a saying that served them well during the bombing of London, “Be calm and carry on.” It seems like good advice in our time.

In unity,

Diana

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**New Elementary Director**

Hi! My name is Sarah Schwartz. (Though many of you may remember me as Sarah Suddleson!) I am thrilled to be the Elementary Director for Providencia, Disney, Bret Harte, Edison, Roosevelt, and Washington. Between 2006-2011, I taught at several BUSD schools and was a member of BTA’s Organizing Committee. During the tougher times following the Economic Crisis, I found a job at a small private school where I was afforded many opportunities I wouldn’t have had otherwise, but one thing was always missing. Now I am home, in public education, in Burbank, and with my Union.

Since I was a small child, I knew I would grow up to be a teacher. I truly believe it is what I was born to do. Even more so, I believe in public education as not only a fundamental right for everyone, but a promise to make the world better for future generations. Now, as Elementary Director, I am even more driven to provide the best opportunities and conditions for my BUSD family. Please don’t hesitate to reach out with questions or for support!

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**UniServ Director’s Message by Nate Banditelli**

I’d like to wish everyone a belated “welcome back” or if you’re new to BUSD, welcome to the district. In case we haven’t met, I’m the UniServ Executive Director for Burbank Teachers Association and I work full-time for California Teachers Association. I also work with BTA’s sister union, the Glendale Teachers Association.

My role is to support members and BTA leaders and I’ve been working harder than ever since COVID-19 shut everything down in March. I know that you have been, too. Thanks to BTA members, BUSD students are receiving the best possible education under nearly impossible circumstances. I do my best to support BTA members and leaders with the skills, knowledge, and ideas that I’ve developed over the last decade of representing education workers in California. I’m just one person, though. The members of the BTA Executive Board, Negotiations Team, Organizing Team, and other member leaders sacrificed their summers to make sure that the transition to distance learning happened under the most favorable conditions that were possible. Constantly changing regulations and guidelines from the county and state
UMe’s BTAC Food Drive

BTA President Diana Abasta is joined by UMe CEO Robert Einstein, CMO Anita Hutchinson and Marketing Coordinator Steven Mozo after she drops off BTA’s contribution to benefit the Burbank Temporary Aid Center.
Donation from the Syrian Community

Thank you to our generous Syrian community. Julie Grair and Diane Grair contacted BTA and wanted to raise some funds to help our students who needed support with technology and anything else that would help the district support these students and their families.

From left to right: Anthony Mahfood, Diane Grair, Julie Grair and Alex Khalil

CONGRATULATIONS

HARJOT KAUR (JBHS) this past May graduated with Distinction from California State University, Northridge with a Master of Arts in Secondary Curriculum and Instruction.

Elementary Teachers Bring It!

Always looking to engage their young students, some of our colleagues have designed creative ways to get them to participate in class.

Jill Pomfret came up with Fancy Friday and students could dress in formal clothes. Jill chose to bring on the royal fancy look with crown and boa.

Every Friday Sandy Solis eats lunch (via Google Meet) with five students. It takes about 20 minutes out of her day but is meaningful to her students and has helped build a sense of community in among her class.

Sarah Sorowice has been reading bedtime stories with her kindergarten students one evening a week.

Gianna Scolari drops off treats for the student of the week.

What about you? Send us your picture and what you do to engage students.
Conversations with Kaiser Permanente
Dr. Elizabeth Dueñas about COVID-19
Tuesday, October 20
4:30-5:30pm
As some school districts are considering resuming some form of in-person teaching, get the latest information about COVID-19 through a question and answer format.

Please share with co-workers. All are welcome.

Finding Joy During a Difficult Time
Tuesday, November 10
4:30-5pm
With all the changes happening now, practicing self care and mindfulness is key to finding balance and reducing your stress. Learn some hands-on techniques to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUB
BAY VALLEY AND IMPERIAL COUNTY EQUITY TEAMS PRESENT:

EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK & VIDEO CLUB SERIES

SIGN UP TO MEET VIRTUALLY WITH MEMBERS FROM BOTH SERVICE CENTERS FOR BOOK AND VIDEO DISCUSSIONS ON RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.

WE WILL DISCUSS THE BOOK HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST BY AUTHOR IBRAM X. KENDI AND THE PREVIOUSLY RECORDING OF BEING AN ANTI RACIST EDUCATOR ON OCTOBER 29TH FROM 5:00-6:00PM

FIRST 10 EDUCATORS TO RSVP WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BOOK

Burbank Teachers Association

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Unsubscribe