President's Message by Diana Abasta

New Beginnings
Like many beginnings, the beginning of school always has its challenges. Sometimes there are changes and sometimes these changes really try our patience. Other times it is just the fact that it has been too darn hot, and some of the air conditioners in rooms and offices have not held up. We can only hope that this too shall pass.

Many Teachers Have left Burbank
The new teacher orientation held on August 5, 2022, at The Castaway was a success. I have never seen that many new teachers in Burbank in the 28 years I have been in the district. We had many colleagues retire, some retired ahead of their scheduled time. We also had many colleagues leave to other districts for better pay or benefits. Others took the opportunity to find work closer to home. However, the exodus revealed not just to us but to the district administration that BUSD is not immune to teacher shortages from early retirements or competition from other districts. The district must address salary and even though we got the 5%, it is not enough. That being said, our negotiations team of Sue Conway, (Luther), Brenda Kosbab, (BHS), Adam Hochberg, (JBHS), Rachel Zonshine, (Edison), Jennifer Halligan, (Disney), and Nate Banditelli, (GBU UniServ Director) after receiving the survey results of our members and some other feedback from members and the BTA Executive Board, will be ready to start bargaining on September 30, 2022.

Persistent Myths About Union Representation
As I meet with members, I am still surprised that many do not know that not all teachers, counselors, speech and language pathologists, and nurses are union members. Some think that those who do not belong to the union, but who get the raises and all the benefits are still paying fees to an approved charity group. This is false. On June 27, 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Janus v. AFSCME that unions could no longer collect mandatory “fair share” fees to cover the costs of collective bargaining, reversing the 40-year precedent that let public sector unions require that non-member employees pay agency fees to cover the costs of non-political union activities. This act gave further rise to the demonization of unions and further eroded public education through the encouragement of the privatization of public education. Today, the fact that there are colleagues who have access to the same raise and benefits due to our collective efforts and yet do not contribute is essentially unfair, and anti-union. On principle, I would understand if they refused to take the raise and added benefits since their beliefs or values apparently discourage their membership; sadly, this is not the case. We can only continue to thrive if we stand together united in our membership.

Elementary Schedule Changes Are District Not BTA Choices
The last thing I would like to address is the schedule time changes for elementary schedules. The changes are a direct reflection of the district's elimination of elementary PE teachers and not due to BTA. The calendar committee meets regularly with BTA representation, the District, CSEA, and parents to adopt an instructional calendar. Whenever there are early dismissals, minimum days, shortened days as in BTS or Open House, the district has to make sure we are meeting the minimum number of instructional minutes from the State. In the past, we have been over, but this year 4th and 5th grades are over the minimum by only 1 minute for the whole year. It's not one minute a day or a week, but it is
This Will Be My Last Year As Your President

In conclusion, I want you to know that this year is my swan song since I will be retiring at the end of this school year. I can assure you, however, that this will not be a “lame duck” year for me. Working aggressively with the Executive Board I will continue to advocate for your rights and the respect you deserve at BUSD. Now more than ever we need to stand together in number and in unity. I look forward to serving this year and giving it the “full measure of dedication” because your success is our success.

In unity,
Diana

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UniServ Director’s Message by Nate Banditelli

California’s Supplemental Paid Sick Leave law is set to expire at the end of September and CTA joined a coalition of nearly 100 labor and community organizations to advocate for the extension of the leave. The state legislature passed the bill and now Governor Newsom has until the end of the month to sign the extension. If Newsom signs the bill, educators will have another layer of protection and schools will be healthier and safer places to learn and work. Without the collective strength of this broad coalition, the leave might expire. This obvious solution to the public health crisis of our lifetimes wouldn’t have happened without collective action. It’s a perfect example of the kind of advocacy that CTA supports in the legislative arena.

From time to time, a Burbank educator will drop their union membership, claiming that they disagree with our union’s politics. What do they really mean when they say that they disagree with our politics? Is it just an expression of political partisanship? Our #1 priority is improving public education. CTA members, leaders, and staff support the candidates, ballot measures, and legislation that supports public education without regard to political affiliation or ideology. Without local, statewide, and national political action, public education will continue to be diminished. Do these educators really believe that they can do better as “free agents” without the help of colleagues, a supportive community, or the attention of our elected representatives? Can they effectively advocate for themselves and achieve dignity and respect at work as an individual? None of us agree with each other on every single political issue, but hopefully we can all agree that by standing together, students will get the best possible education and educators can carry out the work with dignity and respect.

A few other ways that members are supporting education are below:

- **Support Retired Educators!** CTA members who retired prior to 1999 do not receive the same CalSTRS retiree benefit structure as those who retired afterwards. Senate Bill 868 would correct this by making pre-1999 retiree benefits equitable with more current retirees. The bill is currently awaiting Governor Newsom’s signature. CTA is asking members to take a moment to lend support to this bill and urge the Governor to sign it into law. Take action now: [https://www.cta.org/support-retired-educators-in-need-of-assistance](https://www.cta.org/support-retired-educators-in-need-of-assistance)
Elementary Teacher Sought for Credentialing Commission. There are openings for three positions on the CCTC: 1) elementary teacher, 2) public member, 3) school board member. If you know of someone who would be a good candidate to apply, please see the link for information. The application deadline is September 20. Link: APPLY TO BE ON THE CTC

Federal Tax Fairness for Educators in Retirement. Congress is in session. As in years past, there is a bill pending that would repeal the Social Security penalties that have persisted in federal law. These penalties reduce earned Social Security benefits for educators who retire in public pension systems like CalSTRS. CTA is calling on our members to urge their U.S. House and Senate representatives to repeal these penalties once and for all. It just takes a moment to fill out the contact form on NEA's website. Take action today: https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/action-center/take-action/fully-repeal-unfair-social-security-penalties

NEGOTIATIONS

The first bargaining session will be on September 30, 2022, at the district office. At this meeting, the first thing agreed upon are norms for these sessions. Articles 7 (Wages) and Article 8 (Health/Welfare Benefits) are always opened at the table. Below are the results of the bargaining survey.

High Priority Articles

- #11 Class Size (28%)
- #31 Sped (17%)
- #9 Hours (21%)
- Article 5 or 15 Procedures with Parents (10%)
- #15 Safety (second choice – 14% - threats)
- #13 Leaves – Side Letter for sick day donations

Rest of Contract

- Reserve the right to discuss other articles

Hot Topics (member concerns brought to BTA that may have an impact on the majority.

- Tech issues - staffing
- HVAC issues – staffing
  - Hiring procedures for classified
- Discipline procedures
  - Need consistency
- Dress code rules
  - Enforcement
  - Board policy
- Why are so many admin leaving?
- Need hours during pre-service week to watch all the mandated videos.
- Hiring teachers over .2s.

Be sure you look for the first News From the Table after the first negotiations session.

Burbank Teachers Recommend School Board Candidate: Mr. Brian Smith
Burbank—The Burbank Teachers Association voted to recommend in his bid for a seat on the Burbank Unified School District School Board the following candidate: Mr. Brian J. Smith.

Mr. Brian J. Smith has many years of community involvement in PTA, working on the board and fundraising chair at John Burroughs High School and BUSD Facilities Oversight Committee. His background in business and facilities will make him a strong advocate for strengthening our school district.

Burbank Teachers Association President Diana Abasta states, “This candidate exhibits a tireless commitment to our community and our students. Under his leadership, I am confident that we will continue to enhance the educational experiences of all our students, as we move forward into enriching teaching and learning at high quality levels.”

Additionally, the Burbank Teachers Association recommends the following local candidates:

City Council: Nikki Perez, Tamala Takahashi, and Zizette Mullins

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

On August 5, 2022, BTA welcomed over 40 new teachers at our New Member Orientation at the Castaways in Burbank. Together with members of our Executive Board, District Office team, and the community, new and prospective members were introduced to the many benefits of BTA membership. Diana Abasta introduced Leslie Littman, CTA Secretary/Treasurer, as the keynote speaker. She spoke of her journey that started with her as a new teacher hired to teach a few days before school began. The anecdotes she provided were relevant and often humorous.

Nate Banditelli, our GBU UniServ Director, gave the new teachers a detailed PowerPoint on the structure of BTA/CTA/NEA. He also reiterated the point of the importance of being union strong. Sue Conway, BTA Co-Lead Negotiator, followed and gave our new colleagues an overview of the STULL and she also gave them some tips to help their year go well. The morning program ended with our Teacher of the Year, Lisa Fuentez, first grade teacher at McKinley, not only giving us her background and story on why she loves teaching, but she also presenting some ideas for a first day activity. Lunch was provided and after lunch Alicia Loncar, a labor management liaison for Kaiser, spoke briefly about self-care.

We were fortunate to have received donations of new school supplies from retired members Bonnie Shatun and Pam Cohen that the teachers were eager to take and use in their classrooms. These new teachers also participated in many raffles. This was such a special opportunity to meet new Burbank educators and connect as we head into a fresh school year. Welcome to everyone who joined us this year!
BTA HAPPENINGS

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

One of BTA’s goals is community participation. On August 2nd, several BTA Executive Board members started off the school year by having a booth at the Burbank Police Department’s National Night Out at Johnny Carson Park. It was quite warm, but still a beautiful night with many Burbank residents in attendance. At our booth, we raffled off six books to local student readers who were thrilled to win a book for their personal libraries. We also cooled folks with bottled water and passed out Diana’s favorite BTA pencils with “good” erasers. Kids were running around hopping on and off police and other city vehicles. Many of the booths were clubs or organizations to make Burbank a better place to live. Thank you to the members who helped at our booth, and those who stopped by to say hello and thank BTA for all they do. It was a great start to the school year.

Pictured: Officer Reneh Haratonian, Nicole Drabecki, Diana Abasta, Tracy Sorensen, Sarah Schwartz, Officer Karissa Peltier

ROOSEVELT ASSEMBLY

On Thursday, September 8th (International Literacy Day), Roosevelt hosted an in-person reading assembly with LeVar Burton (Reading Rainbow, Star Trek: TNG) for all 1st-2nd graders. Mr. Burton is the Reading
Ambassador for an Educational Tech company called “Osmo” who is sponsoring this reading assembly to launch a new literacy program called “Reading Adventure.” Mr. Burton hosted a short demo of the iPad based program with a handful of 1st and 2nd graders. They were joined by a few staff members, BUSD’s Leadership and a few members of the media for video footage and photos during the small group session.

Bridgett Murphy

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**NEA SEE EDUCATORS RUN TRAINING**

I was selected be one of the 15 trainees for the NEA's See Educators Run Training. It was hosted in person this year at the NEA offices for the first time since the pandemic started. The program, which has produced more than 300 candidates for various political offices, invites participation by teachers who want to be candidates for state legislature, city council or school board positions. This was a great three-day event that included first time candidates for key school board positions or state legislature positions. Some participants were former local union presidents and some were teachers taking a run at office after a lifetime in the classroom.

Tanase Petrenco  *(pictured with Princess Moss NEA Vice President)*
Navigating Special Education
IPD Fall Webinar Series

Sept 22nd, Oct 13th, Oct 14th | 3:30 - 4:30pm

Who is this for?
The Navigating Special Education series is for all CTA members.

Can you tell me a bit more about what to expect?

September 22  Navigating Special Education for the General Education Teacher: We will share information to help you to understand the types of supports your students with IEPs need in the general education classroom.

October 13  IEP Rights & Responsibilities: We will cover California statute and federal law as it applies to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team meeting.

October 14  Office Hours: We will cover Frequently Asked Questions from the field during this one hour live webinar.

How do I sign up?
To register, scan the QR code to the right.

Staying Connected in 2022-2023
CTA has a new Special Education resource page on its website. This page features recorded trainings, informational videos, FAQ, and a resource guide for all CTA members.
https://www.cta.org/special-education-resources

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