



BTA BENCHMARK



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President's Message by Diana Abasta

Vote Like Your Job Depends On It Because It Does

Politics enter into every area of society, and public education is no exception. As education still remains one of the top issues for California and Burbank voters, every elected official wants to tout their own plans for support or reform.



BUSD SCHOOL BOARD

The Burbank School Board elections are no exception when it comes to determining the future outcome for quality education in Burbank, and of our professional lives. Local school boards decide what books we use in our classrooms, and they also approve our salary raises. **We have an opportunity to elect Brian Smith who understands the duties and responsibilities of an effective school board member.** This is no entry level job, but one that requires leadership, responsibility, and accountability. This person must be an excellent communicator and one who reaches out to not only the community as a steward, but its labor unions. It is imperative that school board members understand the crucial roles our teachers, counselors, speech and language pathologists, and nurses. We need a majority of our BOE members to work together to ensure there is accountability on the part of District leadership.

That is why BTA is recommending **Brian Smith for BUSD School Board.** Below are statements Brian has made public on his website:

"We should have the best academic programs and a focus on rigorous academic discipline at all levels.

Our students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community at large want to be associated with great schools. Primarily, we have an obligation to our students to provide them with the greatest number of opportunities to grow and develop. Let's highlight and build upon the programs that Burbank has to offer: Dual Immersion, Arts and Music, CTE offerings, NAF academies, and trade school partnerships.

We should attract and retain the best employees.

*Educating Students is the product and what happens in the classroom is the reason we are here. Recruiting and retaining top-notch talent has never been more challenging. I believe we should have dedicated recruiting to seek out and attract the best and brightest. **The way is partnering with our labor unions to attract talent and highlight why Burbank is the destination.** Competitive compensation for our staff is the objective and it's achievable."*

There is a second seat open, and we are leaving that as your choice. BTA could not recommend any other candidate based on their stated qualifications, background or past history.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

CTA is once again endorsing Tony Thurmond:

"Tony has been a champion for California's six million students and made great accomplishments on their behalf as he tackled the digital divide during the pandemic. Tony's just getting started and, along with parents, we're ready to continue the partnership to ensure our students thrive."

For more information on propositions and other elections, you can go to cta.org and look under 2022 elections.



Welcome to the newest members of BTA

- **Thomas Abich (JBHS)**
- **Cindy Bonilla (Edison)**
- **Alexandra Litvak (Edison)**
- **Kendell Johnson (Miller)**
- **Young Kim (ILA)**
- **Bridgett Lawrence (Stevenson)**
- **Kaitlyn Malinovsky (BHS)**



Burbank Teachers Association

Walk to Find the Cure for all Cancers

By Diana Abasta

Dr. Gordy Klatt founded the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life in 1985 in the state of Washington. The event was to last for 24 hours because it symbolized the battle waged around the clock by those facing cancer.

Way back in 2003, Kim Allender, retired BTA president and Miller teacher, and I worked on the first event in Burbank with the event leader Danella Punta, a cancer survivor at

the time. That July of 2004 Cynthia Madera, as our BTA Community Relations Chair, organized the walk for us. We had members walking on the track at Gross Park in Burbank around the clock for 24 hours. We even won the award for Best Team Spirit. Since then, we have participated most years including this past September 24, 2022, where we set up a booth and raffled gift baskets with items donated by members. We walked this year in remembrance of our colleague Debbie Catello, former math teacher at Muir. Sadly, we also lost Carol Derry, retired teacher from McKinley. Loss is painful, but when we participate in this walk, we celebrate the lives of those gone and honor those who have survived.

I want to thank Sandi Sutter for meeting me early to help set up the canopy and booth. In addition, I want to thank BTA Elementary Director Tracy Sorensen and retired teacher and former negotiations team member, Laura Mixon for attending. It was fun to hear about the McKinley teacher group that still meets. Darla Gerharter and BTA Vice President Nicole Drabecki came by and purchased raffle tickets as a way to donate money to the cause. Although not as high as in years past, we did raise \$600.00 this year in spite of the change in location and the intense heat and wind at Valley College. I hope that our city finds a way to bring Relay to Life back to Burbank because it was an excellent opportunity for our community to come together for a worthwhile cause.



MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE VISITS

The first site visit that BTA president Diana Abasta, and I took was to the campus that I am on. The staff at Huerta is incredibly happy with our site this year, but definitely had some things to share when it came to the district. The retro check, SPED issues, and tech issues were items of concern that were shared. It was wonderful being able to sit and enjoy a sweet treat with many colleagues who I don't get a chance to see on a daily basis. After Diana left, those same colleagues told me how wonderful it was to know that our president took the time to hear what they had to say. The only way for a union to be as strong as ours is by having leadership that listens and cares, and the staff at Huerta feel like we have that.

Diana met with our new principal, Kenny Knoop. They had a good meeting. Kenny knows he can reach out to BTA, and she feels like we have a principal who supports us and advocates for us.

On September 21st Diana, Nate and I visited Muir to meet with members and see how everyone was doing. It was a wonderfully informative meeting in which we discussed their concerns and possible solutions for problems that we all face. The staff at Muir is diverse in the years that staff members have worked in the education community as well as in their experiences and cultural backgrounds. It creates a perfect environment for the collaboration that we saw on our visit. While we were there, everyone was also enjoying their spirit week as they were dressed in western attire. They were also preparing for visitors from Japan who were going to attend the school as guests temporarily. It was an amazing experience, and I really enjoyed the time we spent getting to know the staff better.



Diana and Nate met with Greg Miller and discussed concerns that had to do with large enrollment and counselors' caseload. Greg continues to be a good partner with BTA.

Unfortunately, I did not get to stop by the nurse's office, but Diana popped in and visited with Muir's school nurse, Richere Aleman. She was busy taking care of a few students who needed urgent care and some students who needed non-emergency care, but still required attention. We are fortunate to have members like Richere and all the others who popped into our lunch site meeting. I look forward to working more with our members at Muir.

- Amy Fuhr, Middle School Director

Join the BTA Alzheimer's Walk team as we walk through the Los Angeles Zoo. Opening ceremony at 7:00 a.m., walk begins at 7:30 a.m. on **Saturday November 5, 2022.**

If interested, email

office@burbankteachers.org

Must be registered to walk.



Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day

by Diana Abasta

One of my favorite things to do is spend time at our school sites. On October 6, Laura Flosi, the Edison Elementary principal who also sits on the BUSD's negotiation team, invited me to participate in the Walk or Ride-A-Bike to school day. I'm always happy to walk with the students and their parents. This year I gave away over 75 pencils to our walkers and hand sanitizer to our parents. "Can we ever have enough of that stuff?" I said as I gave the last bottle away.



Laura and I met some parents and students in the AM Kindergarten class in front of Chili John's. It was good to see BTA Elementary Director Sarah Schwartz who was there with her niece Brooke Fuhr, (BTA Middle School Director Amy Fuhr's daughter). Other Edison teachers Diana Solorzano, Kelli Chugg, Debbie Riggs, and Gianna Bertole joined us on the Chandler path to walk with 1st -5th graders. The cheerful voices and friends' hugs when they saw each other reminded me that one of the best social and emotional learning activities is walking and talking with classmates!

Limited Time Offer for CTA Members to Switch Coverage with No Health Questions

From October 1 through November 30, 2022, CTA members who are covered by a different insurance company have a special opportunity to apply for CTA-endorsed Disability and Life insurance from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard) without answering health questions. Before applying, members should compare their current plan with the CTA-endorsed plans to understand how any differences may impact their personal situation.

To help CTA members compare Disability plans or to learn more about the process of switching coverage to The Standard, visit standard.com/cta/portover.

For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods and any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406 (TTY). GP-190-LTD/S399-CTA.1 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA.3



Switch Your Insurance Coverage to The Standard

Two limited-time opportunities to switch your Disability and Life insurance with no health questions asked:

- April 1 - May 31
- October 1 - November 30



A Partner You Can Trust

Endorsed by CTA Member Benefits since 2007, Standard Insurance Company is the only CTA-endorsed provider of Disability and Life insurance. While servicing over 75,000¹ CTA members, The Standard is proud to continuously meet and exceed high service standards set by CTA.



Calculate Your Insurance Needs

Scan the code below with your smartphone or visit standard.com/cta/portover.

Three easy steps to switch

Before applying, be sure to compare your current plan with the CTA-endorsed plans to understand how any differences in terms, exclusions and benefits may impact your personal situation. Ready to switch? Just follow these three easy steps:

1. Apply for coverage with The Standard.
2. Provide The Standard with proof of coverage with another carrier.
3. Cancel your current coverage after you receive a notice from us requesting proof of coverage termination.

Act Now Before Time Runs Out

For full details of this opportunity, scan the code to the right with your smartphone or visit standard.com/cta/portover.



¹ As of April 2022, based on data developed by The Standard.

For costs and further details of coverage including the exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policies may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406. Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204. GP190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA.3

Burbank Teachers Association

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