



GTA Advocate



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Glendale Teachers Association

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President's Message: Cast your Votes in Favor of Public Education By Tami Carlson tamicalson@glendaleteachers.org



It is with a heavy heart that I write this first message of the year. I am deeply saddened by the loss of our fully funded health benefits in Glendale USD. We have given up raises to keep them, and as teachers, we deserve them.

It is hard to believe that it was just two years ago that our then superintendent, Dr. Escalante went to every school site and PTA meeting with charts and graphs of how Glendale would make it

through the next 3 years unscathed due to the financial diligence of the board members he wanted re-elected. Then, the tune changed almost immediately after the election.

GUSD's 2009 -10 Unaudited Actuals show an **unrestricted** reserve balance of 39 million, five hundred sixty-seven thousand, seven hundred ten dollars, and 64 cents (\$39,567,710.64). Of this, \$26,571,817.86 is "undesignated."

But these are unprecedented hard times for public education in California. We have had drastic cuts from Sacramento and it

seems that everyone is against teachers. The media attacks individual teachers with value added test scores published in the paper, the federal and state governments hold us accountable for unfunded mandates and an impossible 100% proficiency rate by 2014.

No one reports that students who receive a fail from elementary and middle school teachers are passed along to the next grade

anyway and that next year teacher now has a student who is not ready to learn the new grade's standards.

Instead many of us are unlawfully pressured to change a failing grade to a passing one so school data looks good.

There is hysteria of how things look: the API, the AYP, the drop out and fail rate, FOR assessments, and the district budget, instead of an emphasis on people- teachers and their students.

These are sad times. The whole child is relatively ignored in favor of data collection; higher order thinking skills and creativity have been eclipsed by teaching test taking skills. Every school in every district has a different way to "beat" the test;

choose those closest to the mark and give them extra attention, make all tests like the CST's so students are used to them, give regular CST practice tests. And only teachers seem to really care; to really understand the consequences to our children, to our very country should such mania continue to persist. Who will be our scientists, writers, engineers of tomorrow? And who, if anyone, will want to be our teachers? Unfortunately, the power base lies with our state and federal government and our district office. We can only do what we are willing to do together; as one united unit. And that, sadly, we have not been. We do not look at the whole unit, only at our individual circumstance. That is not an association. It is not the union mentality. And until we have it, we will continue to be victims; public education scapegoats who work longer hours for less and less.

Please vote this November and cast all your votes in favor of public education.

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Glendale Teachers Association

3233 N. Verdugo Rd.

Glendale, CA 91208

(818) 240-3924

Fax (818) 249-0555

www.glendaleteachers.org



Now More Than Ever It's Time to Vote for Your Interests

By Michael Romo, GTA Executive Director

Whatever your political party affiliation - Democratic, Green, Republican or Tea Party - vote, and vote your interest.

For example, if you believe that it is in your interest to protect your STRS pensions then the following Meg Whitman quotes should interest you,

“First, is we have to shrink the size of government. Second, we have to go after Public Employee Pensions”

Meg Whitman, KSWB Fox 5 Morning News, August 9, 2010

And

“I think the era of a defined benefit program is over relative to a defined contribution program,” said Whitman.

San Francisco Chronicle, Public employee unions in Whitman's Crosshairs, March 15, 2010

Well, the “Public employee pensions” that Whitman will be going after are your pensions. Also the “defined benefit program” that she says is over is your STRS pension. It is a defined benefit program because you know the exact amount that it will pay you when you retire. It provides you with a security of knowing that whatever happens you will get that amount when you retire. The “defined contribution program” is a 401K program that is subject to the state of the economy. It provides no security in difficult economic times - just ask the retirees (or those that were about to retire) whose 401K plans took massive losses in this economic downturn. I guess anyone who has pocket change to the tune of \$120

million to contribute to her own election campaign (a national record) can't be too concerned with public employee pensions!

Is it in your best interests to elect a person who will attack your pensions?

Likewise, if you believe that Education has been decimated by cuts (\$17 billion in 2 years) and that it needs to stop then here's another Whitman quote that will pique your interest:

“If elected, I will identify and implement at least \$15 billion in permanent spending cuts from the state budget”

CBS5.com, Whitman to make Gubernatorial Bid Official, September 21, 2009

To be clear, \$15 billion in permanent spending cuts to the state budget means that Education will bear \$7 billion of those cuts! CTA estimates that that is the equivalent of 100,000 teacher layoffs. Is this in your best interest?

Jerry Brown doesn't think that it is in the best interest of California to implement these policies. He supports making public school funding a priority and he opposes converting STRS systems to risky 401(k) plans. That is why CTA supports Jerry Brown and asks that you vote for him.

CTA also supports Tom Torlakson. He's a former teacher who believes in education and backed up that belief by working with CTA to sponsor the Quality Education Investment Act, which has directed \$3 billion for proven classroom reforms, instead of sanctions, to improve education in low-

performing schools.

In the race for U.S. Senator CTA recommends re-electing Barbara Boxer because of her strong support for education in the past. She recently voted to support the Federal Education Jobs Fund and monies from this fund were used to bring back laid off Glendale teachers.

CTA also supports a yes vote for Proposition 24, the Tax Fairness Act, because it ends \$2 billion in corporate loopholes and will make corporation pay their fair share and keep the Legislature from making deeper cuts to education.

Speaking of education, if you want to educate yourself on the candidates and issues in lunchrooms throughout the District you will find election flyers posted on GTA bulletin boards. These flyers provide information about CTA endorsed candidates and propositions. The CTA State Council made these endorsements based on the history and statements of the candidates. They provide an important insight on how govern if elected. Obviously, it is in the best interest of educators to elect candidates who support education and this year it is crucial.

Vote, and vote your interest in the upcoming election.



Vice-President's Message

By Jana Wells, GTA Vice-President

Hello GTA members. It seems that the summers are going faster and faster. I hope that you have had a good start and expect a great year. I can't wait until I can come and visit and meet with you at your school sites. I will let your reps know as soon as I have a schedule.

Over the summer, I attended the CTA summer institute, learning ways to make our health benefits better and less expensive. Under the leadership of Bryna Schreier, Chair of GTA's Health Benefits Committee, and the rest of the committee, we will be finding ways to improve what we have and bring down the cost for everyone. Our goal is to have our health benefit cost under the cap for all members.

This summer I also went to the NEA RA in New Orleans. The hot topic there was No Child Left Behind, and Race to the Top's changes in funding that are reliant on student test scores. Your students are not test scores and they, and you, should not be judged or funded by this one assessment. Diane Ravich spoke to the assembly. Under Bush, she was originally supportive of No Child Left Behind, but now she has done a complete about face, and gives data as to why standardized testing is not effective. We at GTA completely agree with her and will work hard to make sure that you are not judged by your students' test scores.



Glendale was well represented at the NEA RA

Left to right, Alicia Harris, Allen Freemon, Phyllis Miller, Sierra Vasquez, Jana Wells, Sandy Fink.

Not pictured Lisa Jenks, Pat Vakian and Paul Noto.

Organizing:

This year's November election is important for public education. As we see funding reach new lows, it becomes even more important to elect public education friendly candidates. We will have phone banking at the GTA office, 3233 N. Verdugo Rd. October 19 through November 1. There are two time spots: 4 to 6 PM and 6 to 8 PM. Food will be served. Make time to come and help save the future of public education. See your site rep. to sign up.

I look forward to a great year as your Vice-President

Bargaining Update

By Tami Carlson, GTA President

We return to this school year with a settled contract. The contract was ratified by membership with 80% voting for it and 20% against. Still, the end to this long road of contract negotiations came at great expense to our Family PPO members.

Your GTA Bargaining Team and BOD were faced with a decision we did not want to have to make. The Fact Finder decided that the district and the GTA should accept the last TA that you did not ratify. The district absolutely refused to make any health benefit contributions temporary as we had wanted. That left your leadership team with either coming up with a new plan or walking away from the table in which case the district would impose their last, best, and final offer. All members had greater out of paycheck expenses under the district's last, best, and final proposal so we devised a different plan.

Although we are all proud to have the 8% annual increase to the CAP, we are all equally mortified by the hit to those who have Family PPO. Still, the vote eases our consciences some as it shows that this is clearly what a great majority of membership wanted. You did not want to strike over this issue, and during this time of crisis in public education funding, that is completely understandable.

The Health Benefit Committee members of GTA are ready to get to work to bring down the cost of all the plans. We have been attending trainings on this for nearly a year now and are continuing to do so. We have contacted the district and asked for a full committee meeting to be scheduled as soon as possible. We will meet regularly and leave no stone unturned in finding the best health care for the best price.

So, Family PPO members, hang on. You represent 28% of our membership (before the CAP) but your plight will be receiving the greatest percentage of our time this year.



Newly hired CTA member, or new to your district?

If you're a newly hired CTA member, or transferring to a new district now's the time to get coverage. During your first 120 days of new employment, you have a great opportunity to apply for Disability Insurance and/or up to \$200,000 of Life Insurance – without showing proof of good health. Don't miss this opportunity - call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 for more information. **Does your district have a Section 125 Flexible Benefits Plan?** During open enrollment, a district's Flexible Benefits Plan administrator may encourage you to purchase other insurance products, such as Cancer Care Insurance, Disability Insurance or Individual Life Insurance. This is an important reminder that the Flexible Benefits Plan administrator is not a CTA-endorsed vendor and the insurance products they are selling are not endorsed by CTA. To learn more about CTA-endorsed Life and Disability Insurance contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406 from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. **Organizing your desk?**

Call The Standard if you're moving to a new address or needing to make changes to your beneficiary designation. It's important to keep your records up-to-date, and it's easy to do. You can call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 or go online to Member Benefits at www.cta.org. **Questions?**

Call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Or, email ctaservice@standard.com. You can also visit Member Benefits at www.cta.org to learn more.

In Loving Memory



Charles (Bud) Yoho
 “Ironman”
 1938-2010

As we were going to press, we learned that our dear Bud passed away in the late afternoon on September 27, 2010. His loving wife, Pat Vakian, was by his side as were many of their family members.

Bud has been a cherished GTA leader throughout his career. He gave tirelessly of his time and energy for his colleagues and his students. Bud served on CTA State Council as our GTA Representative for 9 years. Most recently, he served as GTA Community Outreach Chair and was GTA Vice-President (2006/07, 2007/08, and 2008/09) during Allen Freemon’s Presidency. Allen writes, “(Bud was) a kind spirit, a gentle soul, and a man with a noble heart.”

We all agree.

Our deepest sympathies go out to his wife Pat and the family.

CTA Summer Institute at UCLA August 1st through 6th



From left: Karine Armen (Community Relations strand), Phyllis Miller (GTA BOD & PAC chair), Tami Carlson (GTA President, School Finance strand) and Jana Wells (GTA VP, Health Benefits strand)



From left: Karine Armen, Tom Torkelson



From left: Betty Yee, Tami Carlson



From left: Karine Armen (GTA Communications Committee) John Chiang - Candidate State Controller Tami Carlson - GTA President



Tom Torkelson is our recommended candidate for State Superintendent of Schools

Photos by Karine Armen

How to Read Your Paycheck

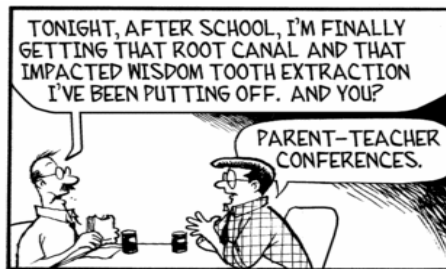
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| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY | | | | | | PAY LOCA-TION | PAY CYCLE | ADVICE DATE | ADVICE NUMBER |
| 64568 GLENDALE UNIFIED | | | | | | 304 | C1D | 10-01-2009 | 1234568 |
| EMPLOYEE NAME | | | | EMPLOYEE ID | | FEDERAL STATUS/ ALLOWANCES | STATE STATUS/ ALLOWANCES | ADDITIONAL STATE ALLOW- ANCES | |
| POTTER, HARRY | | | | XXX-XX-1234 | | M / 01 | M / 01 | 00 | |
| EARNINGS-COMPENSATION | | | | | | DEDUCTIONS/TAXES/MISC | | | |
| BASIS | DESCRIPTION | END DATE | RATE | UNITS | AMOUNT | EMPLOYEE DEDUCTIONS | CURRENT AMOUNT | YTD TOTALS | |
| C M | REGULAR | 09-30-2009 | 7,497.80 | 22.00 | 7,497.80 | PRE-TAX REDUCTIONS | | | |
| C M | DOCK-TIME | 09-30-2009 | 7,497.80 | 1 | 403.11- | VSP R | 14.47 | 115.76 | |
| | | | | | | MED REIM R | 200.00 | 1,600.00 | |
| | | | | | | STRS RED | 599.82 | 4,798.59 | |
| | | | | | | STRS RED | 32.25- | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | EMPLOYEE REDUCTIONS | | | |
| | | | | | | MEDCAR DED | 102.87 | 863.91 | |
| | | | | | | FWT | 458.69 | 3,669.52 | |
| | | | | | | SWT | 136.50 | 1,092.00 | |
| | | | | | | CTA LIFE | 33.60 | 268.80 | |
| | | | | | | CTA IP | 36.89 | 295.12 | |
| | | | | | | CTA | 98.90 | 791.20 | |
| | | | | | | GLENDALE CU | 200.00 | 1,600.00 | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS | | | |
| | | | | | | MEDCAR CON | 102.87 | 863.91 | |
| | | | | | | STRS CON | 585.31 | 4,915.30 | |
| | | | | | | SUI | 21.28 | 170.27 | |
| | | | | | | WORK COMP | 170.20 | 1,361.60 | |
| | | | | | | METLIFE#1 | 8.20 | 65.60 | |
| | | | | | | BLUESHIELD | 1,051.77 | 8,414.16 | |
| | | | | | | DELTA | 174.19 | 1,393.52 | |
| | | | | | | VSP | 12.13 | 97.04 | |
| *****LEAVE BALANCES***** | | CURRENT TAXABLE BALANCES | | | YTD TAXABLE BALANCES | | | CURRENT PAY SUMMARY | |
| VACATION | | FEDERAL | 6,527.11 | | FEDERAL | 47,250.65 | | GROSS PAY | 7,094.69 |
| SICK LEAVE | | STATE | 6,527.11 | | STATE | 47,250.65 | | REDUC-TIONS | 782.05 |
| COMP TIME | | MEDI GROSS | 7,094.69 | | MEDI GROSS | 59,579.29 | | TAXES | 698.06 |
| | | OASDI GROSS | | | OASDI GROSS | | | DEDUC-TIONS | 369.39 |
| | | CA SDI GROSS | | | CA SDI GROSS | | | | |
| | | GROSS EARN'S | 7,094.69 | | GROSS EARN'S | 59,579.29 | | NET PAY | 5,245.19 |
| DISTRICT NAME | | | | DISTRICT ADDRESS | | | | | |
| GLENDALE UNIFIED | | | | 223 N JACKSON STREET | | | | GLENDALE, CA 91206 | |
| GLENDALE UNIFIED | | | | | | NO.1234568 | | | |
| Date Issued 10-01-2009 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Amount | |
| *FIVE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FORTY-FIVE | | | | | | | | \$5,245.19 | |
| AND 19/100 DOLLARS | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | LOCATION 106 | |
| | | | | | | | | ACCURAL DATE | |
| | | | | | | | | 09-30-2009 | |
| NOT NEGOTIABLE | | | | | | | | | |
| HARRY POTTER | | | | | | NET PAY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,245.19 | | | |
| HOGWARTS SCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY | | | | | | HAS BEEN DEPOSITED TO YOUR ACCOUNT | | | |
| ENGLAND | | | | | | | | | |

Certificated Pay Stub

TABLE OF DEFINITIONS – EARNINGS STATEMENT

| | |
|------------|--|
| ACSA LIFE | ACSA life insurance premium deduction |
| ACSA | Association of California School Administrator's dues deduction |
| ADD FWT | Additional federal income tax deduction |
| ADD SWT | Additional state income tax deduction |
| AF ACCIDNT | American Fidelity accident insurance premium deduction |
| AFA IP | American Fidelity income protection premium deduction |
| AF CANCER | American Fidelity cancer insurance premium deduction |
| AM FID L | American Fidelity life insurance premium deduction |
| BLUESHIELD | Blue Shield Health Plan |
| CDH | CIGNA Dental Health Plan |
| CTA IP | CTA income protection premium deduction |
| CTA LIFE | CTA life insurance premium deduction |
| CTA | CTA/GTA dues deduction |
| DDP | Delta Dental Plan |
| DPC 9902 | American Fidelity dependant care reimbursement plan deduction |
| FIRST FFCU | First Financial Federal Credit Union deduction |
| FWT | Federal income tax withholding deduction |
| GEF 10 | Glendale Education Foundation |
| GLENDAL CU | Glendale Area Schools Federal Credit Union deduction |
| GR EARN'S | Employee's gross earnings |
| GSMA | Glendale Schools Management Association dues deduction |
| GTA FEE | Glendale Teachers' Association fee deduction |
| MED REIM R | American Fidelity medical reimbursement plan deduction |
| MEDCAR CON | Medicare - paid by District |
| MEDCAR DED | Medicare - paid by employee |
| METLIFE #1 | Life insurance premium for GTA members – paid by District |
| METLIFE #3 | Life insurance premium for GSMA members - paid by District |
| METLIFE EE | MetLife – employee's life insurance premium deduction – paid by employee |
| METLIFE SP | MetLife – spouse's life insurance premium deduction – paid by employee |
| OASDI CON | Social Security – paid by District |
| OASDI DED | Social Security – paid by employee |
| PERS CON | Public Employee's Retirement System – paid by District |
| PERS RED | Public Employee' Retirement System - paid by employee |
| SAFEGUARD | Safeguard Dental Plan |
| SCHLFIRST | SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union deduction |
| STRS CON | State Teachers' Retirement System – paid by District |
| STRS RED | State Teachers' Retirement System – paid by employee |
| SUI | Unemployment insurance – paid by District |
| SWT | State income tax withholding deduction |
| TSA | Tax Sheltered Annuity deduction |
| TX EARN'S | Employee's taxable earnings |
| UNITED WAY | United Way donation deduction |
| VSP | Vision Service Plan |
| WORK COMP | Workers' compensation premium – paid by District |



Stress Busters – How To Relax and Unwind

If you're like many Americans, you regularly find yourself stressed out. Here are several useful tips to help you relax and unwind...

1. **Make Your Commute More Enjoyable.** Listen to a favorite book on tape or a CD.
2. **Clear Your Mind.** Take 3 to 5 minutes to close your eyes and breathe deeply. This will help you to clear your mind and eliminate stress.
3. **Write It Down.** If a life situation is making it difficult for you to relax, write about the incident. When you're done venting on paper, tear up the sheet and throw it away.
4. **Establish A Ritual.** Having a special routine that you follow every day can help you switch your mindset from work to home.
5. **Exercise.** Studies have shown that regular physical exercise helps reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and increases a person's general feelings of well-being.
6. **Reduce Clutter.** Take 5 minutes before you go to bed each night to tidy up your home or work space.
7. **Listen To Music.** Listening to your favorite music will calm nerves and reduce stress.
8. **Avoid Over Scheduling.** Schedule chores and errands for different nights, or save them for the weekend.
9. **Bank Online.** By taking advantage of FFCU's fast, easy and free Online Banking and Bill Payment, you'll have more time to spend relaxing with your family.

Article courtesy of First Financial Credit Union. This article is not intended to represent First Financial Credit Union's views or opinions, nor does it represent First Financial as an expert on the subject discussed. This article should be used for information purposes only.

“Labor rights are as fundamental as human rights and the job of a democratic country is to protect both.”

Tony Ehrenreich



GTA Executive Officers

Tami Carlson, President
tamicarlson@glendaleteachers.org

Jana Wells, Vice President
janawells@glendaleteachers.org

Nick Doom, Treasurer
nickdoom@glendaleteachers.org

Bryna Schreier, Secretary
brynaschreier@glendaleteachers.org

GTA ADVOCATE STAFF:

Editor: Leslie Beaton Snyder, lesliebeatonsnyder@yahoo.com

Contributing Editors: Tami Carlson

Photo Credits: Karine Armen

Contributing Writers: Tami Carlson, Jana Wells, Michael Romo

Michael Romo, GTA Executive Director
mromo@cta.org