



GTA Advocate



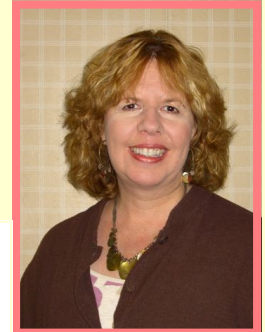
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Glendale Teachers Association

April 2011

President's Message: False Allegations

By Tami Carlson tamicarlson@glendaleteachers.org



We have come under attack by the district once again. The latest allegation is that we are not working with the district. That they wanted to work with us but we have refused.

The problem is that the evidence shows just the opposite. We have continually attempted to work with the district and they have just said, "No."

Last year, I made a "gentleperson's" agreement with district officials to make our health benefit contributions temporary. At mediation, they reneged on the agreement and blamed it on the mediator. Now they are saying I misunderstood the agreement.

More recently, they have continually accused us of not working with them to come to an agreement on Measure S. This is also a misrepresentation. I was told by last year's GUSD Board President that if GTA would support the bond measure, they would rescind our furlough days and maintain our current class sizes. After what happened with the temporary contributions to health benefits agreement, I asked for it in writing. They have continually refused. Nonetheless, GUSD Board members sit on the dais at their meetings and blast me for not working with them. Excuse me. We offered a written proposal. They have said nothing but no. Who is refusing to

work with whom?

Now we are being lambasted for releasing the written proposal we offered concerning class size maintenance as it was offered in a "confidential" meeting. Well, this is news to me. I never knew our monthly Superintendent meetings were confidential nor would I ever consider a proposal to be confidential.

In reality, the district is angry because I have finally given up on trying to be cooperative and collaborative with them. They reneged on our health benefits deal for last year. They grossly underestimated their potential 4th year out budget projections to show a \$50 million dollar deficit. They refuse to put their promise of cancelling furlough days and maintaining class size into writing. Instead, they qualify their "intent" to maintain class size as for "base" or "core" program which I let you know did not include teachers paid out of categorical funds (1/3).

What is really happening is they are very angry that I am providing you and the public with the truth. I am not allowing their political double speak to go unchallenged.

They claim their budget is 90% salary and benefits which is not entirely true. You see, they have two budgets; the restricted and the unrestricted. Salaries and benefits come from the unrestricted only. When you com-

bine the two budgets, salary and benefit costs are a far cry from 90%. I explain this at every meeting where they try to misrepresent the facts and they do not like it one bit.

Yes, I am constantly correcting them. I cannot do it at Board meetings where I am silenced except for my five minutes of public comment but attempt to clarify the record everywhere I go. For example, at last night's CV Community Forum meeting on Measure S, Mary Boger said that without Measure S we could not get matching construction funds. Well, this is not true. She had to admit as much when I pointed out her inaccuracy.

Half truths are as deceptive as lies. I correct them and I send you the information I learn from requesting documents and pouring over the district's books. They do not like this one bit. Too bad. I will continue to so until they become completely honest with you and the public. GTA is ready and willing to work cooperatively and collaboratively with the district when they are willing to do something other than deliver half truths to sucker you and the public and to actually work with us instead of just saying "No."

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The Need for a System of Tax Fairness By Michael Romo, GTA Executive Director

We have all heard the reports of the budget stalemate in Sacramento. Jerry Brown wants and needs two republican legislators from each house of government to break ranks with their party and vote to put tax extensions on the ballot in June. The republicans are not willing to let the people vote on tax extensions and it has developed into an ugly quagmire.

We all know how we got into this mess. The collapse of financial and housing markets in 2007 produced an economic downturn or "Great Recession" that has had severe repercussions in California. Our unemployment rate is at 12.5% and as a result our tax receipts are down, forcing severe budget cuts. What we need is for our economy to grow and produce more jobs so that the state can get more money but the forecasts for this happening are not encouraging. Economists project that our economy will grow slowly in 2011 and pick up momentum in 2012. Unfortunately, absent any permanent solutions, California state deficits will persist for years. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) California faces an annual operating shortfall of \$25.3 billion in 2011-12, \$22.4 billion in 2012-13, \$20.4 billion in 2013-14, \$20.2 billion in 2014-15 and \$19.4 billion in 2015-15.

There is one sure way out of this quagmire and it is to reform our present tax structure so that it fairly taxes all Californians. This will require an investment in California's future that will be reflected in a fair tax system and a realistic State Budget.

Presently, according to the California Budget Project, those with an income in the bottom 20% pay 11.1% of their income in taxes while the top 1% pay 7.8% of their income in taxes. Is this fair?

The cost of funding state services has shifted from corporate to personal income tax payers. The LAO in their 2011-12 estimates that the sources of revenue to the California General Fund are as follows; 53% from personal income tax, 10.2% from corporate income tax, 30.4% from sales and use tax, and 6.4% from other revenue and loans. Is it fair that only 10.20% of California's revenues come from corporations? Corporations used to pay more, in 1980-81 their share was 14.60% and in the last 30 years corporate income taxes as a percentage of General Fund revenue has decreased by 30%. Considering that corporations have profited from California having the 8th largest economy in the world and from the education system and infrastructure that we as taxpayers have paid for, they need to pay more in taxes.

The manner in which property taxes in California are paid also has shifted the funding state services from corporate to personal income tax payers. Proposition 13 has resulted in funding for schools, cities and counties shifting from property taxes to the state. It also contains a business loophole that unfairly subsidizes big corporations who can use complicated ownership changes to avoid property reassessment (worth \$5 billion annually).

We need to reform our tax structure because taxes are our collective investment in a safe, civilized, and prosperous society. This reform will benefit the public at large by ensuring that public services such as police, fire and public education are adequately funded. In addition the infrastructure (roads, railroad, and air traffic) that will help pull us out of this economic downturn will need adequate funding. Lest we forget, safety net programs (social service, health care for the poor and seniors) are needed now more than ever. Nothing less than the survival of basic services and a healthy public sector are at stake.

Important Information:

On-Line classes offered by the GUSD – GTA has heard of this at a recent GUSD Board meeting and from Hoover High School student reporters contacting us. The District has never approached us about negotiating the working conditions etc for these classes.

165 day work year – At a recent FOR meeting, Dr. Sheehan told the participants there could be a 165 day work year next year. This is the first GTA has heard of this. It is a change in our working conditions / salary and needs to be negotiated.

\$39,567,710 is the amount the district's 2009-10 unrestricted budget ended with and consequently its 2010-11 budget began with.

\$18,868,306 is the amount the district received that was not included in the 2009-10 ending budget or 2010-11 beginning balance. It is money received from the October \$271 ADA increase (\$6.8 million), ARRA funds (\$2.35 million), Job's Bill monies (\$4.5 million) and the \$5 million in on-going savings from Health Benefits changes last year (PPO going to HMO and plan design).

\$40,000,000 approximately is what the district has in their "capital" funds to repair College View, put in new buildings at elementary schools (for which matching funds can be applied for), etc.

\$14,000,000 approximately in the COPs fund (what can be "freed up" for the general fund) was accumulated because the district had been paying the monthly payment out of the general fund instead of this one for several years while they told us they could not afford to give us a raise.

Information Requested that the District cannot get to us before April 11 (after the election)

1. Copies of checks, invoices, and detailed services provided for the \$6,751,841.19 expense listed on form 67, page 1, Section B., line 5 (services and other operating expenses) column C of 2010-11 Second Interim Budget Report.
2. The date and reason why COPS payment shifted to Capital Fund in the amount of \$1,270,000 (Action Report #1, Page 7, March 15, 2011, "Unrestricted General Fund Narrative").
3. What fund(s) the District's Long-Term Commitment "General Obligation Bonds" payment of \$11,816,952 for 2009-10, \$13,603,439 for 2010-11, \$10, 588.873 for 2011-12, and \$9,900,515 for 2012-13 come from.



Vice-President's Message

By Jana Wells

I hope everyone had a great spring break. We are past the 2/3 mark in the year, and it is almost time for testing. Remember, what we tell the kids to do before testing also applies to us - get a good night's sleep and eat breakfast! You may not be taking the test, but you are dealing with students who are stressed because of the tests. You need to take good care of yourself, so that you can take good care of the kids.

SAVE THE DATE; Get out your bowling shoes and polish up your ball. We have another TGIF planned for May 20, 2011 at Montrose Bowl. Fliers will be sent out at the end of the month to give you more information. We hope to see everyone there.

Some members have been having problems sending the board of directors emails through the Glendale Teachers Association website. We are working on getting it fixed. In the meantime, you can leave a phone message for a board member at the GTA office, 1-818-240-3924, or email me at atjanagta@gmail.com and I will get it to them.



Community Outreach

By Karine Armen, Community Outreach Chair



Its spring break and usually I travel, but this time I have been busy with several activities and I stayed home. Every morning I check the Glendale News Press' calendar section to see if there are any interesting or important events related to education. A few days ago I noticed that Montrose Verdugo City Chamber of Commerce has its monthly mixer where they were going to honor ten students from Rosemont Middle School who had successfully completed the Los Angeles Marathon. I made an effort to attend and it was worth my time. I was the only teacher participating. It was such a joy to see the excitement in these kids' eyes. Assemblyman Gato and Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich had sent Certificates of Appreciation for each student. One of the fathers, who was also acting as their P.R. person, was so proud of his daughter and the other students' accomplishments.

Generally the mixers include raffle prizes donated by local businesses. I donated two of my books to the Montrose Chamber, one for their office and the other as a prize for their raffle. As most of you know, I have published my mother's self-help book. It is a collection of spiritual and positive thinking articles. I have also included my grandmother's story of surviving the Armenian Genocide. My mother died 20 years ago at the age of 56 and publishing this book was a labor of love. You may read parts of it at my website www.photokarine.com.

Tonight I met Corliss Andrade, one of the board members of Healthy Kids, at the Montrose mixer and I asked her about Saturday's event. Melinda Clarke, Executive Director of the Montrose Chamber, was very warm and welcoming. They all remember Bud Yoho with respect and sweet memories.

Last night I went to two celebration events of GUSD board candidates endorsed by GTA. First, I went to Ingrid Gunnell's home. Jennifer Freemon was there too. Later, I went to Nayiri Nahabedian's event at Bahar Restaurant. Congratulations to Nayiri.

It's been a busy and productive spring break. Please join me to make connections with our community members. There are many wonderful events around town. On Saturday, April 9th, Healthy Kids program has an event at Pacific Community Center. We need to put some educational pamphlets that GTA has published. They include topics such as how to help your child with homework, writing, and positive discipline.



Karine Armen and Melinda Clarke, Executive Director of Montrose Chamber of Commerce



"Dear Mr. Trent: Since you only *pretended* to write this paper, I only *pretended* to grade it!"



Passover begins on April 19, 2011



Happy Easter
April 24, 2011

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