

GTA ADVOCATE

The Official Newsletter of the Glendale Teachers Association



President's Message

By: Taline Arsenian, President



March 2021

Vol. 37

The past year has been an unprecedented year with many firsts. As we approach the one year anniversary of school building closures and the shift to remote learning, one thing is evident, educators will do just about anything to teach and service students. Last March was your crash course in all things that would help you shift to online instruction, Google Classroom, Seesaw, Zoom, Desmos, Teletherapy, and a litany of apps and programs. You spent your own money, time, and energy, setting up an at home classroom in order to make the remote learning experience the best it could possibly be for your students. You did this during spring break 2020 and beyond. You never stopped doing this. You continued throughout the summer, learning, researching, reading, practicing, and buying more equipment/supplies/resources because this pandemic was not going away and you cared deeply for the safety of our school community as well as the remote learning experience students would continue to have in the 2020-2021 school year.

GTA leadership has been working to ensure that members' voices are included in plans for an eventual reopening of school buildings. We surveyed membership in October, January, and now again in March (please take the most recent survey – link was sent to reps on 02--27) to hear about your needs and wants. ***It is no surprise that your wants are wants that you want for your students.*** In order to ensure a safer reopening of school buildings, we want an opportunity to receive the full vaccine with efficacy prior to an in-person because the safety of the school community is critical. We want school buildings and sites to allow for proper ventilation, 6-foot distancing, PPE available to all, plexiglass barriers, hand washing stations and hand-sanitizer, and that everyone on campus follow all safety protocols. We want the return to in-person instruction to be sustainable, manageable, and not diminish the quality of the educational experience students are receiving now. We want equity for both remote students and students that opt to return for in-person instruction. We want to ensure a schedule that will work for ALL students, including FLAG and special education. We want a plan in place to address the social and emotional needs of students who will now be asked to participate in yet another unprecedented event, concurrent teaching. We want support and training in order to implement a model of teaching we have never done before. We want to be able to continue established protocols and procedures that we have worked so hard to implement and that students have become accustomed, as we finish this school. This will require materials and resources including a functioning chrome book and headphone with a microphone for each in-person student. This is just a partial list. Please continue to keep sharing your input via GTA surveys and communication with your site reps, area directors and board of directors. Please indulge me the opportunity to share one of my wants for you: ***a spring break 2021 that is dedicated to time to care for your body, mind, and spirit and for you to spend time with your loved ones.*** #WeAreGTA #UnionStrong

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Glendale Teachers Association

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GUSD must listen to its teachers in order to make hybrid instruction work.

Vice President's Message

By: Chris Davis, Vice President



As Covid-19 infection and positivity rates decline to rates that public health officials consider acceptable for returning students and teachers to classrooms, we need to turn our attention to hybrid models of instruction as a bridge between distance learning and a full return to classrooms.

Hybrid is no more ideal an instructional model than is a full distance learning; both models of teaching and learning redefine student and teacher interaction and student-to-student interactions, and both introduce new factors of uncertainty (will the technology work?) and instability (will a new infection force a return to a full remote model for a period of time?).

Nevertheless, until health guidance says that we can return to pre-pandemic life, GUSD students and teachers will be engaged in some form of hybrid instruction.

In preparation for this time, GUSD and GTA met for several Zoom sessions between June and July 2020 and resumed meeting in January in the hopes that we can find hybrid schedules and instructional models that serve our students and their families and give our members the flexibility they need in order to be effective teachers in a hybrid setting.

GTA is working from a set of principles that are informed by the survey results from our members. At the center of this list of principles are these two:

- Live-streaming while teaching in person, especially for grades TK-6, is not feasible, equitable, or sustainable. We want those members who wish to livestream to be able to do so, but we support the conclusion of Palo Alto Schools superintendent Don Austin who told the Palo Alto Weekly that “being prescriptive right now is not the winning path.” Concurrent hybrid models where students may either receive live instruction in person or at home on their devices at the same time were developed for university settings “where expectations for participation and interaction are vastly different than in an elementary or even secondary school classroom.” (CTA’s [“Distance & Hybrid Teaching Models”](#)) We know that some teachers may want to be able to teach all of their students — both those in their classrooms and those who elect to stay home — at the same time. But we also know that many teachers know they will not be able to sustain equitable instruction for both groups of students, something the GUSD has wanted to write into our contract language.
- We don’t see large-scale, complex hybrid instruction as viable until the fall of 2021; instituting a complex hybrid model now with all TK-6 families who wish to return may be highly disruptive to the established routines and rhythm of distance learning instruction. If GUSD had started its planning process for hybrid instruction earlier than it did, perhaps a full TK-6 implementation before the end of the 2020-21 school year could have been feasible (assuming health conditions allow). However, the GUSD has not adequately prepared its teachers and our students’ families for a full implementation of hybrid instruction for TK-6 after March 12. Yes, the GUSD has made considerable progress in making school sites safer than they were pre-pandemic, but instituting hybrid instruction for thousands of students and hundreds teachers with so few weeks left in the school year seems more disruptive than it does helpful in addressing the real needs distance learning has been unable to address for our students.

There are a myriad of hybrid models being used in schools throughout the U.S. and the world right now. As more schools and districts transition to hybrid instruction near the end of the school year, we know that we are not alone in grappling with the challenges of finding instructional models that are sustainable for teachers, effective for students who participate in the hybrid models or for those who wish to stay in full distance learning, and supportive of our students’ parents who want them to be back in safe schools where their children can regain social connections.

Some school districts, including nearby Burbank Unified, have shown the foresight to know that instituting any major change for their students at this point in the school year will have limited benefit and the potential for even greater stress and uncertainty for all stakeholders. Other school districts, including Santa Monica, have explored options other than traditional hybrid models in order to provide time on campus for students for afternoon enrichment so that students and staff can again be on school campuses in a safe and supportive manner.

In order to implement whatever we decide upon in Glendale, GUSD must include GTA as equal partners.

However, an environment of true collaboration between the GUSD and GTA has proven elusive of late. This is due to the fact that GUSD has promised students and their families hybrid models of instruction it has not previously negotiated with GTA; GUSD wants its teachers to equitably instruct all students simultaneously through in-person and live-streaming instruction without any required training; and GUSD seeks to implement incomplete, ever-evolving, and unsustainable instructional plans that may only be relevant for less than three months of school.

“We all wish this was different,” Tiffany Koo, a New York City elementary school teacher, told the *New York Times* recently. “Let’s just be kind to each other. We’re all trying to do the best we can.” Yes, we do all wish things were different. One thing that can be different, though, is how GUSD decides to work with GTA as we seek to transition to in-person instruction in the coming months.

I am hopeful the GUSD will value its GTA members as collaborators and equal partners who have good ideas on how to make a scaled-down version of hybrid work. Doing so will go a long way towards creating an instructional program that benefits all rather than disrupting everyone’s lives for the last few months of this tumultuous school year.

In Celebration ~ Resources

February is National Black History Month. Here are some resources:

- [CTA Black History Month](#)
- [Facing History and Ourselves: Black History](#)
- [Black Lives Matter at School](#)
- [NEA Black History and Resources](#)



March is Women’s Herstory Month. Here are some resources.

- [Women’s History Month](#)
- [CTA Women’s History Month](#)
- [NEA Women’s History Resources](#)
- [National Women’s History Alliance](#)



Executive Director's Message

By: Nate Banditelli, GTA/BTA Executive Director



Budget Update

Due to the sudden impact the COVID-19, GUSD did not receive any additional education funding in 2020/2021. Even at the height of COVID-19, California's economy is performing better than expected and Governor Newsom's January Budget Proposal contains a 3.84% cost of living (COLA) increase for 2021/2022. It also contains a 1.5% COLA for special education. While these increases continue to leave California near the bottom of the list of per-pupil spending by state, the budget prevents cuts as the result of the economic impact of the pandemic. The proposal also includes funding to address learning loss, additional funding of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER). The proposal assumes that students will come back to school for in-person instruction next school year, with support for students who continue distance learning. GTA will negotiate, as we have done, to make sure that 2021/2022 is as safe as possible.

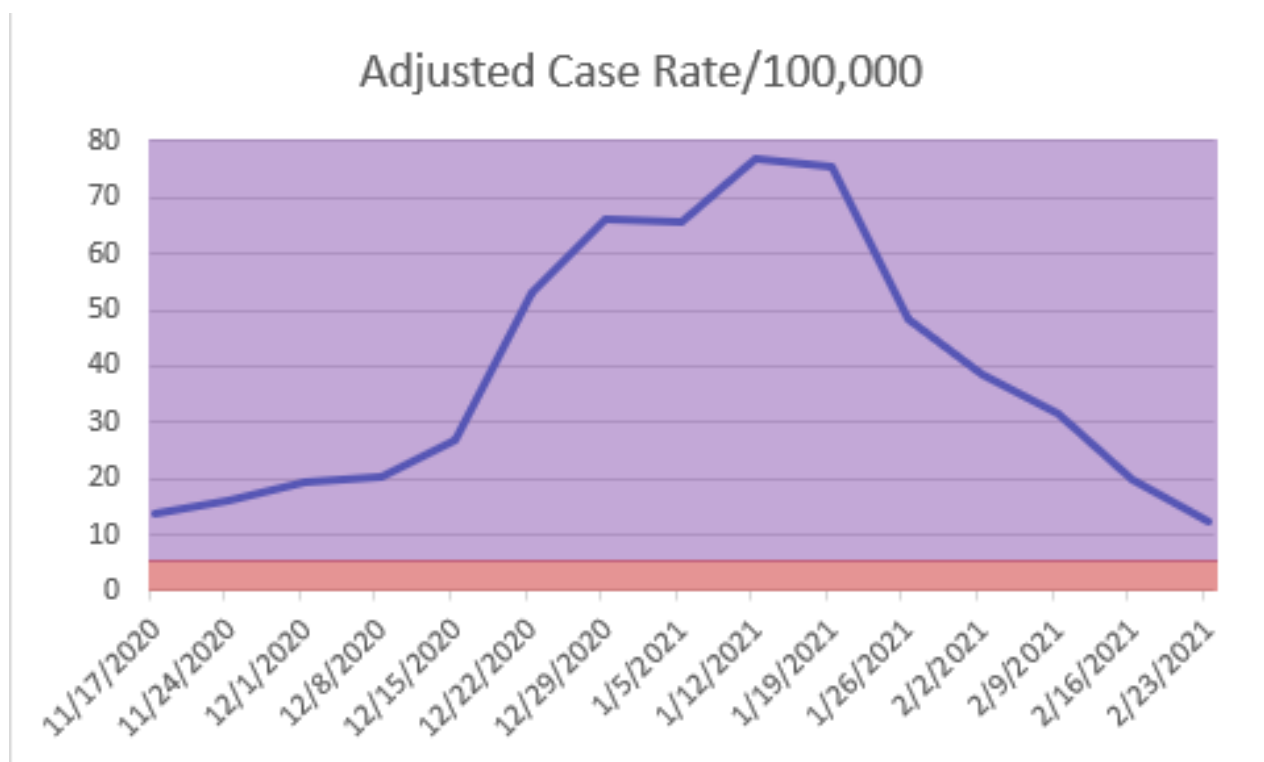
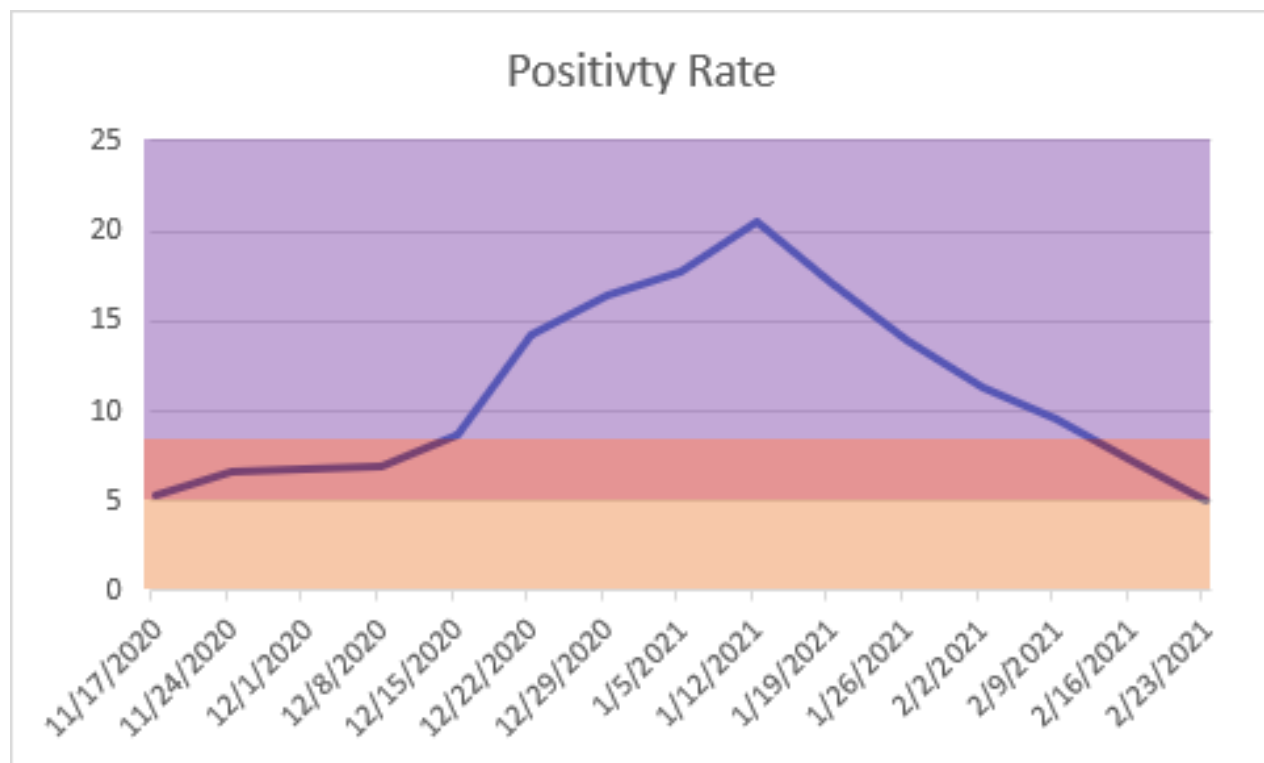
Los Angeles County Tier Update

The November Advocate included an explanation of California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, so refer to it if you want a refresher. The guidelines for reopening have changed and are now less restrictive, but knowing the infection rates is important in order to understand how close we are to in-person instruction that is truly safe. See the latest information in the California Safe Schools for All Hub:

<https://schools.covid19.ca.gov/>

Since the November, cases spiked to unthinkable heights, but have also dropped rapidly.

County risk level	Adjusted case rate* 7-day average of daily COVID-19 cases per 100K with 7-day lag, adjusted for number of tests performed	Positivity rate** 7-day average of all COVID-19 tests performed that are positive	
		Entire county	Healthy equity quartile
WIDESPREAD Many non-essential indoor business operations are closed	More than 7.0 Daily new cases (per 100k)	More than 8.0% Positive tests	
SUBSTANTIAL Some non-essential indoor business operations are closed	4.0 – 7.0 Daily new cases (per 100k)	5.0 – 8.0% Positive tests	5.3 – 8.0% Positive tests
MODERATE Some indoor business operations are open with modifications	1.0 – 3.9 Daily new cases (per 100k)	2.0 – 4.9% Positive tests	2.2 – 5.2% Positive tests
MINIMAL Most indoor business operations are open with modifications	Less than 1.0 Daily new cases (per 100k)	Less than 2.0% Positive tests	Less than 2.2% Positive tests





“If you’re not exhausted after teaching your kids each day, you gotta do more. If you think you’re not doing enough, do double.”

**An open letter by
A GTA Member**


That’s just it. I am not exhausted each day after teaching my students. I am exhausted each day after worrying about each of them the night before and all day when I do not hear from them, and the cycle of exhaustion repeats itself. Every. New. Day.

This pandemic experience is a massive experiment in collective vulnerability. It’s quite simple; we can be our best selves or our worst selves. We can be afraid or we can be brave. In this context of best and worst, there is a slither of space, and when we are uncertain our default within that space is self-protection and finger pointing. We don’t have to be scary when we are scared, and in that slither, must leave some space for grace.

I am a teacher. I maintain my passion for my students and I hold on to my commitment to making a difference each day. I am an educator. I keep my promises to my colleagues to be held to the same standards they are. I am a professional. I refuse to compromise my personal goals to a level of ordinariness. Perhaps that is why I am exhausted. But in the eyes of some, that is not enough.

I worry about my students, about their emotional and physical well-being above all else, and wholeheartedly believe their academic well-being will catch up should there be any regression during this time away from the classroom. I worry about my students and whether or not they have enough healthy food or milk in their refrigerator. I worry about my students and whether or not their parents have passed out due to the drunken stupor they put themselves in. I worry about my students and whether or not their anxiety was so overwhelming that they cried themselves to sleep for another night. I worry about my students and whether or not they can get through the work they’ve been assigned without any help. I worry about my students and whether or not their shyness is now cemented forever as a result of being home for so long. I worry about my students and whether or not they are able to navigate through this scrambled “normal” they have been served. I worry about my students and whether or not their parents who are nurses and doctors came home unaffected. I worry about my students and whether or not they know just how capable they are in the absence of their teacher. I worry about my students and whether or not they know just how much I worry about them.

I am exhausted, but it is not from teaching my students. I am not exhausted from teaching the emotionally taxing *The Diary of Anne Frank* and assigning a paper asking my students to “pack” a bag as Anne had to back in 1942. I am not exhausted from teaching grade level vocabulary to my students who struggle with their undeveloped reading and writing. I am not exhausted from modifying work to fit the needs of my students who can barely tread water in a General Education classroom. I am not exhausted from reassuring my students each day and reminding them just how worthy and wonderful they really are. I am not exhausted from helping my students with their English or History or Math or Science.



I am not exhausted from emailing their teachers every day to thank them for being so supportive to my students who often are disregarded as unable. I am not exhausted from listening to them pour out their insecurities into a puddle of despair while I try to mop it up with reassurance and love and humor. I am not exhausted from answering the same question 20 different times. I am not exhausted from teaching my students each day. Perhaps I really need to do more, or even double.

In times of chaos, folks tend to allow their personal paranoia and weakness to come to the surface. It is their chance to bring out the mediocrity in others without fear of judgement at their own shortcomings. Their selfishness and lack of self-awareness is evident. Their desire to bring anyone along down the drain of discord is maddening. This time is unsettled, unfamiliar, and unforgiving. And I am exhausted.

So to the gentleman who believes I am not doing enough, I ask him one question. How exhausted are you?



Stay in the loop with GTA!

Please visit the [GTA Website](#).

Subscribe to the [GTA YouTube Channel](#).

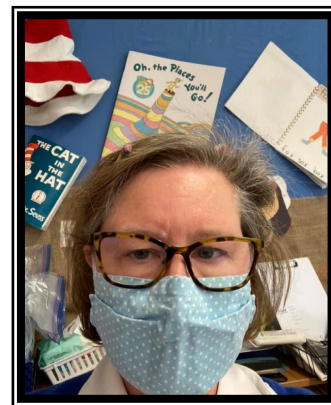
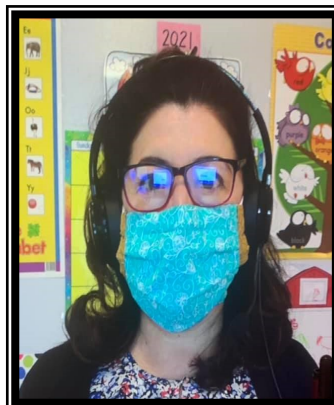
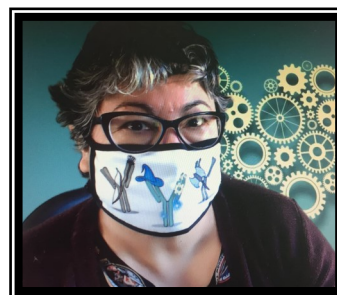
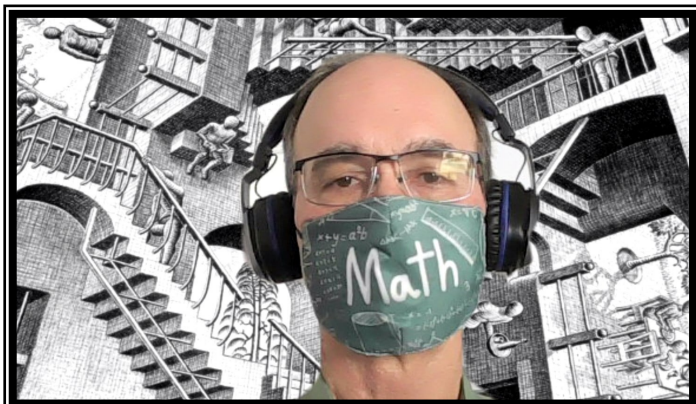
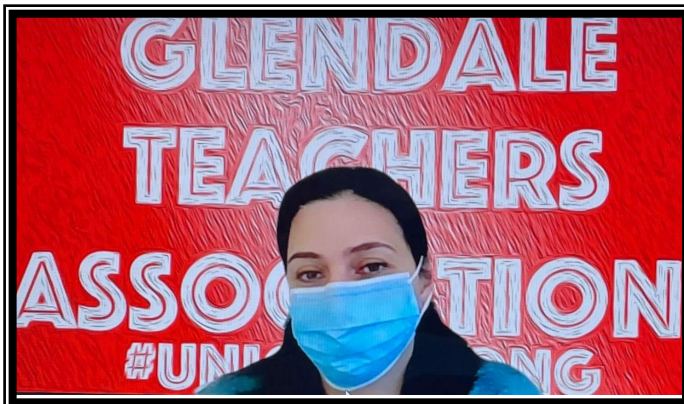
[Sign up](#) or ask stakeholders to sign up for the GTA community newsletter [Ask A Glendale Teacher](#)

The GTA Members Only Facebook Page has grown from 107 members in February 2020 to 662 members! Please send a request to join the Glendale Teachers Association Members Only page (link below). Don't forget to answer all screening questions with your request.

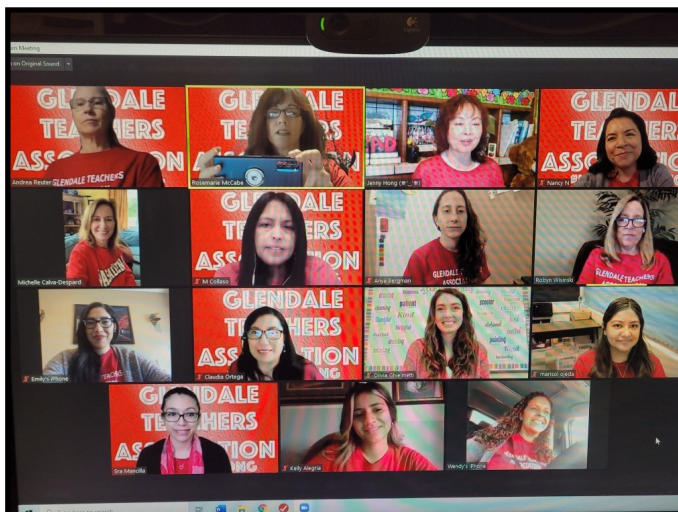
GTA is on the following social media pages. Please join us online:

- ◆ [Facebook.com/Glendaleteachers](#)
- ◆ [Facebook.com/groups/GlendaleTAmembers](#)
- ◆ [Twitter.com/glendalegta](#)
- ◆ [Instagram.com/glendaleteachers](#)

GTA United!



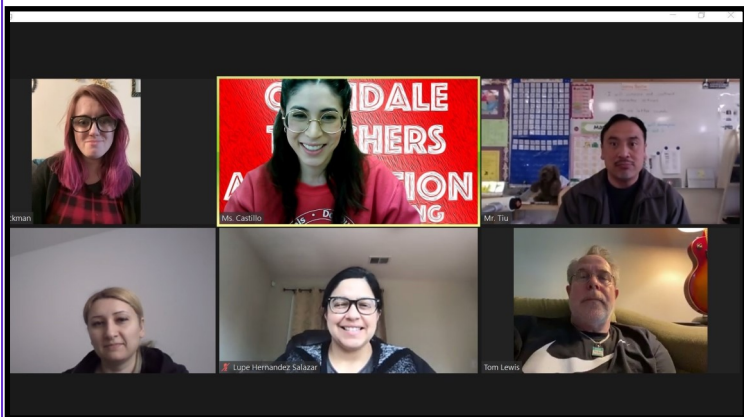
GTA United!



GTA United!



GTA United!





Dues Deductions for 2020-2021

Thank you for your membership!

Together we are stronger.



Category 1 For those whose teaching assignment is more than 60% of a normal assignment, except for those employed as pre-school, head start, child care, and adult education whose salary less than the minimum teacher salary in the district.

\$737.00	CTA	California Teachers Association
\$200.00	NEA	National Education Association
\$242.00	GTA	Glendale Teachers Association
\$1,179.00	TOTAL	\$117.90 Per Month Deduction

Category 2A For those whose teaching assignment is greater than 1/3 but not more than 50% of a normal assignment.

\$378.50	CTA	California Teachers Association
\$111.50	NEA	National Education Association
\$146.00	GTA	Glendale Teachers Association
\$636.00	TOTAL	\$63.60 Per Month Deduction

Category 2B For those whose teaching assignment is greater than 50% but not more than 60% of a normal assignment, or those employed as pre-school, head start, child care, and adult education whose salary is less than the minimum teacher salary in the district.

\$378.50	CTA	California Teachers Association
\$200.00	NEA	National Education Association
\$146.00	GTA	Glendale Teachers Association
\$724.50	TOTAL	\$72.45 Per Month Deduction

Category 3A For those whose teaching assignment is 25% or less than a normal assignment, including those on unpaid leave.

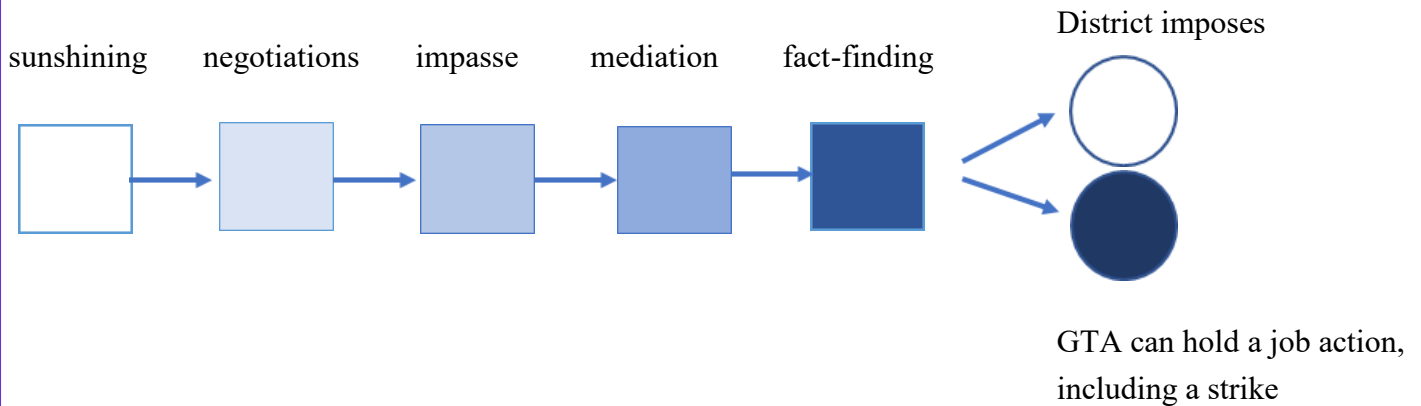
\$199.25	CTA	California Teachers Association
\$67.50	NEA	National Education Association
\$146.00	GTA	Glendale Teachers Association
\$412.75	TOTAL	\$41.28 Per Month Deduction

Category 3B For those whose teaching assignment is greater than 25% but not more than 1/3 of a normal assignment.

\$199.25	CTA	California Teachers Association
\$111.50	NEA	National Education Association
\$146.00	GTA	Glendale Teachers Association
\$456.75	TOTAL	\$45.68 Per Month Deduction

The Bargaining Process

Thank you to the members of the GTA Bargaining Team, Sarah Morrison (Chairperson), Lisa Avery (Secretary), Lenore Piskel, Angelina Thomas, Chris Davis, and Nate Banditelli (CTA Executive Director) who have taken on the monumental task of negotiations during the past year, including but not limited to closing contract negotiations for 2019-2020 and negotiating all impacts and effects of COVID -19.



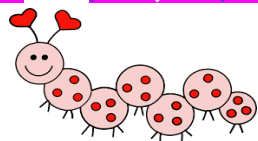
There is no predetermined timeline for most contract negotiation stages, which means that the process can take many months. Here are some common terms used in the process of negotiations.

- **Sunshining:** GTA and GUSD’s initial proposals (contract articles identified in a letter to each other) are presented at the public GUSD school board meeting and are thereafter public records.
- **Negotiations:** Both sides sit down to discuss proposals, with a legal obligation to bargain in good faith, aiming to reach an agreement.
 - * **Memorandum of Understanding-MOU:** An agreement negotiated on topics outside of sunshined negotiation articles that may or may not become part of the collective bargaining agreement.
 - * **Side Letter of Agreement:** An agreement that is not part of the primary contract and which some or all parties to the contract use to reach agreement on issues the primary contract does not cover or that need clarification, or to amend the primary contract.
- **Impasse:** Either side or both sides can declare that talks are deadlocked, which leads to mediation. Both sides have legal obligation to participate with a good faith intent to reach a mediated agreement
- **Mediation:** A state-appointed mediator tries to move the two sides to a bargaining agreement. If this is not successful, the mediator will send the parties to fact-finding.
- **Fact-finding:** A fact-finding panel conducts a trial-like hearing during which both sides present issues, evidence, and comparable data from surrounding districts to support their bargaining positions. The panel then releases a “finding of fact” that is essentially a recommended agreement, but the parties are under no obligation to use it as the basis for an agreement.

If there is still no agreement after the fact-finding stage:

- The District can impose its last, best, and final proposals (these proposals come from the point that impasse is declared).
- GTA can go on strike.

A strike is a last resort action and must be voted upon by membership. If GTA were to strike, we must be prepared to stay out until we have reached our desired agreement.



Feb—March 2021



March 2021

- . 3/02 GTA Board of Directors
- . 3/03 Dunsmore Site Visit
- . 3/09 GUSD Board of Education
- . 3/10 Toll Site Visit
- . 3/15 - 3/19 Spring Break: NO SCHOOL
- . 3/24 Hoover Site Visit
- . 3/30 GTA Rep Council
- . 3/31 Fremont Site Visit

April 2021

- 4/06 GUSD Board of Education
- 4/07 Daily Site Bisit
- 4/13 GTA Board of Directors
- 4/14 Columbus Site Visit
- 4/20 GUSD BOE Recognitions
- 4/21 Wilson Site Visit
- 04/27 GTA Rep Council
- 4/28 Mountain Ave Site Visit



Name or Address Change?

Please notify the GTA Office of any name, address or phone number changes. You may send in the form below to the GTA Office via school mail. GTA will update our records and notify CTA of any changes.

Name: _____

New Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email (Non-GUSD): _____

School Site: _____

You can email the above information to Aline @ glendaletaoffice@gmail.com.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO SUPPORT GUSD FAMILIES AND STUDENTS DURING REMOTE LEARNING!



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