

# GTA ADVOCATE

The Official Newsletter of the Glendale Teachers Association



## President's Message

By: Taline Arsenian, President



November 2020

Vol. 37

Thank you GTA members for all you do to connect with students academically, socially, and emotionally in your virtual classrooms and through your computer screens. You each have masterfully reinvented yourselves, with hours and hours of training, research, and prep work, in order to continue to engage with students during one of the most challenging times in public education. Right now, because we are still in the purple tier (highest risk for transmission), we know that remote learning is the best and safest way to ensure that students have opportunities to stay connected with school, while protecting the health of our community.

Currently, COVID-19 transmissions rates are spiking. What we are seeing locally, nationally and world-wide are re-openings, only to close again, as re-openings have led to increased of positive cases. From March and beyond, GTA's foremost priority has been the safety of our members, students, and school community. Safety is not a new concept to us. Labor unions have pushed for safer and healthier working conditions for centuries. Establishing the 8-hour work day, creating weekends, eliminating child labor, and allowing workers to voice safety concerns without retaliation, *unions made this happen*. Labor unions organized to help pass the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The law established a federal agency (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration—OSHA) to enforce worker safety standards. *Unions made this happen*. Between 1970 and 2014, workplace fatalities dropped by two-thirds, from 38 a day to 13. One particularly memorable example in which OSHA minimized workplace dangers was at the World Trade Center recovery site after 9/11. Together with labor unions, construction contractors, and New York City employees, OSHA collected 6,500 air and bulk samples for testing, distributed 131,000 respirators, 11,000 hard hats, 13,000 pairs of safety glasses and more than 21,000 pairs of protective gloves to workers on the site. *Unions made this happen*. The lives of more than half a million workers have been saved due to work place protections since the creation of OSHA.

GTA will not compromise on the highest safety standards for our Glendale school community. GUSD has received at least 21 million new dollars to spent on COVID related expenses. The best use of those funds is safety. In each COVID proposal that we have passed, our top priority has been safety language. Our top 5 priority safety measures are the following:

- 1) **Surveillance Testing:** We need baseline and ongoing COVID testing for all employees and students at the District's expense. Identifying asymptomatic carriers is crucial to preventing the spread.
- 2) **Consistent Daily Screening Procedures:** We need a HIPAA compliant mobile screening app that will allow all students, employees, and visitors to submit answers to screening questions remotely, prior to arriving on campus for temperature checks.
- 3) **Purchase of PPE:** We need evidence that the District has purchased an adequate supply of face masks, face shields, clear face masks, plexiglass barriers, disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, etc. to satisfy site needs.
- 4) **Fresh Air:** We need evidence that utilized classrooms have working windows and sufficient airflow, full functioning HVAC systems with MERV 13 filters and posted replacement schedules, and a plan to conduct instruction in outdoor spaces for at least 50% of the time.
- 5) **HIPP Update:** We need the District's Injury and Illness Prevention Program to be updated to match current CDPH and LACDPH guidelines.

GTA leadership will continue to fight for the safety of our members and school community and ensure that any mandatory physical return will occur only after our top safety protocols have been implemented. Please continue to practice safety measures while teaching remotely. As the holiday's approach, please reduce the size of your gatherings and practice PPE. We must collectively do our share to help reduce the spread and get us out of the highest risk factor tier.

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**Glendale Teachers Association**

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Glendale, CA 91208  
818-240-3924

## Vice President's Message

By: Chris Davis, Vice President



### An Introduction ...

Dear fellow educators,

I became a teacher because my history teacher, the late Mr. Thomas Marshall from John Burroughs High School in Burbank, told me that I should **not** become a teacher. In 1983, Mr. Marshall had been teaching for a while already — he began his 51-year career at Burroughs in 1948 — and, as a result of the long years in the classroom, he was something of a curmudgeon. But, he was still passionate about American history and conveying that passion to teens. And even though he was probably still miffed about the many budget cuts Proposition 13 had wrought upon public education and he was still reeling from the Burbank teachers strike of 1981, he clearly loved what he taught and drew deep satisfaction from teaching my classmates and me. I learned then what it means to be passionate about what you do, and even though Mr. Marshall wasn't so sanguine about the prospects for public education, he loved what he did, and it showed.

We all walk in the footsteps of educators who came before us, and I am motivated to teach and to advocate for the teaching profession because of teachers like Tom Marshall and so many others who have come before us.

I have been a teacher in GUSD for nearly 30 years and have been active in the Glendale Teachers Association as a site rep and area rep. I am proud to serve you as vice president this year. I take an active role in GTA because I believe it is vital to the future of our profession that we make our members' voices heard. We work with the 26,000 students in GUSD every day, and we know firsthand the challenges our students face. Our postsecondary learning, our continued learning since we earned our degrees, our daily teaching practice, our life experiences beyond the classroom — these form the expertise which we bring to our work and which make us the best arbiters for knowing how to serve our students' diverse needs. I worry that our voices are too often minimized by outside forces which understand little about what we do.

As GTA's vice president, I will continue to advocate for us as educators. I do that not just for our association's members, but also for future generations of public educators. If a young person I teach today asks me about becoming an educator, unlike Mr. Marshall back in 1983, I want to be able to tell them that they should definitely pursue a career in public education. I'd like to be able to tell them that not only do our communities need smart, motivated, compassionate people to teach, these same communities will also support them in this endeavor by honoring them for their dedication to helping future generations realize their dreams.

We must all be advocates for our profession. Please make your GTA voice a strong one so that future generations will continue to carry on the important work we all are doing now in these most unusual and challenging of circumstances. I look forward to meeting more of you during our virtual site visits this year, and in person once we are all able to safely return to our school sites. Thank you for the important work you all do to serve our students every day.

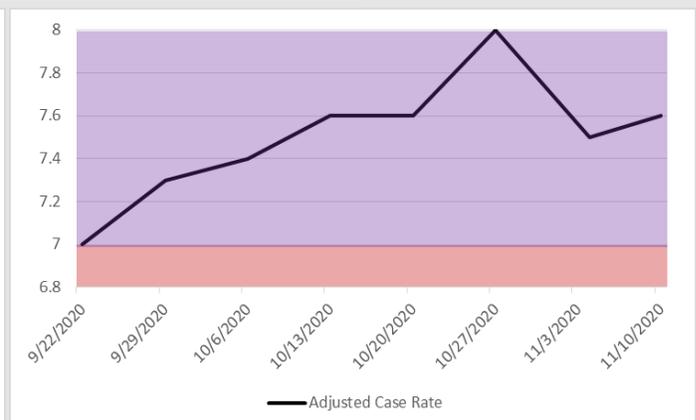
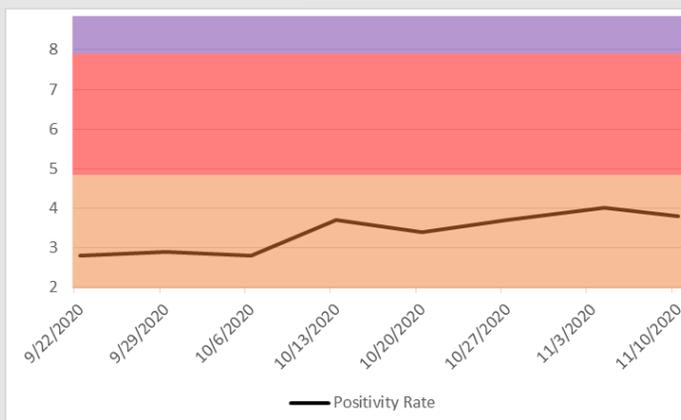
# Executive Director's Message

By: Nate Banditelli, GTA/BTA Executive Director



You've probably heard or read about the "Purple Tier (Widespread)" and the "Red Tier (Substantial)" by now. Under California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, counties are placed into one of four tiers. The tiers are based on the number of cases per 100,000 people and the positive test rate over a seven-day period. While Los Angeles County is in the Purple Tier (Widespread), the District will not be allowed to open schools back up in a full hybrid model. Once both Adjusted Case Rate and Positivity Rate in Los Angeles County are in the Red Tier for two consecutive weeks, TK-12 students can return to campus. While in the purple tier, some groups of students are allowed to return including the following : SPED students for in-person assessments, small cohorts of SPED, ELL, and homeless/foster youth, and TK-2 if a waiver is approved by LADPH. The California Department of Public Health releases a weekly update at around 11:30 every Tuesday morning at <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>. The CDPH's tier chart is below and two graphs show how the Adjusted Case Rates and Positivity Rates have changed since the end of September.

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
<b>WIDESPREAD</b> Many non-essential indoor business operations are closed	<b>More than 7.0</b> Daily new cases (per 100k)	<b>More than 8.0%</b> Positive tests	
<b>SUBSTANTIAL</b> Some non-essential indoor business operations are closed	<b>4.0 – 7.0</b> Daily new cases (per 100k)	<b>5.0 – 8.0%</b> Positive tests	<b>5.3 – 8.0%</b> Positive tests
<b>MODERATE</b> Some indoor business operations are open with modifications	<b>1.0 – 3.9</b> Daily new cases (per 100k)	<b>2.0 – 4.9%</b> Positive tests	<b>2.2 – 5.2%</b> Positive tests
<b>MINIMAL</b> Most indoor business operations are open with modifications	<b>Less than 1.0</b> Daily new cases (per 100k)	<b>Less than 2.0%</b> Positive tests	<b>Less than 2.2%</b> Positive tests



# GTA FUNDRAISER

for



On Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, a ceasefire agreement was signed that involved the transfer of ancestral Armenian lands to Azerbaijan. Those lands contained many Armenian historical and cultural monuments, some dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, including monasteries and churches. More than 4000 soldiers and civilians have been murdered. More than 100,000 Armenians have been displaced and cannot return to their homes in Artsakh. GTA is raising funds to contribute to humanitarian efforts for all who have been wounded and are homeless. GTA stands in solidarity with our Armenian community. Please be considerate to your students who may have impacted family and friends.

**Thanks to everyone who has contributed so far,  
we have raised \$4,325!**

**Our goal is to raise at least \$10 per member for a total of \$12,590.**

*Let's combine our collective strength to help the victims of this tragedy.*

***Please donate:***

- ***Venmo to Taline Arsenian @Taline-Arsenian***
- ***Send a check made out to GTA: 3233 N. Verdugo Rd. Glendale, 91208 -  
in the comments write Armeniafund***

GTA will write a check for all of the funds contributed through **November 16** and present that check to the ArmeniaFund as a contribution from the educators of the Glendale Teachers Association. *This gift is not tax deductible.*



# **An Open Letter to Educators Wanting to Return to In-Person Instruction**

## **By Chris Davis**

In spirit, I am one of you. I miss the energy of the classroom. The funny things kids say and do. The ah-ha's that I can see in their faces every so often. The unpredictability of the school day. The copy machine and the feel of paper in my hand, or a white board marker, or anything for that matter that is tangible and not digital. I feel frustrated in knowing that what I am teaching via my computer screen, which, while taking so much more of my time than in-person instruction, is not as effective as being in the classroom. I am saddened that a group of teens at Rosemont — teens I would have coached — is missing out on the cross country season this year.

However, these realities do not mean that we should rush a return to our classrooms because we are all tired of what this pandemic has wrought. If we lived in Melbourne, Australia or in New Zealand, we could justly feel we had successfully held Covid at bay. However, we live in a country that can't agree on whether we should wear masks, or agree whether Covid is an existential threat or nothing worse than the seasonal flu.

What that means for our community and our classrooms is that we must look at the present reality. That present reality has Glendale's Covid case rate increasing faster than the case rate in Los Angeles County. That present reality includes GUSD leadership which asserts that it has met or exceeded the health guidance for reopening schools when facts point to the contrary.

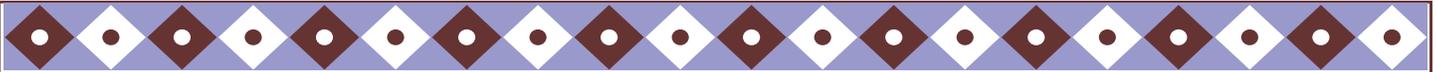
Yes, some studies have shown that children younger than 10 transmit the virus at much lower rates than do children over 10, but these children can still transmit the virus. And, while it is true that most who die from the virus are over 60, which precludes most of our students' parents, few families live in isolated bubbles. In an immigrant community such as ours, many families are multigenerational. Many of us know students who have already lost grandparents due to Covid, so we cannot dismiss the risk that we might increase the likelihood of a child taking home the virus to a family member if we return to campuses prematurely.

Some may say that the past three months of learning pod operations in our school district indicate that our schools can safely reopen for more students. Approximately 5 percent of our 26,000 students are in these pods, and while it is promising that the GUSD believes no one has contracted Covid through the pods, this past performance does not indicate future success when the district brings back more students — especially older students who transmit the virus at higher rates — onto campuses.

I understand the impatience we all feel. Many in our community are impatient with those of us who say our schools are not ready to reopen, and some of you may be impatient with the GTA leadership which has been making this “we are not ready” argument at the negotiations table and at Board of Education meetings.

Here's the reality, though: GTA leadership is listening to and representing the majority of our members who have told us through survey results that our district is not ready to reopen right now. At some point, more of us will say we are ready to return. That will be due to a number of factors — a declining rate of transmission in our community, the movement of L.A. County into the red tier, district leadership undertaking more safety preparations than they've already done, and greater acceptance from community members that masks are necessary.

*Continued next page...*



We will return to the classroom someday. And when we do return, if we return to campuses with a hybrid model (which is what many schools in the red tier have done), our work and our students' experiences will be vastly different from what education looked like up through March 13, 2020. Students will be sitting in rows, with masks on, six feet apart. Group work? Paired discussions? Projects and labs? Passing out of papers or touching of materials among students and teachers? All of that will be different or impossible.

And then add on to those challenges what live-streaming might look like for those students whose families elect to keep them home (and for those students who are in the classroom). You would be expected to engage both the students who are in your classroom and at home via a camera and mic that hopefully capture all that you say and do. It'll be an adventure for sure, and probably even harder to do than the distance learning we are doing now, which most of us have said takes more time than the teaching we did in person pre-Covid. I'm exhausted just thinking about what returning to the classroom would look like in this live-streaming paradigm.

Even with the many questions and challenges that surround the realities of returning to in-person instruction, when more of our teachers say they are ready to return to this new reality, we can talk about how to make that happen. First, though, I want to honor the majority of our GTA members who say that our district still needs to address significant safety issues that other districts have addressed, but which our district thus far has not.

Putting safety first not only protects the health of our teachers but the health of our students, families, and the entire community.



## Important Links

GTA Website: [glendaleteachers.org](http://glendaleteachers.org)

GTA You-Tube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn33IC3GkOIVWpz5-QGslrg>.

To sign up for "Ask A Glendale Teacher": <https://tinyletter.com/AskAGlendaleTeacher>

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

# Q & A REGARDING QUARANTINING FOR K-12 SCHOOLS IN LA COUNTY\*

## 1) WHAT GUIDANCE IS USED TO DETERMINE IF A PERSON MUST QUARANTINE?

The [DECISION PATHWAY](#) (last updated on Oct 20, 2020 by the LA County Dept. of Public Health) is the document that each school's COVID-19 Compliance Officer must follow to determine who to allow onto campus.

## 2) WHO MUST QUARANTINE? AND FOR HOW LONG?

Who?	How Long?	Exceptions?
<b>INFECTED PEOPLE</b>	10 DAYS and 48 HOURS	No exceptions.
<b>EXPOSED PEOPLE</b>	14 DAYS	No exceptions.
<b>SYMPTOMATIC PEOPLE</b>	14 DAYS...	Quarantine could end if a medi-
<b>POTENTIALLY EXPOSED</b>	14 DAYS...	Quarantine could end if the

## 3) CAN A NEGATIVE COVID TEST REDUCE THE LENGTH OF A QUARANTINE?

No.

## 4) WHO IS CONSIDERED A CLOSE CONTACT?

Everyone who is a member of the same classroom or cohort; and everyone who was within 6 feet of a potentially infected person for >15 minutes during a 24-hour period (does not need to be consecutive minutes); and everyone who had direct contact with bodily fluids/secretions from a potentially infected person.

## 5) WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

Per CDC guidelines (8/2020), symptoms consistent with possible COVID-19 infection include:

- CHILDREN: fever  $\geq 100.4^{\circ}$  F; sore throat; new uncontrolled cough causing difficulty breathing (for children with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in baseline cough); diarrhea/vomiting/abdominal pain; new onset of severe headache, especially with fever.
- ADULTS: fever  $\geq 100.4^{\circ}$  F or feeling feverish (chills, sweating); new cough; shortness of breath; sore throat; muscle/body aches; diarrhea/vomiting

\*<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/education/ScreeningEducationSettings.pdf>



# 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
<b>\$1,179.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$117.90 Per Month Deduction</b>

**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
<b>\$636.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$63.60 Per Month Deduction</b>

**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
<b>\$724.50</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$72.45 Per Month Deduction</b>

**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
<b>\$412.75</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$41.28 Per Month Deduction</b>

**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
<b>\$456.75</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$45.68 Per Month Deduction</b>



## Yes on 15 Campaign Statement on Election Outcome

*Against all odds, Prop. 15 made history – taking on the toughest fight in California to address our most pressing challenges.*

The battle for Prop. 15 began long before the official committee was formed or the ballot number was assigned. Five years ago, a core group of racial and social justice organizations and labor unions convened to take on the impossible: closing corporate tax loopholes that cost our local communities and schools \$12 billion every year.

The historic coalition that these groups organized behind Prop. 15, and the share of the vote it received, is a reflection of the belief that our state’s future depends on investments in the things all Californians rely on for success.

Against all odds, Prop. 15 made history. Despite being outspent by \$20 million, a pandemic and economic crisis, and taking on the third rail of California politics, Prop. 15 was supported by a wide swath of Californians – a level of support that many never imagined could be achieved.

**“Educators are deeply grateful to California voters who joined our incredible community and labor coalition that came together to put students and families ahead of additional profits for a handful of big corporations. We came very close, but we demonstrated the power of democracy in action. We demonstrated the difference we can make for ourselves and the next generation. That alone is a victory,”** said CTA President E. Toby Boyd. **“The fight for much-needed funding for equitable resources continues as our schools and communities face billions in devastating budget cuts.”**

Unfortunately, truth became a casualty in this campaign. Prop. 15’s opponents recognized that defending tax loopholes for the wealthiest corporations and investors wasn’t popular, and instead relied on a campaign of scare tactics and outright falsehoods focused on homeowners and small businesses.

The fight for Prop. 15 was many years in the making. It represented a big step forward for a more equitable and prosperous state, and it provides a framework and base of power for future work and reform to truly take on the biggest challenges of our times on behalf of all Californians.

**“Nobody said it would be easy, but the Schools & Communities First coalition took on this fight for the right reasons – to address our state’s most pressing challenges and inequities by investing in Californians. Against all odds, Prop. 15 made history by taking on the status quo to ensure California becomes a more prosperous and equitable state for everyone,”** said Alex Stack, Yes on 15 spokesperson. **“California’s challenges are not going anywhere, and this election result has shown that there is strong public demand for closing the corporate tax loopholes which cost our local communities billions every year.”**

For more information, please contact: Alex Stack, Communications Director, Schools & Communities First  
Cell: (603) 320-0398 | [AlexS@SchoolsAndCommunitiesFirst.org](mailto:AlexS@SchoolsAndCommunitiesFirst.org) | @Alex\_Stack

## REST IN POWER NYRIE

GTA leadership is sad to hear about the passing of Clark teacher Nyrie Gharibian on October 29th. Nyrie worked at Clark from 2008-2016 teaching Art, Design and English. Nyrie was a respected colleague and union member. They were loved and revered by her students. The following is from Equality Armenia's Facebook page: Nyrie was an old spirit. In the eye of their mind, they had seen realms beyond our own. Nyrie's spirit had graduated from many lifetimes, allowing them to connect to others, even for a frenetic moment. Nyrie was always searching, even as a nihilist, and often found equilibrium in our surroundings, found healing by healing others. They found friends along the way, everywhere they went. They were eager to collaborate, contribute to projects, make signs, march and protest. As a self described "grumpy" person, they knew how to squeeze joy out of every moment. They looked sharp and elevated every conversation they engaged in. They were an ally who constantly took actionable steps to contribute to just causes. In 2017, Nyrie became involved with Equality Armenia; they wanted to use their talents in advancing equality for queer Armenians. Their ethnic background and pointed perspective were a welcome input. To commemorate great Armenian poet and activist Yeghishe Charents, Nyrie created a few posters spreading the LGBTQ author's words of reconciliation and unity. We've included a few of their unfinished variations in this post. Nyrie was there marching with the LGBTQ community during Pride. They made posters and brought a few friends along to the rallies. Nyrie was there when Father Vazken Movsessian organized the first Glendale Resist march. They were there supporting their Black siblings in BLM marches. They were a fierce advocate with a keen understanding of justice and a loyal friend. Beneath their nihilist resilience, Nyrie's instinct to seek "frontiers beyond" often meant finding oneself alone on their journey. Nyrie spent a lot of time in nature. Forests were with them, oceans were with them, all living beings were with them, the spirits were with them. They, were ready. So-long, bundle of energy! Until whatever is next... May they rest in peace.





# Nov-DEC 2020



## November 2020

- 11/23 - 11/27 NO SCHOOL

## December 2020

- 12/01 GTA Rep Council
- 12/02 Glenoaks Virtual Site Visit
- 12/04 Franklin Virtual Site Visit
- 12/08 GTA Board of Directors
- 12/09 RD White Virtual Site Visit
- 12/11 Glendale HS Virtual Site Visit
- 12/15 GUSD Board of Education
- 12/16 College View/Verdugo Academy Virtual Site Visit
- 12/21 - 01/06 WINTER BREAK



### 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](mailto:glendaletaoffice@gmail.com).



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



### GTA ADVOCATE STAFF:



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