

GTA ADVOCATE

The Official Newsletter of the Glendale Teachers Association



President's Message, Taline Arsenian

As we wrap up another remarkable school year, I want to express how incredibly proud I am of what you've accomplished together. Through every challenge, you—our dedicated members—have continued to advocate for your students, your profession, your working conditions, your wages and benefits, and your school community. Your work uplifts the educational journey of every student and helps turn dreams into reality.

I want to recognize the incredible contributions of GTA's elected representatives: the **GTA Board of Directors** and the **Site Representatives**. These folks are the backbone of your union and the heart of the democratic process that grounds us.

Per the Bylaws, the **GTA Representative Council**—composed of elected Site Representatives—is the official policy-making body. This group doesn't just show up; they lead. They **establish Association policies and objectives, adopt the annual budget, and determine the annual dues**, including the voluntary political action contribution that supports GTA's efforts through the Glendale Teachers Public Educational Improvement Fund (2026 elections are right around the corner) to ensure union/public school friendly GUSD school board members are elected..

The Representative Council also has the authority to **amend our bylaws, approve or discontinue committees, and act on behalf of the entire membership** on essential governance matters. These responsibilities shape the direction, strength, and impact of your union, as well as ensure the current issues facing membership are addressed.

Site Reps go even further. They **meet regularly with the site administrator** to advocate for site member and student needs, **build consensus on school plans, and attend nine Rep Council meetings a year**. They are your voice, your connection to the broader union structure, and your advocates when contractual issues arise. At Representative Council meetings, they **make motions, deliberate, and take action** that affects us all. Simply put: **they are the union stewards on campus and the foundation** of the democratic process that drives us. The union could not function without them.

This year, we celebrate the retirement of over **43 members**, including **11 Site Representatives**, who have served their colleagues with distinction for many years. While we honor their legacy, we must also look ahead. Their departure leaves open a vital opportunity for others to step up and serve educators, students, and the union.

We need new Site Reps to carry the work forward. If you believe in the power of unionism (my favorite -ism) and want to ensure educators always have a seat at the table—**this is your moment**. [Click here to submit your name using the Site Rep Interest Form](#) for the 2025-26 school year.

Thank you for your commitment, your energy, and your advocacy. You are the reason GTA remains strong and I look forward to all of the achievements to come next school year! You are the Glendale Teachers Association: united in purpose, strong in action.

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**Glendale
Teachers
Association**

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Health Benefits Update for 2025-2026 By Emily Rogers

You have probably heard by now that health benefits in GUSD are changing for next school year. While the words “changes to benefits” might sound alarming, the majority of the changes are *improvements over our current plan*. Here are some highlights:

- Full-time educators in GUSD will still pay *nothing out of their paychecks for healthcare premiums* for the 2025-26 school year
- Blue Shield PPO and HMO networks are not changing
- Kaiser Permanente will be available as an HMO choice
- Copays, deductibles, and out of pocket maximums are going down for in-network visits

How were we able to achieve these positive changes? GTA and the District agreed last year to go through benefits training with the Volition Group beginning in the fall. Our Health Benefits Committee attended hours of training about benefits and presentations from a variety of vendors. We finally selected SISC, Self-Insured Schools of California, a group of school districts that come together to buy health insurance as a collective pool in order to lower costs by reducing risk exposure. The amount of savings from switching to SISC was enough to account for over half of the salary increase that we negotiated in April!

There will be some changes to coverage of certain prescriptions, but 92% of prescriptions will not change with the switch from Medimpact to Navitus. Doctors will be able to submit an appeal for some of the brand name drugs that are no longer covered. Costs are going down on many generic drugs with Navitus, and will be available to be picked up at or delivered by Costco and many other pharmacies.

Open Enrollment will begin on **Monday, July 21**, and run through **Wednesday, August 20**. This is a change from past years. To help educators understand the changes and to begin to make decisions on which plan to choose, the District will be hosting a few sessions with SISC before Open Enrollment begins; the first one will be on June 12 at 1:00. GUSD will also provide a concierge service by phone during Open Enrollment for those who have specific questions about the plans.

Thank you to the GTA Health Benefits Committee:

Chris Davis	Crescenta Valley HS
Carmina Kho	Toll MS
Emily Rogers	Toll MS
Greta Sukazian	Glendale HS
Collin Sasse	ETIS
Tammy Tiber	Verdugo Academy



What a Year!! By Sarah Morrison



11 months ago, labor relationships between GTA and GUSD were at an all time low, especially at the bargaining table. In July 2024, GTA received a letter from GUSD declaring an “impasse in bargaining” – calling in a state-appointed outside mediator to *mediate our negotiations regarding wages and back-pay dating back to 2022. At a time with record COLAs and rising enrollment, the district’s unwillingness to invest in educators was confusing and demoralizing. GTA members were angry, parents were rising up, and initial discussions about a strike were happening on every campus.*

11 months later, things have changed! Not only did GTA and GUSD settle a 2022-24 agreement but, as the year progressed, we signed many other agreements that improved the lives of students and educators. Then, as a mark that labor relations have improved... on April 16, 2025, we returned to the bargaining table and closed out 2025-26 negotiations that very same day. This means that our 2025-26 wage increase will be effective on day 1 of the school year! Getting “ahead” in bargaining is something that GTA has not experienced in decades! All of our agreements can be found under the Contract/Negotiations tab on the GTA website.

Contract Changes	Side letters of Agreement	Memorandums of Understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 13 (Wages): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4% ongoing retro to July 1, 2023 2% one-time for the 2024-25 school year 4.5% ongoing effective July 1, 2025 (next year) Article 8 (Evaluation) -- updates to evaluation forms Article 14 (Health & Welfare): maintains premium-free healthcare and adds a Kaiser option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Benefits Committee Side Letter Early Notification Incentive Side Letter Service Provider Salary Realignment Side Letter (app J) Summer School Pay Increase Side Letter (app D and M) Prep time for all Service Providers Side Letter (art 7 Sec 5m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Retirement with benefits MOU Fire Leave MOU Employee Child Care MOU Paid Class Coverage MOU for all teachers Early Retirement with benefits MOU Transitional Kindergarten MOU renewal Extended Day Kindergarten MOU renewal District Staff PD Career Pipeline (Committee) MOU

These agreements happened because you and your colleagues stood together and made it clear to our elected Board of Educations that investing in educators is the best way to invest in students. You wore red, you participated in school site actions, you signed petitions, you wrote emails, you spoke at board meetings, you rallied—and throughout it all, you continued to show up for students and do the work that makes GUSD schools great places to learn and grow. You also stood together to protect our schools, maintain safe and inclusive classrooms and curriculum, and elect pro-public school school board members who - ultimately - agreed to our demands.

Collective participation is what led to our success. YOU made it happen. And if we want the positive momentum to continue in 2025-26, you and your colleagues must stay organized and engaged. GTA’s bargaining team is committed to keeping you and your colleagues updated and at the center of decision making about bargaining platforms and objectives. On Bargaining updates, we will continue to hyperlink GTA and GUSD’s proposals and counter-proposals. And, through site reps, we solicit feedback and ideas.

Here’s to a great summer and an exciting future for our GTA community.

GTA's Bargaining Team

Sarah Morrison (Chairperson), Emily Rogers (Secretary), Angelina Thomas, Maggie Malone, Alice Petrossian, Collin Sasse, Roxana Castro, and Alex Moore (CTA)

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024-2025 GTA RETIREES*

<i>First and Last Name</i>	<i>School Site</i>	<i>Years of Service</i>
<i>Kathleen Beerman</i>	<i>Crescenta Valley HS</i>	<i>29 years</i>
<i>Brent Beerman</i>	<i>Crescenta Valley HS</i>	<i>32 years</i>
<i>Mary Boerner</i>	<i>Balboa ES</i>	<i>17 years</i>
<i>Michele Botsford</i>	<i>Cerritos ES</i>	<i>26 years</i>
<i>Allison Brown</i>	<i>Rosemont MS</i>	<i>37 years</i>
<i>Andra Clarke</i>	<i>Special Education</i>	<i>30 years</i>
<i>Theresa Cortes</i>	<i>Dunsmore ES</i>	<i>25 years</i>
<i>Jacqueline DaVolio</i>	<i>Rosemont MS</i>	<i>28 years</i>
<i>Lisa Derusha</i>	<i>La Crescenta ES</i>	<i>28 years</i>
<i>Nelly Del Aguila</i>	<i>Nurse</i>	<i>19 years 4 months</i>
<i>Jacquelyn Duvardo</i>	<i>Keppel CDCC</i>	<i>32 years</i>
<i>Kent Ganevsky</i>	<i>Roosevelt MS</i>	<i>17 years</i>
<i>Jennifer Garrubba</i>	<i>Mountain Ave ES</i>	<i>22 years</i>
<i>Gerald Gruss</i>	<i>Clark Magnet HS</i>	<i>36 years</i>
<i>Margaret Gruss</i>	<i>Rosemont MS</i>	<i>23 years</i>
<i>Karen Hayhurst</i>	<i>Itinerant Music</i>	<i>27 years</i>
<i>Lucin Hayrikian</i>	<i>Glendale HS</i>	<i>23 years</i>
<i>Anita Jaeger</i>	<i>Marshall ES</i>	<i>36 years 3 months</i>
<i>Kris Kohlmeier</i>	<i>ETIS</i>	<i>38 years</i>
<i>Cecilia Lara</i>	<i>Marshall CDCC</i>	<i>28 years</i>
<i>Lawrence LeBlanc</i>	<i>Verdugo Woodlands ES</i>	<i>27 years</i>
<i>Alina Mahtesi Hacopian</i>	<i>La Crescenta ES</i>	<i>10 years 2 months</i>
<i>Liza Makasjian</i>	<i>Verdugo Woodlands CDCC</i>	<i>26 years</i>
<i>Chester Marchequ</i>	<i>Glendale HS</i>	<i>28 years</i>
<i>Kenneth Marmie</i>	<i>Roosevelt MS</i>	<i>29 years 4 months</i>
<i>Mary Martinez</i>	<i>Marshall ES</i>	<i>32 years 4 months</i>
<i>Rosemarie McCabe</i>	<i>Edison ES</i>	<i>26 years</i>
<i>Cheryl McPhillips</i>	<i>Verdugo Academy</i>	<i>38 years</i>
<i>Geraldine Mercado</i>	<i>Roosevelt MS</i>	<i>21 years</i>
<i>Helen Mirzakhanian</i>	<i>Balboa CDCC</i>	<i>32 years</i>
<i>Sarah Morgan-Arnold</i>	<i>Fremont ES</i>	<i>30 years</i>
<i>Cynthia Oei</i>	<i>Hoover HS</i>	<i>34 years</i>

*as of June 9

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024-2025 GTA RETIREES*

<i>First and Last Name</i>	<i>School Site</i>	<i>Years of Service</i>
<i>Christina Orris</i>	<i>Wilson MS</i>	<i>10 years</i>
<i>Julie Patton</i>	<i>Crescenta Valley HS</i>	<i>38 years</i>
<i>Theresa Peplow</i>	<i>R.D. White ES</i>	<i>36 years</i>
<i>Carla Reiber</i>	<i>Cerritos ES</i>	<i>30 years 5 months</i>
<i>Suzanne Rosen</i>	<i>Keppel ES</i>	<i>25 years</i>
<i>Martha Sepulveda</i>	<i>Glendale HS</i>	<i>23 years</i>
<i>James Smiley</i>	<i>Crescenta Valley ES</i>	<i>28 years</i>
<i>Alice Soo-Parker</i>	<i>Glenoaks ES</i>	<i>25 years 4 months</i>
<i>Allison Stewart</i>	<i>Hoover HS</i>	<i>24 years</i>
<i>Vahe Tcharkhoutian</i>	<i>Toll MS</i>	<i>34 years 4 months</i>



Scan the QR code with your camera phone or go to bit.ly/GTARetire2025 on your computer to access more retirement reception photos.

*as of June 9

GTA RETIREMENT
RECEPTION



Malcolm Johnson



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Malcolm Johnson



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*Don't forget to
join CTA/NEA
Retired.*

Click here:

www.cta.org/for-educators/meet-cta/retired

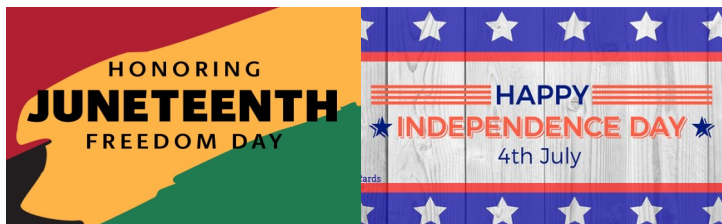


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CALENDAR

June, July, and August 2025

- 06/10 GUSD Board of Education Meeting
- 06/12 Last day of work for 186 day employees
- 06/13 - 08/15 Summer Break
- 06/16 - 07/03 GUSD Summer Session 1
- 06/19 Juneteenth ~No Summer School
- 06/20 Friday, ~No Summer School
- 06/24 GUSD Board of Education Meeting
- 07/04 Independence Day ~ No Summer School
- 07/07 - 07/22 GUSD Summer Session 2
- 07/08 GUSD Board of Education Meeting
- 08/18 First Work Day Educators
- 08/20 First School Day Students



Welcome to the GTA Board of Directors for 2025-26

President	Taline Arsenian
Vice President	Emily Rogers
Secretary	Sebastian Hernandez
Treasurer	Greta Sukazian

High School Area Directors	
GHS/Hoover	Laura Kellogg
CV/Clark/Daily	Sandra DerMesropian

Middle School Area Director
Sandy Fink

Elementary Area Directors	
GHS Area	Matthieu Hamo
CV Area	Angelina Thomas
Hoover Area	Miss Baldwin
At-Large	Yolanda Thiesmeyer

CTA State Council	Andrea Reuter
	Sarah Morrison
	Taline Arsenian

CTA Executive Director
Alex Moore

**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO TO SUPPORT
GUSD STUDENTS AND FAMILIES!**



Name or Address Change?

Please notify the GTA Office of any 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): _____

Work Site: _____

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



GTA ADVOCATE STAFF

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