

GTA ADVOCATE

The Official Newsletter of the Glendale Teachers Association



President's Message, Taline Arsenian

Our Collective Power

NOV 2023

Vol. 41

Issue 1

I have the privilege of starting this year as your new president, again. The first time I was your new president was in July 2015. I found my very first article as GTA president. After reading it, I realized I could use it again. Not much has changed with public education. But then I thought, a lot has changed. This part is recycled: *"I assure you I take my role as president very seriously and will do everything in my power to help our union succeed."* What I now know is that in order for our union to succeed, we must **ALL** work together on common goals, even if we disagree on the priority of our goals. In a union, the majority rules and our **collective power** will lead us to victory.

Here are our most immediate goals:

- Secure a 2022-23 + wage increase that makes GUSD salaries competitive with our neighboring districts: I can do *everything in my power* to make this happen and it won't. It takes the **collective power** of our membership to participate in all **organizing actions** in order to convince our school board this must happen. When there is a GTA **Call To Action**, you must act and encourage colleagues to join you. **No exceptions.** We must deliver on all actions with great quantities. There is power in numbers and we have the membership power to deliver.
- Elect the GTA democratically endorsed candidates to GUSD school board. The election date is March 5, 2024. It is crucial for the future of our students that the GTA endorsed candidates, Telly Tse and Neda Farid, win the open seats in Area 1 and 5. Their opponents are two extremists that seek to undermine public schools. Again, it will take the **collective power** of our membership to help inform Glendale voters about the educators' choice for school board. There will be more information about how to volunteer for campaigns. For now, visit tellytse.com and neda4gusd.com to sign up to get involved and support and every way that you can.
- Representation for all members: There are some sites with no site reps and some with less than their allotment. Sites are allowed 1 vote/rep for every 15 members. Schools with no reps have no voice and no vote on our governing body, the Representative Council. It takes the **collective power** of all site leaders to ensure the democratic decisions of our union represent all voices of our members. Sites with no reps are Columbus, Dunsmore, Mann, FACTS, Nurses/SLP, and the District Office. Ask your site rep if your school has any empty rep seats. If yes, consider stepping up for the collective good your colleagues. Make a one year commitment to serve your colleagues in a way that gives them a voice and gives our union power.

No one knows the needs of our students, our profession, and our union better than us because we are on the forefront engaging with students daily. This is why we need to continue to use our **collective power** in strategic and targeted ways to ensure that we are heard, that we always have a place at the table, and that our goals are met so that our students can have the best possible educational and social-emotional experiences in Glendale public schools. When our union is strong, our students win.

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**Glendale
Teachers
Association**

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Overcoming Fear with Knowledge and Collective Action

CTA Executive Director's Message, Alex Moore

A long time ago, I worked with a co-worker to organize food service workers dealing with a discriminatory supervisor. The supervisor would lash out at workers for listening to the radio in languages other than English and insisted that no one among this diverse, multilingual group could use a language other than English at work. When my co-worker visited kitchens to talk to these workers, they encountered a common obstacle for union organizers: "Everyone is mad, but they're also afraid of what will happen if they push back." After four months of organizing teachers, counselors, nurses, and other certificated staff - I know many of our colleagues sometimes feel this way too. They can be frustrated with top-down decision-making and dismissive behavior from school management or the district office but too worried about the potential consequences to speak up or take action. Luckily, we can often overcome this fear with knowledge of our rights and collective action.

The Law

In California, the Educational Employment Relations Act, or the EERA, explicitly protects our right to form, join, and participate in our union and advocate for changes to our wages, hours, and working conditions. In practice, this legal protection means management cannot discriminate or retaliate against anyone for taking part in "protected activity" or those actions related to our participation in our union and advocacy for our working conditions. "Protected activity" includes things like walking a picket line or filing a grievance, but it also includes actions likely to occur more frequently at work. For example, the EERA also protects your right to wear your union shirt, talk to your co-workers about your concerns with a new policy or directive, and raise your concerns regarding a new policy or directive with management.

Ultimately, our union and many allied unions across California have worked hard to get these rights enshrined in the law and adequately enforced by the Public Employment Relations Board and state courts. We stand on a firm foundation in California regarding legal protections for speaking up and acting at work, largely thanks to the hard work of unionized educators and school employees in generations before us. However, knowing our rights is not the same as finding the courage to use those rights when facing a difficult supervisor. The second part of the recipe to overcome the fear of speaking up at work is acting collectively.

Acting Collectively

While EERA sometimes protects our right to take individual action, acting in a group is always better. Practically, taking action with a group helps people overcome fear. Seeing others take action and knowing your colleagues support you is a potent antidote to the fear of being isolated or singled out. Furthermore, hundreds of years of experience in the labor movement tell us that workers are more powerful together than they are alone. We organize in GTA because we know management will hear the demands of over thirteen hundred educators with more urgency and attention than the demands of one. The same is true at our schools and worksites on a smaller scale. A principal will hear the concerns of a dozen educators differently than they will the concerns of one. Taking action in a group also offers more certainty of legal protection for technical reasons inappropriate for this short piece. But the critical point is that collective action gets the goods. We should confront issues at work together rather than alone.

In the case of the food service workers I mentioned in my introduction, knowledge of their rights and collective action led to success. While no one felt comfortable acting individually, they worked together and with their union to file a group complaint with the employer. The complaint pointed out that a blanket prohibition on languages other than English in the workplace was unlawful, inappropriate, and unnecessary. Only a few days later, the same supervisor who had insisted on the policy rescinded it. And everyone from the workers to the employer was reminded: when workers stand together, we win.

GTA Representative Council Takes Unanimous Action Media News Release

Glendale Teachers Endorse School Board Candidates **Telly Tse for Area A and Neda Farid for Area E**



Glendale– The Glendale Teachers Association Representative Council voted today to endorse the following candidates in their bid for seats on the Glendale Unified School District School Board: Mr. Telly Tse for Trustee A (1) and Ms. Neda Farid for Trustee Area E (5).

Mr. Telly Tse is an experienced educator who has dedicated his life’s work to the betterment of public school students. As a GUSD parent and an active softball coach in our community, he understands the needs of children and is ready to help lead our school district. Ms Neda Farid is the proud parent of a GUSD alumnus and the past president of the Glendale Council PTA. For over 20 years, she has volunteered for Glendale public schools supporting students and educators in a multitude of ways, including contributing her time and resources. Glendale Teachers Association Political Action Committee Chair Emily Rogers shares, “Telly’s years of experience as a public school teacher ensure he is well equipped to make important decisions that directly impact students and staff. Neda’s years of service and knowledge of our school community make her a strong advocate for the children and educators of Glendale.”

Glendale Teachers Association President Taline Arsenian states, “I am confident both candidates will exhibit an unwavering commitment to our school community. They will bring a high level of respect, experience, and vision to our school district. I look forward to working alongside them to ensure safe, inclusive, and quality learning environments for all students and a workplace free of harassment for all employees.”

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Glendale Teachers Rescind 2022 Endorsement *of City Councilmember Ara Najarian*

Glendale– The Representative Council of the Glendale Teachers Association (GTA) voted today to rescind the 2022 endorsement of Glendale City Councilmember Ara Najarian. He was granted the endorsement as he had been a partner to Glendale teachers during the pandemic. At that time, we trusted him to continue speaking out in the best interest of all educators, students and the Glendale community. Rather, he has chosen to do exactly the opposite. Councilmember Najarian has publicly failed Glendale teachers and the children of our community. Trust in his leadership has been irrevocably broken. His unwillingness to fact check disinformation campaigns targeting public school education with those who work in the public schools have shown GTA that he is not interested in being a partner to educators or an ally to the entirety of the GUSD student community.

On October 8th, Councilmember Najarian was interviewed by California Insider. In this interview, he made false claims about GUSD curriculum and slandered Glendale educators. GTA’s President Taline Arsenian states, “Councilmember Najarian’s comments have perpetuated myths that make schools less safe for LGBTQ+ students and employees. We no longer have confidence that he is willing to understand or meet the needs of the Glendale community.”

Many of Councilmember Najarian’s accusations have long been debunked by GUSD leaders. Glendale teachers follow the curriculum mandated by the State of California. This includes inclusive and age-appropriate lessons following the CA FAIR Act and State Standards for Health Education. GTA educators are proud to work in a state that acknowledges the full dignity and humanity of ALL students, educators, and families.

Councilmember Najarian’s actions over the past few months, punctuated by his unacceptable comments in his interview, indicate he does not seek to represent the full, vibrant, diverse Glendale community. Therefore, the governing body of GTA, the Representative Council, rescinds all support of Ara Najarian as a Glendale office holder.



Elections Matter

Vice President’s message, Emily Rogers

The School Board election on March 5 could have a profound impact on Glendale schools. It is imperative that we elect candidates who support public education. We need school board members who would help us create a positive learning environment for ALL our students. There are candidates who are running in areas 1 and 5 (or A and E) who belong to a group of extremists who want to control what we teach. They have been spreading misinformation, harassing and threatening our educators, and attempting to dominate our school board meetings for years now. This form of extremism is not unique to Glendale; people like this have been infiltrating school districts and funding school board candidates all over the country. They often target immigrant communities by spreading misinformation that plays on parents’ fears about their children.

Fortunately, GTA’s PAC team is able to recommend two amazing candidates who are running for the open seats. Both have extensive experience with Glendale schools and are strong proponents of public education. In Area 1 (or A), our Board of Directors and Rep Council have endorsed Telly Tse. Telly is a special education teacher, a father to two students at Monte Vista Elementary, and a former CTA Board member. Learn more at www.tellytse.com. In area 5 (or E), GTA chose Neda Farid. Neda is a mother to a GUSD alum and has held several leadership roles in the Glendale Council PTA, Glendale Education Foundation, Verdugo Hills Hospital, and more. Learn more at <https://www.neda4gusd.com/> Both of these candidates went through an extensive application and interview process with our PAC team.

To win these two school board seats, we will need participation from members, parents, and community volunteers. CTA has given us a special circumstances grant to help with the campaign costs. We will ask our allies in other unions and organizations to endorse these candidates. We will conduct phone banking, send out mailers, spread the word on social media, and canvass door-to-door. Be on the lookout for an email asking for volunteers!

Some members wonder why our union needs to be involved in politics. The answer lies in the fact that our schools are funded and run by the government. Politicians make decisions about our school funding and put policies into place that affect educators and students. And when certain politicians and candidates spread racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and transphobia, this deeply affects our school communities. This is why we support candidates who believe public schools in Glendale should welcome ALL children, who believe and trust teachers, and who will understand and honor the work we do with decent wages and working conditions.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

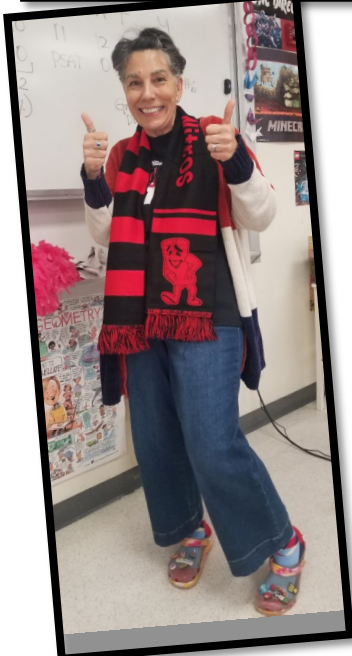
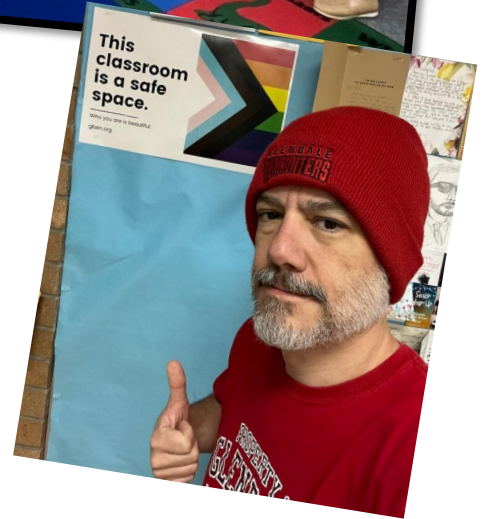


Please contact GTA if you are interested in GTA sponsoring your conference.

For more info, go to cta.org/conferences

Conference Name	Dates	Location
The 2023 Solidarity Conference	December 8-10, 2023	Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles
2024 Issues Conference	January 12-14, 2024	Planet Hollywood, Los Vegas
The Good Teaching Conference North	February 2-4, 2024	Hyatt Regency SFO, Burlingame1
2024 New Educator Conference	February 23-25, 2024	Hilton Orange County, Costa Mesa
Equity and Human Rights Conference	March 1-3, 2024	Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles
The Good Teaching Conference South	March 22-24, 2024	Hilton Regency, Garden Grove

GTA WEARS RED





Good Arguments Do Not Always Win

GTA Bargaining Chair's Message, Sarah Morrison

GTA members often approach members of GTA's bargaining team with questions about why some proposals (such as the recent TK proposal) are brought to the bargaining table urgently and others are postponed. GTA's Board of Directors makes these decisions and, among the factors they consider, the likelihood of success is a big one.

Let's explore examples of two GTA "wins" at the bargaining table and how they came to be.

Example 1: Yard Duty. Prior to 2018-19, elementary teachers in GUSD were required to supervise students during snack/recess. It took years of fighting at the bargaining table before GTA succeeded in removing this requirement from our contract. Good arguments were raised at the table for why the elimination of yard duty was good for students, good for educators, and affordable to the district. But good arguments were not enough. What sealed the deal then? Buttons. When hundreds and hundreds of GTA members (including secondary members) united to wear yellow "No YD buttons" to campus every day, the District quickly signed an agreement. Organized collective action leads to agreements.



Example 2: CDCC TK. This "win" happened last month. GTA secured new language requiring elementary schools to ensure safe and appropriate care for TK students who need extra toileting support. Unlike yard duty, this "win" was secured at the bargaining table in just one bargaining session (Oct 6). A significant reason why this agreement was reached without large scale organizing was because the working conditions we were negotiating were new and unilaterally imposed. Labor law requires GUSD to negotiate the impact of new duties on our workload—so the District was both required to negotiate and motivated to reach an agreement that both parties could be proud of. And we did.

Last year, when GTA declared an impasse in bargaining over the district's unwillingness to withdraw proposals to remove contractual rights that our members value, many members asked why we were being called to action when our demands are reasonable and good for students. Unfortunately, good arguments alone do not always win agreements; *collective action seals the deal!*

On the table right now are proposals that will impact our wages and our healthcare, and (coming soon) a proposal in response to the District's decision to extend the length of the kindergarten instructional day. Per state law, the decision of instructional minutes is under the purview of the employer. However, the impacts of the decision to increase kinder minutes must be negotiated.

This is our opportunity to improve the lives of educators and students better in GUSD. Here are some ways you can help:

1. Report to your site rep any **new directives** that add to your workload. Even if you do not mind doing an additional task, GTA's bargaining team might seek to negotiate the impact of these new duties.
2. Participate in **union actions**, starting with wearing red when called to wear red, wearing buttons when called on to wear buttons, or standing outside buildings when an action is called. Every display of solidarity communicates our **collective power**.



Large, Multi-Family YARD SALE!

All Proceeds to Benefit
Classroom Teachers

Saturday, November 4th, 2023

9:00 am - 1:00 pm
no early birds please

2747 Fleur Drive • San Marino

Household Items • Books • Vacuum • Bikes
Clothes • Linens • Small Furniture and More

Sponsored by



As a CTA member, you always have the opportunity to apply for CTA –endorsed Disability insurance even if you are covered by a different insurance company. The Standard offers special opportunities between October 1 - November 30 and March 1 - April 30 to switch your coverage **without answering any health questions.**



Switch Your Insurance Coverage

Two limited-time opportunities to switch your Disability insurance with no health questions asked:

- October 1 - November 30
- March 1 - April 30

Three easy steps to switch:

1. Apply for coverage with The Standard.
2. Provide The Standard with proof of coverage with another carrier.
3. Cancel your current coverage after you receive enrollment confirmation from The Standard.

Visit: standard.com/cta/portover



Scholarship Opportunities

Application Deadline : February 9, 2024



CTA Scholarship for Dependent Children/Del A. Weber Scholarship

- ◆ This program offers up to 35 scholarships, of up to \$5,000 each, to a dependent child of an active member of CTA, CTA/NEA-Retired or a deceased CTA member. The Del A. Weber Scholarship program offers one scholarship, of up to \$5,000, to a dependent child who is attending or attended a continuation high school or an alternative education program.

CTA Scholarship for Members

- ◆ This program offers up to five scholarships, of up to \$3,000 each, to active members of CTA completing college coursework.

CTA Aspiring Educators Scholarship in Honor of L. Gordon Bittle

- ◆ This program offers up to three scholarships, of up to \$5,000 each, to active members of CTA Aspiring Educators who have demonstrated high academic achievement.

For more information or to apply, please visit cta.org/cta-scholarships.



CALENDAR

November 2023

- 11/2 College View/Verdugo Academy Site Visit
- 11/7 GTA Board of Directors Meeting
- 11/9 Wilson MS Site Visit
- 11/14 GUSD Board of Education Meeting
- 11/16 RD White ES Site Visit
- *11/20 to 11/24 Thanksgiving Break*
- 11/28 GTA Rep Council Meeting
- 11/30 Hoover HS Site Visit

December 2023

- 12/5 GTA Board of Directors Meeting
- 12/7 Keppel ES Site Visit
- 12/12 Dunsmore ES. Site Visit
- 12/12 GUSD Board of Education Meeting
- 12/14 Mann ES Site Visit
- *12/22 to 01/05 Winter Break*

GTA Board of Directors 2023-24

President	Taline Arsenian
Vice President	Emily Rogers
Secretary	Pamela Gorsuch
Treasurer	Greta Sukazian

High School Area Directors	
GHS/Hoover	Laura Kellog
CV/Clark/Daily	Patrick Davarhanian

Middle School Area Director	
	Sandy Fink

Elementary Area Directors	
GHS Area	Matthieu Hamo
CV Area	Angelina Thomas
Hoover Area	Rosemarie McCabe
At-Large	Yolanda Thiesmeyer

CTA State Council	Andrea Reuter
	Sarah Morrison
	Taline Arsenian

CTA Executive Director	
	Alex Moore

Contact info on www.glendaleteachers.org

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



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 Aline @ glendaletaoffice@gmail.com.



GTA ADVOCATE STAFF

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