BEGINNING THE SCHOOL YEAR EARLIER: PROS AND CONS

The calendars for 2018-19 and 2019-20 have already been established. There is on-going discussion between GGEA and GGUSD about starting the 2020-21 school year earlier in August. GGEA asked you, the members, about this issue in a bargaining survey that was sent out on 11/15 and is due on 11/26. What are some pros and cons about an earlier start?

**Pro:** Our graduating seniors will have more time and be more competitive in applying for top colleges nation-wide. Since most schools back east start earlier and end earlier, their students already have grades, letters of recommendations and personal statements ready to go. By starting the school year earlier, our students will be on more of an even playing field.

**Con:** The weather tends to be warmer in August than in June. This is changing due to changes in weather world-wide; also, most of our schools are already air-conditioned. The remaining un-air-conditioned schools will have AC by the 2020-21 school year.

**Pro:** An earlier start will be beneficial to student athletes and teacher/coaches. CIF has already begun scheduling football games much earlier in August. If we begin the year earlier, athletes and their coaches will already be at school and “on the clock”. Also, it is predicted that football games in August will have higher attendance if school is in session.

**Con:** Some employees and their families like the traditional summer of July and August. This is almost a cultural phenomenon in the United States, but it is changing. Certainly, July will remain a vacation month. It appears that June will become more of a summer month than August.

**Pro:** Advanced Placement (AP) classes all have their nation-wide testing on the same exact date in May. The testing is invariably the first two weeks of the month. Since the testing date is set by the College Board for all students enrolled in AP classes, both students and teachers will have more time to learn and teach prior for the test. Currently, some classes have 4-5 weeks of additional instruction after the big AP test. An earlier start date will provide for more instruction prior to the test.

**Con:** Currently, GGUSD members and bargaining-unit-members are paid on the 30th of September and the 30th of June. If we work much of August and very little in June, will the pay period be shifted to align more closely with the work calendar?

**Pro:** Many teachers, nurses and librarians live in a “two calendar household”. Especially if the member lives in the Inland Empire and along the I-10 corridor, their children often are beginning school before the GGUSD employee. If we begin earlier in August, a number of our members will enjoy more closely-synchronized work and home calendars.
President’s Message

When I was told I needed to write an article for the Advocate I was a little apprehensive. What do I write about? I don’t really have anything pressing on my mind at the moment. I can definitely say it’s different being out of the classroom. My son made the comment “Mom, you actually have weekends now.” I guess I do! So, as I ponder on my task at hand, do I make it personal, political, spiritual, speak on a hot topic or make it funny?

Many times, I find someone else’s words can nicely sum up what I’m thinking or feeling, and this is such a time. In the words of Terri Marshall, “The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek out ways to make life better for those around us.” You all have worked hard over the past three months, enjoy your Thanksgiving break with family and friends. -Kelly
Calendar of Events

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>Non-student Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Rep Council</td>
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<td>12/4</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
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<td>12/11</td>
<td>Segments/Rep Council</td>
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<td>12/13</td>
<td>Executive Board</td>
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<td>12/18</td>
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<td>12/24-1/4</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
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<td>1/8</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
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<td>1/15</td>
<td>Segments</td>
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<td>Executive Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>MLK Jr. Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
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*Attorney available December 12, 2018.
For appointments please contact the GGEA office at 714-638-7480.

CALL FOR ARTICLES!

Are you or your colleagues doing something fabulous at your school site? **We would love to hear about it!** The Advocate Team is looking for articles about YOU, our GGEA teachers and your students. We want to spread the word about the fantastic teaching, events, and successes happening at all the schools across our district. Please email your stories, articles, ideas, and photographs to ADVOCATE@ggea.org by **Jan. 9, 2019**. We can’t wait to hear from you!

JOIN our FACEBOOK group TODAY!

**Join Us:** Facebook members search for “Garden Grove Education Association” and ask to join the group. Allow our administrators 24-48 hours to accept your request.

This is a closed group for members of GGEA only and not open to the public. If you have any questions, send a message to the group administrators or ask your rep.

Welcome New GGEA Members!

- Brian Dieriex
- Amy Gunter
- Kelly Henderson
- Patrick McLoy
- Meagan McMillen
- Lizelle Reapor
- Alexis Wasson
- Dava Zepeda

*Advocate Editorial Staff:
Willie Burghard, Sara McCarthy, Kelly Nolan, Susan Kaylor

*Contributors this Month:
Sabine Oberhofer, Kristy Gladysz*
CHRISTENA HARPER

Christena started working for GGUSD in January 2001 as a Mild/Moderate Kindergarten-First grade teacher at Peters Elementary School. Since her first year of teaching she has held many positions from Preschool Autism to K-6 Special Education TOSA. Christena has worked at five elementary schools, the DO, and Clinton Corner. Due to her background in early childhood education she is a firm believer in supporting the whole child and making learning hands on and tangible. She feels strongly that we should create a rich learning environment for all students to explore STEM. When she heard about the American Heart Association’s Teaching Gardens Program that had been started at several other GGUSD schools she knew she had to create a garden at Morningside. It was a lot of work to get funding and materials, but it was worth it to see so many students actively engaged in outdoor hands-on learning experiences. Christena believes all students can learn when given the right tools. Many of our students don’t have the life experiences to be able to connect to the learning we are providing within the school setting and she asks that we as educators re-examine how we are providing the learning and what can we do to bring in the realia and life experiences our students need to make the connections within their textbooks? It is important to look at our jobs as more than the subjects we are teaching but, rather as helping to grow healthy, problem solving, creative, and productive adults. What can we tangibly do to make our learning environments more engaging and hands on while meeting the content standards? Through the Master Gardeners of Orange County Christena was able to train 10 parents on how to help in the garden. On planting as many as 20 parents would come out and volunteer in the garden. The parents helped make the garden possible by helping to build the garden beds, helping to build the garden, and helping to plant. Through the discovery garden space the Morningside community is seeing new cognitive connections for students and an increased sense of community within the families they serve.
Amy has been teaching in GGUSD for 23 years. She spent her first 21 years teaching first grade and the past two years teaching third grade. This is her 4th year on Stanley’s musical team and her first year directing. Amy has been involved with the Stanley Elementary PTA for the past 23 years as a teacher representative, fundraiser coordinator, and the current PTA President. The PTA provides an opportunity for her to work closely with the school community, parents, and staff to help support the students at Stanley. Amy states that “being an integral part of the PTA helps enrich the opportunities of the students and families we serve by providing them with memorable activities and events. The musical provides students an opportunity to shine in a different capacity. It is a blessing watching the students learn and grow as they experience the performing arts. Their self-esteem grows as they inspire others.” To raise money to support the musical, Amy sells pencils (Smencils) during her lunch break and organizes a family picture day on a Saturday. Amy also organizes the yearbook for her school and teaches a math intervention for 5th graders after school a few days a week. The contributions she is making allow the students and community to recognize the importance of helping one another in every capacity possible. Amy truly cares about making the world a better place for others.

**FURRY FRIENDS FOSTER READING SKILLS**

This fall, Morningside School was lucky to be able to partner with the Orange County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to encourage a love of reading! Morningside teachers, always looking for ways to improve students' school experience and create diverse learning opportunities, reached out to the local organization to request the Canine Literacy Program be brought to their campus. Once the OCSPCA notified the school they had 6 volunteers and dogs ready to bring the program to Morningside, first through fifth grade teachers selected 24 students they felt could get the most benefit from the experience! The program focuses on reducing reading anxiety in children by giving kids a furry friend to comfort and listen to them as they read aloud. Teachers selected students who could use a boost in reading fluency or needed reassurance or needed a positive school experience to help build self-esteem and create positive school memories. The six-week program was hosted every Tuesday in the school library by Library Media Tech, Irene Cervantes. The program was an overwhelming success for all involved! The kids loved reading to the dogs and were never absent on a Tuesday! Teachers saw our most reluctant readers willing to pick books from the library table to read to their dog partners. And smiles abound as students felt better about themselves, formed a caring bond with their dogs and believed they were special. Sometimes the best learning doesn't come out of a curriculum box but from thinking outside the box to find ways to offer students the chance to discover what wonderful learners they are!
The students in Pacifica’s German program have not only learned so much about the German culture and its language this year, but they have had a blast doing so! Above are photos of some of the unique learning opportunities they have enjoyed…

• A trip to the German film festival in Los Angeles, organized by the Goethe Institute, to watch the movie “Timm Thaler.” • German exchange students from Stuttgart visited Los Alamitos and Pacifica for a few weeks. They attended classes, made new friends, and experienced American culture, food, and education. We are always looking for families to host students each fall…keep it in mind! • During extension periods the students do yoga as a way to learn body parts, left vs. right, and other directions. They are so good at it!
Educators Devastated by Fires Ravaging Northern and Southern California Working Together to Support Colleagues, Students and Families

Lives, Schools and Homes Lost, Thousands Evacuated; CTA Disaster Assistance Available

Contacts: Cyndi Menzel at 650-380-8553 or Claudia Briggs at 916-325-1550

BURLINGAME – California Teachers Association President Eric C. Heins issued the following statement today regarding the devastating Camp Fire in Butte County and the Woolsey Fire in Ventura County:

“These destructive fires are turning lives upside down. Our hearts and prayers go out to the families and communities living this nightmare. The fires have claimed lives, destroyed homes, schools and hospitals. I know many educators, students, families and friends are threatened and are being evacuated or have already fled their homes. Right now, our number one job is to make sure everyone is safe.

“CTA members are working with school districts and community partners to provide whatever help and resources they can. Local teacher leaders are helping to account for educators, students and families, connecting them with housing when needed. In these devastating times, I am proud and gratified to see the outpouring of support from the entire community. We’re also grateful to our union brothers and sisters, the firefighters and first responders, who are battling these blazes and providing medical care. Although this is frightening, I know we will land on our feet because we have each other, and because of our collective strength and good will.”

Heins made his statement while he and his family packed up belongings and were being evacuated from their southern California home.

In northern California, the Camp Fire has destroyed at least five of the nine schools in Paradise and many educators have lost their homes. CTA’s Disaster Relief Fund provides assistance to educators who have had homes or schools damaged by wildfires. In the last three months, CTA Disaster Grants have paid out more than $187,000 to support educators, their families and students. www.cta.org/disasterrelief

The CTA Chico Regional Resource Center at 1430 East Avenue #1 in Chico will be open all day Tuesday to aid area educators, including help with donations and filling out Disaster Grant forms. CTA leaders and staff are also stepping up to raise funds for victims. Donations for Paradise area teachers can be made through a special GoFundMe account.
It pays to be a CTA member

CTA membership comes with many great benefits including access to the only CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance plans from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard). Now, at no extra cost to you, when you protect your paycheck with CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance from The Standard, you can get access to two new benefits from CTA:*

- Student Loan Benefit
- Cancer Benefit

These added benefits are available exclusively for members enrolled in the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability Insurance plans on a qualified disability claim.

Learn more!
Visit us at CTAMemberBenefits.org/Disability

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*The benefits are offered by CTA to eligible members on approved disability claims under the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability Insurance plans with a disability date on or after 9/1/2019 who meet additional specific criteria. CTA provides these benefits at no extra cost, and The Standard acts only as the claims administrator of these benefits. Student Loan and Cancer Benefits are not provided under the Disability Insurance policy. For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policies may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406 (TTY). Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204 GP190-LTD/S398/CTA-1 SI 201907-CTArev/06/19

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