Annual Employee Recognition Program

On Tuesday, December 7, 2021 Garden Grove Unified celebrated the first in person Employee Recognition Program in over a year. Employees received pins to celebrate 5 to over 40 years of service with the district. Sylvia Krenzien, a kindergarten teacher at Russell Elementary, received a beautiful bouquet of flowers as well to commemorate her 45 years with the district! Congratulations to all receiving recognition. We are proud to work with you!
President’s Message

At the October 19th GGUSD School Board Meeting, the motion to approve the ESSER III Expenditure Plan to provide services during the 2021 through 2024 fiscal years in the amount of $111,078,484 was unanimously approved. [https://www.ggusd.us/district/esser-iii-plan](https://www.ggusd.us/district/esser-iii-plan)

This plan must explain how the district intends to use its ESSER III funds to address students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs and any opportunity gaps that existed before and were worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

GGEA did not agree with areas of this plan, organized, and took action at both the November 2nd and 16th School Board meetings. At the first meeting, over 50 members in their GGEA blue attended. Some were in the board room while others were in the district office lobby. GGEA members, Sarah Held, Bridget Holdermann, Kristy Gladysz, and Donny Terranove spoke on their own personal class experience during this time, along with their dissatisfaction of how the ESSER III monies were going to be spent. The ask from all of us was to give higher priority to human resources, even if temporary, rather than facilities. Hire more teachers to aide in class size and lessen the 106 combination classes, hire more paraprofessionals full time to assist in the classrooms, in order to meet the needs of our students.

Our second action at the November 16th School Board meeting was focused on the effects of having combination classes after just returning from a remote and hybrid 2020-21 school year. GGEA member and combination class teacher Tamra Wood spoke about her current experience teaching a combo during the Pandemic and the struggles being experienced by both her and the students she teaches. I told the district that combination classes have impossible challenges of meeting student needs and providing adequate direct instructional minutes for both grade levels. Time and support are the greatest resources for our students. Placement in a combo class significantly reduces both. Furthermore, our students need every support at the district’s disposal within a normal instruction year, under ordinary circumstances. We are definitely not teaching in normal circumstances. In a nutshell, combo students are getting ½ a teacher, spending more time on independent work, and have less time to interact with the teacher. Our ask to the district is that support be provided by hiring temporary teachers and aides with the use of ESSER III monies.

Thank you to all of you who attended this Board meeting. Your support is appreciated.
Executive Director Message: Thank U-nion!

As 2021 is coming to a close, I wanted to take the time to thank all the hard work the union has done to advocate for the classroom and to promote the perspective of teachers. Without you there would be no Garden Grove Education Association. Thank you to the Board and the President for leading the way. Thank you to the Negotiations Team for your tireless work in negotiating MOUs and contracts that help move our Association forward. Thanks to the Grievance Committee that helps uphold the contract and protects the rights of our membership. Thanks to all the Committee Members that help make the Association function from Organizing to Rules and Election to Political Involvement/EAC to Retirement to Communication to Scholarship to Human Rights and to Community Action. A thank you to the Committee Members that represent members in Special Education, New Educator, IPD, Health and Safety and Health Insurance. And finally, to the Site Representatives, thank you for being a leader at your site, representing members, upholding the contract, disseminating information, and organizing members to action. You are really the heart of the Union.

Our mission statement is, “GGEA is an association of educators who advocate for the well-being of our membership and the students we serve.” We can’t accomplish this without ALL of you, the Union, the members of GGEA. Let’s continue to work together so we can be ready for whatever 2022 will bring.

Paul Kim
GGEA Executive Director

Calendar of Events

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<td>Winter Recess</td>
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<td>Last day of 1st Semester</td>
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<td>Non-Student Day</td>
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<td>01/17</td>
<td>MLK Jr. Holiday</td>
<td>02/25</td>
<td>Last day of 2nd Trimester</td>
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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 **February 10, 2021.** We can’t wait to hear from you!

A special welcome to our newest members!

Kourtnie Cohen  Evan McGee
Cristian Gomez Moran  Jennifer Rey
The Human Rights Committee recognizes GGEA members who make a positive contribution outside of the classroom with the “I Make a Difference Award.” This award is given to members who volunteer their time and energy to benefit the school community or the community at large. Past IMAD winners have been involved in working in local charities, after school tutoring projects, library reading programs, soup kitchens, charity runs and human rights endeavors.

Nominations can be submitted to the GGEA Human Rights Committee via our website online form (located on Human Rights Committee page at GGEA.org) or emailed to humanrights@ggea.org. Nominations can be submitted by a single member, by a group of members, or by the entire school staff. Please include the following in your nomination:

• The nominee’s name, school and contact information
• His/her specific contribution (please provide details)
• Your name and contact information

Each month, the committee will honor an IMAD recipient at a Rep Council meeting and feature him/her in the GGEA Advocate.

NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE TODAY!!

We focus on what’s important so you can do the same.

Tea parties. Story hour. Sing-a-longs. You’re likely too busy to research and find a Life insurance plan that works for you. That’s why CTA offers CTA-endorsed Life insurance from The Standard:

When you protect your loved ones with one of our plans, you also get instant access to Life Services Toolkit1 to help with estate planning, will preparation and more as well as Travel Assistance1 for travel-related emergencies.

Embrace the best parts of life with CTA Member Benefits!

For coverage as strong as the bonds you share, turn to CTA-endorsed Life insurance. Visit CTAMemberBenefits.org/Life.

1 Travel Assistance and Life Services Toolkit are provided through an arrangement with service partners not affiliated with The Standard and are not insurance products.

For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406. Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204 GP190-LIFE/5399/CTA3 SI 21765-CTAvol (8/21)
Preschool Winter STEM Activities

STEM activities encourage preschoolers to use cross-disciplinary tools and critical thinking skills to solve a basic problem. In this case, our Clinton Corner students’ challenge was to build an Evergreen Tree using only green playdough, popsicle sticks, and decorative items such as beads and stars. Check out their little trees below! We have such a creative and bright group of students this year!

That’s why we’re working with California Teachers Association to provide access to auto and home insurance designed exclusively for you and your fellow educators. It’s our policy to do more for the people who give more. Starting with you.

Exclusive Member Benefits | Payment Skip Options | $0 Deductible Waiver | And... for the opportunity to provide you a no-obligation quote, California Casualty will give you a $25 Gift Card — limited offer while supplies last.

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Our recipe share is the newest feature in the Advocate! If you have a favorite recipe we want to hear from you! Please send it over to advocate@ggea.org

This month we have a recipe for the most adorable snowman marshmallows as a fun way to dress up your hot chocolate! They are super cute, easy to make, and are sure to be a hit in your classroom or teacher’s lounge. They would make a great holiday gift as well! Just package the marshmallows in a plastic bag and bundle with hot cocoa and a mug!

**Snowman Marshmallows**
Recipe and Photo credit: happinessishomemade.net

**Ingredients:**
- Jumbo Round Marshmallows
- 6 oz. Wilton Chocolate Candy Melts
- 4 oz. Wilton Orange Candy Melts
- Wilton Icing in Green, Red, and Blue
- Piping bag or plastic baggie and #2 icing tip

**Instructions:**
1. Place 6 oz. of chocolate candy melts in a small microwave-safe bowl, and microwave in 30-second increments, stirring after each, until the candy is completely melted.
2. Transfer the melted chocolate to a prepared piping bag that has been fitted with the #2 icing tip. Draw eyes and mouths on all of the marshmallow snowmen and allow to cool.
3. Repeat the process using the orange candy melts, and gently squeeze the orange candy from the bag to form the carrot noses. Allow the melted candy to cool and set.
4. Use the Wilton icing to create “earmuffs” for your marshmallow snowman – squeeze a round dollop on each side of the snowman’s head and then make a headband across the top to attach the earmuffs.
5. Top your favorite mug of steaming hot chocolate with an adorable snowman marshmallow for a delicious winter treat!
One way we can show solidarity and stand together as unified members is to wear our GGEA T-shirts on campus and out in the community. If you didn’t get your t-shirt two years ago, you’re in luck because we’ve ordered more! These t-shirts are soft and stylish, designed by our very own Advocate editor, Sara McCarthy!

If you did not order at one of your recent GGEA meetings, you can find a fillable order form as well as photos of the shirts on the GGEA website. Once your form is complete, please send it to jennyg@ggea.org. We will fill the order and send the shirts and copy of the order form through district mail!

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Be Sure to Get Your Union T-Shirts!

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Front of Ladies tee!

Back of shirt!
GGEA Elementary Segment Director Sarah Held and President Kelly Nolan were mentioned in an OC Register Article, Pandemic once closed schools; now it’s financing them.


Here is an excerpt from the OC Register regarding our action taken at November’s School Board meetings.

In neighboring Garden Grove Unified, administrators chose to put $71 million of the $111 million it received in its latest COVID-relief funding into facilities maintenance. Projects include expanding or building new spaces for outdoor instruction – which may help reduce the risk of virus transmission – along with things like classroom projectors, outdoor security cameras, athletic facility upgrades, portable classrooms, shade structures, playground equipment and heating and air conditioning projects.

Some of Garden Grove Unified’s plans didn’t sit well with the teachers’ union and a number of educators who spoke at a recent school board meeting.

“None of these Band-aids address the devastating emotional and mental toll the pandemic has taken on our students and teachers,” Sarah Held, a first grade teacher at Garden Park Elementary, told the Garden Grove Unified school board.

“We need to use this ESSER funds money as it was intended.”

Kelly Nolan, president of the Garden Grove Education Association, also suggested the board take another look at how that money will be spent. In a recent interview, she repeated the teachers’ recommendation for the district to flip its priorities, giving higher priority to human resources, even if temporary, rather than to facilities.

“We need extra teachers and aides in the classroom, with the understanding we would hire this many teachers for maybe one or two years to help with the situation we are currently in,” Nolan said.
On November 17, 2021 Garden Grove Unified School District presented its Showcase of Bands. This is an annual event that features the High School Marching Bands from the seven comprehensive high schools. The event was postponed last year due to Covid, so it was a good return to form for the music programs. Usually the High School Marching Bands are not able to see each other perform, so this is an opportunity for the programs to show off for each other.

As they have returned to performing after a year off, this year's performance featured some changes. Many groups did not perform a full competitive show, but were doing some different presentations of music and marching. Additionally, as part of the upgrades to the Stadium at Bolsa Grande, the event was live-streamed using the digital camera mounted atop the press box, with live commentary from David Mora. The event also featured the Bolsa Grande High School choir and the Drill Team from Santiago High School.

For some schools, the Showcase represents the cumulative performance of their season, their last presentation of month’s worth of work. For others, it is another opportunity to perform in front of an audience before their competitive Finals happening the following weekend. The friends and family of the individual bands are more than enthusiastic to applaud and appreciate what the other schools are presenting.

Most programs begin in May with starting preparation for the upcoming Fall season. The work continues over the summer with rehearsals, and finishes with Band Camp, which is usually a week or two before school begins. Then a fall season of football games and competitions goes from August to Thanksgiving, or sometimes later into December.

Joe Miller
Pacifica High School Music
Compensation In Lieu of Release Days and IEP Prep Days MOU Revision

- One of the three MOUs that were agreed upon and signed on November 18, 2021 will now be rewritten to include PK teachers.
- The MOU will now read...GGUSD proposed that for the 2021-2022 school year, in lieu of release days, PK-8 teachers will receive $350 per release day remaining.

Upcoming CalSTRS Webinars

- If you are thinking about retiring it would be wise to attend a CalSTRS webinar so you don't underestimate your retirement income or expenses. Visit the link below!
  - [https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CALSTRS/bulletins/2fe784c](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CALSTRS/bulletins/2fe784c)

Teacher Expenses & Tax Deductions

- The IRS has issued COVID Tax Tip 2021-169 for eligible educators who may be able to offset qualified expenses they paid in 2021 when they file their tax return in 2022. **Teachers can deduct out-of-pocket classroom expenses including COVID-19 protective items.** For more information visit the link below.
  - [https://files.constantcontact.com/ea1a5c0d001/72d24463-f951-4add-a0c0-aac199ee105b.pdf](https://files.constantcontact.com/ea1a5c0d001/72d24463-f951-4add-a0c0-aac199ee105b.pdf)

Evaluations

- Evaluation procedures are addressed in Article 7 of our CBA, (Collective Bargaining Agreement). As per Article 7.3, "permanent employees shall be evaluated at least every 5 years for teachers with more than 10 full years teaching in the district and at least biennially for teachers with 3 to 10 years in the district. Non-permanent employees (temporary and probationary) shall be evaluated annually. All evaluations shall be completed no later than May 1."
- If you are a permanent employee, GGEA's Grievance Committee highly recommends scheduling your observation. By doing so you will have control of your environment and the opening and closing of your lesson. If you are being evaluated this year pursuant to the contract or principal discretion, remember these dates:
  * by October 1 - Evaluation Process Form must be submitted.
  * by December 10 - First observation must be completed
  * by March 15 - Employee may be given a Recommended Improvements Form.
  * by May 1 - Evaluation conference must be held.
  * by May 15 - Employee shall be given a written summary of the conference.

H.O.P.E. Necessities Drive

- H.O.P.E. is a non-profit organization that helps Garden Grove and its surrounding communities.
- GGEA's Community Action Committee is hosting this drive.
- This would be a great project for your sites' Student Council or ASB. Please note that your site will need to drop off collected items to H.O.P.E, located in Garden Grove.
- For more information visit the link below.
  - [https://files.constantcontact.com/ea1a5c0d001/2f4413ea-7ee9-4e06-b59b-feae876ebea8.png](https://files.constantcontact.com/ea1a5c0d001/2f4413ea-7ee9-4e06-b59b-feae876ebea8.png)
Lady Argos basketball wins silver division tournament championship @ Pacifica, defeating Marina 44-32 on Saturday. Senior Tu La scored 20 points and was named to the all-tournament team. Senior Zakai McAlister scored 18 points and was named silver division MVP. Congratulations Lady Argos!

Congratulations Lady Argos!

IFT Grants

IFT helps all students and schools by awarding grants directly to CTA members and local chapters. To date, CTA members have funded 453 grant projects totaling more than $5.2 million. All CTA members are eligible to apply for an Educator grant (up to $5,000) or an Impact grant (up to $20,000).

Open application submissions from December 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. Awarded IFT Grants will be implemented in the 2022-2023 school year.