



# CONSENSUS

A Newsletter for BHEA Members  
October 8, 2008



## BHEA Election Fills Several Vacancies on Rep. Council

On Sep. 29, BHEA conducted a special election to fill vacancies that exist in some positions of our Representative Council. BHEA congratulates the following members on their successful election to the RC:

- HS Representatives: Dan Moraica, Roel Hinojosa, Joanie Garratt, Bill Ryan.
- HM Representatives: Jeff Galens, Christian Fuhrer
- HS Director: John Borsum
- Treasurer: Stewart Horowitz

Newly elected representatives will be installed at the Oct. 16 RC meeting.

## BRIEFS

- Salary/Benefits: The BHUSD Payroll Dept. has informed BHEA that certificated paychecks distributed on Oct. 1 do not yet reflect any recently negotiated salary increases. The Payroll Dept. said that Nov. 3 paychecks will reflect the new 2008-2009 salary rates. The Payroll Dept. said that retroactive checks will be processed no later than Dec. 5. All certificated unit members will receive retroactive pay to augment the Oct. 1, 2008 paycheck. Those certificated unit members who worked during 2007-2008 will also receive retroactive pay to augment the six paychecks issued between Feb. 1 and July 1, 2008. The benefits cap increase to \$7,000 annually will begin with the Jan. 1, 2009 paycheck.
- 08-09 Bargaining Cycle: A preliminary tally of the bargaining survey recently issued to all BHEA certificated members indicates that our #1 issue is class size. The #2, #3, and #4 issues are, respectively, hours, evaluations, and transfers. BHEA's Executive Board met with certificated bargaining team members on Oct. 2 to analyze the bargaining surveys and to set this year's priorities for negotiations. BHEA will soon provide a more detailed summary of member responses to this survey.

## CTA Recommendations: Election Season Brings Full Ballot on Nov. 4

Election Day on Nov. 4 will ask voters to decide on a slew of California ballot initiatives as well as our next U.S. President. The California Teachers Association, our parent union, remains neutral on some issues but has made recommendations to its members on the following items:

- YES on Proposition 3. \$980 million state bond for children's hospitals. Yes because it improves health, welfare, and safety of children.
  - NO on Prop. 4. Parental notification and waiting period before teen abortions pregnancy. No because of negative health risks to teenage girls. Similar propositions rejected twice before by Californians in recent years.
  - NO on Prop. 6. \$965 million in funding for prisons and police plus creation of new gang-related crimes and increased penalties. No because the price tag of this initiative would divert needed funding from public schools. California already spends four times more per prisoner than per student.
  - NO on Prop. 8. Eliminates right of same-sex couples to marry. No because CTA believes that this initiative would eliminate equal protection under the law for same-sex couples.
  - NO on Prop. 9. Victim's rights and parole for criminals. No because several of the victim's rights clauses of this initiative are redundant with current law. Other clauses of this proposition could potentially cost California hundreds of millions of dollars in increased prison costs due to this initiative's proposed restrictions on parole.
  - Barack Obama for U.S. President. The National Education Association, CTA's parent union, supports Obama because his views on public education align with NEA's. Obama wants to overhaul NCLB, opposes linking teachers' salaries to test scores, supports class size reduction, opposes private school vouchers, and supports increasing student financial aid for college.
- You may view more extensive discussions and rationale behind CTA's recommendations by logging onto the "My CTA" section of [CTA.org](http://CTA.org). Also, BHEA has posted more information on online at: [BHEA.org/Elections.htm](http://BHEA.org/Elections.htm)

## Measure E Facilities Bond Heads to BH Voters on Nov. 4

• **\$334 million measure would be spent on infrastructure improvements throughout BHUSD.**

The Beverly Hills Unified School District is promoting passage of a \$334 million school bond on Election Day, Nov. 4. According to the Measure's backers, the money generated from BH property taxes to fund this school bond would be used to improve the seismic safety and security of buildings and to modernize classrooms, gymnasiums, libraries, technology, and utilities such as heating, ventilation, and electrical output.

The website in support of Measure E is: [www.beverlyhillsmeasuree.com](http://www.beverlyhillsmeasuree.com). This website contains many details associated with the bond itself, a list of October dates for information sessions about the bond, and a "frequently asked questions" section. Any BHEA members who wish to find out more about the bond or who wish to volunteer to support its passage may visit the above website or call 310-688-5437.

## Oct. 16: DUI Seminar

The Iranian American Parents Association is sponsoring an information seminar on the consequences of drunk driving on Oct. 16. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Beverly Hilton hotel on Wilshire and Santa Monica. If interested, RSVP as soon as possible to 310-358-3337.

## July 29: Board of Ed. Meeting

Highlights from the July 29 Board of Education meeting include:

### High School Physical Education/Dance Program:

- Nineteen people, including parents, students, former students, and community members either spoke or submitted cards in support of maintaining a strong HS dance program. Janet Roston said that dance modules could be included into the 08-09 PE curriculum. Marilyn Weiss told a story of how her daughter went on to succeed in life because of dance. Ariella Herman that the HS should maintain a full-time dance teacher. One student was in favor of dance but didn't necessarily want the PE credit. Elizabeth Chait said that students in elementary school "strive" for HS dance. There was also confusion in the audience over whether the HS dance program had been cut when the Board voted back in February to eliminate one HS PE position.
- Three people either spoke or submitted cards saying that theater and performing arts would be adversely affected if additional sections of dance were added at the high school. Joel Pressman said the expansion proposal is "hasty, not well-thought out." Another community member said that the proposal was being "rushed through" without "proper feedback."
- Fran Lebkowitz said that she is not opposed to expanding dance, but that students still need to get PE credit. Another student disagreed with cuts to the dance production program.
- BHEA Pres. Chris Bushée spoke about the fairness of the process. He argued that it was too close to the beginning of the 08-09 school year to make a programmatic change to PE. He said that there has been limited opportunity for discussion. He said that he supports the administration's recommendation to use the 08-09 school year to develop the necessary dance curriculum for a successful transition.
- Board VP Nooshin Meshkaty asked, "Is this a joke district?" in reference to the proposed expansion of the HS dance program. She said, "We have failed. Don't put it on the backs of kids" in reference to students not being able to receive dance instruction. She said that our district should have been in compliance with PE "Course 1/2" requirements since 2005 and questioned the

rush to comply now. She speculated that communication from the district administration to teachers was poor. She said that non-compliance could become a WASC accreditation issue. She said that curriculum can be adopted by the start of the 08-09 school year to create a freshman and sophomore dance program. She asked how multiple-sport athletes comply with Course 1/2 requirements.

- Supt. Kari McVeigh said that a new PE dance curriculum cannot be developed in time for the 08-09 school year.
- Board member Brian Goldberg asked why dance was not included when other team sport modules were integrated into Course 1/2 over the last few years. McVeigh responded that it is because dance is not a seasonal team sport.
- Board member Steve Fenton said that he needed to hear from the PE Dept. to make an informed decision.
- Board member Myra Lurie said that the discussion should be broadened to include other programs that were cut. She spoke in favor of a "feeder" system for the dance program. She said that no one advocated for dance when cuts were being made last February. She said that cuts to the dance program would disproportionately affect girls over boys.
- Board Pres. Myra Demeter said that more facts are needed. She stressed that freshman dance at BHHS will not get PE credit or VAPA credit in its current form because dance is not currently covered in our Course 1/2 description. She said, "It is unusual to ask for a program to be reevaluated in the middle of the summer."
- The Board voted 3-1-1 to expand HS PE by three sections, with those sections focused on dance. Demeter voted against expansion and Fenton abstained.

### Facilities Needs/School Bond Election:

- A community member said that accountability has not been good enough in years past on BHUSD bond measures. He also said that he's concerned that the administrative staff report on our facilities needs is not impartial enough.
- Facilities consultant Karen Christiansen said that BHUSD's buildings rate a 2 for safety on a 1-5 scale, with 1 = worst.
- A political consultant presented data suggesting that a Nov. 2008 bond election would be favorable. She said that many districts don't start their November bond campaigns until August.

- Demeter said that "seismic and structural" repairs to our buildings must be made. She supported a Nov. '08 date. She said that general fund money would eventually need to be used for "security issues" if no bond is passed.
- Goldberg said that it's a misperception that our buildings are unsafe. He said that the district is moving too fast by organizing for a Nov. '08 bond. He said that extra time is needed to build support for the bond.
- A district-hired attorney said that Board members have personal liability for injuries arising from unsafe buildings under the Field Act only when the buildings have been certified as unsafe and nothing is subsequently done.
- Fenton argued in favor of scheduling a Mar. '09 bond election because of so many issues that will appear on the Nov. '08 ballot that could take the focus off of our district's bond message. He asked how the district can raise enough money for a successful bond campaign "in 98 days."
- Lurie said that Nov. '08 has a more advantageous voter pool than Mar. '09.
- The Board voted 3-2 against putting the bond on the Mar. '09 ballot with only Fenton and Goldberg in support.
- The Board voted 4-0 in support of putting the bond on the Nov. '08 ballot with Goldberg abstaining. The bond would generate \$334 million if passed by 55% of the voters of BH.

## IMPORTANT DATES:

- Oct. 9: Local holiday (no school).
- Oct. 10: Staff Development Day (pupil-free).
- Oct. 14: Board of Ed. study session on permits/enrollment, Board Room.
- Oct. 14: Certificated bargaining.
- Oct. 16: BHEA Rep. Council meeting, Room 118, BHHS, 3:45 p.m.
- Oct. 28: Board of Ed. meeting.
- Nov. 3: Certificated paychecks reflective of new 08-09 salary rates.
- Nov. 4: Election Day.
- Nov. 13: BHEA Rep. Council meeting, Room 118, BHHS, 3:45 p.m.
- Nov. 13: Board of Ed. study session, topic to be announced, Board Room.
- Nov. 18: Board of Ed. meeting.
- Nov. 20: Board of Ed. study session, topic to be announced, Board Room.
- Dec 5: Certificated retroactive pay will be issued on or before this date.