



BEVERLY HILLS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Educational Employees Working Together

Web: BHEA.org

241 Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills CA 90212

Phone: (310) 277-9364

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Dear Editor of the Beverly Hills *Weekly*:

Willie Brien. Virginia Maas. John Mirisch. These are the candidates that the teachers of Beverly Hills are endorsing for City Council. How did our association arrive at this recommendation and why are educational employees taking an interest in this city election?

For most of this current decade, BHEA did not play an active role in either school district or city politics. However, our district made many administrative decisions in the middle of this decade that we believe could have been better, particularly in the area of administrative personnel choices. We have also felt an increasing sense of isolation, a shifting workplace environment where our views as professionals are not being incorporated into decision-making. In the fall of 2007, teachers decided that it was time for us to use our collective voice to speak to the community about these issues. We endorsed both Steven Fenton and Brian Goldberg for the school board and in November of 2007, Beverly Hills voters elected both of them.

Now here we are a little more than a year later. The city and the school district share a close, mutually beneficial relationship. Rather than operating in separate worlds, decision-making in the city affects the district and vice versa. Teachers recognize this. Last month, we conducted face-to-face interviews with the nine candidates who sought our endorsement in this election. We asked the candidates their opinions on communication, joint use of district facilities, labor relations, the local press, and the issue of public versus private schools. We followed an objective process that focused on candidates' positions and records on the issues that matter to us as educators. We offer to you, the Beverly Hills voters, our conclusions through the endorsement of Brien, Maas, and Mirisch.

Teachers know that education is one of several important topics that the Beverly Hills electorate must consider when choosing the next City Council. BHEA is excited about playing a role in this important process. Willie Brien, Virginia Maas, and John Mirisch bring a healthy mix of political experience, fortitude, and willingness to challenge the status quo. This is good for the city and, by extension, good for our schools.

Christopher Bushée
President, Beverly Hills Education Association