



# BEVERLY HILLS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

*Educational Employees Working Together*

Web: BHEA.org

241 Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills CA 90212

Phone: (310) 277-9364

Speech on layoffs delivered by BHEA Pres. Chris Bushee at the May 11, 2010 Board of Education meeting:

“Good evening. I urge you to reject this layoff resolution and allow the 10 affected teachers the opportunity to continue educating our kids next year. Here is BHEA’s four-point case:

#1. The district has not done enough to shore up confidence in a budget pockmarked by 1.4 million dollars in accounting errors. Where were the public study sessions on the budget? Where was the public unveiling of a line-by-line analysis that plainly shows this deficit perceived by the administration? These important trust-building events did not occur since the district began pursuing layoffs. In the last three months, our district has spent more time debating law firms, bell schedules, and facilities than it has spent debating this budget in public. And now, 10 teachers may find themselves the unwitting victims of what? A void of interest in overturning every possible stone to try to save their jobs? I just haven’t seen the district put forth the public effort required to justify making a decision with such deleterious effects.

#2. Our district receives more money on a per-pupil basis than virtually any other district in the state. Basic aid, the JPA, BHEF, and our PTA combined provide us with revenue most California districts could only dream of. Does it make sense to you that--absent a public, line-by-line budget analysis showing otherwise--BHUSD could have grown into all of this revenue to the point where, instead of debating increases to classroom supplies, technology, and wages, we need to lay off 10 teachers? Absent proof, that doesn’t make sense to me.

#3. This is the third year in a row that our district has pursued teacher layoffs. In 2008, the district issued three dozen layoff notices and followed through on 11. Last year, the district pursued four layoffs and followed through on one. Consider the cumulative effect on the cohesiveness and morale of the staff of having to endure three straight years of involuntary severing of employment. In BHEA’s opinion, the intangible cost to our educational mission of another year of layoffs outweighs whatever financial benefit you seek to gain.

#4. BHEA has addressed the Board at every one of your meetings since February and we have provided you with constructive and logical ideas and suggestions to help the administration address its perceived budget difficulties. We have not just complained, but rather assisted our employer in finding ways to avoid layoffs. BHEA has done this consistently and repeatedly and we have noticed, with appreciation, the district incorporate some of our suggestions. But we seek to close the loop. I hope that you agree with me when I say that avoiding layoffs is not just an employee interest, but rather a district interest since the district is responsible for its hiring practices.

I urge you to reject this resolution. Don’t reward uncertainty about the budget by acting on fear. Act instead on faith and stand behind your investment in our human capital. Thank you.”