

TEMPLE CITY *Voice*

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SEPTEMBER 25, 2009

District BTSA Program Begins a New Year

By Sophia Chang

Temple City High School (TCHS) had its first BTSA meeting last week.

The BTSA, also known as Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment, is a two-year program for teachers with preliminary teaching credentials.

Tina Cunningham, director of the BTSA consortium for the Temple City Unified School District (TCUSD), reviews the credentials of candidates and contacts the chosen teachers. A "mentor", or a teacher already employed in the particular department of school, is matched with the newly selected teacher. The partners attend various meetings once a week, sometimes together and sometimes alone to more specific role-oriented meets.

Teachers already employed in the respective schools would ease the newcomer's assimilation while relaying basic teaching skills to them.

In the past, teachers had to receive instruction on education from schools after their preliminary programs. In 2002, TCUSD implemented the BTSA program.

Teachers are generally positive about this program. Ryan Hoague, who



SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT EXTENDED UNTIL 2010: *The Temple City School Board voted to extend Superintendent Chelsea Kang-Smith's contract one additional year on Wednesday, September 23.*

Photo Courtesy of TCUSD

teaches AP English Literature and Composition and Creative Style at TCHS, believes that a compatible match can be of tremendous benefit to the mentee teacher.

"Teaching is a very isolating activity," he says. "It has generally not been collaborative and I see [BTSA] as an effort to change that. It definitely helps us get away from the 'sink or swim' method that teachers before BTSA have had to go through.

The only part of BTSA that seemed to dissatisfy teachers was **"BTSA" on Page 2**

School Board Extends Kang-Smith's Contract to 2012

By Chris Du

The local School Board voted Wednesday evening to extend Temple City Unified School District (TCUSD) Superintendent Chelsea Kang-Smith's employment contract.

Kang-Smith became the District superintendent on August 1, 2008. Her contract was expected to mature in three years, but the School Board lengthened it to 2012.

Soon after taking over, the TCUSD faced its biggest challenge in years: budget cuts. The School Board cut the 2008-2009 budget and handed out pink slips to teachers, clerks and custodial staff.

Despite the dire circumstances, School Boardmembers attested to the strong leadership Kang-Smith has shown during her first

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News Brief: *Meg Whitman, former CEO of eBay formally announced her candidacy for the Republican gubernatorial nomination.*

Sacramento Bee

UNPUBLISHED, HISTORICAL NEWS STORY

Moratorium on Medical Marijuana Extended

By Randy Shun

A moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries and the distribution of the substance within Temple City has been extended.

The City Council unanimously supported prolonging the ban for an additional 10 months and 15 days at its meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2009.

Marina Drabkin, an independent medical consultant, again testified in opposition to continuing the current prohibition. Drabkin's case for a medical marijuana dispensary in Temple City had prompted the City Council to enact the urgency ordinance in April.

Enacted on April 21, urgency ordinance 09-926U prevents the establishing or operating of a marijuana dispensary in Temple City. After hearing from Drabkin, councilman Tom Chavez stated his support for the ordinance, noting there were still many questions surrounding the business.

Councilman Fernando Vizcarra agreed. He

added that additional legal advice was needed on the issue.

Earlier, the Planning Commission had recommended creating an ordinance prohibiting the business. The emergency ordinance also had the backing of Community Development Manager Joseph Lambert.

Public Safety Officer Brian Ariizumi said at the April 21 council meeting that cities with medical marijuana dispensaries did experience an increase in crime. He cited the cities of West Hollywood and Walnut as examples.

However, medical marijuana could also bring desperately needed tax revenues to Temple City, claimed Drabkin on April 21. Drabkin pointed to the city of Santa Monica. Her attorney, Anthony Curicle, who appeared at the April council meeting, was not present on June 2. The moratorium will remain on the city's law books, at least until April 2010.

Also on Tuesday night, the City Council directed staff to draft an ordinance banning smoking from city parks.



BTSA Holds First Meeting of the School Year

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the amount of time required of the mentors.

Mihee Kim, who instructs AP Studio Art, Honors Painting and Art 1, commented, "It is definitely a great learning opportunity for both mentor and mentee; however, there is so much time dedicated to it that, at times, you end up not being able to dedicate as much time to your own students."

"I'd like to see fewer paperwork tasks and more classroom observation and interaction," suggests Hoague.

The stipend of a mentoring teacher is about \$15,000-compared to the starting salary of a coach, which is around \$40,000-is quite low when one considers the amount of dedication mentoring requires.

When asked how this affects mentor morale, Hoague responds, "Many teachers see the value in doing extra things...they want to help. Money isn't the prime motivating factor."

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Kang-Smith to Stay as Superintendent until 2012

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year.

School Board Vice-President Rachel LaSota, who previously voted against hiring Kang-Smith, stated it was a wise decision to stay with one leader, especially given the "downhill ride of the state."



Matt Smith, Board Clerk and up for re-election in November, added that Kang-Smith "passed with fine colors." He supported an extension of the superintendent's contract.

While School Boardmembers supported the move, teachers from several of the District's elementary schools did not. Teachers from Longden, La Rosa and Emperor elementary schools spoke up against extending Kang-Smith's tenure an additional year. Some asked the School Board to wait a year before deciding to do so.

Teachers have been unhappy about the actions the School Board has taken the previous year. Some complained about having to buy their own supplies when there was a 23 percent reserve in funds. Others were furious about the pink slips and layoffs.

Chelsea Kang-Smith is the seventh and first Asian superintendent of the TCUSD.

She was previously an area superintendent of the San Diego Unified School District, overseeing 27 schools. Kang-Smith has been a principal, assistant principal, a high school and middle school teacher, and a substitute teacher.

If a future School Board decides not to renew her contract, her last day will be June 30, 2012.

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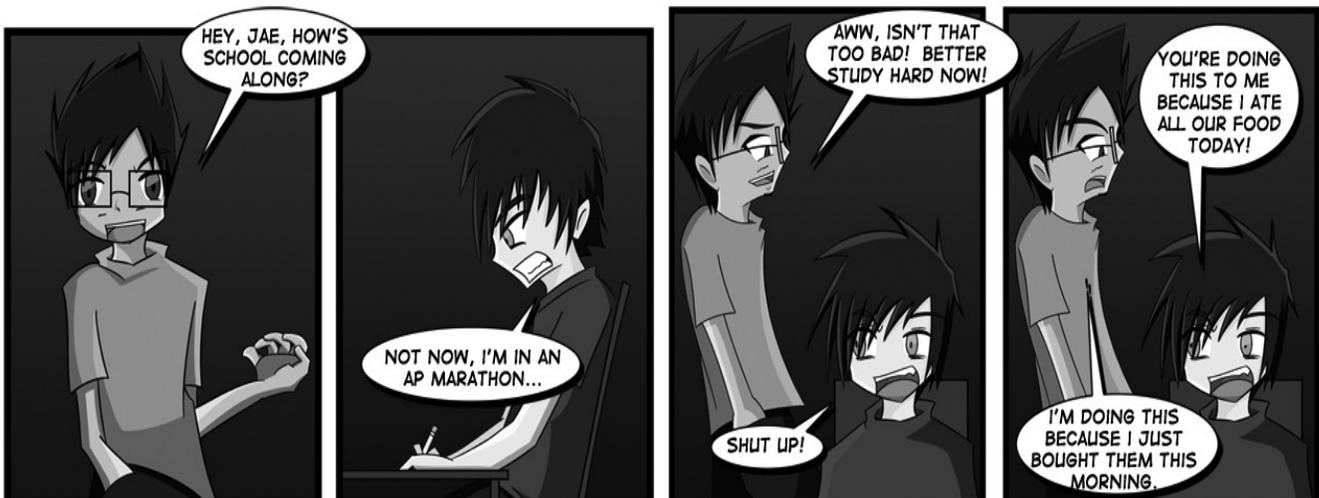
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This week's comic was drawn by Jason Alvin Wu.

EDITOR'S COLUMN: BUDGET CUTS

According to UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, governments in North America and Western Europe invest 5.6% of their GDP on public education. The Arab states trail closely behind at 4.9%, and sub-Saharan Africa at 4.5%, with Central and East Asia at the lowest in the world—2.8%. This means we are unmatched in how much money we allocate for education.

However, that does not mean that 7 billion in educational budget cuts is justifiable.

With the latest budget cuts in education, our AP Chemistry class is down to about only a dollar per student. That is not enough to pay for modern science equipment needed for lab projects, which are many times the only means that chemistry students can directly observe what they are learning. The art department is even more heavily impacted. Two advanced classes, though large and attention-demanded, are forced to take place in the same class period, because there is only one instructor.

And though our school is heavily impacted by the budget cuts, it has not suffered as greatly as other schools. Online petitions and protests have broken out throughout the state to save schools that are now forced to shut down, forcing the students to relocate to further schools. Besides the messy process of sorting in an entire school of kids into another one, this forces kids as young as elementary students to have to wake up an hour earlier to go through 9 hour school days, and have less time to study and complete their homework; and this is assuming that there are no traffic complications. Blogs track the progress of the protestors' efforts and ask for help from the online community.

The questions remain: are we really able to maintain quality education with such low funding? How about the reformations that educators constantly preach about? Would those ideas be able to be carried out now that little or no cold cash backs them up?

As students, what we can do right now is embrace what education we have and make sure that none of it goes to waste. The state has severely cut the input, and thus we must work to maintain the previous level of output. At the same time, try not to fret, and definitely don't give up. Tough times have always produced the most capable people, and this situation is no different.

Sophia

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Letters to the Editor...

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UPCOMING EVENTS

September	25	Staff Development Day
	29	TCHS High School 101 <i>TCHS Media Center @ 7 P.M.</i>
	30	PCC Vision 20/20 Town Hall Meeting <i>@ District Office</i> 3-5 P.M. and 7-9 P.M.
October	5	City Council Meeting <i>Council Chambers @ 7:30 P.M.</i>
	17	Fall Festival <i>Temple City Park 10 A.M. - 4 P.M.</i>



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