

# Let's Talk January 2026

## Topic: Phones in classrooms

1. Now that California laws have been updated to include more phone restrictions for kids in classrooms as of the upcoming school year, what measures are being considered to keep our kid's mental and emotional health in mind while making learning more distraction free in the classroom? What restrictions are being considered?

**Response:** As of now, no further restrictions are being considered. We plan on getting feedback from all our education partners after Spring Break to determine next steps. As a district, we are well ahead of the state law mandated **Phone-Free School Act (AB 3216)** taking effect by July 2026.

## Topic: School Board meetings

1. While the decorum email was greatly appreciated, it seems that Joel Schlossman's continues to disrespect civility requirements. There is a fear that his or other individuals' anger could escalate, causing there to be safety concerns during our school board meetings. Is there a way to have law enforcement or some other type of control over the meeting to ensure the safety of all attendees?

**Response:** We do have options to strengthen safety, including requesting Burbank Police Department presence, exploring hiring district or contracted security, and enforcing our Board's civility and conduct policies, which allow removal of individuals who become disruptive or threatening. We can also coordinate with law enforcement in advance when there are known concerns. Please know that we are monitoring the situation closely and will take any necessary steps to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all attendees.

2. How do I figure out who the school board member for my neighborhood is?

Response: <https://www.burbankusd.org/>

(look for News and Announcements section,

<https://ndcresearch.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=18ead190d84d40b88ce06b2e44431e88>

3. The Community Session that took place and was shared as being a Town Hall was not a Town Hall. The questions submitted were not read as the questionnaire stated they would be. There was no dialogue with the attendees. It was a misleading event. Does the district plan to have a Town Hall that includes dialogue with the audience?

**Response:** Dr. Macias has hosted several "Voices of Burbank Unified" - Dialogue with Dr. Macias events throughout the school year that are structured as Q and A. Next event is Jan 29, 2026@ 5 pm at the District Office Board Room

## Topic: High School Schedules

1. If the zero period minutes seem to be an issue, is there a way to add a 7th period instead? Or a way to have a zero period and a 7th period?

**Response:** We offer select courses in period 0 and period 7. Period 7 courses are quite limited and generally only include performing arts and some sports. Contractually, it is challenging to assign teachers to teach outside of the traditional school day. It also puts a strain on

administration and support staff to provide supervision and support services beyond the traditional school day.

2. Is the zero period really about not having funds to pay our teachers? Seems the law says that Zero period is not included in SB 328. This means that schools may continue to offer zero-period classes. Given that the standard school day (Periods 1) would now start at 8:30 a.m. or later, zero period would also start at a correspondingly later time – so these students would also start their days later and be able to get more sleep. SB 328 doesn't eliminate zero period; it just shifts its potential start time later, aligning with the new main school day start. The law says Classes must be for a "limited" number of students, though the law doesn't define this number, leaving discretion to districts. It is up to our district. So why are our high school's currently cutting zero periods for 9th and 10th and talking about getting rid of the option all together? If a student is there periods 1-4 which is 240 minutes which is what is required to receive ADA funding and the students in grades 9-11 must take at least 6 classes. So even though zero doesn't count toward funding the rest of their day would. So, what is the reason we are trying to phase out Zero periods that are so important for our students to get all the classes they need to be competitive to apply for Universities?

**Response:** We've been working with our auditors to ensure compliance with both ADA funding rules and instructional time requirements. Under SB328 and Ed Code §46148, any classes scheduled before 8:30AM (such as zero period) do not generate ADA funding. Zero period is allowed under the law, but it must be optional for students. This means we cannot require students to take a zero-period class, which can make it challenging to fill certain courses. Additionally, because zero-period classes do not generate ADA funding, offering them widely can create financial and staffing constraints. Contractual agreements also affect how and when we can assign teachers to these early classes.

Our goal is not to eliminate zero period but to balance compliance, fiscal responsibility, and operational feasibility. We will share more detailed guidance soon, including how these factors influence scheduling decisions.

3. Could there be an explanation sent out to families with a more comprehensive explanation about how dual enrollment language courses work. Could we or are we partnering with community colleges for an easy path for our students to take the A-G World Language requirement outside of our high schools as it's not required to graduate but is required to meet A-G standards. We can ask our counselors but they are currently telling our students to drop the elective or sport that is taking up the class spot for a language. But if this is an option can we make it easier for families to be aware of it?

**Response:** This is an alternative option that the College Board allows for students to meet the A-G world language requirement. It specifies that students must pass a 1st year college world language comprehensive exam. This requires further collaboration with one of our local community colleges. This option needs to be explored further and evaluated (impact on acceptance/admissions for example) before it can be made available to students. Counselors are providing correct guidance to students to meet the A-G requirements of 2 years of world language and recommending 3 years to be competitive to universities.

4. Can you explain why sports in this district take up a class period which makes it harder for multisport athletes to take all of the classes they need for A-G requirements? Can students have an exception to the 8 class maximum if they are in a fall and a winter sport that together take up two fall class periods?

**Response:** Board Policy only allows 10 additional credits per semester beyond the 30 credits earned in 6-period day. Multi-sport athletes typically are not enrolled in two sports simultaneously and would add/drop courses at the transition of season to avoid this conflict

and issue with credits over the maximum allowed. Additionally, students with six classes would take priority for seats available in courses before a 7th or 8th course request would be scheduled, so availability and scheduling conflicts must also be considered.

5. The recent decision to strictly limit summer school opens combined with the slow eradication of zero period is directly harming currently enrolled students who had created a 4 year plan with their counselors. It seems very much that Burbank has decided to push all students into the community college route with an eventual path (maybe) to transfer to a 4 year university rather than provide students with the opportunity to compete to enter into a 4 year college directly. This is especially true if you unnecessarily force students to drop the very interests (such as involvement in arts programs or sports) that 4 year universities prize so they can meet the bare minimum academic requirements (unnecessary because these students would happily take on more classes, e.g. 7-8 periods a day plus summer). This decision by the District further harms the district's own goal of halting declining enrollment. Burbank already sees a drop off in high school enrollment from middle school because families that value education do not see Burbank offering the educational opportunities that would make their child competitive for a 4 year college. How is it in the interests of Burbank families to restrict our high schools to be a conduit only for the community college route? How is it in the interest of the Burbank school District that should be working to make our schools more enticing and competitive so as to keep enrollment high?

**Response:** See response to # 8

6. Please explain the Zero period being phased out. We understand the minutes logged for school don't count. And that is an issue with a senior leaving after 4th. But if a younger student wants a zero they are going to have 7 classes. So they will still have 1-6 minutes counted. How does this hurt the overall minutes counted.

**Response:** See response to # 1 and 2

7. Why is there an upcoming "rule" about no student can take 8 classes in high school. Older students who are still given the opportunity to take a zero may have two sports. Counselors are currently pulling students in telling them they have to choose.

**Response:** See response to # 4

8. Many students attended the December board meeting to plead their case for why summer school is necessary to meet selective university requirements (such as accelerating in math or taking 3 years of a language) for high-achieving students who are in sports and performing arts. Was any real consideration given to the impact of taking summer school away from these students? How do we (parents and students) best communicate and advocate for this decision to be reconsidered due to the clearly negative impacts to these students? This decision appears to be an attempt to solve one problem that creates a new serious and highly detrimental problem for other students aiming for competitive universities.

**Response:** Students have been encouraged to speak to their counselors to identify options for summer school. Many of the students who spoke at the board meeting were advocating for other students but didn't have scheduling concerns themselves. Counselors can problem-solve many of these situations and communicate directly with school and district administrators about situations that cannot be resolved. Our students still have opportunities to take History classes, Physical Education, and Electives over the summer. We are avoiding classes that students have had difficulty completing over the summer in light of tight deadlines and calendars. The majority of courses that were prohibited have traditionally been prohibited, but weren't communicated upfront or early in the process. The intent was to add clarity before the process begins. World language, mathematics, and science courses over the summer have not adequately prepared the majority of students to continue in those subject areas into year 2,

3, or 4 coursework. Science, for example, is avoided because lab work is not comparable to in-person labs. Individual petitions have been approved in the past few years for some of the courses in question, but were considered in order to provide flexibility for students who lost opportunities or were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning that occurred in the spring of 2020 through the fall of 2021.

### **Topic: Summer School**

1. In the board meeting Ms Markuessen mentioned DEI as a reason to not offer extra summer school options as some students can't afford. Did anyone try to find a solution as opposed to some cannot so none can do? Our high school PTAs currently raise funds for scholarships, some of the money they raise could be allocated for specific circumstances where a student wants to take summer school but can't afford it. A summer scholarship. Or at the very least can't we discuss options vs just no one is given the opportunity?
2. Could you please explain to the BUSD community on what basis the decision to take away most summer school classes was made? Do you believe the best interests for ALL students were considered in this decision? What national or local educational data that shows improved outcomes or any shows any metric or outcome that would support this decision to take away learning opportunities? Why is BUSD taking these opportunities away while other surrounding districts are offering an abundance of opportunities for summer learning?

**Response:** See response from High School Schedules # 8. Students are encouraged to speak with the counselor to determine the best options for a summer initial credit course. The majority of students have three subject areas to consider for initial credit. "Take away most summer classes" is an inaccurate statement. Traditionally, many of these summer courses have not been offered. Counselors can communicate with site and district administrators about specific schedules/courses when an initial credit course cannot be identified for students.

### **Topic: Curriculum**

1. Is there district guidance or oversight on the use of technology in the classroom, in regard to the quantity of online time students are spending vs. real-time engagement with an educator or practicing tactile, hands-on learning? If there is not, how might we address this? If classrooms are asking students to do a large percentage of work online, the students must be taught digital literacy. I am a parent of a 4th grader and do not see this taking place.

**Response:** At the elementary level, we utilize programs via technology, textbooks, and also hands-on materials. Teachers make a point of balancing these tools and their instructional practices as a whole. A policy and/or regulation does not exist to outline the amount of time spent utilizing technology for students/classrooms. The TPACK model has been communicated via trainings and professional development to help teachers identify when technology is the best tool or a program is the best instructional practice to engage in a learning activity or lesson. Digital literacy is a component of our graduation requirements and is embedded throughout our students' educational experience. Plans are being discussed with our next Chromebook refresh to incorporate explicit computer/digital literacy curriculum/instruction at specific benchmarks in our students' academic career. Input would be appreciated from parents/students. Lastly, if there are concerns about the amount of time spent using technology in a classroom, it is recommended that parents/students reach out to

the teacher first to discuss and possibly conference about the amount of time devoted to technology.

2. While the district has GATE, Honors and Advanced Placement, it feels as though "high achieving kids" and even "at grade level" kids are ignored to focus on kids that need to get to grade level. Is there an option to focus on all kids, creating opportunities for the kids that want to keep pushing the boundaries helping them for future stages in life? I get that parents can be seen to be behind a lot of the push, but there are definitely kids who want opportunities. Being told that they are not special or cannot do all the things is very frustrating and discouraging, and sidelining these kids does not create the educational environment that we should be striving for.

**Response:** Meeting the needs of all students is a core priority for us, and we work hard to ensure every learner, whether they need support, are on grade level, or are ready for more challenge, has meaningful opportunities to grow. Differentiated instruction in the classroom, enrichment offered during and beyond the school day, and a range of after-school activities all help us create those pathways. At the elementary level, for example, students engage in hands-on, inquiry-based learning with their teachers in the campus STEAM labs, which gives them space to explore, extend, and deepen their thinking.

3. Each school seems to be operating as separate entities, following different rules and even ways that they are addressing education. Is this normal? If it is not, is there a way to get all our schools on the same page? While certain programs can only be offer at certain schools, living in a certain part of the city should not determine how our children are educated and/or how well programs are run.

**Response:** While it's true that programs vary across school sites, we place great value on offering meaningful and unique opportunities at every campus. In many cases, these differences reflect the specific needs and interests of each school community. If families feel an interest or need is not being met, we encourage parents and guardians to reach out to the site leadership so those perspectives can be heard and considered.

### **Topic: Campus Safety (Narineh)**

1. What has been done to improve safety and security at BHS since the attempted murder of one student by another student with a weapon that was likely with the student at school right outside BHS? Is the district filling campus supervisor positions in a timely matter given the urgency of the situation with campus supervision? What can be done quickly and what are long term plans to keep weapons off campus?

**Response:** Extra Campus Supervision was added to BHS. Yes, BUSD is filling campus supervision positions in a very timely manner. Long term plans are being discussed with school personnel, district personnel.

2. How are our school administrators are being supported and trained in knowing how to deal with the growing presence of ICE in our region, and what to do in the case that agents show up at a school?

**Response:** Administrators and office personnel have the BUSD Protocols. They were just resent the protocols as a reminder. District Leadership is in constant contact with our principals, as well. In short, if ICE agents show up at a school, administrators know to immediately call the Superintendent's Office and not allow the agents on campus.

3. What the district is doing to amplify safe school environments, and how are those communications going out to families in an accessible, inclusive way?
4. What opportunities can the district provide families to stay informed about the safety of their children at school? There is a digital BUSD resource page - but families are not looking online for support. We need other points of engagement.

**Response:** The Superintendent's Office would like to know if there are suggestions/ideas as to what other points of engagement look like. We want to be partners in communication.

### **Topic: Elementary**

1. Could you provide clarification on why the Good News Club is still operating at Disney Elementary? Our understanding was that the club rotates among different school.

**Response:** The Good News Club continued at Disney this year for several reasons, including available space and summer communication. That is correct that the club generally rotates among the different schools and will likely do so for the 2026-2027 school year.

### **Topic: Calendar (**

1. When will the instructional calendar for 2026-2027 be available? When will the calendar for 2027-2028 be available?

**Response:** This will be on the Feb. 5, 2026 Board Agenda for approval. Moving forward, the BUSD Calendar Committee will be approving 2 instructional year calendars at a time.

2. Can the District publish and maintain a list and calendar of the approved celebrations it observes? For example, Deaf Awareness month, teacher appreciation week, PTSA Membership month. There is no single document that acts as a reference for these approved celebrations and having a list available would be helpful. It would also be helpful to note if it is a national or local celebration.

**Response:** Yes, this can be done. Thank you for this suggestion

### **Topic: Enrollment (Narineh)**

When enrollment information is presented, rather than looking at the numbers for an outgoing cohort and their incoming numbers for the next grade (outgoing 7th graders to incoming 8th graders which are the same group/kids graduating the same year), the reports are presented as outgoing cohort and the incoming numbers for the same grade (incoming 7th graders to incoming 7th graders so two different groups/kids who are graduating different years). It seems like while the overarching goal is to understand enrollment fluctuation year over year, wouldn't the immediate goal be to see that the same graduating year cohorts are fairly similar year over year and that we are not losing mass amounts of existing enrolled kids? Additionally, by comparing two different grades, the numbers go up and down at similar levels year over year because it seems like drastic changes would be rare (ex. 7th graders are not all of a sudden going to have 100 additional enrollees but they could have 20 new enrollees and 10 kids who disenroll). Why is the information presented this way?

**Response:** Enrollment reports can definitely be presented in a number of ways. An Enrollment Study is almost completed and hope to have in presented in March 2026/

### **Topic: Music Education (Peggy)**

How much does our Elementary Music Education program cost? What is the budget for it? Which grade levels receive that instruction?

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***How much does our Elementary Music Education program cost? What is the budget for it? Which grade levels receive that instruction?***

The cost to maintain the current music program for the 2026-2027 school year is estimated to be approximately \$575k (\$557, 508.00 in Salaries and Benefits and a recommended \$20k available for repairs, replacements, and maintenance).

In 2025-2026 ALL TK-5 students receive weekly general music instruction. 5829 students weekly

The program is funded by multiple sources.

Prop 28 Pooled Funds	\$310, 741	4 Credentialed Music Teachers
LCAP/General Fund	\$246,767	2 Credentialed Elementary Music Teachers
TCLFF Music Grant	\$55,000	Instrument/ Equipment Repair and Replacement
<p><b><i>Please note: We have received grant funds to support instruments, licenses, equipment, repairs and replacements since 2022. These are not guaranteed indefinitely and have been used for both new and replacement. We do have the funds committed for the 2026-2027 school year. We cannot use these funds for salaries.</i></b></p>		

**Also important to note:** If we do elect to downsize or eliminate the elementary music program, the teachers who have worked with BUSD the longest will have seniority. These are often the highest salaries and elementary music teachers will have bumping rights for any music position at secondary that was hired after they were. The K12 Music Credential does not specify elementary or secondary regardless of the teacher's area of expertise.

Investments made to date, the costs to maintain our investments, and anticipated costs if we were to restart a program after making cuts, whether to single grade levels or the entire program need to be considered before completely eliminating any program or position. There is no reality to "we can cut for a couple of years and then bring back". Start-up costs will be significantly higher. For example, BUSD cut elementary music in 1992. The next time we had sufficient to restore was 2007 with a short term block grant - a full 17 years later. That is a full generation of students who entered and graduated. Higher socioeconomic area schools like Roosevelt and Jefferson had fundraised music programs. Lower socioeconomic sites had zero access and that was reflected in our secondary music enrollment. Research shows that it is also reflected in test scores.

<b>Elementary General Music Program Start Up and Replacement Costs PER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b>		
	<b>Cost Per Site In 2007</b>	<b>2026 Approximate Cost Per Site to Replace</b>
<b>Electric Keyboard</b>	<b>\$850</b>	<b>\$1,300</b>
<b>Projector</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,300</b>
<b>Staff Lined portable white board</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$800</b>
<b>storage cabinet</b>	<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$850</b>



<b>classroom area rug</b>	<b>\$350</b>	<b>\$700</b>
<b>Curriculum (textbooks, audio, and online licensing) Gr 2-5</b>	<b>\$11,328</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>
<b>Orff Instrument Sets</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>
<b>Boom Whackers</b>	<b>\$120</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>Rythmn Sticks</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$175</b>
<b>Shaker Eggs</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Individual student Whiteboards</b>	<b>\$105</b>	<b>\$175</b>
	<b>\$18,513</b>	<b>\$20,150</b>

Here is a breakdown of the Elementary Prop 28 pooled funds contributing to Elementary music teachers (which helps us meet the staffing 80% obligation)

	% of the Districts Allocation	Total Site Allocation	33.5% of Site Allocation TK-5 POOLED Prop 28 Funds for Music	% of share all of the elem. Site 33.5%Al location
Disney	2.84%	\$53,165.00	<b>\$17,810.28</b>	7.04%
Edison	3.07%	\$57,342.00	<b>\$19,209.57</b>	7.59%
Emerson	3.79%	\$70,823.00	<b>\$23,725.71</b>	9.38%
Harte	3.57%	\$66,736.00	<b>\$22,356.56</b>	8.84%

Jefferson	4.89%	\$91,506.00	<b>\$30,654.51</b>	12.12%
McKinley	3.10%	\$58,047.00	<b>\$19,445.75</b>	7.69%
Miller	5.71%	\$106,755.00	<b>\$35,762.93</b>	14.14%
Providencia	3.01%	\$56,225.00	<b>\$18,835.38</b>	7.45%
Roosevelt	3.69%	\$69,071.00	<b>\$23,138.79</b>	9.15%
Stevenson	3.41%	\$63,812.00	<b>\$21,377.02</b>	8.45%
Washington	3.29%	\$61,586.00	<b>\$20,631.31</b>	8.16%