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## Longtime choral teacher takes new position



Photo John T. Miller

**Bruce Lengacher directs his "hybrid" group of choral students in warm-up exercises at Acalanes.**

**By John T. Miller**

Bruce Lengacher, longtime choral teacher at Acalanes High will be leaving the school at the end of the year to take a position with the Acalanes Adult Education

Center. The popular educator has been named the director of music and theater in the Acalanes Continuation and Independent Study program.

Lengacher is excited with the prospects of his new position, adding that he will miss the energy and joy the stu-

dents brought to his high school program.

"I'll also miss the frustrations," he added. "It was never boring, and always worth the frustrations. The students could do something that was a cut above what you usually see in high school."

In contrast to most other teachers, Lengacher got to watch students grow over the course of four years. "I once had a freshman who was so nervous to perform, she threw up in the bushes. By her senior year she blossomed into one of our top soloists."

He will also miss his colleagues, saying, "They were like my family, with the same approach to Arts Education as I had."

He started the Acalanes Choral Boosters, Inc., which became the Acalanes Performing Arts Boosters (APAB) with a regular board and a nonprofit group, using the money for scholarships so that a low-income student

could manage to go on tour.

The choir has gone to Seattle, New York, Chicago, England, Switzerland, France, Vancouver, Southern California and many other locales.

Wendy Gilberd, whose two children graduated from Acalanes and participated in the choral program all four years, praised Lengacher, saying, "Bruce's passion, dedication and enthusiasm made him an exceptional teacher. He worked tirelessly to promote performing arts education at Acalanes. Bruce and his students produced high quality musicals and concerts. Watching my kids performing on stage with their friends will always be one of my most cherished memories as a parent."

Adult education principal Steve France, a former principal at Acalanes, recruited Lengacher for the position. "We are excited to add a vocal music and theater program to our course offerings," he said. "Bruce and I have worked to-

gether for many years and I look forward to the passion and knowledge he will bring to our program."

The admiration is mutual. Lengacher appreciates France's approach to the arts. "It's nice to have an administrator who recognizes the importance of arts education providing a well-rounded experience for all students."

The adult ed program will include a voice lab, a choir, and a musical theater workshop with both performing and technical tracks. Lengacher will also be in charge of the Del Valle theater.

"I'm looking forward to an arts education of a diverse population," says Lengacher. "From English Language Learners, to kids who don't fit in with the typical high school program, to Golden Agers and members of the community, I'm excited that they can share the experience with each other."

## AUHSD to host on-site vaccine clinics in the coming weeks

**By Sophie Braccini**

The Acalanes Union High School District is planning to start the 2021-22 school year this coming August with the same schedule as pre-pandemic. In order to do so safely and in anticipation of health authorities approving the Pfizer vaccine for teens 12 and up, the district will host two vaccination clinics on two campuses in May, open to all and in particular to students.

At the May 5 governing board meeting, Superintendent John Nickerson insisted that the schools would prefer all the students to be vaccinated. The day-long clinics will be on May 18 or May 25, or at the latest June 1. Families will receive directly detailed information on hours

and exact location.

The superintendent noted that vaccination will be the best response to incidents such as a recent outbreak involving 21 students who tested positive for COVID-19 and the resulting quarantining of 100 students in the district. Nickerson confirmed that the cases were related to a party, not to hybrid on-site instruction, and that no spread on campuses was noted.

During that same governing board meeting, Aida Glimme, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services, said that families of incoming students had been asked to confirm their desire to have their students attend school in-person or remotely next school year. Within the four high schools that comprise

the district, only 20 families indicated that they would prefer their student(s) to continue to study remotely. Glimme explained that this small number, spread among

four different grades, was too small for the district to commit resources to such a program. She will contact each family individually to discuss with them how either the

Acalanes Center for Independent Study (ACIS) or the standard campuses with additional staff support will provide an adequate solution.

## Superintendent retires

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Her ability to collaborate with teachers, staff, parents and community members has been the key to navigating this incredibly difficult past year. I am enormously grateful for all she has done for our district!"

Jason Kaune agreed that Seaton has been transformational. "Collaborating with our parents, she helped recreate our foundation as one of her top priorities. She earned confidence from our community to fund the rebuilding of our campuses and built new relationship with our city partners. Inspiring our educators, she accelerated Orinda's academic excellence, even as the state reduced our share of funding. She has a knack for hiring - 'getting the right people on the bus,' she calls it. During the pandemic crisis she steered us through uncertain waters. Orinda schools will

benefit from her leadership for a generation."

Liz Daoust also found Seaton to have been an exceptional leader for OUSD the past five years. "She has an incredible gift for bringing people together and understanding the needs of all stakeholders. Our entire community has benefited from her vast teaching and administrative experience, visionary approach, and boundless positive energy.

"During all of her years in Orinda, but most especially this past extremely challenging pandemic year, she has gone above and beyond in her work with the singular goal of supporting all students, teachers, staff, and parents. She is the true definition of dedication and commitment, and we are extremely grateful for her service to our District. She will be deeply missed, but we wish her all the best in her retirement."



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