

## Published May 12th 2021 Longtime choral teacher takes new position By John T. Miller



Bruce Lengacher directs his "hybrid" group of choral students in warm-up exercises at Acalanes. Photo John T. Miller

blossomed into one of our top soloists."

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 students 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

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 together 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."

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