



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

September 2017

IMPORTANT DATES OCTOBER

- 5th OMSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
- 9th OMTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
- 16th NON-SCHOOL DAY (PD DAY, SEE ARTICLE)
- 19th OMSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
- 30th OMTA REP COUNCIL MEETING

"The more you read
the more things you know.
The more that you learn
the more places you'll go."
-Dr. Seuss

FROM MARYKAY TO YOU



I bet most of us remember the School House Rock cartoons and their reminder that "Knowledge is Power." Teachers, of course, understand the message of that simple statement. Knowledge is indeed power. And for us to acquire knowledge, communication is key.

Because communication is essential, I have been visiting school sites as much as possible – with pre-planned pizza visits and surprise donut deliveries. I've appreciated hearing from you and have shared your observations with the district. We hosted a Kindergarten Open House on September 14 to hear the specific concerns of our Kindergarten teachers as they implement the Extended Day protocol in our two-year MOU. We have plans to begin Open House gatherings for other specific groups to hear their perspective (primary, upper elementary, middle). Watch for those flyers.

We will continue our social events. But we also plan to host several informative trainings throughout the year. We have already hosted one Cal STRS training. A second Cal STRS training is scheduled for March 13. The training covers the basics of the Cal STRS Defined Benefits Program, 2012 Legislative Cal STRS reforms, and Social Security offsets. This training is intended for members of all ages. The younger you are when you learn about how to plan for your retirement, the better your retirement will be. Please come and educate yourself. We provide snacks!

Not only is OMTA offering training, CTA provides multiple leadership development opportunities throughout the year. Your rep has posted information on grants available to members. Anyone interested is encouraged to apply for a grant. You do not need to be an elected representative to participate. These opportunities are open to all of you – every member.

The Executive Board will be starting their Listening Tours soon. An Executive Board member will be visiting every site sometime by early December. During their visits, they will ask your perspective on what's working and what's not. That Executive Board member will continue to be available to you throughout the year.

I am routinely visiting with our OMSD Trustees. They have told me they very much appreciate hearing your perspective. Two of our Board members were able to join us for a regional leadership training on Saturday, September 16 (see article on page 4). We will continue to include them whenever possible. They cannot know how to support teachers if they do not know what teachers need. Keep sharing with me, our Association Executive Board members, and your Site Representatives, so that we can continue to let our elected officials know of your concerns.

I am committed to open and comprehensive communication with our district leaders. In order for us to do the most important work of educating our students, it is crucial for them to be informed. I feel it is my responsibility to elevate your voices, the voices of all our teachers and unit members, so that our students can continue to find success.

MaryKay Scheid, OMTA President



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HEALTH BENEFITS

For those of us who opted to enroll in more than a basic, single-party medical and dental plan, October is the first month that the tenths deductions (our cost for benefits) will be taken from our paychecks. Although our benefit plan year runs from July 1 – June 30, the annual cost is divided over 10 months. The deductibles (if any) and maximum benefits, however, are calculated on an annual basis, January through December. Keep in mind, the vision plan benefit frequencies (i.e. getting a new pair of frames once every two years or new lenses once every 12 months) do not run on a calendar year but instead consider last date of service benefit.

MEDICAL: Medical out-of-pocket maximums are the co-insurance payments you make for any visits, prescriptions, hospital stays. Once you reach the out-of-pocket maximum, your copays become \$0. Those vary from plan to plan. A deductible is the amount of money you must spend before you receive any insurance benefits at all (only a feature of the PPO plans offered in OMSD). Based on this data from the Employee Handbook, a teacher who opted for Trio (Option 1) family coverage would have all medical costs covered after making \$3000 in co-insurance payments. The co-insurance payments you incurred while covered under the Anthem plans were carried over if you switched to Blue Shield. If you remained with Kaiser, you have until December 31 to reach your out-of-pocket maximums; they reset on January 1.

	Blue Shield HMO Option 1	Blue Shield Trio ACO Option 1	Blue Shield HMO Option 2	Blue Shield Trio ACO Option 2
	Classified, Certificated, Management & Confidential	Classified, Certificated, Management & Confidential	Classified	Classified
	In-Network Only	In-Network Only	In-Network Only	In-Network Only
Deductible	None	None	None	None
Out-of-Pocket Maximum	\$1,500 per individual; \$3,000 per family	\$1,500 per individual; \$3,000 per family	\$3,000 per individual; \$6,000 per family	\$3,000 per individual; \$6,000 per family
Lifetime Maximum			Unlimited	

DENTAL: The Employee Handbook also highlights the calendar year benefits for the dental plan. If you are a new employee, or you have not utilized the \$1750 per member maximum, it would be prudent to schedule impending dental procedures in November or December, as your benefits reset in January, 2018. To get information about your dental benefits, how much you have used and what remains, you can reach Delta Dental at 866-499-3001

Delta Dental DPPO Plan Summary	
Annual Maximum Benefit	DPPO Providers: \$1,750 per member, per calendar year Non-DPPO Providers: \$1,500 per member, per calendar year
Calendar Year Deductible	None
Annual Plan year Maximum Period	January 1 through December 31

ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS: You are permitted to enroll your legal spouse, your registered domestic partner, and your children. But there are some differential rules for children. You may cover your unmarried dependent children of any age if “they are incapable of self-support due to mental or physical handicap which occurred before the limiting age.” For medical coverage, you may enroll you married or unmarried children from birth to age 26; BUT for dental and vision coverage, your 19 years and older children must be full-time students to qualify (12 units or more) AND they are disqualified when they turn 25 regardless of their status. Aging out would be considered a qualifying event, and your contributions for their dental and vision coverage will cease (as will, of course, their benefits).

MAKING CHANGES: If you selected Blue Shield, there are some new benefits available to you, including chiropractic and acupuncture care. If you are not happy with your medical practitioner, you are eligible to change your primary care physician during the year. With the district health benefits, you have access to a service called “Health Advocate” to help you navigate your healthcare. Unfortunately, if you selected a plan you no longer find meets your needs, you will not be able to make changes until open enrollment next year. As explained in the Employee Benefits Handbook, “Any changes you make . . . will remain in force through June 30, 2018, unless you have a qualified status change as defined by the IRS.”

SUPPLEMENTAL COVERAGE: Unlike medical, dental, and vision benefits, your voluntary participation in supplemental insurance (like income protection and life insurance) may be changed at any point during the year. You may need to answer some health questions to enroll. If you are enrolled in supplemental plans that allow you to pay pre-tax, you may not change your election until open enrollment, in accordance with IRS rules. To confirm when changes can be made, contact your carrier. 🍏

OCTOBER 16 PD DAY

OMTA President Scheid has signed another MOU to allow for teachers to be paid their per-diem rate for participating in the October 16 Professional Development Day. This PD day is similar to the “buy-back” days we used to have. The term “buy-back day” developed many years ago when the state was funding professional development days at teachers’ per diem rate. Unfortunately, state funding for such

training disappeared years ago. Voluntary trainings (and the October 16 training is voluntary because it is outside of our contracted days) have been paid at a lower “workshop” rate. But, to encourage your participation, the district has offered per-diem for your attendance on October 16. Each site has been empowered to develop their own agenda, so that the training will be meaningful to your work! 🍏

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

The district is consistently working to employ sufficient substitutes. Most school districts are still “short” on subs. At OMTA’s urging, the OMSD Board of Trustees passed a resolution to allow retirees to return to OMSD as substitutes without waiting the 180 days required by Cal STRS. If you know of colleagues who might be interested in returning, please reach out to them. You are also welcome to refer potential subs at any time (even when there isn’t an official opening on Ed Join). When a sub cannot be found for a classroom, the contract offers the following remedy.

Article VIII: HOURS OF WORK

F. Period Substitute Pay:

Each site will address the need for coverage in the event that a substitute is not available. This will include the following procedures:

For Middle Schools: In the event that non-classroom certificated staff is unavailable, the administrator will first ask for volunteers. If no one volunteers for a particular period, the administrator may assign unit members, provided that such assignment is done in an equitable manner from among all available unit members.

Classroom unit members shall be paid 1/5 of the substitute daily rate for each period of coverage they provide. Non-classroom, certificated unit members may provide substitute coverage for no more than five (5) periods in one week without compensation. If such substitute coverage is required more than five (5) periods in one week for non-classroom, certificated unit members, said unit members shall then be compensated 1/5 of the substitute daily rate for each period of coverage they provided in excess of five (5) periods per week.

For Elementary Schools: In the event that non-classroom, certificated staff is unavailable, the administrator shall divide students among other classrooms in an equitable fashion that will have the least impact on the instructional program. Unit members shall be compensated at the substitute daily rate, divided by the number of unit members who provide coverage. If the coverage is for less than one (1) instructional day, the amount shall be pro-rated. Non-classroom, certificated unit members may be required to provide substitute coverage for no more than one (1) instructional day per week. If such substitute coverage is required more than one (1) instructional day per week for non-classroom certificated staff, said unit members shall also be compensated at the substitute daily rate for coverage they provide in excess of one (1) instructional day per week. 🍏



BARGAINING SURVEY

By: Tracy Taylor

OMTA and the District will begin our bargaining process for the 2017-2018 re-opener in October. Next week OMTA will send out a bargaining survey to you, as a member, regarding what you believe to be the most important issues to discuss with the district.

Our union represents many groups with interests that aren’t always the same. Middle school teachers have a different perspective than do primary or upper grade teachers on some topics. Nurses, counselors, and TOAs all have special needs of which many of the rest of us are unaware. However, we all share a desire to be able to provide for our students in affirming and healthy working environments.

We need to remember: we are strongest together and that ALL our interests and perspectives are discussed in the bargaining room.

This is why it is especially important for you and EVERYONE you know to complete the survey. We cannot represent your interests unless we know what they are. The Bargaining Team works on behalf of all Unit Members. That is YOU. No concern is too minor. Help us represent you.



CINDY NEWEY, OFFICE MANAGER

When you contact OMTA, you are likely to speak to our OMTA Office Manager, Cindy Newey. We thought you might like to know more about the voice on the other end of the phone.

Cindy Newey joined OMTA as Office Manager in August, 2004. Her job is to answer telephones and emails, provide support to our Rep Council and Executive Board, and maintain our building. Soon after accepting the job, Cindy proved to be a woman of many talents including bookkeeping, marketing, and event planning.

Cindy often is the first voice disgruntled, tired, angry, or worried teachers hear. She can listen to concerns, write down what they want the president to know, and then soothe and assure them that the president will hear their concerns. She also supports multiple outreach and recognition events throughout the year, designing flyers for our trainings or socials and working closely with 2nd Vice President Daniel Salcido to plan our annual Retirement Dinner.

Executive Board Member Trudy Cowan shares, “Cindy’s is the first voice you hear when you call the office. Even when she is busy she takes the time to make sure the teachers get what they need. I have even watched her get out the contract and look something up and read it to a teacher on the other end of the phone.”

Next time you reach out to OMTA, make sure you say “Thanks” to Cindy. 🍏

CTA REGIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By: Kim Hunter

The one-day “Nuts + Bolts” Leadership conference, held at the Fairplex on Saturday, September 16, was jam-packed with information, all types of partners in education, speakers, good food, and sponsors. We spent the day coming together with common goals in mind, working toward positive student outcomes, and promoting educator success and support.

The morning started with guest speakers Congresswomen Grace F. Napolitano and Judy Chu. Each had messages of “thank you” to our educators. Rep. Napolitano’s inspiration came from her mother, as she was a teacher. Rep. Chu is working on many things, but fixing the gap of Social Security and Cal STRS benefits are priorities.

Mr. Joplin (my Wiltsey colleague) and I shared the day with co-educators, union representatives, our union president MaryKay Scheid, and two of our very own OMSD Board of Trustees Representatives: Alfonso Sanchez and Michael Flores. What a pleasure to be able to share visions and ideas! Our board members are passionate about what we are doing and the resulting

student outcomes. They want to make informed decisions, and what better way to do that than communicate with teachers and visit classrooms? This is what they want to do, and I encourage you to invite them to come visit you and your students.

The sessions offered were numerous. Honestly, there were too many to mention them all. Among the offerings were: teacher leadership, law and public records, bargaining, understanding your retirement, grievance training, and laws protecting students and teachers. One session addressed our district PBIS initiative, and how, in order for it to be successful, PBIS must go hand-in-hand with Restorative Justice and all-inclusive teacher training.

I must mention and thank the sponsors of our conference and want to let them know that they are so very much appreciated: Service Center One (our regional CTA network), California Casualty, California Credit Union, Delta Dental, The Standard, and Vision Service Plan. 🍏



From Left to Right, **Row One:** MaryKay Scheid and Tracy Taylor. **Row Two:** Michael Flores, Alfonso Sanchez, Jermaine Shiver, Brad Joplin, and Kim Hunter
Not Pictured: John Egan and Jeff Mejia

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PE/APE: Vacant
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