



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

September 2013

IMPORTANT DATES

**OMSD SCHOOL
BOARD MEETING**
September 5th

**OMTA EXECUTIVE
BOARD MEETING**
September 9th

**OMSD SCHOOL
BOARD MEETING**
September 19th

**OMTA REP
COUNCIL MEETING**
September 30th

**OMTA has LA County Fair
tickets for Sale!**

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Amy Tompkins

Welcome back for the 2013-2014 school year. I hope everyone had a restful and fun-filled summer vacation. Does the summer seem shorter every year? Here we are back again ready to start the year with a brand new class. I wish you a very productive school year.



Here in OMSD I believe we have started the year on a very positive note. On the first day of school, we received the great news that the district is finally converting approximately 80 of our temporary teachers over to Probationary 2 status, which means they will be permanent on their first day of work next school year. This is a step in the right direction. Of course, I would like to see more temps moved over to probationary status each year. I commit to you that I will continue my discussions with the district this year about why they need to continue moving our dedicated temporary teachers into Probationary Status.

I hope everyone was able to read my welcome back letter regarding bargaining; the letter was emailed out to your reps who should have forwarded it to you. I am looking forward to having better lines of communication open to all members about our upcoming bargaining sessions. Please be on the lookout for the OMTA Bargaining Advisories that will follow each bargaining session. Thank you to those of you who completed the bargaining survey. The bargaining team has spent a great deal of time going over every response so we are prepared on how you would like us to move forward this year in negotiations. Our hope is to start bargaining at the beginning of September.

To those teachers at QEIA schools, I have a commitment from the district that they will keep your classes at 20-1 (K-3; and for grades 4-6, they will keep you at the numbers you are supposed to be at (which varies by site). As you know, a waiver was approved by the state to increase your class sizes. The district's intention for the waiver is to have some flexibility when it comes to bussing. If a family enrolls at your site and one grade level is full, instead of breaking up the family or switching their home school, they will place the student in the class. This is to avoid having to pay for transportation for that student/family. Your classes should not be more than approximately 2 over your limit. Per the contract, the district does have some flexibility with classroom numbers for the first 20 days of school before they will start making adjustments.

In California, while we were on summer vacation, the governor signed the state budget. This budget overhauls public school funding to help at-risk students succeed. The budget also

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includes \$1.25 billion in school district funding to prepare for Common Core State Standards. For OMSD, this means we will receive approximately \$200 in additional money per student to spend on professional development, materials and technology (there are guidelines on how to spend money from the state). This budget is a big step in the right direction for our schools. In the state budget, Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was passed. This is a completely different way for the state to give school districts money. LCFF provides extra money for school districts with high populations of ELLs, students on free and reduced lunch programs and foster youth. As you know, OMSD has many students in these categories. This means more money to help our students. There are many components of LCFF; the state, school districts, and CTA are still in the process of figuring out what it is going to look like. One very important piece of LCFF is funding for lowered class sizes for K-3. It is not as low as CTA was hoping for but it will be 24-1. LCFF is supposed to give districts more control on how their money is spent and be able to prioritize their money. There will still be requirements and accountability from the state, but this is a great opportunity for OMTA to stay very involved with the district at the negotiation table on how this new roll-out will work and bargain what's best for students and teachers.

OMTA has scheduled many trainings for you to attend this year here at the OMTA office. There will be training every month starting in October and going to April. Some of the trainings offered include: Bullying 102, STRS, Work Place Bullying, Supplementing Your Retirement, and many more. We welcome all to attend. You will be receiving a calendar with all the training dates and times from your reps. Food and drink will be served at the events. And we have a great raffle prize for one lucky winner who attends trainings; each training you attend you will get a raffle ticket to be entered into a drawing to win an airline ticket! If you attend all the trainings you will have 7 chances to win. Hope to see you here. 🍏

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY (NEA RA)

MaryKay Scheid & Tracy Lee Taylor

Eight of your colleagues from the Ontario-Montclair School District spent the first week of July at work in Atlanta – sometimes affectionately called “Hotlanta.” Gathering with more than 10,000 educators representing every state, the California delegates debated issues and made decisions intended to direct the activity of the National Education Association for the coming year. John Egan, Leticia Martinez, Rick McClure, Tracy Taylor, Amy Tompkins, Daniel Salcido, and MaryKay Scheid were returning delegates. First time delegate Tisha Curry observed “It is amazing to be in a place where you get to see democracy at work.”

In addition to debating issues, delegates were privileged to participate in a variety of uplifting events. Prior to the event, a group of teacher volunteers spent the day beautifying a local school. This volunteer effort, somewhat comparable to “Habitat for Humanity” for schools, is an annual event. Outreach to Teach was started by NEA’s Student Program as a way to give back to the city hosting the NEA Annual Meeting.” Teachers from the local site, this year Thomasville Heights Elementary School, work side-by-side with NEA leaders and members to paint, repair, refurbish, and beautify a school in need. Those delegates who could not participate did get to see a video of the amazing transformation.

Another moving presentation came in the form of a live address from the 2013 Teacher of the Year, Jeff Charbonneau. His 14 minute and 44 second speech has been uploaded to YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2ja8EVZpKQ), and is well worth watching. But in a nutshell, the energetic and optimistic teacher argued: “Rather than succumb to the notion that we are failing, we must celebrate the quality education that we are providing while strengthening our resolve to further improve . . . Despite what we read in the paper, students and teachers across the nation are achieving in countless ways. It is time for us to recognize that public education is succeeding.” He shared evidence of student successes in his own room and challenged us all to focus our attention on what we are doing well, as it is sometimes easy to forget. He encouraged us to promote ourselves as professionals and highlight for administrators, parents, the community, and our government leaders that teachers know what’s right for kids and they are delivering it on a regular basis.

The RA is a huge convention. Any of the 10,000 delegates can have his/her issue addressed by the larger group in the form of a New Business Item. With a little determination, a delegate can get their issue heard by the entire Assembly. We had nearly 100 NBIs to debate this year. Our members are empowered by the democratic process. And any delegate can address the group, both in caucus and in the RA. If you have the courage to speak on

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KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

Amy Tompkins

The beginning of the year is a busy time filled with lots of deadlines, dates, and rules to follow. Here is a Cliff's Notes version of information from your contract to help you start the year. If you'd like to read the contract in full, you can access it online on the OMTA website at www.myomta.org or on the OMSD website.

ARTICLE XI - EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

"The site/department administrator will designate the evaluator and provide notice to the unit members by the 20th duty day of school. The designated evaluator will meet with unit members by the 30th duty day of school to discuss and collaboratively determine the form of evaluation. The evaluator shall have the sole responsibility for the final evaluation." According to the calendar, the 20th duty day of school will be September 3, 2013. The 30th duty day of school will be September 17, 2013. There are 4 different form of evaluation that you can choose from: the formal observation method (with a maximum of 3 observations/ there can be fewer), peer coaching, professional portfolio method and action research project. You can learn more about these by reading the contract on page 42-43 and working with your administrator.



ARTICLE VIII - HOURS OF WORK:

"Prior to the start of the academic school year, as well as throughout the year, the site administrator shall consult with the staff regarding the content of professional development."

"Prior to the start of the academic year, the District and the Association will determine the weekdays reserved for site level and/or district meetings and publish a site meetings calendar. Under special circumstances, the calendar for meetings can be deviated from with the approval of the District and the Association."

"When such meetings occur on an early-release Tuesday, the meeting shall not extend beyond the contract day. When such meetings occur on regular instruction days—in accordance with the site meetings calendar—the meeting shall not exceed an hour

and one half in duration. Meetings (e.g. staff meetings, committee meetings, SST meetings) extending beyond the normal minimum school-based assignment hours shall not require more than five (5) hours of unit member attendance in any calendar month. Exceptions to the above may be made in the event of an extraordinary circumstance."

ARTICLE VII - SPECIAL EDUCATION:

"When unit members are requested to attend IEP meetings called during regular instructional hours, the District shall make a good faith effort to provide for the release of the unit member from his/her assigned duties in order to attend."

"On regularly scheduled minimum days, special education unit members shall be provided time for collaboration, conferencing, preparation and attending District and site level meetings/in-services."

"In order to facilitate the legal requirements of annually reviewing the IEP of each special education student, each special education unit member shall be provided up to two days of release time each year to engage in such annual review activities as directed by the responsible administrator(s)."

"The District will make a good faith effort to protect the teachers' professional time. To that end, the District will support the scheduling of IEP meetings during the regular school day. Teachers are not required to participate in IEP meetings longer than 60 minutes beyond the teacher's regular work day."

"Elementary RSP teachers will receive the equivalent of one day per week to complete assessments, IEP meetings, paperwork and other required non-teaching duties with the expectation that this time shall normally be one full day per week unless the RSP teacher and site administrator mutually agree to an alternative schedule." 🍏

a microphone in front of 10,000 people, you may make your point known to all of those people who are in attendance.

The NBI issues ranged from asking NEA to adopt policy in regard to current education reform movements to social justice issues, from asking NEA President Van Roekel to write a letter to state politicians in support of teachers, to urging the name change of a sports team because its current name is not politically correct. Some balk at NBIs that don't relate directly to the classroom, while others implore the passing of language to begin to make the world more equitable for all. Much of what comes up for debate is also debated in the larger US culture. Current events are often at the forefront of our discussions.

This year we heard arguments for and against gun legislation, ending gender, age and ethnic discrimination and immigration reform. Some see these issues as 'political' and not topics on which teachers, as an Association, ought to take a position. But others point out that these are the very issues that are the focus in the lives of many of our students. How could we not see them as worthy of our time?

Many NBIs debated this year had to do with the implementation of the Common Core, teacher evaluations, Special Ed, ELL and Arts in Education, to name a few. These topics were debated for hours over the course of our time in Atlanta. For every NBI, when debate was ended, a vote was called.

By the end of the week, Democracy did its job and a decision was made on each issue. All sides were heard and decisions were made. Not everyone was happy with each outcome, but they will have another chance to be heard next year. 🍏

NEA'S GREATEST GOVERNOR AWARD GOES TO CALIFORNIA'S JERRY BROWN

During the week, California Governor Jerry Brown received "America's Greatest Education Governor Award" from NEA. His steadfast belief that teachers know how to teach children and that they should be a part of the decisions made about schools was a part of the reason he earned this honor. "You don't learn by hammering people, you learn by inspiring the inner drive of every human being to learn..." He praised the work done by the teachers in our state and rejected the idea testing should be used to pass judgment on schools, teachers and students. He praised the work CTA and the state's teachers did to pass Prop. 30 and described how California's Local Control Funding Formula would change the future of our state's public schools. "Nothing is more determinative of our future than how we teach our children," said Brown. "It's an honor to accept this award on behalf of the educators working every day to make our public schools better and our future brighter." 🍏

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