



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

January 2019

IMPORTANT DATES FEBRUARY

- 1st OMTA SOCIAL
- 7th OMSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
- 11th OMTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
- 15th LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY NO SCHOOL
- 18th PRESIDENTS DAY – NO SCHOOL
- 21st OMSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
- 25th OMTA REP COUNCIL MEETING

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

I hope everyone had a restful winter break, despite the payroll error made toward the end. Hopefully everything was put back into place and made whole again. Starting off this new year I wanted to talk about the values of unionism.

One of the underlying principles I admire, is reflected in this quote attributed to Saul Alinsky:

“Never do for someone that they can do for themselves.”



I've heard this adage come up several times over the years I've been involved with OMTA and CTA. It's brought up because of the concern of how we educate, as well as, lift-up our fellow union members, some with many years of experience and others with just a few months of experience. We try and do it through member meetings at each and every site. Our reps hopefully pique interest from time to time with information provided at rep council meetings. We do it through email messaging. Hopefully everyone takes the time to find information from this office, and CTA, by checking the OMTA bulletin board located either in your staff room or lunchroom. You should also be receiving the CTA Educator magazine that also provides information up and down the state, regarding news, new curriculum, legislation, tips, etc. that is all pertinent to you as educators. The CTA and NEA websites also provide valuable information.

Also, over time as you matriculate and build up years of service, you gain valued classroom experience, both personal, as well as collegial, that helps frame your perception, your truths about what public education is, and/or ought to be. Do not take your experience lightly. Your experience is also framed by the context that you were “raised” in. I'll skip the whole nurture/nature debate.

In a perfect world every teacher knows the contract from cover to cover. Let me know when you stop laughing. I know that statement not to be true. Nor do I ever expect it to be true. I know that every teacher's main focus is to try to reach and educate every single one of their students. I know time is precious, and there are priorities. Unfortunately, sometimes life intercedes in a variety of ways. There will be times that your practice will be interrupted in some way that you need help and that contract becomes pivotal.

I know that myself and the executive board of OMTA will do everything in our power to help each and every one of you should a contractual issue impact you professionally. Hence this article. Being an Outward Bound graduate, one of our favorite adages is, “You're only as strong as your weakest link”. I don't want to sound preachy, but every teacher should know where to

Continued on Page 2

 Find us on
Facebook

www.myomta.org

Affiliated with



access their contract. If you don't know, you can find it on the OMSD website, as well as the OMTA website. It's not exciting reading. At some point in time, everyone should sit down and look at what's inside, because these are exciting times.

I will always go out of my way to help anybody who asks for help. There is one thing I want to ask from each and every one of you though. I want you to access your contract. I won't go so far as to say that it's part of your responsibility. It is a big part of my responsibility. However, the contract does outline and define your work day and you should have some knowledge about that. The more knowledgeable we are as a unit, it will benefit us as a unit. As it is said, "Forewarned is forearmed".

I'm sure a lot of you have been paying attention to the work stoppage in Los Angeles. Some of their issues are very close in nature to our issues. Class size, behavior issues, lack of counselors, lack of nurses, general support, are just some of the issues that United Teachers Los Angeles has that parallel the issues that also affect us here in Ontario-Montclair School District. Knowing our contract enables us to better frame our discussions and concerns professionally and articulately. I, of course, will continue to represent you as best I can, through personal conversation and at board meetings.

However, as stated before, you all have your wealth of experiences in and outside the classroom. You know the needs of your students, you know what good education looks and sounds like, you know what is too much, and you know what is too little. I've sat with many of you and heard you loud and clear, and I believe you know how to speak to your ideas, concerns, frustrations, for our students much more eloquently, and passionately than I can. More importantly, if I, or we, don't take the time to let our administrators and board members know what is working, or isn't working, within the Ontario Montclair School District, the school district has every reason to believe that things are going well.

For those of you who have taken the time, sacrificed being away from your families to get up and share your stories, I am grateful, and I thank you and your family for adding another piece to the amazing patchwork quilt that is Ontario Montclair School District, and Teachers Association. It is not an easy thing to do to get up in front of a group of your peers and neighbors to tell your stories and speak to your truths. Teaching is one of the most challenging things to do in this day and age. I appreciate everything you do in helping to support the health and well-being of our students and their families in Ontario and Montclair. 🍏

A CHECKUP FOR OUR MEDICAL PLAN

By: MaryKay Scheid, CSEBA Board of Directors

The healthcare landscape appears to be in a state of constant change. A number of issues impact our insurance providers and, ultimately, us. Revisions to the Affordable Care Act, new approaches to wellness, and changes in providers all affect our benefits. It is sometimes difficult to navigate the system when the rules change, but it's critical to learn the rules when changes occur.

We secure our medical benefits through a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) called CSEBA (California Schools Employee Benefits Association). The non-profit JPA works with districts throughout California to pool our resources and find the most competitive, benefit-rich plans. In order to ensure the health of our JPA, CSEBA is requiring member districts to conduct a "Dependent Eligibility Verification." This verification process will happen from February 1-March 15 of this year and then again every three years going forward. The regular verification of dependent eligibility is an industry standard among insurance providers, so changing our JPA wouldn't eliminate the requirement. But there is no need to panic; the process should be simple and straightforward.

When you elect your benefits during open enrollment, any dependent covered by the plan can be simply rolled over without any documentation. The purpose of the verification process is to ensure all enrolled dependent

spouses, registered domestic partners, and children continue to meet the medical health plan's eligibility rules for coverage. By doing so, we can better control healthcare costs for all of those served by the plan.

Your covered dependents should have a dependent relationship with you that is recognized by the federal government. When your children reach the age of 26, for example, they are no longer eligible. The same is true for an ex-spouse. Employees who cover eligible dependents will need to verify their continued relationship to the dependent. This is necessary because eligibility documents you may have submitted when you initially registered for coverage are NOT retained in your personnel file. To complete the verification process, those who elect 2-party or family coverage will need to complete the following steps:

1. Prepare a Statement of Facts Affidavit, which is available online or via call center
2. Submit verification documents (like a birth certificate or marriage license) to a secure portal

Documents may be uploaded via the secure website, emailed; faxed, or mailed. Please note when "snail-mailing" documents that a postmark date will not meet the deadline requirement. The materials must be RECEIVED no later than 9PM Pacific on March 15.

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

ARTICLE XVI - PERSONNEL FILES

A. There shall be a single personnel file for each unit member.

Personnel files shall be kept in the Human Resources office of the District.

B. Materials in personnel files of unit members which may serve as a basis for affecting the status of their employment are to be made available for the inspection of the person involved. Such material is not to include ratings, reports, or records which:

- 1) were obtained prior to the employment of the person involved,
- 2) were prepared by identifiable examination committee members, or
- 3) were obtained in connection with a promotional examination.

Every unit member shall have the right to inspect such materials upon request. Upon authorization by the unit member, an Association representative may review the unit member's file or accompany the unit member in his or her review of the file. Personnel file inspection shall be scheduled with Human Resources in advance.

C. Information of a derogatory nature shall not be entered or filed unless and until the unit member is given notice and an

opportunity to review and comment thereon. A unit member shall have the right to enter, and have attached to any such derogatory statement, their own comments thereon. Such review, and preparation of comments in response to the material and/or statement, shall take place during normal business hours and the unit member shall be released from duty for this purpose without salary reduction.

D. All material placed in a unit member's personnel file shall be dated and signed by the person who caused the material to be prepared.

E. Access authorization must be obtained from either the Superintendent, Human Resources Officer, or their designee. It is understood that the contents of a personnel file are confidential. The District shall keep a log permanently attached to each personnel file indicating the persons who have requested to examine a personnel file, as well as the dates such requests were made. Such log shall be available for examination by the unit member or their authorized Association representatives under the same conditions as provided in B above. 🍏

OMSD has contracted with an independent healthcare verification firm to collect answers to verification questions and legal/official verification documents. Employee information will remain secure/confidential. All documents provided to confirm eligibility will be destroyed after the verification has been completed (file documents in an easy-to-locate place so you can access them readily in three years).

All employees with one or more medical health care covered dependents (employees with two-party and family coverage) are required to participate.

The district has scheduled multiple reminder messages, via letter, email, and phone calls. It is urgent that those contacted and asked to complete the process do so as soon as possible and absolutely before the deadline. Our contract with the JPA states that those who do not comply will lose their dependent benefits (but will cease to be charged as well). The next opportunity to apply for dependent benefits would be during the open enrollment period for an effective date of September 1. At that time, since you would be enrolling a "new" dependent, you would be required to provide the same sort of documentation you are being asked to provide now.

Your insurance representatives (Tracy Taylor, Brett Waters, and I) are happy to answer questions about the process and guide you to someone who can assist. Or you can reach out directly to the Dependent Eligibility Center at 1-866-691-6551. 🍏

WHAT WONDERFUL THINGS ARE YOU DOING IN CLASS?

I would like to initiate something new this year. I would like to visit classrooms, so I can see all the wonderful things that are being taught and accomplished by all your students. If you are



comfortable with a visitor and there is something you are excited about that your class is doing, being academic or elective, I would enjoy seeing it! My goal is not to stay long and/or disrupt your teaching; it's simply to pass along the good word to others. If you're interested in having me as a visitor, drop me a line; give me a call with at least three dates & times. And most important, notify your administrator that I'm coming.

Thanks, John Egan

president@myomta.org • 909-986-2414

P. S. I'll bring a little something for your students

A NEW GOVERNOR, A NEW BUDGET

January 10th, we saw newly-elected Governor, Gavin Newsom, propose a progressive and multi-faceted budget for the upcoming year that is promising and could initiate a great many positive trends throughout education in the state. I am going to highlight just a few of the items that stuck out in my eyes. Bear in mind, that the budget is not set in stone, as it still needs to make it through the State Legislature.

First, the K-12 Proposition 98 education funding proposal for 2019-20 provides \$435 per pupil more 2019-20 than for this year 2018-19.

Governor Newsom has proposed to increase funding for school districts and chartered schools (I know) by \$2 billion over 2018-19 levels.

The \$2 billion increase that is proposed for the coming year is about two-thirds of the amount of new LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula) money that was provided in 2018-19.

The Governor's proposed budget includes funding COLA (Cost-of Living Adjustment), which is set at 3.46%, and growth for select categorical programs which are kept outside the LCFF. These stand-alone categoricals are: Special Education, Child Nutrition, Foster Youth, the Mandates Block Grant, State Preschool, American Indian Education Centers, and the American Indian Early Childhood Education Program.

There is proposed a one-time \$3 billion (non-Proposition 98) allocation to partially "buy-down" employer contributions.

As well, proposing the state making a direct contribution of \$2.9 billion over four years to paydown the CalSTRS unfunded liability, and \$3 billion to CalPERS.

There is a proposal of a \$20.2 million increase for County Offices of Education to provide technical assistance to LEA (Local Education Agencies) and improve student outcomes.

In Special Education, a proposal of \$576 million (\$186 million is one-time funding) to support expanded services and school readiness supports at LEAs with high percentages of both students with disabilities and unduplicated students.

State Preschool is proposed to receive \$26.8 million to fund the full-year costs of 2,959 full-day slots implemented part-way through the year in 2018-19.

Time will tell how this will all play out as the budget is presented, reviewed, and edited; then makes it way out of the state and down to the county and the Local Education Associations. OMTA, and I hope you all as well, will take an interest in how our district chooses to use these funds as they are presented at board meetings, LCAP meetings and surveys, and your respective school site councils. 🍏

OMTA OFFICERS AND OPERATIONS

President: John Egan
president@myomta.org
1st Vice President: Tracy Taylor
2nd Vice President: Daniel Salcido
Secretary: Tisha Curry
Treasurer: Erine Ames

CTA State Council Representatives
Tracy Taylor, John Egan, MaryKay Scheid
Service Center 1 Representatives
Shari Megaw, Vickie Harri, Trudy Cowan,
Isabel Santos, Judy Westbrook
Bargaining Chair: Tracy Taylor
Elections Chair: Vince DeFabiis

Office Manager: Cindy Newey
officemanager@myomta.org
Advocate Design: Dorreen Petersen Davis
OMTA Office
417 West "E" Street • Ontario, CA 91762
Tel: (909) 986-2414 • Fax: (909) 983-0585

OMTA REPRESENTATIVES

Arroyo: Brenda Zola
Berlyn: Crystal Cook, Erik Kobulnick
Bon View: Abel De Casas, Debbie Roose Baker
Buena Vista: Michael Hatter
Central: Marina Garcia
Corona: Julie Rafeedie
DeAnza: Inaki Bizkarra
Del Norte: Natalie Cantos/Mary Braunstein
Edison: VACANT
El Camino: Susie Imrich/Sandi Missick
Elderberry: Kevin Dixon, Dennis Kelly
Euclid: Wendy Beltran, Kelly Duffy
Hawthorne: Monique Gray, Celina Marshall
Haynes: Robert Mariani, Cecil Malacarne

Howard: Kelly Pawley
Kingsley: Michelle Montes, Javier Sandoval
Lehigh: Robin Carr, Jennifer Barringer
Lincoln: Holly Baca, Denise Dryden
Mariposa: Sendai Parker,
Dionne Treadway Contreras
Mission: Debby Hilak, Vince DeFabiis
Monte Vista: Kay Hoover
Montera: Ana Zoque, Dawn Falkenberg
Moreno: John Ross
Oaks: Lora Dahms, Lisa Eckersley
Ramona: Kelly Albers, Lindsay Gallagher
Serrano: Ana Moreno, Curt Albers
Sultana: Terri Tucker, Elsa DeShazo

Vernon: I-Esha Scott, Rosa Whitton
Vina Danks: Lisa Ochoa, Glenn Wong
Vineyard: Nila Delise
Vista Grande: Monica Lite
Wiltsey: Kim Hunter, Brad Joplin
Counselors/Orcs: Deana Shoultz
Early Ed/Pre-School: Alison Guadalupe
HFB/Hardy Center: Laura Smart
Health/Nurse: Dana Smith
Music: Daniel Salcido
PE/APE: Daryl Durston
Special Ed: Aurora Mejico
Speech: Ulla Tang Larsen