



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

February 2018

IMPORTANT DATES MARCH

8th OMSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

12th OMTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

13th OMTA/CTA CALSTRS TRAINING

19th OMTA REP COUNCIL MEETING

26th – 30th
SPRING BREAK – NO SCHOOL

FROM MARYKAY TO YOU



On February 26, The Supreme Court began hearing arguments on the Janus case. We expect a decision to be made within the next few months, almost certainly before the beginning of the next year. In an effort to show solidarity with labor, we asked both CSEA and OMTA members to wear black and share photos of themselves on social media. The future isn't looking too bright, so demonstrating our togetherness was important.

OMSD has been working on a budget stabilization plan to reduce the deficit spending that has resulted from declining enrollment and a stagnation of revenues available to us through the Local Control Funding Formula. The healthy reserve should provide some protection against furloughs and salary freezes in the future. Still, California ranks 46th in the nation in per pupil funding. CTA and member districts continue to advocate in Sacramento for education funding.



What amazes me is that California is regularly on the list of the top ten economies in the world independent of the United States, yet we are 46th in the nation for per pupil spending. With 1 in 4 of our students living in poverty, our students need more from us. But it is hard to give enough when so many need so much at the same time. Class size reduction in the lower grades is a start. However, our state should take declining enrollment as an opportunity to lower class sizes in all grades across the state. We all need to speak together in order to be a force for change at the state and national levels.

MaryKay Scheid,
OMTA President



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ALFONSO SANCHEZ

By: Trudy Cowan

Hello Advocate Readers, it is time to meet another OMSD School Board member. Let me introduce you to Alfonso Sanchez. Alfonso now resides in the city of Montclair. He grew up in Sacramento, California. He was first elected to the school board in 2014. His current term will end in 2020.

When he is not working or attending school board meetings or functions, he loves to read stories to elementary school students. He finds reading to children to be exciting and fun. He feels that when professionals read to children they help them to see that they can be anything that they want to be.

Alfonso is working behind the scenes to find resources for the school district. He is talking with people to try and expand the food backpack program so that no student in OMSD will go hungry over

the weekend. He is looking to find free resources to give our students opportunities to create unique things after school. He believes that students who are engaged in activities will do better in school because they will want to come to school.

Rumor has it that he was going to be a teacher. Actually, he went back to school in pursuit of his teaching credential, but quickly decided that his passion was not in the classroom. Alfonso's life experiences have helped him to realize that he likes serving the people of California. He would love to be elected to public office at the state level. If he does not get elected to office, he is hoping to serve as an aid for a senator or congressman again. He believes that he can benefit the students and teachers of California better by being an elected official at the state level. 🍏

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT: ARTICLE XI, TRANSFER PROCEDURES

As much as we might feel we belong to our school site, we are ultimately employees of the district. During a period of declining enrollment, it may become necessary to reduce staff at certain sites. Teachers with probationary or permanent status may be administratively transferred to achieve the correct staffing ratios.

The contract language regarding administrative transfers reads:

First, administrators at affected sites will solicit volunteers. If and (when) there are insufficient qualified volunteers, administrators shall base their selection of personnel for administrative transfer upon unit member seniority unless they can provide justification that a specific transfer would negatively impact students because the programmatic expertise of a less senior unit member is crucial for the continued success of a current curriculum/instructional program or because the credential held by a less senior member is essential to the immediate program needs of his or her present site.

Teachers who are unhappy in or seeking a change from their current roles may volunteer to be an administrative transfer. Doing so allows them to have priority of placement in available positions because all administrative transfers are placed before administrators can consider voluntary transfers.

The placement process for both administrative and voluntary transfers may involve an interview. The contract language reads:

... all unit members being administratively transferred shall be granted interviews at existing openings. Administrative transferees, including those who volunteered to be administratively transferred, will have first opportunity to interview for available openings, in preference to transfers voluntarily initiated by unit members.

It can be valuable to participate in the interview process, as it allows the teacher to identify which sites are a better fit than others and to convey to administrators their personal strengths and preferences. Ultimately, however, permanent unit members being administratively transferred will be placed in a position for which they are credentialed regardless of whether or not they participate in the interview process.

Programmatic concerns and credentialing limitations could result in a less senior probationary or permanent unit member remaining at his or her site over a more senior teacher. A teacher who has a single subject credential cannot be placed at an elementary site with openings, so it may become necessary to transfer a teacher who is qualified for the available opening. All temporary positions will be available to probationary and permanent teachers who are displaced. Once the probationary and permanent teachers are placed, temporary teachers will be considered for the remaining vacancies. 🍏

DID YOU KNOW?

A FEW FACTS ABOUT BENEFITS

OMSD purchases its medical insurance (Blue Shield and Kaiser) through California School Employees Benefits Association (CSEBA).

CSEBA offers access to Health Advocate. Health Advocate can help you with a multitude of things, including finding a doctor, scheduling appointments, and correcting bills.

The IRS Section 125 plan allows for you to set aside pre-tax dollars for medical expenses (co-pays, prescriptions, even mileage to doctors' offices). You are currently allowed to deposit \$2650 into your plan. The funds become available to you immediately (for big expenses, like braces), but are deducted in equal tenths amounts from October to June.

You will be invited to sign up for voluntary benefits during open enrollment this year. Voluntary benefits are insurance products that offer protection beyond basic medical and dental insurance. Basic examples of voluntary insurance products include cancer insurance, accident insurance, and disability; but many vendors provide pet insurance and other more specialized products as well. OMSD has worked for many years with American Fidelity. They

offer voluntary insurance products. The district, this year, requested other vendors submit proposals to OMSD to provide alternatives to American Fidelity. Although the district did find more competitive products which would allow members to save money, both the CSEA and OMTA Executive Boards determined that members would not be interested in making a change at this time, so declined the offer.

American Fidelity premiums are deducted from your salary through payroll deduction. This is certainly convenient. But if you desire to purchase supplemental insurance products from a different company, you may choose to do so. For disability insurance, CTA endorses The Standard (for more about CTA endorsed companies, see the member benefits article on this page). At this time, OMSD allows teachers to pay for The Standard through payroll deduction as well. If

you were to choose a vendor other than one already set up in OMSD, you would have to pay your premiums like you do all your other bills.

CTA Member Benefits

You have probably received solicitations from companies proudly declaring they are a CTA endorsed vendor. Some of those companies may, in fact, be CTA endorsed; others may not. Many vendors target school district employees for sales of their products and services. Because vendors may misrepresent themselves in order to gain your trust, it is good to know which companies truly are CTA endorsed.

CTA endorses the following companies: The Standard Insurance Company (life and disability products), California Casualty (auto and home insurance), Provident Credit Union (financial services), and Bank of America (credit card services).



Companies endorsed by CTA must go through a rigorous screen and review process, and must be approved by the Vendor Evaluation and Screening Committee and the CTA Board of Directors. Those companies who receive endorsement by CTA must agree to be subject to the processes of the CTA Advisory Panel on Endorsed Services. The Panel provides advocacy for our members

should they have a concern or be unhappy with the products or services of an endorsed vendor.

Endorsed vendors are highlighted on the CTA member benefits website. Visit www.cta.org, or call the Member Benefits Department at (650) 552-5200 to confirm a company's status.

Retirement Training

OMTA is hosting a second retirement training on Tuesday, March 13 at 3:45. No matter where you are in your career, it is valuable to learn about the role your pension will play in your retirement plans. Young teachers especially need to realize that the pension, though a critical component in retirement, cannot represent the entire plan. Please RSVP to OMTA to save your seat for this event. 🍏

FEBRUARY SOCIAL



Join us
Friday, April 13
for our spring social
at Rodrigo's

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