



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

March 2017

IMPORTANT DATES – APRIL

6th OMSD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

10th OMTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

10th & 13th OMSD BLUE SHIELD Q & A

11th OMTA/CTA CALSTRS RETIREMENT TRAINING

17th NON-SCHOOL DAY

18th & 19th OMSD HEALTH BENEFITS FAIR

20th OMSD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

24th OMTA REP COUNCIL MEETING

28th TEACHER APPRECIATION SOCIAL

COMING UP IN MAY:

5th RETIREMENT DINNER

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

MaryKay Scheid



We are in the 7th inning stretch! You've spent the year working diligently with your students. I am certain you are proud of how much they've accomplished. You should be proud of yourselves too.

Very shortly, OMSD will be administering the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress. Remember to follow all directions and rules related to this test. Your site must train you and then obtain a signed affidavit in order for you to administer the exam. I know the test is as hard for you as it is for your students. Don't forget to work with your administrators to ensure you have the ability to use the restroom during extended testing blocks.

Our Tentative Agreement passed by 88%! It was an exceptionally long bargaining season because of the quantity of articles discussed. There will be less to debate next year because we will be looking into particular areas of concern only. We are hearing that there will be minimal if any additional revenues allocated to the district next year. Nevertheless, we plan to be back at the table before summer to begin conversations about our working conditions. Please be on the lookout for a bargaining survey asking for your input on what issues we should consider.

March 20 was the opening of Posting II, Voluntary Transfers, for the 2017-2018 school year. Posting II will remain open until Friday, March 31st. Only probationary and permanent employees who have submitted a Voluntary Transfer Form to the Human Resources office are eligible to contact the sites with vacancies and schedule interviews. Selected candidates will be notified the week of April 3rd.

Significantly fewer temporary teachers were released this year, a positive result of the transitioning of teachers into probationary status at the beginning of this year. Temporary teachers who have been displaced will have the opportunity to be placed during Posting III. Some temps may simply be notified that they will be able to stay at their site. Those notices will be delivered on April 24. The rest of the positions will be filled by April 31. Last year, a vast majority of our temps were again placed at OMSD schools. I expect our temps will enjoy similar success this spring. I also plan to begin conversations about moving additional temps into probationary status at the beginning of next year.

I know how difficult it can be to navigate the final months of the school year—with few holidays, testing schedules, and end of the year exhibitions. I hope many of you can break away from your work to join us at our "We Ain't No Fools Social" March 31 at Don Jose in Montclair. We have planned an interactive retirement training at our office on April 11. And our end of the year teacher appreciation event is April 28 (see article on page 2). There is so much to celebrate. Come join us at one of these events! 🍏

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THE PATH TO OUR PROFESSION

By: Sarah Vigrass

There are many paths into this profession. Some educators knew at a very young age they wanted to be teachers. Some grew up with teachers as parents. Some were inspired by one special educator along the way. Others graduated from college and started subbing while they figured out what to do with their lives and found this was their calling. No matter how we got here, there are some constants among us now.

No one is deluded into thinking this profession is a gateway to wealth. Everyone understands the job will come with its share of frustration, bureaucracy, and unending change. Despite being surrounded by others, it can be lonely in the classroom. The stakes and responsibilities are high. Heavy emotional weights land on our shoulders. It's tough sometimes to leave the job when the day ends. But the rewards keep us going. It's a vital, noble, and giving profession, and a calling worthy of great respect. Many who attack us wouldn't last a day in our roles, because what we do requires a constant effort to build, not tear down. Building is much harder.

There are factions who may believe your job is easy. That it's just part-time, seasonal work. That you're overpaid and entitled. That you're ineffective and our schools are "failing." That schools should be privatized and "compete." That public education is to blame for many of society's ills. Don't believe the hype!

Think about what you believe as you walk through the gate and the bell rings each day. When the scores of eyes and ears tune to you, depending on you to help them grow into the next generation of builders. Do you believe your work is important? Do you believe your contribution to society should be valued? Do you believe that public education is an investment in our collective future and should be a top priority of our society? Do you believe that you as practitioners should have a voice in education policy? You should and you do.

It's your union – our union. Your voice. Our union advocates for teachers and students; CTA has been fighting for public education for more than 150 years. Our predecessors pushed to create CalSTRS in 1913. They fought for the Rodda Act, which is the reason your contract exists. I encourage you to read it if you haven't, and see the fingerprints of previous generations upon whose shoulders we stand. Together we have stopped privatization and voucher efforts. In unity, we have defeated many attempts by corporations and wealthy individuals to silence us as they seek to use the courts, the Legislature, and the ballot box to dismantle public education and profit from it. Our solidarity and strength stand make us a powerful force. 🍏

OMTA APPRECIATES Y-O-U

By Cynthia Lopez Elwell

On Friday, April 28th, OMTA will be celebrating Teacher Appreciation Day with a party just for you. The first observance of "National Teachers' Day" was spearheaded by Eleanor Roosevelt, when she convinced congress to recognize its observance in 1953. Since its inception, the day has had a variety of sponsors, including the National PTA, Congress, and NEA. In recent years, "National Teachers' Day" has expanded to fill the first full week of May. Just think, an entire week set aside (at least on the calendar) to appreciate and celebrate the work of educators! We hope you can join OMTA at this kick-off for a week designed to honor you. There will be raffles, music, a slideshow of your colleagues, a Nacho bar, and shaved ice treats. The celebration will last from 3-6pm at the OMTA office. We request that you RSVP no later than April 24, so we can be sure to have sufficient supplies. See you there! 🍏

OMTA WELCOMES A NEW STAFF PERSON

Hello OMTA! My name is Sarah Vigrass and I have been hired by CTA to serve as your Primary Contact Staff. Prior to this position, I worked as a teacher for 17 years. Most recently I was employed by a large online charter school. During my time at that school I became frustrated by the decline in learning conditions for our students and working conditions for our teachers. A group of colleagues and I formed an Organizing Committee to unionize our school and give teachers a voice in school operations. After a contentious three-year fight, we achieved recognition. Through the course of these efforts I discovered I enjoyed my "hobby" of union work more than my actual job. I pursued this interest by completing the CTA Staff Development Program. That is what led me to working with you. I look forward to supporting OMTA. 🍏



KNOW YOUR CONTRACT – BENEFITS FOR 2017-2018

As I'm sure you know by now, our insurance group (known as CSEBA) has dropped their partnership with Anthem Blue Cross and has elected to contract with Blue Shield instead. A number of factors influenced the group's decision to shift providers, but one significant factor was the feeling that Anthem had not treated us as valuable customers.

Blue Shield is a non-profit insurance company, in business since 1939 and headquartered in San Francisco. They will be offering a number of insurance products, but are most excited to present an ACO they call "Trio." An ACO is a collaboration of doctors, hospitals, and providers who work together to deliver integrated care. Research indicates ACOs eliminate fragmented care and result in better health outcomes for the patients (fewer ER visits, lower re-hospitalization rates, etc.). The Trio option will offer a narrower group of providers (because it is very competitive to be qualified as an ACO provider), but San Antonio Hospital is among the options.

With any Blue Shield coverage, they will offer concierge service. It is designed to help members navigate the health care system, connect them to personalized services, identify gaps in care, and offer follow-up coaching. The concierge team will be available during open enrollment through the phone number. Another change will be to our prescription plan. In place of Express Scripts will be Blue Shield/CVS Caremark. Your medical card will be your prescription card. No more multiple cards! Those who currently have coverage with Anthem are advised to refill renewable prescriptions sometime in late June in order to have sufficient medicine in stock during the transition from Anthem to Blue Shield. Continuation of Care will be provided for people in the midst of a medical issue (e.g. pregnancy).

In our new contract, the district has increased the benefit allotment to single party, two party, and family by \$480. Assuming you elect to take the less expensive Dental HMO for ONLY YOURSELF (all unit members MUST take dental insurance) and assuming you do NOT opt to take Vision Insurance (since your medical plan allows for you to have a basic vision check-up), with the new district contribution, the following will be your approximate cost for medical coverage:

Kaiser HMO Option 1 and Delta Dental HMO *for the unit member only.*

Type of Coverage	Your monthly out-of-pocket cost for 10 months
Single -----	none
Two-party -----	\$173.37
Family -----	\$441.47

Kaiser HMO Option 2 and Delta Dental HMO *for the unit member only.*

Type of Coverage	Your monthly out-of-pocket cost for 10 months
Single -----	none
Two-party -----	\$91.38
Family -----	\$325.44

Blue Shield HMO and Delta Dental HMO *for the unit member only.*

Type of Coverage	Your monthly out-of-pocket cost for 10 months
Single -----	none
Two-party -----	\$269.61
Family -----	\$521.68

Blue Shield TRIO and Delta Dental HMO *for the unit member only.*

Type of Coverage	Your monthly out-of-pocket cost for 10 months
Single -----	none
Two-party -----	\$74.14
Family -----	\$253.34

Blue Shield PPO and Delta Dental HMO *for the unit member only.*

Type of Coverage	Your monthly out-of-pocket cost for 10 months
Single -----	\$476.84
Two-party -----	\$1390.80
Family -----	\$2060.08

If you opt to include other family members in dental coverage, choose the more expensive Dental PPO, or add vision insurance, your monthly out-of-pocket costs WILL BE HIGHER. All out-of-pocket medical costs are taken pre-tax and reduce your taxable income.

Open enrollment will be from April 17 through May 12. Once open enrollment is over you will not be able to make any changes to your plan. The district is also sponsoring a Health Benefits Fair on April 18 (with all providers) and April 19 (with medical providers only). A Blue Shield representative will be at those events. American Fidelity will be at open enrollment to present their supplemental insurance products and to help you start/renew your Section 125 (Flexible Spending) plan. If you intend to participate in a Flexible Spending plan, YOU MUST REENROLL every year. Schools First will be there to assist with 403b plans. Those who opt out of benefits because they are covered through a spouse can begin to bring their proof of insurance to the benefits department as of April 3rd. 🍏

OMTA Getting Educated About Retirement.

Don't forget to join us on April 11 at the OMTA office for our local retirement workshop.



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SEA WORLD SPECIAL OFFER

There are all sorts of benefits to being a K-12 teacher and a member of CTA. I am happy to share that **Sea World offers a Teacher Fun Card.** The Teacher Fun Card is **valid for unlimited admission to SeaWorld San Diego through December 30, 2017.** An added bonus is that all active and certified K-12 California and Arizona credentialed school teachers will receive both the complimentary Teacher Fun Card AND 2 free Single-Day tickets to Sea World.

REGISTRATION FOR 2017 IS NOW OPEN.

Use this link: <https://seaworldparks.com/en/seaworld-sandiego/educational-programs/teachers>.

When the page opens, click the green "Teacher ID" button on the right to register. You must redeem the Fun Card no later than May 19, 2017.



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Ramona: Trudy Cowan, Lindsay Gallagher

Serrano: Sam Sager, Brad Holtan

Sultana: Terri Tucker, Bertha B. Fitzgerald

Vernon: I-Esha Scott, Rosa Whitton

Vina Danks: Jeff Rogers

Vineyard: John Borrowman, Nila Delise

Vista Grande: Monica Lite

Wiltsey: Steve Taylor, Kim Hunter

Music: Daniel Salcido

PE/APE: Vacant

Speech: Ulla Tang Larsen

Health/Nurse: Dana Smith

Early Ed/Pre-School: Vacant

HFB/Hardy Center: Olivia Craig