



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

January 2015

IMPORTANT DATES

OMTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

February 2nd

OMSD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

February 5th

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DAY

No School

February 9th

PRESIDENT'S DAY

No School

February 16th

OMSD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

February 19th

OMTA HAPPY HOUR

February 20th

OMTA REP COUNCIL MEETING

February 23rd

CTA/OMTA TRAINING Unconscious Bias

February 24th

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Amy Johnson



Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful winter break and got to do some relaxing and rejuvenating with family and friends.

I have heard a lot of positive feedback about the non-student day on December 19th. It sounds like a lot of you had time to plan with your colleagues. Some of you have asked me if this is something the district will plan again. I am working with the bargaining team to think of ways to get you more planning time and time to collaborate with your colleagues. We know that is the number one thing you need right now. The second PE that was added this year is a start to giving you this time. When we worked with the district to put together the calendar for next year, we built in 3 non-student days. We will be advocating on your behalf to have them as optional days for you to work with colleagues and get to plan for common core.

As you know, we just finished voting on the tentative agreement for the special bargaining session that was held to negotiate salary for 2014-15 and class size for 2015-16. The tentative agreement reached is for a 5% ongoing salary increase for the 2014-2015 school year, retro back to July. We also negotiated a reduction in class size in TK/K by 2 less students, and in 1st through 3rd grade by 1 less student for the 2015-2016 school year. Remember, we are negotiating class size each year in TK-3rd grade until we get to 24 to 1 by 2020, per the state regulations and funding. Once we get TK-3rd grade reduced, we will look at the other grade levels.

I want to share a little bit with you about the bargaining process. So many of you ask members of the Bargaining Team and Executive Board to tell you what is going on and what's being discussed. The bargaining process has to stay confidential until a tentative agreement is reached. The reason for this is because things often change at the table throughout the process. Multiple groups are involved in bargaining. The OMTA Executive Board directs the Bargaining Team to negotiate certain language or a certain amount for salary and benefits. The District also has rules and policies they have to follow. Sometimes the bargaining teams for the district and OMTA need to check back with their leadership on an issue. Once a tentative agreement is reached and both sides tentatively agree, we can then take that information back to the OMTA Executive Board and Rep Council to vote on. Once those groups approve the tentative agreement, we can present it to the members for a vote. If the members approve or ratify the agreement, it goes onto the School Board for final approval.

If this contract is ratified, we will start the process all over again for the 2015-2016 school year.

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KNOW YOUR CONTRACT: ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFERS

We have been fortunate in Ontario-Montclair to be a part of QEIA for the last 8 years and have class sizes reduced in TK-6th grade at 10 elementary schools. QEIA was a lawsuit filed by CTA against then Governor Schwarzenegger, after he refused to pay back the billions of dollars he borrowed from schools in 2004-2005. QEIA came out of this lawsuit and the purpose was to help close the achievement gap and to improve learning and teaching in schools that were struggling. Schools that qualified for this were randomly chosen in a drawing; our district had 10 schools picked to receive QEIA funds.

QEIA expires next year, and we have 10 schools that are affected. This means that these schools will be raising their class sizes back to the contract numbers. OMTA and OMSD have negotiated language to reduce the contractual class size by two students in TK/K and by one student in 1st-3rd grade. Unfortunately, the new contract language will not prevent staff movement. There will be some movement in staffing, mostly at QEIA schools. I am working very closely each week with Human Resources to make sure the process goes as smoothly as possible for those affected by this. If you are affected and have any questions throughout this process please email or call me and I can help you through it. Please take some time to read some of the contract language regarding administrative transfers. If you would like to read the article in its entirety, you can go to www.myomta.org and find the contract under the bargaining tab.

ARTICLE X - TRANSFER PROCEDURES

B. Administrative Transfers

2. When the District initiates a transfer, 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. Those administrative transferees not selected and placed during the interview process will be placed into openings deemed appropriate by the District prior to placement of voluntary transferees. When a choice of positions is possible, unit members may indicate an order of preference for appropriate consideration. Anyone granted an interview but not selected shall upon request, be notified in writing within ten (10) days as to the reason(s) for denial.

6. Selection of Personnel to be Administratively Transferred

When an administrative transfer is deemed necessary under Paragraph B.3, the District shall abide by the following procedure:

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.

If and when a transfer is required mid-year, administrators shall follow the same transfer protocol outlined above. However, in the case of mid-year transfers, in addition to programmatic expertise and credential authorizations, administrators shall consider the number of staff moves involved in the new assignment(s) and/or reassignment of pupils so as to create the fewest reassignments of staff and/or pupils at the site.

No unit member may be administratively transferred more than once every three (3) years, except in the event of a school closing, program change, or credential restriction. No unit member shall be transferred solely because he/she has applied for a leave of absence.

E. Assistance in Assignment Change and/or Administrative Transfer:

When there is an assignment change and/or administrative transfer within the school year, a unit member may request a reasonable period of non-teaching preparatory time of up to three (3) instructional days. At the request of the unit member, up to the equivalent of (1) one school based minimum assignment day, as defined in Article VIII – section A of this agreement at the work shop rate, may be substituted for two (2) release days. Permission for such release time shall not be unreasonably withheld or unreasonably limited by the immediate administrator. If a site change occurs beyond the contractual year, the unit member will receive a stipend of up to \$450/\$150 per non-contract day worked.

The District will also furnish reasonable assistance to move personal teaching materials and equipment.

Please be aware of the steps above that need to happen for permanent teachers: The administrator FIRST needs to ask the staff for volunteers who would like to be an administratively transferred. IF there are no volunteers, then it would come down to the seniority list order for those who will be administratively transferred.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF URBAN EDUCATOR'S ASSOCIATION (NCUEA)

By: MaryKay Scheid

In early December, three representatives from the Ontario-Montclair Teachers' Association traveled to Nashville, Tennessee to attend the fall meeting of the National Council of Urban Educators' Association (NCUEA). NCUEA is a sub group of the National Education Association whose goal is to ensure that the NEA consider the unique concerns of large urban districts when designing their legislative platform for the coming year. A sort of "grass roots" group, NCUEA advances its agenda by "empowering and supporting Local Associations, Leaders, and Members."

OMTA President Amy Johnson, OMTA Treasurer and Bargaining Co-Chair MaryKay Scheid, and State Council Representative Tracy Taylor joined over 300 other participants from across the country to hear from education experts and to network with other large urban local associations. The theme of the conference was fixing education, but realizing to do this we first need to fix poverty in our country and provide resources to education; Equity vs. Equality.

During the 3-day meeting, attendees heard from both NEA and NCUEA leadership as well as multiple candidates for NEA office. NEA President, Lily Eskelson Garcia, addressed the group, and her passion for education was palpable. She read from a book she recently published (all profits to be donated to "United We Dream," an immigrant rights group). Entitled "Rabble Rousers," the picture book aimed at an elementary school audience, highlights the accomplishments of activists like Martin Luther King Jr. and Harvey

Milk. She then talked about how toxic testing is and what it does to our students. She is a big proponent against all the testing and has already, as a new President, talked to President Obama about it.

Several candidates for NEA Board positions attended the meeting to campaign, and attendees had multiple opportunities to interact with these potential leaders in an informal way. NCUEA member districts are those that serve over 1000 unit members (OMTA has 1200). Currently there are 264 member districts in the organization. One of the major benefits of being a part of the organization is that "NEA is not nearly so far away when you are a member of the NCUEA." The NEA meeting in the summer is attended by more than 10,000 teachers. It can be challenging to be heard by leadership in this venue. At NCUEA, the candidates and current leadership are accessible and eager to hear about the issues important to our members.

The fall meeting is a business meeting, but there are also multiple break-out sessions on topics like strengthening your local, successfully lobbying about issues like student debt, and accessing NEA grants to fund special projects at your school or in your classroom. Any OMTA member is eligible to attend the NCUEA Conference (but only one attendee may vote). Multiple grant opportunities to fund your travel and registration fees exist. The location of the Fall 2015 Conference has not yet been finalized. If you think you might have an interest in attending, look for grant and scholarship applications this summer. 🍏

Have you ever come across a workshop, conference, or training that is outside the professional development plan at your school site? If so, you are not alone. Can't afford to pay for the expenses yourself? You are not alone there either. You can attend that conference by applying to the Teacher Initiated Fund.

Teacher Initiated fund allocates each applicant with up to \$800 to attend a conference, training, or workshop. Applicants must submit a one page form to the Teacher Initiated Fund (TIF) committee, be approved, and follow procedures to conform to accounting practices. So you can attend! Next step, visit the OMTA website, click on Teacher Fund, and download the application.

*Don't forget to buy your
See's Candy Certificates
For Valentine's Day!*



*Available at the OMTA office
Monday-Friday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
\$14.50 per certificate (Valued at \$18.50)*

We always start bargaining with a survey of the entire membership through email on SurveyMonkey. This survey is to find out what your interests are and what we should bargain for. I hope all of you take a few minutes to fill out this survey. The Executive Board and Organizing Committee also did site visits at the beginning of the year and heard your concerns. We will look at that data when compiling our re-opener as well. The Bargaining Team reads each and every comment made from the survey. The deadline to complete the survey will be January 29th at 5:00 pm. We will be re-opening on two articles (the most we can do); salary and benefits and class size will automatically get re-opened. We would like to go back to the table in early March and hope to negotiate something for your benefits. We would like to be done with this before open enrollment so you will know if anything is different when you are making your insurance selections.

Each month OMTA offers different trainings and workshops for you put on by CTA and NEA staff. We try to hold them on a teacher Tuesday for your convenience and try very hard not to schedule them during busy times. The next training will be February 24th at 3:30 at the OMTA office. The name of the workshop is Unconscious Bias. The following is a little blurb about the training: Social psychologists and other social scientists have found that all of us, regardless of

race, have cognitive biases that influence how we perceive and make decisions about other people. The behavior of human beings is often guided by racial and other stereotypes of which we are completely unaware. This training is an introduction to the CTA Unconscious Bias dialogue and will explore the shortcuts and subsequent perceptions we make about people and our surroundings. It will also provide tools to increase awareness about our cognitive biases and offer direct strategies to developing meaningful relationships with students and colleagues. Each month your reps receive flyers for the trainings that they will email you and post on your OMTA bulletin board. Please watch out for these flyers and RSVP. We provide great snacks and a raffle ticket to win an airline ticket at the end of the year.

Please join OMTA for our monthly happy hour and say hello and meet colleagues from all over the district. We had a very successful happy hour in January and would love to see it get even bigger. It will be at Don Jose's in Montclair on February 20th at 3:00. We will provide appetizers, you provide the fun. Please watch for the flyer in your email from your reps and on your OMTA bulletin board. See you all soon! 🍏

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Euclid: Wendy Beltran/Anna Young
Hawthorne: Monique Gray, Dale Johnson

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Sultana: Terri Tucker, Bertha B. Fitzgerald
Vernon: Isabel Santos, Diana Verdugo
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Vineyard: John Borrowman, Nila Delise
Vista Grande: Helen Cieslik/Monica Lite
Wiltsey: Ken Aven, Linda Boren
Music: Daniel Salcido
PE/APE: Shaun Walters
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