



# ADVOCATE

## Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

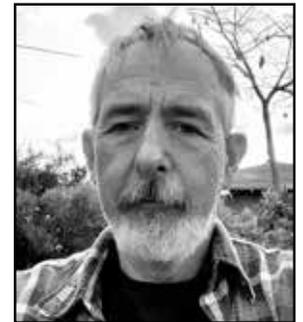
March 2020

### IMPORTANT DATES APRIL

- 5<sup>th</sup> OMTA SPRING SOCIAL  
CANCELLED
- 13<sup>th</sup> OMTA EXECUTIVE  
BOARD MEETING  
TENTATIVE
- 18<sup>th</sup> OMSD BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES MEETING  
LIMIT OF 50  
PEOPLE
- 27<sup>th</sup> OMTA REP  
COUNCIL MEETING  
TENTATIVE

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

I hope this edition finds everyone well and in good health. I am going to try and stay away from the words “unprecedented” and “uncertain”, as we all have heard enough of these two words by now. Certainly, most of us living in this country have ever lived through anything like this. Some of you, as I have, lived through the assassinations of President John Kennedy, his brother, Senator Robert Kennedy, and of course, Dr. Martin Luther King. These of course, were singular tragedies that impacted our nation politically and emotionally. Being a native Californian, I have lived through a great many earthquakes that terrified my family when as a child, and as a parent. Fortunately, we never experienced the tragedy of living in the epicenter of a quake where my family suffered physical damage, or the death of someone, like the Whittier earthquake in 1987.



But this is different, a new and unseen threat is creating such a physical and emotional disturbance that it is closing schools and interrupting the learning of students, as well as disrupting life as we know it. Currently, we are now scheduled to be out of schools until May 1st, with a tentative return to classes on May 4th. Until then, teachers are asked to extend learning opportunities to their students through distance learning packets that were given to students on the last day they attended school, or through online learning opportunities. It is my understanding that packets were also passed out to parents, when they came to school to obtain breakfast and lunch for their students.

It is important to know that teachers are accountable for providing these opportunities for their students. Remember that these are “learning opportunities” for students and not lessons that are to be graded or assessed. It is simply an intermediary chance for students to remain in contact with school-type activities to bridge the gap until we return to school. There is no accountability for the students to perform any of this work. We know that many of our students will have other

*Continued on Page 2*

 Find us on  
Facebook

[www.myomta.org](http://www.myomta.org)

Affiliated with



## WEAR RED for PUBLIC ED

### Every WEDnesday

### #redford

*Message from President Continued from Page 1*

distractions while at home. Some of our older students will be taking on family responsibilities to look after their younger brothers and sisters, and to perform chores, help parents, etc.

With students being told to go home, this also means that teachers' children will be at home as well. Teachers time will become even more impacted at home with trying to attend to their students' needs through online learning and providing feedback, as well as caretaking their own children (more so if they're especially dependent), and possibly their own parents. Teachers at home must have the flexibility to manage their time as they see fit so that are not compromising their own physical and mental health.

Because the closures came so quickly and gave both district and teachers so little time to prepare, it was important for me to get clarification that clearly dictated the responsibilities of teachers, as well as the district's responsibility. On Thursday, March 19th, at the emergency board meeting, I presented Dr. Hammond a letter of demand, and a memorandum of understanding that defined what teachers' expectations should be during the crisis, as well as district expectations.

Some of the key points:

- The parties (parties meaning OMSD and OMTA) recognize there is a need to close schools and move to a distance learning program that includes (but not inclusive to) online programs and teacher-developed packets for students. This alternative to continue learning opportunities for students allows for social distancing as recommended by public health officials in order to prevent the spread of illness arising from the coronavirus during the 2019-20 school year.
- Unit members' compensation shall not be reduced as a result of the emergency school closure.
- The parties recognize distance learning as a model that will require flexibility in scheduling. In most cases, employees will complete their distance learning responsibilities within the range of their normal school site hours. The parties also agree that at times, employees will need to complete distance learning work using a flexible schedule.
- The coursework provided to students shall have the intention of promoting continuity of learning while students are not in school. This will include enrichment, intervention, and/or exposure to new material. The pace of instruction shall be at the discretion of the teacher based on the needs of their students. The work provided will not require summative assessments or grading.

- Evaluations shall be paused (unless final classroom observation has already taken place) for the duration of any school closure (modified or otherwise). It is understood that teachers may be developing to be delivered via a new modality. Teachers shall not be evaluated based on the "quality" of those lessons or instruction during this crisis.
- The District shall submit a "J-13A waiver material decrease request", and /or any other waiver for which the District may be eligible, to the California Department of Education in order to mitigate the loss of ADA funding. In the event the State of California deems alternative requirements for schools in response to COVID-19, the parties agree to immediately initiate negotiations on the impacts.
- Upon the State/County/District determining schools safe to open, the District shall provide one day of unimpeded preparation to all unit members to prepare for the return to the classroom with students.
- Unit members shall not be required to make up adjunct or committee assignments missed as a result of the emergency school closure. Adjunct duty, district and/or site committees during the closure will be deemed canceled and will not be rescheduled.
- Unit members are expected to remain available to return to the worksite during working hours if necessary. The District will provide unit members 24-hour notice of the need to return to the worksite when necessary as authorized by the District Office in consultation with Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association. In the event special circumstances prevent an employee from attending a training, or any on campus event, the employee shall make special arrangements with their site administrator or supervisor.

Of course, other issues will need to be brought up as well, in light of the on-going concerns regarding distance learning and accountability. One, that is of particular importance is the need for clarification for our special education teachers as the distance learning pertains to them. Inside this edition you will find an excerpted Supplemental Fact Sheet from the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services that talks about providing Free and Appropriate Public Education during "exceptional circumstances" such as we are currently in to our students.

John Egan, OMTA President



# ADDRESSING THE RISK OF COVID-19

The following is an excerpted statement from The United States Department of Education, the Office for Civil Rights, and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. It notes that during times of crisis, like we are experiencing now, that all students are to be provided “free and appropriate public education”.

## Supplemental Fact Sheet

### Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities- March 21, 2020

School districts must provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. In this unique and ever-changing environment, OCR and OSERS recognize that these exceptional circumstances may affect how all educational and related services and supports are provided, and the Department will offer flexibility where possible. However, school districts must remember that the provision of FAPE may include, as appropriate, special education and related services provided through distance instruction provided virtually, online, or telephonically.

*The Department understands that, during this national emergency, schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided.* While some schools might choose to safely, and in accordance with state law, provide certain IEP services to some students in-person, it may be unfeasible or unsafe for some institutions, during current emergency school closures, to provide hands-on physical therapy, occupational therapy, or tactile sign language educational services. Many disability-related modifications and services may be effectively provided online. These may include, for instance, extensions of time for assignments, videos with accurate captioning or embedded sign language interpreting, accessible reading materials, and many speech or language services through video conferencing.

*It is important to emphasize that federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities.* The determination of how FAPE is to be provided may need to be different in this time of unprecedented national emergency. As mentioned above, FAPE may be provided consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing special education and related services to students. Where, due to the global pandemic and resulting closures of schools, there has been an inevitable delay in providing services – or even making decisions about how to provide services - IEP teams must make an individualized determination whether and to what extent compensatory services may be needed when schools resume normal operations.

*Finally, although federal law requires distance instruction to be accessible to students with disabilities, it does not mandate specific methodologies.* Where technology itself imposes a barrier to access or where educational materials simply are not available in an accessible format, educators may still meet their legal obligations by providing children with disabilities equally effective alternate access to the curriculum or services provided to other students. For example, if a teacher who has a blind student in her class is working from home and cannot distribute a document accessible to that student, she can distribute to the rest of the class an inaccessible document and, if appropriate for the student, read the document over the phone to the blind student or provide the blind student with an audio recording of a reading of the document aloud.

The Department encourages parents, educators, and administrators to collaborate creatively to continue to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Consider practices such as distance instruction, teletherapy and tele-intervention, meetings held on digital platforms, online options for data tracking, and documentation. In addition, there are low-tech strategies that can provide for an exchange of curriculum-based resources, instructional packets, projects, and written assignments. 🍏

## Red for Ed T-shirts for Sale

We have available a few Red for Ed T-shirts at the OMTA office. They feature on the front of a red t-shirt the California Teachers Association logo with the state of California outline. On the back is a nicely-sized logo of the Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association. I currently have these sizes in office:  
1 Small, 6 Medium, 5 Large, 3 XL.

**I will order more shirts depending on the amount of requests for shirts.**

- **Size range** in Adult sizes: Small to 3X
- **Prices:** Small to XL – \$18 | 2X and 3X – \$20

# FEBRUARY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

The February 27th school board meeting was very well attended as Bon View, Edison, Haynes, Mariposa, Ramona, and Oaks members were in attendance. There were nine speakers that night, eight of which were OMTA members that spoke to the concerns of the PE/PREP memorandum of understanding that is being talked about at bargaining. All the teachers that spoke clearly explained and defined how important this time is to maintain their professional responsibilities to the school, as well as to their students. They stressed the importance of having the time to attend to all the things they are accountable to: Q, Zangle, P4SS, SARs, PBIS, contacting parents, gradebooks, scoring assessments, lesson planning/preparation, etc. Four teachers from Edison, and one each from Ramona, Montera, and Mariposa rose to speak to this one item. I was the eight if you're doing the math. I can't express enough how appreciative I am to these teachers who took the time and energy to express their opinions to the school board.

As most of you know I had created a schedule for teachers to attend OMSD school board meetings so that there was more participation at school board meetings, and as well to give our teachers the opportunity to speak if they so wish. With the advent of coronavirus, this has, of course, had an impact on board meetings. The March 12th board meeting was right when the coronavirus was starting to make people take notice and talk of school closures was being considered. I had sent out an email to all members to stay home that rainy evening, and only to attend unless they felt compelled to. It was a very sparse turn-out, though some teachers did attend that late afternoon.

March 19th, OMSD scheduled an emergency board meeting to pass a resolution that allowed the superintendent to have "delegated authority to take any and all appropriate action to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic including, but not limited to, any and all actions". The resolution then lists almost two pages of actions under his authority. Because the board unanimously voted this all-encompassing power of authority, I, as previously noted in this Advocate, presented to Dr. Hammond the letter of demand, and a memorandum of understanding which we will soon start discussion upon return to work.

At the March 19th meeting, attendees saw probably what the norm for the rest of the school year will be as the coronavirus lingers here until abating. The auditorium at Central Language Academy was portioned out to accommodate social distancing. Every 5th seat or so was clearly marked with a green piece of paper signifying a place to sit to allow distancing. Two board members were self-quarantining, and on conference call. Some cabinet members were seated in the audience to allow ample spacing at the council seats. As well, the meeting was limited to only 50 attendees.

As for future board meetings and member attendance, we will take a "wait and see" approach before deciding how we can best organize members in the near future. As always, I am very grateful to those who have attended in these past few months. You have clearly made a difference. 🍏

## OMTA OFFICERS AND OPERATIONS

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

**CTA State Council Representatives**  
John Egan, MaryKay Scheid, Tracy Taylor  
**Service Center One Representatives**  
Trudy Cowan, Isabel Santos, Judy Westbrook,  
Vickie Harri, Tisha Curry  
**Bargaining Chair:** Tracy Taylor  
**Elections Chair:** Sendai Parker

**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  
**Edison:** Diana Eberle  
**El Camino:** Susie Imrich/Sandi Missick  
**Elderberry:** Kevin Dixon, Dennis Kelly  
**Euclid:** Wendy Beltran  
**Hawthorne:** Monique Gray, Joyce Johnson  
**Haynes:** Robert Mariani, Cecil Malacarne

**Howard:** Kelly Pawley  
**Kingsley:** Michelle Montes, Robert Paulak  
**Lehigh:** Robin Carr, Jennifer Barringer  
**Lincoln:** Holly Baca, Alice Mungia  
**Mariposa:** Sendai Parker,  
Dionne Treadway Contreras  
**Mission:** Debby Hilak  
**Monte Vista:** Jose China  
**Montera:** Ana Zoque, Dawn Falkenberg  
**Moreno:** John Ross  
**Oaks:** Lisa Eckersley, Malinda Hurley  
**Ramona:** Kelly Albers, VACANT  
**Serrano:** Ana Moreno, Curt Albers  
**Sultana:** Breanna Jones, Terri Tucker

**Vernon:** Regina Kranzer, Rosa Whitton  
**Vina Danks:** Noe Ortiz, Glenn Wong  
**Vineyard:** Nila Delise, Brett Waters  
**Vista Grande:** Annmarie DeHerrera  
**Wiltsey:** Kim Hunter, Brad Joplin  
**Counselors/Orcs:** VACANT  
**Early Ed/Pre-School:** Alison Guadalupe  
**HFB/Hardy Center:** Jeff Quick  
**Health/Nurse:** Dana Smith  
**Music:** Daniel Salcido  
**PE/APE:** Daryl Durston  
**Special Ed:** Aurora Mejico  
**Speech:** Ulla Tang Larsen