



ADVOCATE

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association

April 2021

IMPORTANT DATES MAY

3rd OMTA EXECUTIVE
BOARD MEETING

6th OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

10th OMTA REP
COUNCIL MEETING

20th OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

20th LAST DAY
FOR STUDENTS

21st TEACHER PREP DAY

31st MEMORIAL DAY

JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST
CALENDAR ON BACK

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

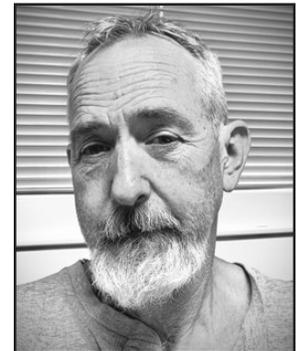
We will be almost two weeks into Hybrid instruction by the time you read this. I hope it has been fruitful for you and your students. If this language reads a bit familiar, it is because I am using some of the letter I sent out on the 15th of this month.

I know the return created a certain amount of anxiety and I hope getting to see those students you have been attending to virtually was good for everyone and that there were no major surprises. I do not live in your shoes, and I can only guess what some of you may be feeling or thinking right now. All I can say is that I believe you have all done admirably considering the conditions we currently are in. No one I think would have predicted this, or would have wanted this scenario of a crippling, deadly virus that tested the resolve of every single one of us. Thank you for your grace, your patience, and your kindness during these times.

As we return to school, we need to keep in mind a few things which I think are important as we enter these last few weeks of the school year. Some of you have received the vaccine, some of you have not. Whether you have or haven't is none of my business. However, I am hoping that all of you are following the pre-established protocols every single day you at your school site. Please continue to wear a mask in your classroom and when in the presence of students. If you are alone in your classroom, it would be your choice to take it off or not. If someone were to enter, please put your mask on. I only say this because of my wish to look out for one another. Wear your mask when outside of the classroom and on school site grounds. If you choose not to, you will more than likely be asked to put one on and may be susceptible to possible other consequences.

Please continue to practice social distancing both inside and outside the classroom. We know that 3 feet has been said to be okay, but 6 feet of distance is still a good distance to observe with others. It is better to be safe than sorry. I know it will be hard not to get closer to students to do what teachers do best, that being to provide that desk-side guidance that leads to personalized instruction.

Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer regularly. I can probably guess that you will be hearing more of this from your site administrators and from District administrators as well. I



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will leave it at that, you will probably have signs reminding you and your students of this important task too.

I want to say thank you to those administrators who have been supportive of teachers during this time. Thank you for acknowledging the challenges teachers have faced in learning new applications and platforms in order to better serve their students through this rough patch. Thank you for understanding that this is not the best time to evaluate instruction and being able to empathize with your teachers who may be struggling with concerns that lie outside of the classroom and maybe COVID influenced. As well, teachers should not be judged by their students' academic marks and scores during this time as we (teachers) are not entirely privy to the learning environment our students are living when not

in our classrooms. I believe there is no "learning loss" per se, as some government organizations like to spout about. If we believe this, it means there was an expected learning outcome before any learning ever took place. If there is some way to find out what our students did learn during this time away from us (like resilience, courage, or empathy, etc.) while sequestering, maybe we should explore trying to measure that.

In May you will be receiving the \$800 stipend that School Board voted for so that teachers could recoup some of the costs teachers incurred while teaching from online from home. Permanent and Temporary teachers will all be receiving these funds. I appreciate the School Board recognizing that many teachers did take a financial hit while performing their duties remotely. 🍏

PPE POLICY

XVII. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) OR ESSENTIAL PROTECTIVE GEAR(EPG)

1. Masks - The District shall require the use of facial coverings ("masks") of all individuals entering campus in accordance with federal, state, and local guidelines currently in effect. (see June 18 CDPH directive) Individuals who cannot wear a mask because of a documented health issue shall instead be required to wear a face shield and neck drape (tucked into the shirt).
2. Exceptions- All student IEPs and 504 Plans supersede this MOU. The district reserves the right to convene an internal reasonable accommodation procedure on the following: Masks and face shields may not be required for students or adults with documented medical/extenuating circumstances, for children age two and under, or for students with extenuating medical apparatus which prevents or obstructs the use of the apparatus.
3. PPE- Unit members may request additional equipment relevant to providing the essential functions within their job description (e.g., Protective sleeves, face shields, disposable latex gloves).
4. Hand sanitizer/soap - The District shall comply with the following hand washing logistical requirements:
 - a) every room with a sink shall be stocked with soap, hand sanitizer, and paper or air hand drying equipment;
 - b) every classroom shall be provided hand sanitizer.
 - c) non-classroom workspaces shall be provided hand sanitizer (e.g., Nurse stations, workrooms, lunchrooms);
 - d) hand sanitizer or portable hand washing stations shall be distributed at high traffic locations accessible to water and drainage and teacher shall be informed of their locations;
 - e) all hand washing/hand sanitizing supplies noted above or otherwise provided shall be checked and restocked immediately as needed and prior to the beginning of each day.
5. Classroom and other student contact areas will be disinfected between the AM and PM student groups.
6. During the duration of this MOU and the continued spread of COVID-19, to the greatest extent possible there will be no sharing of classrooms from grades TK - 8 to mitigate further spreading of COVID-19. 🍏



See's Candies has discontinued their gift certificates and replaced them with gift cards. The discount that we have provided will not be possible with this change. Unfortunately, OMTA will no longer sell See's Candy at the office once the supply we currently have is depleted.

STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW

By: MaryKay Scheid

The key word here is NOW. About the most important thing to know NOW is that **OPEN ENROLLMENT IS HAPPENING NOW!**

All bargaining unit members qualify for District subsidized health benefit (those who job share have access to a proportional share of the allocation. We have until Friday, May 7, 2021 to confirm or change our health insurance plan(s). The online platform where you can review and update your benefit selections is:

<https://omsdbenefits.hrintouch.com>

It's always best to do an annual review of benefits, but you only need visit the website if you want to make changes for the new plan year. If you do nothing, your current benefit selections (medical, dental, vision) will roll over to the new plan year.

Assistance is available over the phone. If you are unable to complete open enrollment online, you can schedule a phone appointment by contacting: 909 418-6456 or 909 418-6459. Since you need an appointment for assistance navigating through the Benefitfocus portal, it would be best to start that process NOW.

When your insurance premiums exceed the district's allocation, the difference will be deducted from your paycheck. Although our benefits year runs from July 1 – June 30, the annual cost is divided over 10 months. October is the first month that the tenths deductions (our cost for benefits) will be taken from our paychecks. The co-insurance and maximum benefits, however, do not match the benefits

year. The medical out of pocket maximums as well as the dental annual maximum benefit amounts are tracked on a calendar year basis running from January through December. To complicate things even further, vision plan benefit frequencies (i.e. getting a new pair of frames once every two years or new lenses once every 12 months) do not run on a calendar year but instead consider last date of service benefit. If you want to get the most from your benefits, you need to keep track of your calendar.

There have been a host of improvements made to our benefits plan. 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.

Another benefit available to you involves tax savings. 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 \$2750 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.

The Employee Handbook highlights the benefits programs available to us. You can read more at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tmomxILD07jBRO-3bQn3lw2YLIImu_2p/view 

FAREWELL FRIEND!

I think it is important for you to all know that after almost eighteen years working for the Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association, Office Manager Cindy Newey will be retiring. As many of you know, Cindy has been the helpful and welcoming face of the Association for a long time. Cindy is very pivotal and integral in the daily business of the Association. She is instrumental in making sure that financially the Association is stable and works alongside the current OMTA Treasurer year after year. She has been the backbone (along with the 2nd Vice President) for the Retirement Dinners (now on hold because of COVID) and has always been very involved in the planning and the decorations for this fun and important event for our members who leave us. I cannot thank her enough for her guidance and calm hand when I took office back in 2018. Her friendship and easy-going disposition have made this job a heck of a lot easier for me. Cindy will be here for the rest of this academic year, then at some point in the summer will be heading for Arizona to live with family. I know many of you have built friendships with Cindy. If you are wishing to visit Cindy to wish her well on her new adventure, please feel free to visit the office (with proper protocols please).



IMPORTANT DATES JUNE

3rd OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

17th OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

JULY

1st OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

15th OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

AUGUST

19th OMSD BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING

Socialism is a scareword they have hurled at every advance the people have made in the last 20 years. Socialism is what they called public power. Socialism is what they called social security. Socialism is what they called farm price supports. Socialism is what they called bank deposit insurance. Socialism is what they called the growth of free and independent labor organizations. Socialism is their name for almost anything that helps all the people.

Harry S. Truman
October 10th, 1952

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Vista Grande: Annmarie DeHerrera
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HFB/Hardy Center: Jeff Quick
Health/Nurse: Dana Smith
Music: Daniel Salcido
PE/APE: Daryl Durston
Special Ed: Aurora Mejico
Speech: Ulla Tang Larsen