



The Advocate

January 2026

A Message from Your President

As we kick off 2026, I want to give you a "State of the Union" for us here in Ontario-Montclair. Usually, January is a time for guessing games about the Governor's budget for our District and for OMTA. While it is encouraging, we are cautiously optimistic and will stay informed and involved as more details emerge in May and June.

Here is the good, the bad, and the work we need to do this year.



The Good: A Positive Budget Proposal

First, the positive news. Governor Newsom released his January budget proposal, and the "Prop 98" numbers—that's the pot of money that funds K-12 schools—looks positive. However, the Budget proposes to underfund schools by \$5.6 Billion which CTA will fight to make sure schools have what they are promised by Prop 98. The Budget proposes an increase to special education funding. The Governor has also proposed the extension of two grants: Learning Recovery and Community Schools. This money would be additional one-time monies that could possibly help us maintain some of our needed support at our schools. These supports are not just job titles or line items in a budget—they represent invaluable people who make a real difference for our students, families, and staff every day. We will not know for sure until his May Revise and the final adopted budget in June.

The Reality Check: What Does That Mean for Us?

However, I know what you're thinking because I'm thinking it too: *"That sounds better than last year, so when will I feel some relief in my paycheck?"* Here is the hard truth. While the overall funding pot is up, the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) proposed is only 2.41%. Once we know the actual funded COLA and LCFF in late May, OMTA will begin work to negotiate a raise.

The Solution: Why We Need You

One reason we have this budget stability is largely thanks to Proposition 55, the tax on the wealthiest Californians that we passed back in 2016. But here is the cliff: Prop 55 is set to expire in 2030. If we let that happen, we lose billions annually. Here at home, this would mean a \$27 million loss for OMSD. This November, we return to the ballot box to extend and secure Prop 55 permanently. This isn't about politics; it's about protection. It's about ensuring that when we negotiate our next contract, the district can't say, "*We don't know if the funding will be there in five years.*"

I'm asking you to continue to help by collecting signatures for the Prop 55 extension.

We have a strong community here in OMSD. Let's make sure our future is as secure as our commitment to our students.

Pop Quiz (Fun Edition!)

Do you love rainy days?

☔ Love them

😐 Meh

☹ Hate them

Loading...

What's rain?

📅 Voting ends in 18 days

👁 Votes are anonymous but results are public

Above & Beyond: Honoring Our Unsung Heroes

Michael Hatter

Michael is our union representative here at Buena Vista, and he does an outstanding job keeping us informed and supported. In addition to this role, he teaches TK and truly works wonders with his students. He is always willing to help, offer guidance, or simply lend a listening ear. His positivity is contagious and deeply appreciated by everyone who knows him. He consistently goes above and beyond in ways that often go unnoticed. We see you, Michael, and we thank you for all that you do.





Cindy Green

Cindy has made such a positive impact with our ELOP program here at Haynes. She has created hands-on engaging classes, made the classes teacher friendly, doing most of the prep work, and takes the stress off the teachers teaching the class. Because of her creativity in designing classes, we have a very high participation rate among students. During the school day, she makes sure to check in with staff to help and support in any way she can, even though it's not part of her "job description".

She does so many things! She has worked on the negotiations team as well as many other parts, supporting our teachers through many union committees. Cindy is an incredible advocate for her colleagues, students, and community. Thank you Cindy for all you do.

Contract Highlights

Knowing your contract empowers you and lets you know what your rights are. Here is an important topic that has come up so far this year.



Frequency

Probationary & Temporary
every year

Permanent
every other year;
unless mutually agree
to every four years



*Final Eval
due
4/24/26*

Evaluations

Article X1

Formal Observations

Ordinarily 3 formal observations of at least 30 minutes w/at least 2 days notice

May reduce to 2 or 1 if mutually agreed

Informal Observations

Provides additional information and ongoing feedback

Alternative Methods

Typically 3 progress conferences. If not meeting standards, administrator can request additional conferences and unit member can request written explanation.

OMTA Retiring Educators Scholarship

**Apply
today!**

Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association Retiring Educators Scholarship

**Deadline
3/20/26**

OMTA is awarding a scholarship for those seeking a career in education!

Who can apply? Former OMSD students, OMSD employees, or an employee's dependents are eligible!

For more information, please visit our website at www.myomta.org today!

Contact the OMTA office at 909-986-2414 if you have questions!

CTA - Institute for Teaching

In our December Advocate, OMTA featured an article by our very own member, Cindy Lopez Elwell, who was awarded an IFT grant for her garden project at Bon View Elementary School. Every school year, \$5,000 and \$20,000 Educator Grants are awarded to PK – 12 teachers and certificated support staff, ESP members and college instructors. If you are interested in applying or learning more about an IFT grant, please check out the link below.

We believe teachers are essential to building student agency, equity, and community solidarity.

Click here to learn more about CTA's Institute for Teaching

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship

CTA recognizes the shortage of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) educators in California. The goal of the Fund is to encourage BIPOC students to become educators, school nurses, school counselors or school therapists and to promote professional growth for BIPOC teachers and Education Support Professionals (ESP) members.

Who can apply?

- An active CTA member
- Dependent child of an active CTA member, CTA/NEA-Retired, or deceased CTA member
- An active member of CTA Aspiring Educators (CTA-AE) who wants to become an educator, school nurse, counselor or school therapists.



SCAN ME



Apply and learn more:
CTA.ORG/MLK-SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: February 20, 2026

Questions? Email: scholarships@cta.org

Not All Heroes Wear Capes!

Every day, educators go above and beyond—not only for their students, but also for their colleagues and the school community. We believe these quiet acts of dedication deserve recognition. We invite you to nominate a fellow educator who demonstrates exceptional commitment, inspires others, and makes a lasting impact through their service to both peers and students.

Who can be nominated:

Any educator who has shown outstanding work, collaboration, mentorship, and dedication to our shared mission.

How to nominate:

Simply click on the Heroes Wear Capes image and complete the form!



Your nomination can help shine a light on the individuals whose passion and hard work often go unnoticed—but make all the difference.

Unsung Hero Nominations

Together We WIN!

Even with all of today's challenges, there is much to celebrate. Over the past four years, OMTA has successfully negotiated:

- Over 16% in salary increases
- More than 3% increase in benefits allotment
- Lower Special Education caps than surrounding districts
- Higher hourly rates for timecarded work
- Daily prep for middle school teachers at K–8 sites
- Two new minimum days for report card and conference preparation
- Weekly prep time for elementary teachers (2 hours)
- Release days for Special Education teachers
- PLCs within the workday and not after school

Quick Links

 **OMTA Contract**

OMPTA Contract 

Salary Schedules

CalSTRS  **800-228-5453**

Check out your retirement benefits today! Or call to attend a class to see your retirement information!

How to register for your myCalSTRS account!

CalSTRS has reimagined the myCalSTRS portion of its website. As of September 23, 2025, all CalSTRS members (active and retired) will need to register to access the resources available to manage their accounts online.

Workplace Violence Form

Ontario-Montclair School District shall log information about workplace violence threats, incidents and post-incident responses that meet the definition of workplace violence types in SB 553.

Our website

myomta.org

Contracts, TIF information, Chapter Information, and more!

Calendar

Upcoming dates...

1/28

OMTA presents School Safety module here at OMTA at 3:30! Reserve your spot today! 909-986-2414

2/2

Executive Board Meeting

2/5

School Board meeting at Central Lang at 6pm.

2/9 &
2/16

No School

2/23

Representative Council at OMTA

Join OMTA Today!

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Tisha Curry
President