



The Advocate

February 2026

A Message from Your President

This school year continues to fly by! We have already completed 120 days of school, yet there is still important work ahead. Earlier this month, we wrapped up the second round of negotiations, and you ratified the tentative agreement. Thank you for making your voice heard. While this year is settled, the work for next year is already underway.



The bargaining survey is ready, please take a few minutes to share your thoughts and needs for our upcoming Reopener. Your input is essential for us to truly negotiate for *your* needs. The coming year is a reopener, which means Salary and Fringe Benefits are automatically back on the table, and OMTA will select two additional contract articles to negotiate based on your survey responses. The District will also have the option to open two articles. With the continued support of CTA, we will closely monitor the governor's proposed budget and its impact on our negotiations for next year.

As we conclude our listening tour, the message from members has been clear—we hear you. Two of the most consistent concerns are teacher-led PLCs and prep time. Prep time is *your* time. As our contract states: *"Preparation periods for unit members shall be used for job-related work, teacher-directed preparation for classes, and preparation of teaching materials."* We have made important progress. The addition of a second elementary PE period is now in the contract, and middle school teachers at our TK–8 sites are receiving daily prep, just like middle school teachers across the district. These daily preps are also *your* time.

At the same time, we know that even with these improvements, the workload often exceeds the time available. When additional time is needed—for IAB grading, student assessments, surveys, or the countless other responsibilities you manage—please reach out and ask for support. While

resident subs may not always be available, making the request helps highlight the ongoing need. Protecting and respecting your time will remain a central focus at the bargaining table—not only your prep time, but your instructional time as well. Meetings should be purposeful and meaningful, not simply held for the sake of meeting. We will continue to advocate for solutions that don't just add to your workload, but actively remove unnecessary demands.

Thank you for your continued advocacy, your professionalism, and the work you do every day for our students and one another. Together, our voices make a difference.

Pop Quiz (Fun Edition!)

Biggest time-waster at work?

 Email

 Meetings

 Paperwork

Loading...

 Browsing memes

 Voting ends in 18 days

 Votes are anonymous but results are public

Above & Beyond: Honoring Our Unsung Heroes

Norma Mota

Norma Mota is a teacher who consistently goes above and beyond what is expected of her. She is a true role model and one of the finest, most creative, and approachable educators on staff. As a colleague, Norma is cooperative, considerate, and respectful of others' opinions and perspectives. She makes valuable contributions to our school community by providing support to our ELD students and their parents, as well as providing support with student intervention needs. She actively participates in committees that support and engage students and staff alike. She continuously seeks professional development opportunities and eagerly embraces new instructional strategies that enhance her teaching practice. Thank you for all you do, Norma!



Laura Keshavjee



Laura is an unsung hero because of her dedication and commitment to the kiddos. She goes above and beyond to ensure all students' needs are met and are learning. As a TK and Kinder teacher, she goes out of her way to make the learning fun by creating engaging games to play. She celebrates successes in her classroom, so her students feel accomplished and continue to work hard. Laura is a team player, she mentors and collaborates with her team members. She is always willing to listen and try something new to support the kiddos. We have learned so much from Laura and appreciate everything she does to support our community.

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.



Bereavement Leave



Who is Immediate Family?



01 | Your Family

Spouse, domestic partner, parents, step-parents, foster parents, legal guardian, children, grandparents, grandchildren, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces.



02 | Your In-laws

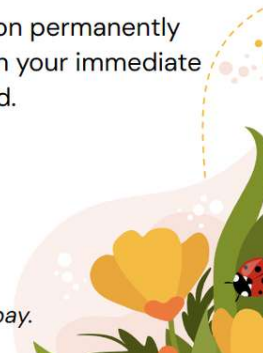
Parents, step-parents, foster parents, legal guardian, children, grandparents, grandchildren, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces *of your spouse*.



03 | Your Household

Any person permanently residing in your immediate household.

Errors on an absence slip may not be corrected and may result in a loss of pay.



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

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. What kinds of projects are they looking for? Projects that are innovative, creative, practical, action-oriented and student-centered. Projects that address all seven pillars of our Strengths-Based Strategy. Projects that address the needs of diverse learners and improve student learning. Deadline to submit an application is April 2, 2026.

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

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

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 17% in on-schedule salary increases over last 4 years!
- Over 10% in off-schedule over last 4 years.
- 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 (added one more too!)
- PLCs within the workday and not after school
- SLP compensation for overage finally in the contract
- Release days for Elementary Combination Teachers
- District will move your stuff if you are transferred! (Voluntary transfers too!)
- Release days for Admin or non-voluntary room changes increased to 4! Moving rate isn't sub rate either!

Quick Links

 **OMTA Contract**

OMPTA Contract 

Salary Schedules

CalSTRS  **800-228-5453**

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

March 2026



2

Exec Board

2-6

Middle School
Conferences



12

School Board
Meeting



13

Elementary
Minimum Day
Report Cards



16

Rep Council



23-27

Elementary
Conferences

Join OMTA Today!