From the President's Desk

I hope your Winter Break was a safe and restful one with your families. As I’m sure you can all attest, it wasn’t long enough. As we begin this new year, I know you all have a great deal of questions. Probably first and foremost is the projected date for when we start populating school sites. If you listened to Dr. Hammond’s recent webinar or read his Constant Contact message, we now know that the date we might start back at school sites has been moved to the day we return from Spring Break: Monday, March 29th. This would leave us with a full seven and one-half weeks of school and possible in class Hybrid instruction.

First though, hopefully by this time, ALL teachers will have been inoculated twice with either the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines and the two weeks-time suggested after the receipt of the second shot in order for our bodies to acclimate to the vaccine. The vaccine at this point in time is slow in arrival. At the time of this writing (January 14, 2021) the Los Angeles Times had an article about the slow roll-out that has been impacted by both the federal and state government’s inability to effectively plan a systematic and comprehensive dispersal of the vaccine. One of the biggest challenges is that the vaccines need specialized freezer units that keeps the stored vaccines at specific temperature ranges in order to transport to their projected locations. Also, there was mention of no funding being allocated by our state government to plan a schedule for dispersal of the vaccines around the state. Last, the production of the vaccines is not as prodigious as initially thought and the expected vaccination dates as outlined by https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/ is being pushed back. Regardless, we do know that the health care personnel, as well as long-term care facility residents are being vaccinated. Teachers are currently classified as Phase 1B– Tier 1 on the list. The list can be seen here: https://sbcovid19.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2021/01/Phases-Of-Vaccine-Delivery-Legal-Size_r10.pdf

Considering the return to school will be the factor of how far San Bernardino County will be into the administering of the vaccine. If all teachers have received the vaccine by then (and that is not a given) will classrooms be at full capacity or half capacity as dictated by the Hybrid MOU that is still being negotiated? I believe that the jury is still out on the effects the vaccine has on school age children. I think it would be best if we do return this spring, that it is imperative that we continue with the AM/PM Hybrid schedule, possibly erring on the side of caution in favor of our students’ health, as well as teachers’ health.
The other big concern is the issue of standardized testing. Last year standardized testing was waived by the federal government as teachers were getting ready to go home and teach the rest of the school year using online instruction. Currently we have no idea what the Biden administration and his new Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, will do regarding testing, and whether another waiver is being considered or the possibility of online testing. Online testing is a big concern because of the unreliability of the data, and there is no way to truly administer the assessments, which in turns makes the data from the assessments unreliable. This is from the Los Angeles Times, writing about the optional statewide English-proficiency tests administered in the fall which allowed in-person testing with local health guidelines, or testing remotely (online or by paper):

“Remote tests were delayed because it was difficult to secure signatures from parents; there were not enough resources to install secure browsers on devices; proctors were reluctant to sign a security affidavit for fear of being held accountable for anything that went awry in the students’ homes, and students still struggled with bandwidth and internet access. Delivering booklets for written tests was difficult and expensive and some are still being received.”

There is also the consideration of the extra stress placed upon students with the online testing during already stressful times. Many parents may not want their students to test, though it could be beneficial to measure the progress, and/or learning loss of students during the pandemic. If new Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona does move forward with assessing students, it should be to gather information on students and not look for teacher accountability.
A little on Distance Learning and Teaching from CTA and the CDE

COVID-19 has brought many changes to our schools and educational system. Moving from spring 2020 to fall 2020, one of the most significant changes in distance teaching and learning in California was the push to standardize and, in many cases, increase the amount of instructional time students received. Language in SB-98, the education omnibus budget trailer bill, specifies a minimum number of instructional minutes for all students based on grade level for the 2020–2021 school year:

- 180 instructional minutes per day for students in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten;
- 230 instructional minutes per day for students in grades 1 to 3; and
- 240 instructional minutes per day for students in grades 4 to 12*.

*Or 180 instructional minutes per day for certain high school students co-enrolled in community college, California State University or University of California courses, or who attend a continuation high school.

The California Department of Education (CDE) further clarified:

In distance learning, instructional time is calculated based on the time value of assignments made and certified by a certificated employee of the LEA in which the student is enrolled. Those assignments can include assigned instruction or activities delivered through synchronous or asynchronous means. Synchronous opportunities may include whole group instruction, peer interaction and collaboration, two-way communication, small-group breakouts, or individual office hours. The delivery method should match the purpose of the current learning outcome, corresponding task, and program placement (i.e., Language Acquisition Program). At times it may be appropriate for new content to be delivered asynchronously utilizing synchronous time for peer interaction, small-group breakouts, or individual office hours. Inversely, at times content may require synchronous opportunities to include direct instruction on new content. All modes should provide students a means of checking for understanding and progressing based on that understanding. [CDE website, Distance Learning Instruction Planning Guidance]

One key take-away from the CDE’s guidance on distance teaching and learning is that the minimum number of instructional minutes is meant to be fulfilled through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instructional practices, including direct instruction, student collaboration, and independent application activities. Unfortunately, too many administrators and school districts have interpreted the minimum number of instructional minutes narrowly, expecting teachers to conduct 3-4 hours of synchronous online direct instruction per day. This is neither consistent with the letter or intent of the statutes, nor is it sound educational practice. Students should not be expected to sit through hours of online instruction when both teachers’ professional judgement and state regulations call for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, time for students to practice and apply learning within the school day, and student interaction with peers as well as teachers.

~ from AN OVERVIEW: DISTANCE & HYBRID TEACHING PRACTICES, CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

A Final Note

There has been a lot said about the “Learning Loss” happening due to the coronavirus. We as educators need to reframe this narrative. There is no learning loss, and the students you teach are learning. They are just not learning a cadre of pre-established standards as determined by politicians far removed from the classrooms we teach. Many of our students have learned to navigate through a digital platform as devised by you, their teacher in order to receive an education. There is learning here that just cannot be measured at this time. As well, if the state is so concerned about a so-called learning loss then when we do return, there should then be a moratorium on Professional Development and Staff Trainings so the money used for these activities that pulls teachers from classrooms can be devoted for more time to make up the in-class instruction that was missed. Also, how was this shift made to online learning if teachers were not working hard and past the contract day to make this happen for their students? I cannot say this enough, thank you for all you do for the students of Ontario-Montclair School District.
**OMTA OFFICERS AND OPERATIONS**

President: John Egan  
1st Vice President: Tracy Taylor  
2nd Vice President: Monica Lite  
Secretary: Isabel Santos  
Treasurer: Daniel Salcido

CTA State Council Representatives:  
- Mary Kay Scheid, Tracy Taylor, John Egan  
Service Center One Representatives:  
- Judy Westbrook, Vickie Harri, Tisha Curry, Isabel Santos, Glenn Wong  
Bargaining Chair: Robert Mariani  
Elections Chair: Sendai Parker

Office Manager: Cindy Newey  
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**OMTA REPRESENTATIVES**

**Arroyo:** Brenda Zola  
**Berlyn:** Crystal Cook, Erik Kobulnick  
**Bon View:** Debbie Roose Baker, VACANT  
**Buena Vista:** Michael Hatter  
**Central:** Marina Garcia  
**Corona:** Julie Rafeedie  
**DeAnza:** Inaki Bizarra  
**Del Norte:** Natalie Cantos  
**Edison:** Diana Eberle  
**El Camino:** Janean Rogers/Cindy Smith  
**Elderberry:** VACANT  
**Euclid:** Wendy Beltran  
**Hawthorne:** Joyce Johnson  
**Haynes:** Robert Mariani, Cecil Malacarne

**Howard:** Kelly Pawley  
**Kingsley:** Michelle Montes, Robert Paulak  
**Leigh:** Robin Carr, Jennifer Barringer  
**Lincoln:** Alice Mungia, Tamara Lemmon  
**Mariposa:** Sendai Parker, Dionne Treadway Contreras  
**Mission:** Debbie Hilak  
**Monte Vista:** Joe China  
**Monteria:** Ana Zoque, Dawn Falkenberg  
**Moreno:** John Ross  
**Oaks:** Lisa Eckersley, Malinda Hurley  
**Ramona:** Kelly Albers, Trudy Cowan  
**Serrano:** Ana Moreno, Glynnis Ellis  
**Sultana:** Breanna Jones, Terri Tucker

**Red for Ed T-shirts for Sale**

A new batch of Red for Ed T-shirts have been delivered to the OMTA office. They sport the CTA logo “outlined” by the state of California on the front of the shirt, and the OMTA logo on the back.

We have a supply of:  
5-Medium, 7-Large, 8-XL, 5-2X, and 5-3X.

**Prices:** $18 for small to XL | $20 for 2X and 3X

**Nominations for Executive Board/NEA Representatives**

In January, nominations open up for five Executive Board positions of our Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association. The positions that need to be filled are for 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, two Service Center One Representatives, and a State Council position. All positions have responsibilities, most notably the required monthly attendance at OMTA Executive Board Meetings and Representative Council Meetings. The Service Center Representatives also have four quarterly dinner meetings (currently Zoom meetings due to COVID) they are required to attend. The State Council Representative also has the responsibility to attend the four State Council meetings that are held at the Biltmore in Los Angeles and occupy scheduled weekend dates. These are also held via Zoom meetings currently. If one is interested in getting a start and being more involved with Association (union) activity a good place to start is (in my opinion) to run for a Service Center Rep position. You will make acquaintances with other OMTA Representatives and representatives from neighboring associations within the Service Center One domain which extends along the southern foothills corridor from about Pasadena to Fontana. Although it helps to be a site representative first, anyone who is a member of Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association can run for any of these positions. If you need any more information you can call or email the OMTA Office for more information.

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**DeAnza:** Inaki Bizarra  
**Del Norte:** Natalie Cantos  
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**El Camino:** Janean Rogers/Cindy Smith  
**Elderberry:** VACANT  
**Euclid:** Wendy Beltran  
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**Ramona:** Kelly Albers, Trudy Cowan  
**Serrano:** Ana Moreno, Glynnis Ellis  
**Sultana:** Breanna Jones, Terri Tucker

**Vernon:** Regina Kranzer, Rosa Whitton  
**Vina Danks:** Noe Ortiz, VACANT  
**Vineyard:** Nila Delise, Brett Waters  
**Vista Grande:** Anmarie DeHerrera  
**Wiltsey:** Kim Hunter, Brad Joplin  
**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