

Our Union Voice

UNITING • EMPOWERING • ADVOCATING

Orange County Classroom Teachers Association Newsletter



July 26, 2022

Greetings fellow CTA members! I hope you find this newsletter helpful and informative and that your summer is going well. Thank you for all that you do as educators and as members of our union. There is strength and empowerment in our united efforts to advocate for a better future. You are the union. #CTAstrong #ReclaimOurFuture

-Clinton McCracken, OCCTA President

Contract and Salary Ratification

We became aware there were some issues with some people not receiving ballots and a few who even received empty envelopes. We have discussed this with the printer and will be using a different printer for future ratifications. The preference would be electronic voting if PERC (Public Employees Relation Commission) would allow it as this would likely improve our voter participation which is vital. Those who didn't receive a ballot during this ratification were able to pick up a new ballot from the CTA office. Due to these issues and a delay in some people receiving their ballot over the July 4th holiday, the deadline was extended 10 days to be due on July 28th when ballots will be counted. You may watch this ballot count on Zoom at this [link](#).

Election 2022

Primary "Vote-By-Mail" ballots started arriving last week. Now more than ever it is critical that educators vote. We have seen a constant attack on public education from Tallahassee. There are more than 20 laws that now govern how teachers can be paid and yearly proposals to limit union rights. We've also seen many unnecessary culture war laws created that make our schools less safe for all students. We need pro-education lawmakers elected to turn things around. Vote like your job depends on it and encourage your family and friends to do the same. There are several critical OCPS School Board races as well. We must vote for candidates who support teachers and who aren't running on false flag extremist agendas. There are other candidates advocating for book bans, against what they refer to as "CRT", calling teachers "groomers", accusing us of indoctrination, and advocating for limiting union rights. We encourage you to get involved and canvas for candidates who support teachers. The four candidates endorsed by CTA are:

Teresa Jacobs, Chair Angie Gallo, District 1
Heather Ashby, District 2 Kila Murphey, District 3

As an affiliate of the Florida AFL-CIO, CTA supports the following endorsements: [CLICK HERE](#). You can also access the FEA Voter Toolkit [HERE](#).

Note: In May a letter was approved for FEA to send to members with information on voting and includes a Vote-By-Mail Ballot Request Form. This letter just arrived in mailboxes this week but contains important information on voting.

CTA Office Open After Pandemic Closure

The new CTA Board has chosen to reopen the CTA office to members again. Due to the very high positivity rates currently, masks are still required.

IMPORTANT DATES

REGISTRATION DEADLINE	MAIL-IN DEADLINE	VOTE BY MAIL BALLOTS SENT
Primary July 25	Primary August 13	Primary July 14-21
General October 11	General October 29	General September 29 - October 6

ELECTION DATES

PRIMARY: August 23rd
GENERAL: November 8th

Retention Supplement

A joint communication from CTA and the District was sent on July 20th to your OCPS email. CTA originally proposed this as a Longevity Supplement and through the impasse hearing it became known as the "Retention Supplement". Both of these terms refer to the same thing. It is funded by ESSER and was ratified as a three year supplement. The first distribution occurred on April 13, 2022. The second year will be paid on January 18, 2023 and the third year will be paid in January 2024. During the impasse proceeding the School Board made it loud and clear that they intend to look for funds to continue this supplement beyond these first three years and CTA intends to pursue this as one way to reward our veteran teachers for their longevity in this profession.

"Don't Say Gay" (HB 1557) and "Stop WOKE" (HB 7) Implementation

FEA has issued a [guide](#) (in coordination with AFT and NEA) with important information about your rights related to HB7. With regard to HB1557 we haven't received clear guidance from FLDOE except through the "Motion to Dismiss" the Equality Florida lawsuit. After CTA received reports of Principals saying Safe Space stickers must come down, President McCracken spoke with Dr. Vazquez to find out if Principals were directed to remove these. They have not received such guidance and Dr. Vazquez has notified Area Superintendents these are not to be removed. The District will be issuing further guidance on HB 1557 this week. The OCPS Legal Services Department posted an [apology](#) on their website after CTA raised important concerns from their "Camp Legal" workshop as well. Safe Space stickers may remain.

AR Training/Calendar

We are excited we were able to offer a workshop for our Association Representatives on July 21st both in person and virtually. We will continue to offer mini-workshops at each monthly AR meeting as well. We've also asked ARs to share with us specific topics they want addressed for these future trainings. We are in the process of sending each member a 2022-2023 Calendar. This is filled with valuable information on: Your Union, Your Profession, Your Rights, Your Vote, and Your Benefits and Future. Your Association Representative will receive this to distribute at your work sites.

Know Your Contract

Preplanning Schedule: Meetings and other activities scheduled by Administrators during the preplanning week should not exceed 2 ½ duty days.

Article XIV - Duty Day

T. *"Beginning in 2020-21, scheduled activities during preplanning will be limited to the equivalent of no more than two and one-half (2 ½) duty days so as not to significantly impede the teachers' time for preparation for the coming school year. This does not apply to new hires to the District and/or work location, schools assigned to the School Transformation Office, or schools identified as Corrective Program Schools."* (Full contract is available on the CTA website)

Member Spotlight

We had several members attend the National Education Association Delegate Assembly in Chicago and the American Federation of Teachers Convention in Boston in July. These conventions are a great way to ensure your voices are heard at a national level, to be informed of current issues in our profession, and to get reenergized. We would love to increase our CTA representation at the next events so consider running in the Spring when we have the next election for this. Elected delegates receive reimbursement for eligible travel expenses. Pictured here are Vice President Maira Rivera, Treasurer Ashley Modesto, Board member Daphne Lewis, member Alan Rasmussen, and member Selena Menchan.



CTA's mission is to empower and advocate for our members in order to ensure a quality public education for every student.

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