



Our Union Voice

UNITING · EMPOWERING · ADVOCATING

Orange County Classroom Teachers Association Newsletter

SPECIAL BARGAINING UNIT EDITION May 30, 2023

As we bring this year to a close, I want to acknowledge your commitment to our students, even through the difficulties many of you faced this year. You are the definition of resilience, and your dedication is admirable. Thank you for all that you do and for being the heroes that you are every day.

Your union is working tirelessly on your behalf. A special thank you to all our Association Reps who help disseminate critical information to our schools/worksites. They are a great example that "CTA" is not limited to CTA leaders or staff members working in the union office. It is a collective of thousands who are advocates for each other and for a better working environment. This year, I have made it a goal to work in a more collaborative manner with district leadership to achieve much-needed changes in school culture. I have also prioritized communication and providing opportunities for members to get involved. Together, we are stronger and can achieve more. May your summer bring some much needed rest, but also renewed energy, and precious time with your family and loved ones. Thank you for all that you are. -Clinton McCracken, CTA President



Bargaining: The CTA bargaining team has been meeting and will continue to meet during the summer. Currently, the team is developing the plan that will be followed during negotiations. This includes developing the proposals that will be presented to the district. Negotiations with the district will begin June 28, 2023. The location will be announced at a later day. We invite members of our bargaining unit to monitor CTA social media for ways you can be actively involved in the process. Your voice and advocacy matter.



Summer School Contract Language: Teachers shall be paid a full day's salary if they report to work in the summer session and there are not enough students to justify the continuance of a class. Each high school with a summer academic program will be provided with a minimum of one half-time media specialist for the summer session. Summer session employment shall be paid at the teacher's rate of pay per their primary contract for the school year just completed. The Board shall issue payments to employees employed in summer school in equal installments on a biweekly schedule, insofar as possible. Click [HERE](#) to access the contract.

End of the Year Survey: It is important that your voice is heard. We've created a short end of year survey to reflect on how things went this year and to provide an opportunity for you to give us feedback. Click [HERE](#) to complete the survey. .

Summer Planning Days: The district sent a memo about Summer Voluntary Planning Days. The days are being provided utilizing ESSER funds. There will be a total of five voluntary common planning days for classroom teachers, Tier 1 teachers, select resource teachers and coaches. Click [HERE](#) to read the memo.

School Board Work Sessions and Meetings: On June 15 at 10:00 a.m. there will be a work session about Public Input at School Board Meetings. The Operating and Capital Budget will be discussed during the Work Session on June 20 at 10:00 a.m. While there is no public comment during work sessions, board members have a discussion and you get to know their position on important topics including your rights, salary and working conditions. The budget public hearings will be August 1st and September 12. The public is allowed to speak during the public hearing. Can't attend the board meetings? All board meetings are broadcast live. Click [HERE](#) to access their YouTube channel.

CTA Scholarship: (left) Congrats to all our recent OCPS graduates and to the recipients of the CTA Howard Fenner Scholarship! CTA members donate \$4 of their dues each year to this scholarship fund. We were thrilled to give out \$31,000 to graduating seniors of CTA members. Since 1966 CTA has given over \$1 million to students in Central Florida.

CTA Social Media: CTA has a private Facebook Group to provide another method for sharing information and another benefit of membership. Rules for belonging to this group are posted to maintain a helpful and supportive experience. Click [HERE](#) to join. CTA also has a public Facebook Page you can follow [HERE](#) and Instagram [HERE](#).





Classroom Instruction on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: On April 27, 2023 the District sent a memo that states: "Unless a teacher can expressly point to a Florida state academic standard which addresses sexual orientation or gender identity or unless the teacher is teaching a reproductive health course, the teacher cannot provide classroom instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity." Click [HERE](#) to read the memo.

CTA Virtual Series: CTA hosted Virtual Presentations about student discipline, membership and the bargaining process. On July 26 we will host the Virtual Series Presentation: "Know Your Contract" in preparation for the 2023-2024 school year. Learn about your contract, the grievance process, and building an advocacy team at your work site.

This workshop is for CTA members only. Click [HERE](#) to register.

CTA Accomplishments: I am proud to highlight some of the accomplishments we achieved together this year:

- Fostered a respectful and collaborative partnership with the district, working together to address concerns and find solutions that benefit both teachers and students.
- Actively represented your interests and concerns at the district level, advocating for fair treatment, improved working conditions, and the recognition of your invaluable contributions.
- Prioritized open and transparent communication, ensuring that you were informed about important updates, changes, and initiatives.
- Initiated a bargaining process that includes the input and perspectives of all teachers, ensuring that your voices are heard and considered in decision-making. (Stay tuned for bargaining sessions to begin in June)
- Sought your input through surveys, giving you the opportunity to provide feedback, share your ideas, and contribute to shaping our union's initiatives and advocacy efforts.
- Provided numerous social activities including Pride Parade, MLK Parade, Puerto Rican Parade, and Social Hour events throughout the year to celebrate our community.
- Improved our Social Media presence to ensure our community knows who teachers really are and what they stand for.
- Sent multiple members to Tallahassee to speak out against laws that are harmful to students, teachers, teachers unions, and public education.
- Created a CTA Republican and CTA Democratic Caucus so all political voices are heard.
- Reconvened Safety Committee Meetings with OESPA and District.
- Requested the District form a Teacher Advisory Council and met throughout the year to discuss issues with district leadership.
- Proposed and signed a Health and Safety MOU for the first semester.
- Assisted Riverdale Elementary after Hurricane Ian with a supply drive and ongoing advocacy.
- Secured and distributed Hurricane Relief funds from FEA/NEA/AFT for 19 members.
- Established a positive relationship with our sister union, OESPA.
- Increased member input through Bargaining Survey and meeting with several individual subgroups.
- Distributed \$31,000 in scholarship money to OCPS High School seniors, children of CTA members. We have now donated over 1 million dollars in scholarship funds to OCPS students.
- Requested that Superintendent Vazquez and President McCracken visit some of our more fragile schools together to discuss opportunities for collaborating and helping schools/students succeed. (Right)
- Increased school visits to provide assistance to members, provide updates, and ensure your voice is heard.
- Reestablished AR meetings both in person and virtually as a respectful and collaborative solutions based council.
- Redesigned CTA website so that information is easily accessible.
- Negotiated additional planning hours due to loss of early release Wednesdays.
- Advocated for Media Specialist and School Counselor summer hours.
- Convened Discipline Roundtable to provide the District with input from teachers.
- Discussed impact of Artificial Intelligence in Education and convening Roundtable in Fall.
- Increased membership density to a record 57%, passing 8,000 members.



Not a member?



Join today!

The Contract, Lesson Plan Agreement, MOUs, Evaluation Info, Supplement Handbook and more are available [HERE](#).

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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