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Orange County Classroom Teachers Association



BARGAINING UNIT NEWSLETTER - Digital Version at [ORANGECTA.COM](https://www.OrangeCTA.com)

August 1, 2023



Welcome back to a new school year! I hope your summer was wonderful and filled with quality time with friends and family, leaving you reenergized for the year ahead. CTA is Your Union, advocating for all 14,000 instructional personnel. We bargain Your Contract, represent our over 8,000 members during professional issues, offer many member benefits, and amplify our voices by standing in solidarity. With the legislature now requiring 60% membership for teachers' unions, we are almost there at 58%. Joining Your Union is essential so that we can keep our Contract and improve wages and working conditions. The protection provided by the Contract would be gone without this Union. Districts without teachers' unions serve as an example of the potential impact. Now is the time to unite with your fellow educators and be part of the Union that advocates for You. Together, we make a difference. Wishing you a successful year ahead.

Clinton McCracken, CTA President and 23 year OCPS teacher

Bargaining Update: CTA is a member-led union and our proposal is based on your concerns and input. You have overwhelmingly emphasized inflation and teacher retention to give our students the support they deserve—that means addressing salary compression for veteran teachers, valuing ESE services, and providing a pathway for teachers saddled with student debt.

OCPS' proposed flat amounts for raises instead of percentages, combined with significant healthcare increases, ignores these needs. Their salary proposal has STRINGS ATTACHED: it includes steep healthcare cost increases in 24/25 (for example, Plan A would now have a cost and the only no-cost option would be the small Advent network (Surefit); the employee + children premiums in Plan A would increase by nearly 100% and in Plan C would increase by 123%).

- Click [HERE](#) to read all bargaining updates.
- OCPS limits what information can be included in our emails, so please click [HERE](#) or scan QR to the right to join our nonmember email list.



- Bargaining Petition: Click [HERE](#) to sign and share your support for our proposals.
- Let us tell your story related to our proposals. Click [HERE](#) or scan QR to the left to submit your story for us to share.
- Your Union will continue to bargain in good faith and fight for an agreement that represents the concerns raised by teachers and gives the recognition they've earned.



CTA Membership Interest: We are currently at 58% membership and are required to reach 60% before March in order to recertify as a Union and keep our Contract. We have shared at District New Hire events (Great Beginnings and PREO) what your Union does for you and how to join. If you are interested in joining, go to www.tinyurl.com/joinmyunion.

PragerU: This "resource" was recently approved by the FLDOE to be used in Districts but OCPS has not adopted it. CTA President Clinton McCracken discussed this political propaganda with District leadership and was told, "OCPS recently participated in the state adoption process and purchased approved materials that are used within our Social Studies courses. There are no plans to seek additional supplemental materials as our current resources meet state standards."

Public Ed Advocacy: CTA members spoke out against the Florida Board of Ed new African American History standards this summer. Members continue to write their legislators sharing [why](#) these are so problematic. This NEA [guide](#) helps public school teachers understand their rights when speaking up for public education and students.

CTA Solidarity Day: Wear red September 12 District-wide to stand in solidarity. Each member is asked to share with one nonmember why you are a member of your Union and ask if they will join us for their own benefit including our collective desire to keep our Contract. The Elementary, Middle, and High Schools with the highest increase in membership in September will receive a free lunch (Other worksites will be combined with like-sized schools). The member with the most recruitments in September will receive \$300, second place \$200, and third place \$100!



Current Members: Recent legislation removed your ability to pay dues through payroll deduction. Dues are now paid through our eDues platform. **65% of members have completed this.** The deadline is September 15 after which membership will lapse and you will lose the protections and benefits of membership. Contact us at ctaedues@gmail.com or 407-298-0756 for assistance. Click [HERE](#) for our FAQ document and/or watch this [eDues Tutorial Video](#).

ATTENTION:
MEMBERSHIP IS AT
RISK SEPT. 15

Members must click personalized link in email or text from CTA or from your A.R. to complete eDues before your membership lapses Sept 15. Only members receive protection/assistance from CTA.

Preplanning Meetings: Contract language: "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." Members should call the CTA office if you need assistance.



Pictured Clockwise: AR Training, NEA RA, CTA Members at Board of Ed, Coffee with Clinton

Meet The Teacher: The schedule for the day when the schools host Meet the Teacher has to be modified so it does not exceed 7.5 hours. Remember, the only activity the administrator may require attendance outside the 7.5 hours is Open House. "The parties recognize the importance of employees' participation in school-related activities, such as open house, PTA, and other school functions, which occur outside of normal working hours and flex time may be used for affected teachers. The administrator may require attendance at the school's annual open house." Members should call the CTA office if they need assistance.

Getting involved with CTA: CTA will again be in the Pride, MLK, and Puerto Rican Parades. We've also created ad hoc committees based on member interest such as: LGBTQ+ Caucus, Black Caucus, Hispanic Caucus, Women's Caucus, Young/Early Career Educators Caucus, Republican Caucus, Democratic Caucus, and Military Veterans Caucus! Connect with fellow union members! Click [HERE](#) to join a committee (CTA members).

CTA Teacher Leader Program: Seeking teachers interested in collaborating with colleagues on: Increasing an understanding of the major challenges facing the teaching profession, Improving leadership skills, Representing our profession as spokespersons, and Becoming members of an influential and supportive network of educators. This program will occur online one Saturday per month, 8:30am to 3:30pm from September to April. You can find the application [HERE](#).

CTA Social: Join us at our first CTA Social at Gatlin Brewing Sept. 1. Gift Basket Raffle and appetizers provided. Drinks provided by Voyage Retirement. Get help signing up for membership or e-Dues while you enjoy happy hour!

CTA Membership Drive: You will receive a \$50 gift card at the end of the year for recruiting 5 new members and \$10 for every person beyond that. All new members will also receive a \$20 Wawa card.



Free CTA Member T-Shirt: Click [HERE](#) to order your T-Shirt if you haven't yet received one.

CTA Facebook Group: CTA created 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](#).

Voting: Due to changes in law, all Florida voters who vote by mail must submit a [NEW mail ballot request](#) to their county Supervisor of Elections. Not registered to vote? Register [HERE](#).

Member Reference Guide: CTA members will soon receive a new Member Reference Guide which highlights Contract FAQs, Evaluation Quick Guide, and AR/Field Rep contacts. Members can offset the cost of membership by utilizing Union Benefits/Discounts and this new guide outlines some of these which include Liberty Mutual, BMG Money, Suncoast Credit Union, American Fidelity, Cross Country Mortgage, Voyage Retirement Solutions, FEA MyDeals app, FEA Access Card, AFT benefits program, NEA insurance discounts, NTA Life, and more!

The Contract, Lesson Plan Agreement, MOUs, Evaluation Info, Supplement Handbook and more are available [HERE](#).
Our ongoing Bargaining Suggestion Form can be accessed [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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www.tinyurl.com/joinmyunion