

# ADVOCATE



**ONTARIO-MONTCLAIR TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

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**FEBRUARY 2008**

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## **VALUABLE RESOURCES ON "MYOMTA.ORG" LINKS!**

by Melody Kelly

Browsing our education websites linked to "myomta.org" is time well spent in keeping current on educational issues, opportunities, and resources that can save us time. One such link that saved our grade level team a lot of time last year was cta.org. By clicking on "Family Involvement Tips," our Cheryl Ramirez found a sample of a "Family-School Compact," a voluntary agreement between staff, parents, and students. After adapting it to our needs we were able to send it home for signatures at the beginning of the year. Even though any agreement we would have written would have been exceptional, having this resource freed up our time for other things. The CTA website has many Family Involvement Tips, including brochures, with translations. Click on "Parents and the School" and we can learn about the Family School Partnership Act that allows parents, grandparents, and guardians to take time off work to be at their child's school. This information can be shared at conference time to support and encourage participation.

Anyone writing a school newsletter, parent education materials or outreach materials would benefit from reviewing this website. The best thing about it is easy access. I don't have to dig for it in a file drawer or binder like in the good old days!

As we celebrate the birth of "myomta.org," let's keep in mind it has many ideas and resources that can help our planning and refresh our knowledge in many areas. YOUR input on "myomta.org" is valuable. Please email President Rick McClure with any suggestions or comments. Happy surfing!

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## **OMTA/CTA TO SPONSOR OPEN ENROLLMENT IN ENDORSED STANDARD INSURANCE COMPANY INCOME PROTECTION AND LIFE INSURANCE.**

The Standard Insurance Company is currently conducting an Open Enrollment campaign with OMTA members for the CTA sponsored Income Protection and Life Insurance programs. Any member who enrolls before March 15 will be able to acquire either product without answering health questions.

The Standard will be holding Open Houses at the OMTA office on Feb. 28, March 5 and March 13 from 3 – 5. Not only will you be able to get any questions you have answered, you will also be able to enroll in either, or both programs. Refreshments and door prizes will be given to all who attend.

OMTA highly encourages every member to give serious consideration to these products. Every teacher should have an income protection policy, and any of you with families need life insurance. The programs from The Standard have been selected by CTA because of their quality, price, and the staff's commitment to service.

All of you will be getting mail from CTA about this. Information will also be available at your site through your building rep. Questions can also be directed to the OMTA office.

## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

*Rick McClure*

Ontario Montclair School District has a new Superintendent. At its Feb. 7 meeting, the school board announced that they had reached an agreement with Interim Superintendent Dr. Virgil Barnes to remove the Interim from his title. I applaud that decision. In his short time here, I have been very impressed with Dr. Barnes' business-like approach to the serious financial issues facing the district, his desire to rely upon the talent within the district instead of consultants, and his commitment to a management style that will insist upon decisions at school sites being made collaboratively with teachers. He is bringing the winds of much needed change to the district in both style and substance. I'm looking forward to continuing to build a good working relationship with him.

The district has informed me that they will be moving 82 of our teachers from temporary to probationary status. Hopefully by the time you read this, the actions necessary for this to occur will have already taken place. This is a very positive step forward, in my opinion. The district has teachers who are now in their fifth year in the district still in temporary status. The decision to move them onto a track towards permanent status was a good one and will reward the hard work and loyalty of the OMSD teaching staff. I know this has been a big issue for many of you and am glad that, by working with the district, we have been able to reach a decision that is good for both the district and our teachers.

I have also been working with the district towards finding some solutions to our substitute teacher crisis. We have reached agreement at the bargaining table on language that will pay teachers when it is necessary to cover for the lack of a sub. At the middle schools this will mean teachers will be paid when they cover a class on their prep period. At the elementary schools students will be "farmed out" to other classes only after other credentialed personnel fill in (i.e. principals, assistant principals, and TOAs) when available. When teachers must fill in, whether they are TOAs or regular classroom teachers, they will be compensated for it now. Due to the need to submit the proposal to the County Office of Education for AB 1200 approval, implementation of this will begin around April 1. The district is also working on placing restrictions on the number of teachers who can be involved in trainings and other out-of-classroom activities on any given day. In addition, the district has been aggressively working to hire more substitute teachers. I hope when all of these pieces are in place we will see a dramatic reduction in the need for teacher covering due to the lack of substitute teachers.

The state budget crisis continues. The Legislature and Governor have agreed on mid year cuts of \$400 million for education. Most of these cuts will come from categorical funds that have not yet been spent, but some will come as a reduction in the base revenue limit districts receive. The impact of this on OMSD is not completely clear yet, but cuts are always bad news. The district also continues to plan for the cuts that are inevitable next year. Unless the Governor and Legislature agree to find new sources of revenue, next year's budget will be catastrophic to every district in the state. Even with new revenue sources, next year's budget will be a bad one. There will, of course, be no reductions in the expectations that will be placed upon each and every one of you to produce results with your students. You simply won't have the resources to do it with. I urge every one of you to contact your State Legislators and the Governor and let them know that reducing the funding for education as has been proposed, making California dead last in the country in school funding, is unacceptable. You can find tools to help you do this at [www.cta.org](http://www.cta.org). Please take the time to do this. Your salary, benefits, and perhaps even your job may depend on it.

## CORRELATES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

This is a continuing series on the Seven Correlates of Effective Schools by Lawrence Lezotte. This series is running in the Advocate to serve as a reminder to everyone that simply having the presence of the Essential Program Components (EPCs) is not enough. Having a relevant curriculum, using the adopted texts, following the pacing guides, etc., are all important, but will mean relatively little unless the school itself is functioning in a meaningful way. It should also serve as a reminder that simply complying with the requirements of Program Improvement is not enough either. It is far more important that schools offer meaningful instruction that students can connect to and learn from.

### 6. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

**The First Generation:** In the effective school student academic progress is measured frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are used to improve individual student performance and also to improve the instructional program.

**The Second Generation:** In the first generation, the correlate was interpreted to mean that the teachers should frequently monitor their students' learning and, where necessary, the teacher should adjust his/her behavior. Several major changes can be anticipated in the second generation. First, the use of technology will permit teachers to do a better job of monitoring their students' progress. Second, this same technology will allow students to monitor their own learning and, where necessary, adjust their own behavior. The use of computerized practice tests, the ability to get immediate results on homework, and the ability to see correct solutions developed on the screen are a few of the available "tools for assuring student learning."

A second major change that will become more apparent in the second generation is already under way. In the area of assessment, the emphasis will continue to shift away from standardized norm-referenced paper-pencil tests and toward curricular-based, criterion-referenced measures of student mastery. In the second generation, the monitoring of student learning will emphasize "more authentic assessments" of curriculum mastery. This generally means that there will be less emphasis on the paper-pencil, multiple-choice tests, and more emphasis on assessments of products of student work, including performances and portfolios.

Teachers will pay much more attention to the alignment that must exist between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum. Two new questions are being stimulated by the reform movement and will dominate much of the professional educators' discourse in the second generation: "What's worth knowing?" and "How will we know

when they know it?" In all likelihood, the answer to the first question will become clear relatively quickly, because we can reach agreement that we want our students to be self-disciplined, socially responsible, and just. The problem comes with the second question, "How will we know when they know it?" Educators and citizens are going to have to come to terms with that question. The bad news is that it demands our best thinking and will require patience if we are going to reach consensus. The good news is that once we begin to reach consensus, the schools will be able to deliver significant progress toward these agreed-upon outcomes.

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## NO-COST AUTOMATIC INSURANCE PROTECTION NEW (2/15/08)

As a CTA/NEA member you are automatically eligible for two valuable insurance programs at no additional cost, the CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and the NEA DUES-TAB. These plans are a no-cost insurance protection exclusively for CTA/NEA members. The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and the NEA DUES-TAB automatically cover you on September 1, following the date you become an eligible member, but even if you have just one year of credited membership, you will be eligible to receive a benefit.

You may name anyone as your designated beneficiary. Simply complete one beneficiary registration form for CTA and one for NEA. By doing so, you will not only ensure that your designated beneficiary is registered, you will have personal security that comes with your CTA membership.

The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan is designed to provide a life insurance benefit that increases with each year of continuous CTA membership, until the maximum benefit is reached after ten (10) years. The NEA DUES-TAB maximum benefit is reached after five (5) years.

	CTA	NEA
Death Benefit	up to \$2,000	up to \$1,000
Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit	up to \$10,000	up to \$5,000
Occupation/Association Leader Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit	\$50,000	\$50,000
Unlawful Homicide while on the Job	NA	\$150,000

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## OMTA REPRESENTATIVES

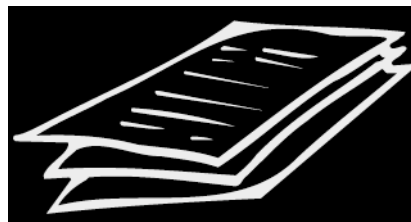
**Arroyo:** Karen Hirschfield  
**Berlyn:** Crystal Cook, Erik Kobulnick  
**Bon View:** Sally Field, Angela Pratt  
**Buena Vista:** Jessica Gagnon  
**Central:** Marina Guevara  
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**Ramona:** Jay Lemke  
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**Vernon:** Robert Armijo,  
Stephanie Hibbard  
**Vina Danks:** Donald Brubaker, Steve Loy  
**Vineyard:** Lesia Beasom, Lucy Kopaz  
**Vista Grande:** Helen Cieslik  
**Wiltsey:** Ken Aven, Linda Boren  
**Music/PE/APE:** David Moody  
**Speech:** Susan Yee  
**Health/Nurse:** Denise Mick  
**Early Ed Center:** Leticia Martinez  
**Hardy Center:**  
**HFB:** Linda Nelson



This is only a brief summary and not a complete description of the Plans. For a complete description of the CTA Death and Dismemberment Plan, please refer to the booklet entitled "CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and Summary Plan Description," a copy of which is provided to all CTA members.

To register a beneficiary, please call the CTA Risk Management and Member Benefits Department at (650) 552-5200 or e-mail: [member\\_benefits@cta.org](mailto:member_benefits@cta.org).

For a complete description of the NEA DUES-TAB or to register a beneficiary, please call the NEA Member Benefits Department at (800) 637-4636.



OMTA Executive Board Meeting  
March 3rd at 3:45pm

OMTA Rep Council Meeting  
March 24th at 3:45pm

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OMSD School Board Meeting  
March 6th & 20th - 7:00pm at  
Central School

## OMTA OFFICERS AND OPERATIONS

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