



Respect.

It's so important to us. We are in the classrooms day in and day out. Good teachers/educators know the students we work with better than anyone else in education. And we, the teachers/educators of OPS are good. Yet our voices have become muted.

Over my years in OPS I have watched the level of respect for teachers drain further and further away. Extending the school day with no notice or conversation. Paperwork requirements increasing to unmanageable levels. Professional judgment whether it's curriculum content, teaching styles, or lesson plan requirements all managed at micromanaged level found in no other profession.

Out of control student behavior is reaching a crisis level, yet who is held to blame? Not the people who have control of the consequences. Across the district, school employees at all levels are subjected to verbal and physical threats and assaults on a regular basis, but the district response is to blame the very people who are victims of the assault.

Here are actual words I have heard over the course of the last six years

"If teachers were engaging their students, they wouldn't have these problems".

"What did you do to set this student off?"

"What will you do to turn this behavior around?"

"Are your procedures and routines posted?" "I didn't see the objective for the lesson posted in the classroom." "You need to write your Kagan strategy for each lesson." "Did you identify each stage of the gradual release model for every lesson you teach? "You are a charter school proponent." "We just want what's best for kids". "We don't think teachers understand."

"Do teachers understand that there is no magical pile of money lying around the TAC building?" "These teachers just don't want to do the work."

**ENOUGH!**

It's time this stops. You, me, we... All of us are the Omaha Education Association. It's time that we, not have a voice at the table, but redefine the table itself. It's time we take back our profession. It's time that we join together and stand together as one. The OEA Negotiating Team is calling a meeting. I am calling a meeting. This is an all member meeting, Friday, January 12th at 4:45 PM. Surveys, emails, texts, committees and flyers all have their place, but we need more. We must come together and decide where we, as a membership, stand.

No more excuses. No more I didn't get the information. What do you want to do as an association? What do you want? For years The OEA has advocated collaboration in decision making. How much progress have we made? We have reached a watershed moment. Do you want to continue the "Go Along to Get Along", the "Pay to Play" philosophy that we have relied on for all these years? Or do we pull the power of our membership together and take a stand for all of us?

Either way, you need to be there to set our course. Yes it's short notice, Yes, it's a Friday. Yes, you're busy. We are running out of time. Your voice makes the difference. You have a negotiating team and board willing to stand up for you. We need to know what you want. This email will be followed up with another email giving you the location of the meeting.

We are the force for change.

Spread the word. Go to our Facebook page

I will see you on Friday, January 12th.

In Solidarity,

Bridget Donovan

President - Omaha Education Association

<https://www.facebook.com/bridget.oea/>