



# OEA Update

## August 13th, 2021

Colleagues,

It is a new year; new day and the slates are clean to begin making lasting impressions for the students you service. I can not thank you enough for your tireless dedication you have given to make learning the best for your students. I know full well that the summer was spent preparing for the arrival of students, professional development learning or teaching the Next Level Learning courses. Your dedication is one in a million.

The OEA has been diligently working to make sure our schools remain open, safety measures in place, and the staff are advocated for to have the best year possible. However, there are always challenges and we will address them as they arise.

### New Contract:

As we start a new year, we are also entering into the first year of a two-year master agreement with the district. Information on changes were shared before it was ratified by members last year. [CLICK HERE](#) to download a copy of the master agreement.

Some topics to be aware of...

- Look at your paycheck on 9/15 to make sure you are placed correctly on the salary schedule. If you find an error, reach out to the Comp and Benefits department in OPS. Your Organizational Specialists are here to help you navigate but are unable to go and gather the information on your behalf from the district.
- Your personal days should have been paid out in June at the prior contracts rate of \$150 per day if you did not use them, and your new days should be reflected accordingly.

### Open Enrollment:

- Open Enrollment for Benefits is taking place from August 1-14. Make any changes to your current coverage and re-enroll for your Flexible Spending Account through the OPS Anywhere portal. There are now multiple health insurance options for you to select from.
- Our Health Insurance deductible has changed to a \$1,200 deductible. If you have already satisfied your \$1,050 deductible, the additional \$150 deductible amount will apply to claims incurred the last four months of the calendar year. OEA and OPS hosted many virtual seminars throughout the Spring and Summer, allowing Blue Cross/Blue Shield to explain in detail about the health insurance benefits and the option for Alt Network.

- **Short term disability** enrollment also closes on August 14. There is NO federal leave available for Covid this school year, so you will need to use your sick days if you are out ill for any reason. Short term disability with MetLife can help supplement your income after your sick days are used. More information on short term disability can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).

### Plan Time Minutes:

The OEA encourages all teachers to carefully read the changes to plan time in the Negotiated Agreement. If your schedule currently does not allow for the minutes you should receive for your position, discuss with your principal, and have a copy of the negotiated agreement with you to share with them if necessary. If you continue to have issues regarding plan time, contact your Organizational Specialist at the OEA office. Elementary school educators – if you are interested in serving on a committee to propose changes to elementary school plan for the next negotiations cycle, email [becca.dingwell@nsea.org](mailto:becca.dingwell@nsea.org) for information on upcoming virtual meetings.

### Value of Membership:

OEA/NSEA/NEA is a 100%-member driven Union. You have an elected OEA Board who meet monthly, Building Reps (AR's) who meet monthly to share topics to address with the district, and an executive team that is in constant communication with each other to be well informed on issues educators are facing. I meet with district leadership on a regular basis to share our positions, concerns, and ways that we can enhance our collaboration with one another. Locally, we have two Organizational Specialist who work on your behalf to address the issues impacting the classrooms and our members. They are always available to assist our members. At the state level you have leaders who are fierce advocates for our students are members across the state.

Your membership comes with a wealth of opportunities for you to participate. We have committees that are starting up in September, check out the [website](#) for dates and times. We are scheduling some PD opportunities in the coming weeks. They will be virtual for the safety of everyone.

Our office and staff will continue to be available for our members and are willing to come to you but adhering to the district's building protocols. If you need anything, please call the office at 402-346-0400 or reach out to me via email.

I appreciate all you do. OEA is here for you, and we are stronger together! Don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

Be well,

Robert

OEA President  
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