

OPTA NEWS

August 2021



Make sure you check out www.opta97.com for contact info, resources, virtual meeting links & more.

President's Report

Welcome back to all of our educators and welcome to our 35 new educators! We have been working with the interim Superintendents and interim HR Directors and it has been a positive experience so far. All individuals seem very pro-educator and seek to leave D97 better than they found it. We are cautiously optimistic.

Our Executive Board was elected in the Spring. The Executive Officers are Co-President Lary Grimaldi (Brooks), Co-President Hannah Boudreau (Brooks), VP Jim Zander (Mann), VP Gina Harris (Julian feeders), Secretary Debbie Cooper-Tomallis (Lincoln), and Treasurer Jim Hayward (Mann).

Other members of our elected Executive Board include Region 46 Representatives Stephanie Suerth (Brooks) and Gabby Rosenblum (Beye), Members at Large Kara Sakellaris (Irving) and Kristen Sundquist (Beye), and Ethnic Minor Representative Riley Hoerner (Brooks).

We have a vacancy for the one-year term of Ethnic Minority Rep on our Executive Board. Please email either Lary or Hannah if you are interested in serving. The duties of the role can be found on our website in the Bylaws, specifically in Article VII.

Please use [this form](#) to let us know if you would be interested in serving on a committee.

Bargaining Team Updates

The bargaining team was appointed after an application process in the Spring and consists of: Co-President Lary Grimaldi (Brooks), Co-President Hannah Boudreau (Brooks), VP Jim Zander (Mann), VP Gina Harris (Julian feeders), Kara Sakellaris (Irving), Stephanie Suerth (Brooks), Arnetta Thompson (Lincoln), Elizabeth Smith (Lincoln), Jennifer Jaros (Holmes), Jennifer Raia (Longfellow), and Taylor Furlong (Beye).

The team met for an introductory meeting in August and voted on Arnetta Thompson and Stephanie Suerth to lead negotiations. The team also began preliminary planning for outreach to members including a survey and listening sessions. They meet again in September.

In Other News

Communications - Our communications team met over the summer to update our website and begin planning for the year. Our goal is to streamline communications and create more transparency for our membership. We will be hosting some brief trainings throughout the year, and we encourage everyone to follow us on Facebook both our [public](#) and [private](#) pages. Please participate in our [Membership Spotlight](#) series for our public OPTA Facebook page.

Membership - We want to welcome our 35 new members and congratulate our 37 members who achieved tenure this year! We are planning to host a Membership Mania on October 26th in conjunction with our Meeting of the Membership. Please save the date!

Conference Opportunity - EMELT (Ethnic Minority & Emerging Leaders Training) is November 5-7, 2021. If you would be interested in attending EMELT, OPTA can help with registration. More information can be found on [the IEA-NEA website](#). Please contact Stephanie Suerth.

Important Dates/ Upcoming Events

September 13 - Education Council (Zoom*)
September 16 - Association Reps Meeting (Brooks & Zoom*)
September 21 - Executive Board (Brooks & Zoom*)
October 1-2 - IEA ONE Conference
October 4 - Education Council (Zoom*)
October 5 - Executive Board (Brooks & Zoom*)
October 7 - Association Reps Meeting (Brooks & Zoom*)
October 26 - Meeting of the Membership (Brooks Commons & Zoom*)
October 26 - Membership Mania (Brooks Commons)



*Please use a personal device/email to log into session via Zoom. Links can be found on www.opta97.com under Member Resources. Contact Adrienne Court or Stephanie Suerth (communications@opta97.com) for the password.