

OPTA

NEWS

January 2022



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President's Report

At the January Meeting, President Lary Grimaldi moved support of a pending move to Remote Learning for two days on Thursday and Friday, January 13 and 14, respectively. OPTA has no vote on whether or not we actually go remote, but it would be a sign of support for our interim Superintendents who are working with the Oak Park Public Health Department and would allow Lary and Hannah the ability to bargain if necessary. Current details include: (a) grade K-8 being fully remote, (b) PKP, ECE, and instructional/multi-needs being on site, (c) causes included staffing concerns, COVID positive cases climbing, and contract tracing needs, (d) using the holiday weekend as a pseudo-quarantine, and (e) days will not need to be made up in June. The Executive Board asked clarifying questions including: would time for lesson planning (answer - no) and would there be an option to teach from home (answer - yes, onsite or from home). Presidents reminded all that the requirement for synchronous and asynchronous is 70/30. The schedules for middle school would be A/B for consistency and the elementary day would be to continue the day as it currently exists. When the question was called, the vote was unanimous to support the move to remote.

An update was provided on the Middle School survey. We are waiting on an update from IEA.

OPTA is working with the interim Superintendents to update the COVID Sick Days MOU to include rapid antigen tests in addition to PCR tests as an approved ways in which to return to work after a positive COVID test.

Finally, OPTA leadership was asked to provide questions for the Superintendent Forum being held on January 12. A subcommittee was formed and questions were submitted around the topics of experience, transparency, relational trust, educator support/retention, and change in D97.

Conferences in February will be remote with the option to Zoom from home.

Bargaining Team Updates

Bargaining sessions with the Board of Education began on January 10. The majority of the joint sessions are on Mondays, with a few exceptions for holidays.

The Negotiations Support Team will meet to be trained at the end of January. Thank you to all those who volunteered to support our bargain within the building. At this time all buildings are represented on the Support Team. Please make sure you are familiar with who is on the Bargaining Team and who is on the Negotiations Support Team from each school. Refer to opta97.com for the list of Bargaining Team members.

In Other News

Elections - Congratulations to our elected delegates to the 2022 IEA RA, Hannah Boudreau (Brooks), Adrienne Court (Julian), Ruby Dajani (Brooks), Lary Grimaldi (Brooks), Jim Hayward (Mann), Nichelle Stigger (Brooks), Stephanie Suerth (Brooks), and Debbie Tomallis (Lincoln). Also thank you to our OPTA members who attend the RA as delegates in leadership roles: Gina Harris (NEA Director) and Arnetta Thompson (Region 46 Vice Chair). Upcoming elections for NEA RA delegates (summer) will be held on March 1.

Communications - 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.

IPACE/ Membership - First dinners with Board of Education members are scheduled for January 19 and will be held via Zoom rather than in person. Gift cards will be sent to OPTA members after attendance is confirmed. As of right now all dinner groups are organized, and all seven board members are participating.

Board of Education Meetings - Public Comment - At our October Membership Mania, five members of the BOE came to meet with our membership. They spoke about wanting to hear from our members more about their experiences in the school buildings. Please consider sharing via email. The board will read aloud all public comments received by 7 p.m. on the day of the meeting. To submit a public comment, please email d97board@op97.org with the subject, "Public Comment." Your message must include your first and last name in order to be read aloud.

Important Dates/ Upcoming Events

February 7 - Ed Council (Zoom)
February 8 - Region 46 Meeting (canceled)
February 8 - Board of Education (Zoom)
February 9 - IEA Member Meetup with IL House Speaker Chris Welch
February 10 - Association Reps (Zoom)
February 15 - Executive Board (Zoom)
February 22 - Board of Education (Zoom)
March 10 - Association Reps (Zoom)
March 14 - Ed Council (Zoom)
March 15 - Executive Board (Zoom)
March 15 - Board of Education (Zoom)
March 26 - April 3 - Spring Break



*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.