



# Annual Report

Old Town Teachers Organization  
For the period July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Prepared on  
September 26, 2025

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## A Note from Our Officers

### Co-Presidents, Dona Benkert & Renée Nanzer

This past year has been a period of significant change for OTTO. With the elevation of Troy Anderson to CEO and John Huber to Education Director, our relationship with school management has been a dynamic one—moving from moments of strain to strong collaboration. We have worked diligently to foster a more positive and productive partnership with the school's administration.

Along with holding general membership meetings each session, some of our key accomplishments include:

- Reviewing and suggesting modifications to the new employee guidelines.
- Interviewing the final two candidates for the Education Director position.
- Successfully increasing the Virtual Teaching Allowance limit from \$500 to \$750.
- Working with the steering committee on key initiatives.
- Co-sponsored with the Resource Center a May Day Sing-along Celebration, the first of what is hoped to be a regular series of cooperative events between OTTO and Admin.

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### Secretary's Report, Michael O'Toole

Our work behind the scenes has been crucial to the smooth operation of OTTO this year. Secretary's responsibilities included:

- Keeping minutes of Steering Committee and other meetings.
- Facilitating and managing OTTO's Zoom account.
- Regularly reviewing the Week 4 Union Lists and updating the status of teachers using our Google Contacts and Email List – new hires, terminations, active vs inactive, etc.
- Regularly monitoring, organizing, and cleaning up OTTO Gmail and Google Drive accounts.
- Attended to our Social Media accounts – Facebook, Instagram. We have now completely let go of X (formerly Twitter). However, it has been archived.
- Chairing the Election Committee which oversaw the May 2025 Election of Officers and proposed Amendments to our Constitution and Bylaws (the latter did not pass).
- Assisting in the transition of the Secretary position from myself to Will Fancher.

# Committee Reports

## **BIPoC Committee: Mars Caulton**

The BIPoC Committee focused on amplifying the voices of People of Color within our community. Efforts included:

- Distributing newsletters highlighting arts community events featuring People of Color.
- Expanding our mailing list to reach a wider audience.
- Producing podcasts that feature People of Color from various departments within the Old Town School, which were shared through our newsletters.

## **Communications: Jim DeWan**

The Communications Committee worked to enhance our internal and external messaging, ensuring our members and the wider community were kept up to date on OTTO's activities and initiatives. Efforts included:

- Writing and editing emails, letters, etc.
- Updating the OTTO website with new and relevant information and increased ease of use.

## **Defense: Will Fancher**

The Defense Committee reconvened this year to partner with other local unions and participate in public demonstrations of worker solidarity and protest against the anti-labor conduct of the Trump administration. Efforts included:

- In Spring 2025 we participated in the No Kings protest in Daley Plaza.
- Partnered with Chicago Teachers Union for their May Day march.

## **Grievance Committee: Dona Benkert**

The Grievance Committee provides comprehensive support to our teachers, protecting their rights and advocating on their behalf. This year, we:

- Advocated for teachers by addressing a wide range of concerns, including tardiness, no-call/no-shows, allegations of improper conduct, and student complaints.
- Prepared teachers for formal proceedings like investigatory meetings, grievance hearings, and arbitration.
- Collaborated with administrators to resolve issues early, reducing the need for formal grievances.
- Filed grievances and demands for arbitration when necessary to protect teachers' interests.

- Provided union representatives to support teachers called into investigatory meetings.

### **Finance Committee: Julianne Rice**

The Finance Committee worked to ensure the financial health and accountability of our organization. Our accomplishments include:

- Paving the way to begin paying Officers and Steering Committee members starting in FY 2025-2026.
- Hiring a professional accountant to assist with financial reporting and oversight.
- Filing legal reporting documents at federal and state levels, IFT, AFT, and other financial reports.
- Maintaining the OTTO membership list.

### **On-Boarding Committee: Rick Veras, Will Fancher**

The On-Boarding Committee is dedicated to welcoming new teachers and informing them about the benefits of joining our union. Our accomplishments include:

- Updating our new hire correspondence, providing a direct online link for signing union cards.
- Sending welcome emails to new teachers that detail the advantages of union membership.
- As a result of our outreach, we successfully signed-on a total of 13 new members.
- Ensuring all teachers, including non-union members, were invited to our OTTO professional development seminars.

### **Stewards: Alicia Lees**

Our stewards serve as frontline support for our members. Their work included:

- Disseminating regular updates to keep OTTO members informed.
- Acting as the first point of contact for teacher concerns and connecting them with appropriate resources and support.
- Conducting outreach to non-union members.
- Adding new stewards to our team. A special thank you to all who are currently serving or have served as stewards for their invaluable dedication.
- Supported and advertised OTTO events including this year's election and May Day performance

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We look forward to another productive year ahead and thank all our members for their continued support.

# Financial Statement FY 2024

July 2024 - June 2025

	Total
<b>REVENUE</b>	
Investments	
Interest-Savings, Short-term CD	19.17
Share Dividend	1.10
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>20.27</b>
Program Income	
Membership Dues*	3,106.55
Program Service Fees	143.00
<b>Total Program Income</b>	<b>3,249.55</b>
Services	222.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>3,491.82</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>3,491.82</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Contract Services	
Accounting Fees	175.76
Stipend for Union Work	2,550.00
<b>Total Contract Services</b>	<b>2,725.76</b>
Hospitality Food Beverages	488.71
Operations	
Postage, Mailing Service	623.61
Printing and Copying	23.28
Supplies	134.91
Telephone, Telecommunications	474.29
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>1,256.09</b>
Travel and Meetings	155.98
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>4,626.54</b>
<b>NET OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>-1,134.72</b>
<b>OTHER REVENUE</b>	
Refund	28.60
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>28.60</b>
<b>NET OTHER REVENUE</b>	<b>28.60</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -1,106.12</b>

# Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2025

		Total
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Bank Accounts</b>		
01 SHARE SAVINGS - 2		5.00
Checking		45,557.93
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>		<b>45,562.93</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>45,562.93</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$45,562.93</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		
<b>Equity</b>		
Opening Balance Equity		10,651.50
Restricted Net Assets		25,000.00
Unrestricted Net Assets		11,017.55
Net Revenue		-1,106.12
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>45,562.93</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		<b>\$45,562.93</b>

\*Note:

Income from membership dues was low due to OTTO having been behind in per capita payments to IFT (Illinois Federation of Teachers). A transition was made to a Direct Dues model. Old Town School (OTS) now routes the full membership dues straight to the IFT. This allows IFT to assume control of the dues calculation and collection. The initial incoming direct dues were allocated to settle the outstanding per capita debt. Upon full repayment, the IFT normalized the process and began forwarding OTTO's entitled portion of the dues to our local.