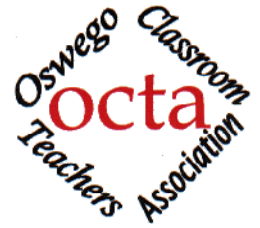


OCTA Advocate

A newsletter for members and friends of the Oswego Classroom Teachers Association



February 2021

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Carrie Patane
OCTA President



Kim LeRoy
VP Grievance



Gretchen Coakley
VP Negotiations



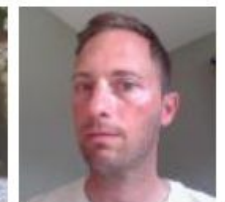
Jenn Cahill
VP Pol. Action



Mike Patane
Treasurer



Michelle McManus
Secretary



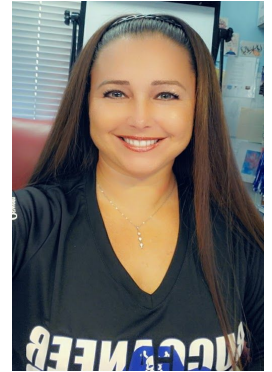
Dan Rose
VP Newsletter

Meet your 2020-2021 OCTA Officers!

Message from your OCTA President, Carrie Patane:

I would like to send along my personal thanks to all OCTA members who continue to stay true to the community in which we all work, and the students whom we all nurture and serve. It is truly an honor to work alongside individuals and professionals who understand the power of togetherness and the call of the greater good. I am inspired daily by the unrelenting passion and joy I see in the hallways and classrooms of our schools and on the streets and sidewalks of our beloved community. This joy and passion has only strengthened with the return of students to in-person learning at the secondary level.

With the influx of students and the continued threat of Covid, we must be as vigilant as ever in protecting ourselves and our schools.



Along those lines, NYSUT has raised a number of concerns regarding the privacy of protected medical and health information. As a result of our continued conversation, the New York State Department of Health is issuing a notice to Superintendents and schools informing them that they are not to collect this information from teachers and to await revised guidance. An amended executive order is forthcoming to address the issues NYSUT raised.

In addition to NYSUT's unwavering support for the health and safety of our members, delegates from every local in the state will be attending our Committee of 100 meetings this month to lobby our policymakers in order to push for the support of a variety of educational issues including adequate funding, health and safety in schools, and waivers for state assessments. Many thanks to Jen Cahill for taking this on each year, but especially for carrying the torch while we have so much uncertainty.

Take care of yourselves and your families. Be well and be safe!

In solidarity,

Carrie

OMS Social Studies teacher in the February OCTA Spotlight!



Mr. Jeff Brown is an 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher at OMS; he is also the Social Studies Team Leader, the unofficial 'go to' person on the 8E Team, a Mentor for new teachers, Student Teacher and Practicum Supervisor and the Auditor for all OMS Student Activities.

In his 26+ years as a Social Studies Teacher at OMS Jeff has become the 'voice of reason' for his peers and OMS administrators; he remains 'calm, cool and collected' at all times and leads by example. He has a love of learning and growth that has continued throughout his career and he often shares articles or books that he has read related to education with his colleagues. In the words of John F. Kennedy, "Leadership and Learning are indispensable to each other." Mr. Brown is a wonderful representative of this thought and quietly models it each and every day.



Do you know an OCTA member who works hard at what they do? Someone whose efforts seem to go unnoticed? Send the candidate's name, along with a brief description of what makes them special to drose@oswego.org. All nominees and nominators will receive a SPECIAL GIFT from OCTA! Send your nomination today!

Teacher's book deliveries make reading fun

Author: Kara Smith

Source: NYSUT Communications

Nearly everyone remembers the thrill of getting new Scholastic books. Whether through book fairs, paper order forms filled out at the kitchen table, or digital order forms viewed online, Scholastic books are a rite of passage for many American students. Kerry-Ann Reeves, a fourth grade teacher at Daniel Webster Elementary School in New Rochelle, Westchester County, was determined to keep that excitement going for her students, despite COVID-19 restrictions.

“Before COVID, I held classroom book raffles a few times a year,” said Reeves explaining that she would give students tickets, display a selection of free books and let them choose materials for themselves when their ticket number was called. Since many of her students are remote learners this year, she came up with a unique way to keep her classroom book giveaways going — hand delivering free books to her students’ homes every few months. READ THE REST: [CLICK HERE!](#)



Holiday Desk Building follow-up and THANK YOU to big donations from Oswego Children's Board and others!



In a follow up to an article that first appeared in the December 2020 edition of the OCTA Advocate ([OCTA Members Build Desks for Students in Need](#)), Kyle Brown, Betty Wills and Dan Rupert, who spearheaded the charity drive to build and deliver desks to students in need, along with member of OCTA would like to give special thanks to all those who made the gift-giving possible including the [Oswego Children's Board](#) who donated \$2000 to the cause (the largest monetary donation received!).

On their website ([Oswego Children's Board Website](#)), OCB co-presidents Norma Barnes and LaDonna Tucker say, “It is an honor to work alongside members who also dedicate so much of their own time to help other community members in need.” The Children's Board, according to information found on the website, is comprised of volunteers who commit to work on specific projects designed to improve the lives of children in the greater Oswego community. The CBO also has a [Facebook](#) page and encourages all to join, volunteer and participate! (Pictured Above: Members of the current Oswego Children's Board (reprinted from the OCB Website, 2017).

Also of note: our own OCTA members raised over \$1000 dollars for the community project! The Oswego Community and affiliated organizations continue to step up during these challenging times, and the OCTA Advocate will continue to highlight these groups in hopes that more individuals will get involved.

Travel Advisory Reminders

November 4, 2020

*Reviewed and Updated February 9, 2021

Dear Faculty and Staff Members:

New York State has been issuing travel advisories since June 2020, for people traveling to States with elevated community spread and transmission of COVID-19. The NYS Department of Health (DOH) imposes a period of quarantine for people who visit States where it has been determined that the COVID-19 virus has not been adequately controlled and there is significant evidence of infections.

Effective November 4, 2020, Governor Cuomo updated the NYS travel advisory and quarantine requirements (Executive Order 205.2). This new Executive Order implements a “test out” provision for travelers to States and localities covered by the travel advisory. A summary of the travel advisory rules can be found online at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory and is outlined below. **Always consult this website for the most recent travel advisory rules.**

EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 4, 2020		
OUT-OF-STATE TRAVELERS MUST DO THE FOLLOWING UPON RETURN TO NY		
Traveler Group	To which State (and for how long)	Applies upon return to NY (requirements are mandatory)
Group 1	To States that share a border with New York (Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and likely Vermont & Massachusetts)	No mandatory period of quarantine No COVID-19 testing requirements
Group 2	In another State for less than 24 hours	No mandatory period of quarantine Must complete a Traveler Health Form (on DOH website noted above) Must take a COVID-19 test within 4 days of return
Group 3	In another State for more than 24 hours	Mandatory 10-day period of quarantine, which may be shortened by the following “test out” procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a COVID-19 test within 3 days of departure from the state to which you traveled, prior to arrival back in New York Upon return to NY, begin your 10-day quarantine On Day 4, obtain a second COVID-19 test If both COVID-19 tests are negative, traveler is released from the remainder of the 10-day quarantine period

[WANT MORE INFORMATION ON COVID-19 TRAVEL? CLICK HERE!!](#)

Union sees path forward with new slate of educator-lawmakers

Author: Ned Hoskin

Source: NYSUT United

After years of hard work with many months of active support from members of NYSUT and other unions all over the state, new state Sen. John Mannion finally broke through in Central New York's 50th Senate District.

Sworn in Dec. 16 in Albany, the Democrat has been the longtime president of the West Genesee Teachers Association and a NYSUT political activist.



“It’s an honor for me and my family,” the science teacher said, “but it’s a victory for working people in Central New York who will finally have a senator who can bring our voice and our values to Albany.” Mannion is a product of the NYSUT Pipeline Project that helps identify, train and support local union members who are interested in running for office. He joins several other members in the state Legislature, most of whom came through the pipeline. ([READ the REST: CLICK HERE](#)).

RETIREMENT Seminar for OCTA Members (and families) in March!



Join us for a one-hour NYSTRS Retirement Benefits session on **March 24 at 5PM** when a NYSTRS Information Representative will discuss key topics you need to know.

The session will include an overview of pension calculation rules by tier, as well as:

- How to be sure you receive all the service credit for which you are eligible.
- Important service milestones and their impact on your pension calculation.
- The various pension payment options.
- Death benefits and their continuation into retirement.
- The steps to take to file for retirement.

Meeting participants will be able to submit questions through a chat feature during the meeting. We encourage general questions in this public setting. Specific questions concerning your individual situation should be discussed during an individual benefits consultation or by calling the Retirement System at (800) 348-7298.

PLEASE respond to this email to let Dan Rose know that you are interested in attending this virtual seminar. Mr. Rose will then forward you the invite for the meeting!! Thank you!

Want to know more about the retirement savings vehicle called the New York State Deferred Compensation Plan (AKA 457 Plan)?

Attend the virtual informational meeting on **April 21 @ 5 PM** with OCSD Rep Dan Kain who will discuss:

How a 457 differs from a 403B

Top reasons to participate in a 457 plan

Income tax benefits of the 457 plan

Investment options offered through the plan

Flexible distribution options

Lower costs

Great customer service

Frequently asked questions

Interested? Get a sneak peak at the presentation through the FAQs page on the NYS DEF COMP Website: [CLICK HERE!!](#)



OCTA Newsblast February 2021

Highlights from our February 2021 OCTA Meeting

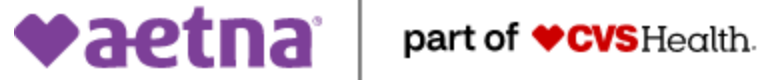
*There is still concern about the Governor's budget. The state is looking to take back funding. NY State is saying if the Federal Gov't doesn't give funding to the State for schools then the state will need to withhold funding to make the Federal Gov't have to give money to the states. **Keep an eye on things and be sure to participate in the MAC.**

*OCTA is working on a Families First Corona Response Act MOA. FFCRA expired Jan 1st. This MOA will cover all bargaining units to allow members to use their sick days if there is a need to quarantine.

*A tutoring MOA is being worked on so teachers will be able to apply for tutoring jobs that could take place during our breaks and still get paid. Currently teachers are not able to take jobs with the district during breaks due to already being during the break.

[READ THE REST: CLICK HERE!](#)

Insurance Concerns Resolution Procedure



Melissa and I are aware of some recent frustrations with claims, billing, and approvals, with our insurance carrier Aetna. We thought it might be helpful to provide some information and reminders about who you can reach out to for help.

ENV Insurance Company are folks who are our insurance brokers and act as our liaisons and problem solvers. They are super helpful and local, and can be reached by calling them at 315-641-5848 or 800-641-5848 or emailing callcenter@insurewithenv.com

While it's completely okay to contact Aetna, it might be easier to call ENV with the problem as they are very familiar with our self-funded plan and they chat with Melissa and me almost everyday.

If you have a very complicated issue or you feel like ENV hasn't responded in a timely manner, please don't hesitate to reach out to me (hsweeney@oswego.org or ext 2009) or Melissa Syrell (msyrell@oswego.org or ext 2023), who is our Health Benefits Clerk. Included is the flyer from ENV, which can also be located in the Personnel Shared Drive, in the Benefits folder.

February 23, 2021

NYSUT statement on federal government's decision to require state standardized exams

Source: NYSUT Media Relations



ALBANY, N.Y. Feb. 23, 2021 — New York State United Teachers today strongly rebuked the federal government's decision to mandate that states administer standardized tests this school year.

"In a year that has been anything but standard, mandating that students take standardized tests just doesn't make sense," NYSUT President Andy Pallotta said. "As the

educators in the classroom, we have always known that standardized tests are not the best way to measure a child's development, and they are especially unreliable right now. We need to ensure that our students who have been hit hardest during the pandemic receive the support they need. Sizing up students with inequitable and stressful exams is not the solution."

NYSUT previously encouraged the state to request a federal waiver of grades 3–8 and high school testing requirements. Thousands of comments were submitted to the state by educators demanding a waiver of testing requirements this year.

"We have grave concerns that standardized tests at any level can be administered in any sort of equitable way," NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene T. DiBrango said. "Students deserve better. Regardless of what flexibility the federal government provides, no student should be forced to come to school in person just to take

a test.”

New York State United Teachers is a statewide union with more than 600,000 members in education, human services and health care. NYSUT is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the AFL-CIO. RELATED ARTICLES: [NPR](#), [CBS NEWS](#), [ED WEEK](#)



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Andrew Pallotta
President

Jolene T. DiBrango
Executive Vice President

Ronald Gross
Second Vice President

J. Philippe Abraham
Secretary-Treasurer

TO: NYSUT Board of Directors
NYSUT Local Presidents

FROM: NYSUT Officers

DATE: February 23, 2021

SUBJECT: **NYSUT Alert – February 23, 2021 – Update from NYSUT**

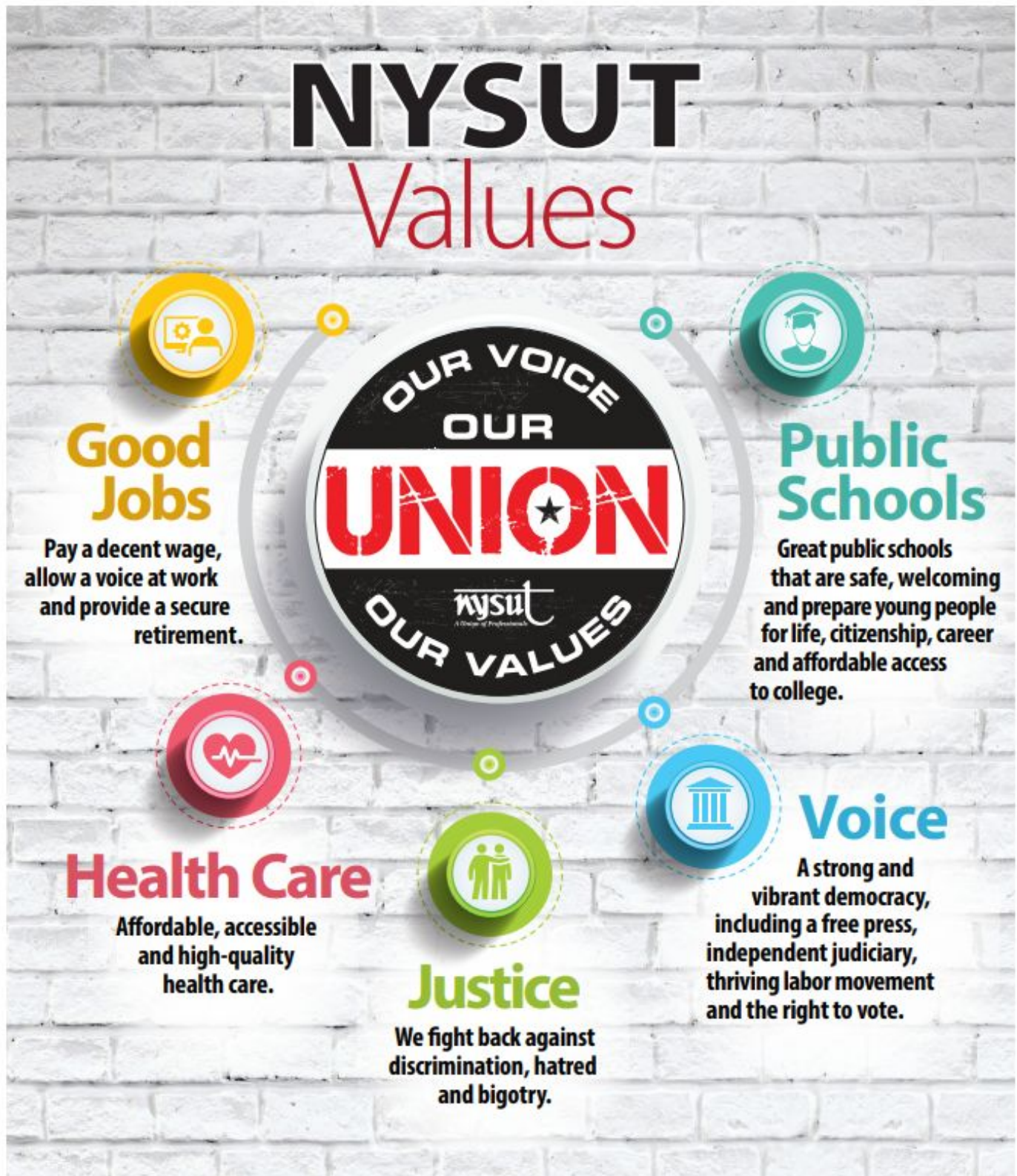
Executive Order #202.95

Last night the Governor issued a new Executive Order (EO) number 202.95 regarding teachers and the COVID-19 vaccine. More specifically, the EO requires teachers who receive the COVID-19 vaccination to report the immunization to their school.

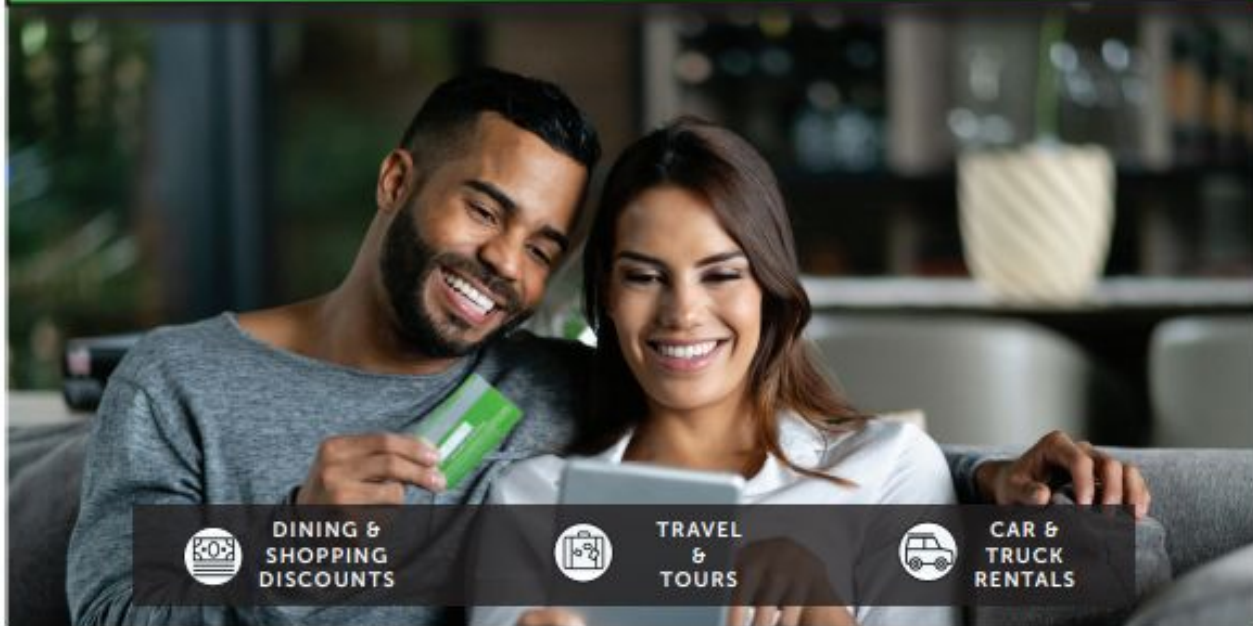
Beginning February 24, 2021, schools and school district are required to report, on a weekly basis, to the New York State Department of Health the number of completed COVID-19 vaccinations reported in the prior week, as well as the number and percentage of teachers instructing students in-person during the prior week. Such weekly report shall include any other data elements as the Commissioner of Health determines to be appropriate to track in-person instruction in such schools and school districts.

[No. 202.95: Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency | Governor Andrew M. Cuomo \(ny.gov\)](#)

WHAT'S THE VALUE OF YOUR UNION?



Come to us for the savings...



Come back for our Legal Service Plan



To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

**MEMBER
BENEFITS**
nysut
Working to Benefit You

Jan./Feb. '21

OCTA Leadership

Position	Name	Building	Phone #	email
President	Carrie Patane	OHS 341-2202	315-374-8111	cpatane
1st VP - Grievance	Kim LeRoy	MIN 341-2641	315-591-5605	kleroy
2nd VP - Negotiations	Gretchen Coakley	KPS 341-2500	315-591-3678	gcoakley
3rd VP - PR	Dan Rose	OMS 341-2300	315-254-5657	drose
4th VP - Political Action	Jennifer Cahill	FLS 341-2700	315-342-0891	jcahill
Treasurer	Mike Patane	OMS 341-2300	315-343-3926	mpatane
Secretary	Michelle McManus	FLS 341-2700	315-529-1049	mmcmanu2

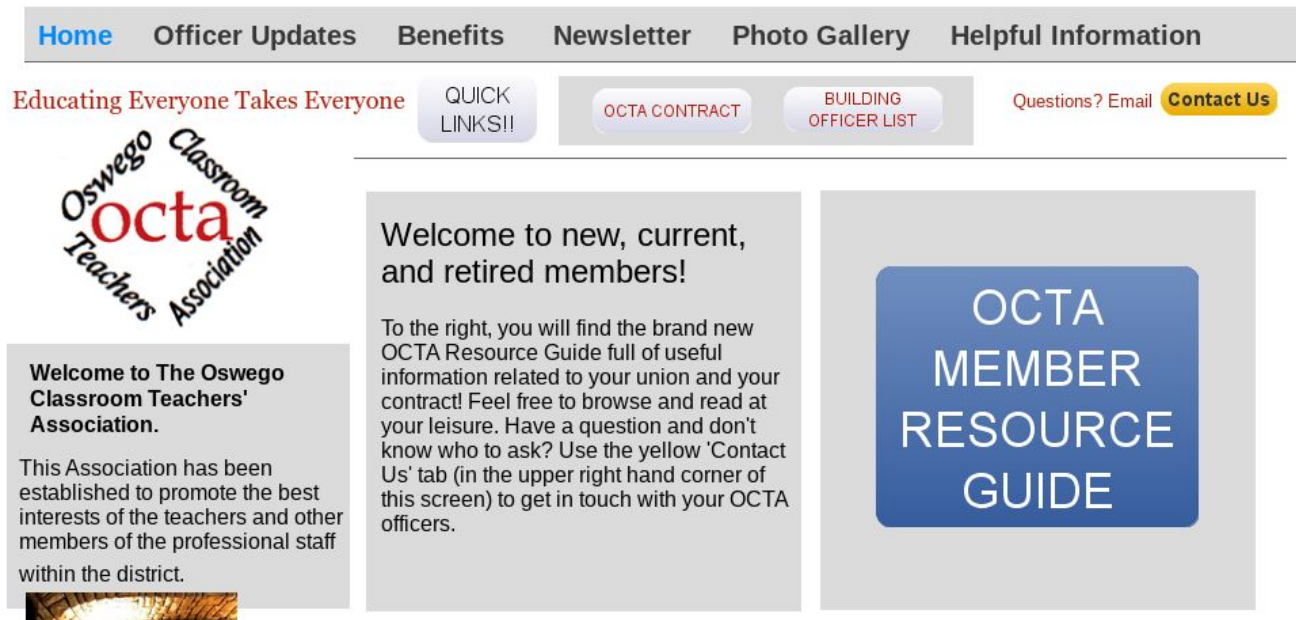
Building Officers and Representatives 2020-2022

<u>OHS</u>	315-341-2202	<u>FLS</u>	315-341-2700
Gina Iorio Pres	giorio	Amy Armet. Pres	aarmet
Heather Sugar Pres	hsugar	Jamie Turtura VP	jturtura
Robert Dumas VP	rdumas	Carolyn Dehm	cdehm2
Gloria Canale-Giberson	qcanale	Jennifer Cahill	jcahill
Lindsay Brown	lbrown23	Jim Hartmann	jhartman
Tami Palmitesso	tpalmit2	Michelle McManus	mmcmanu2
Kathy Audlin	kaudlin		
Jenn Smith	jsmith3	<u>FPS</u>	315-341-2400
Kaylee Morse	kmorse	Erin Wilder Pres	ewilder
Sarah Kimak	skimak	Jamie Brancato VP	jbrancat2
Trish Shene	pshene	Laurie Kelly	lkelly
Amy Orr	aorr	Cari Joyce	cjoyce2
Sarah William	swilla2	Nick Little	nlittle
		Julie Tubolino	jtubolin
<u>OMS</u>	315-341-2300	<u>MIN</u>	315-341-2600
Lori Bradway-Veiga Pres	lbradway	Carol Janice Co-Pres	cjanice
Peg Holt VP	mholt	Amy Sullivan Co-Pres	asulliva
Sally Kingsbury	skingsbu	Sandy Kunzwiler	skunzwil
Susan Roik	sroik	Don Fronk	dfronk
Chad Platten	cplatten	Rayna Mills	rmills2
Elise Davis	edavis	Jenn Szkotak	jszkotak
Dan Rose	drose	Crystal Mason	cmason
Michelle Cooper	mcooper	Keri Hunter	khunter
<u>KPS</u>	315-341-2500	<u>CER</u>	315-341-2800
Mary Lynne Maxwell Pres	mmaxwell	Terri Stacy Pres	tcullens
Jessica Burridge Pres	jburridg	Teddy Beers VP	tbeers
Hope Mazuroski	hmazuros	Molly Clark	mclark2
Carolyn Slobodian	cslobodi	Holly Deban	hbabcock
Gretchen Coakley	gcoakley	Ann Jadus	ajadus
Sub President- Ed Stacy	Sub Co Vice Presidents - Meg McLaughlin & Beth McCrobie		

Have you visited the OCTA website yet? What are you waiting for!!!!?

Click on the screenshot of the homepage below to explore the site! Find quick links to important union documents like the new OCTA Contract, the OCTA building officer list, and the new OCTA resources guide!

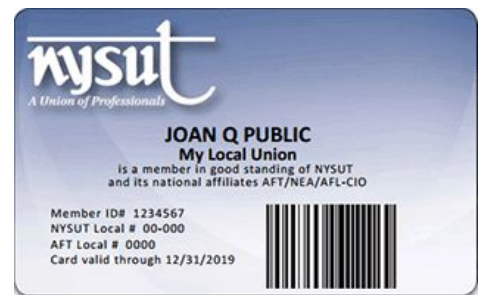
Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association



Need A Quick NYSUT Membership Card?

[Login here and download a PDF of your membership card.](#)

To request a replacement for this card, call NYSUT at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224



OCTA Advocate is published by the Oswego Classroom Teachers Association, West 1st Street, Oswego, NY. **President:** Carrie Patane, **VP Grievance:** Kim LeRoy **VP Negotiations:** Gretchen Coakley **VP Political Action:** Jenn Cahill, **VP Newsletter:** Dan Rose, **Secretary:** Michelle McManus, **Treasurer:** Mike Patane. Affiliated with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

