

OCTA Advocate

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



April 2026

Use the following Table of Contents to navigate this month's ADVOCATE!!

Click on the bookmark to jump to the article. Click on the OCTA ADVOCATE hyperlink in the page header to navigate back to this table of contents.

[Message from your OCTA PRESIDENT](#)

[Congratulations to APRIL OCTA Spotlights!](#)

[OCTA Building and Officer Election Information](#)

[NYSTRS makes the retirement process easy](#)

[Dental Benefits Update!](#)

[What benefits do I receive through our legal service plan?](#)

[School Budget and BOE vote May 19!](#)

[OCTA Blast: April 2026](#)

[Webinar Opportunity: Legal Service Plan](#)

[Visit the OCTA Website today!](#)

Meet your 2025-2026 OCTA Officers!



Carrie Patane:
OCTA President



Kim LeRoy:
OCTA VP Grievance



Jess Burrige: OCTA
VP Negotiations



Jenn Cahill:
OCTA VP PA



Mike Patane:
OCTA VP
Treasurer



Michelle McManus:
OCTA VP Secretary



Dan Rose: OCTA VP
PR

Message from your OCTA President



April always feels like a turning point. The days grow longer, the calendar fills quickly, and as educators we can see the finish line of another school year beginning to come into focus. We know, however, that these final months are never simply about counting down to June. They are some of the most important weeks of the year—weeks filled with growth, reflection, perseverance, and the everyday work of helping students finish strong. Even when energy runs low, OCTA members continue to show up with professionalism, care, and commitment for the students who depend on us.

At the same time, the world around public education continues to shift rapidly. Across New York and around the country, debates about schools, technology, funding, fairness, and the future of our profession are happening every day. Questions about cell phones in schools, the rise of artificial intelligence, student attention, and the role of human connection in learning are now front and center. While new tools can offer opportunities, they can never replace what matters most: the relationship between a student and a caring educator. No device, program, or algorithm can replicate the encouragement of a teacher, the patience of a support staff member, or the trust built in a classroom community. Learning is, and always will be, a deeply human endeavor.

That truth is why our voices matter so much in this moment. Decisions about education should be guided by the people who live it every day—educators, families, and students—not by trends, politics, or profit. Whether we are advocating for thoughtful technology use, protecting public school funding, defending professional dignity, or ensuring safe and supportive learning environments, we do so for a common purpose: strong public schools that serve every child well.

This year has asked a great deal of all of us. We have navigated challenges, adapted to changing expectations, and continued to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. Many of those efforts happen quietly and without fanfare, but they matter enormously. The lessons taught, the extra help given, the calm conversations in the hallway, the encouragement after a setback, the moments of joy you create in your classrooms—these are the things that shape lives and strengthen our community.

As we move into the home stretch of the school year, there are also important opportunities ahead to stay engaged in the future of our district. Please mark your calendars for **Tuesday, May 19**, when residents will vote on the school budget and elect three members to the Board of Education. We strongly encourage all OCTA members to stay informed and participate in elections in your community. Strong schools depend not only on the work happening inside our classrooms, but also on an informed and engaged community.

Thank you for everything you have given this year—to your students, to your colleagues, and to one another. The work is not easy, but it is meaningful. And because of educators like you, the future remains bright.

In Solidarity,

Carrie Patane

President, Oswego Classroom Teachers Association

CONGRATS TO ALL WHO SHARE THE April OCTA SPOTLIGHT!

OCTA Spotlight – OHS – Sherry Deloff



After a dedicated career defined by her passion for education and love for mathematics, Sherry Deloff is beginning an exciting new chapter. Whether she was leading a classroom or providing essential support within it, Sherry's impact on the Oswego community has been both meaningful and lasting. Her commitment to students, colleagues, and learning has left a positive mark that will be felt for years to come.

Sherry's journey in education reflects both versatility and a deep dedication to student success. Over the course of more than 20 years working with children, she brought patience, encouragement, and a steady presence to every role she held. Most recently, for the past three years, she has served as a Teaching Assistant at Oswego High School, working closely with 9th and 10th grade students. In that role, she has been an integral part of helping students build confidence, overcome challenges, and grow both academically and personally.

Although Sherry is hanging up the full-time school lanyard, her next chapter promises to be just as full and rewarding. In retirement, she is looking forward to traveling abroad on a long-awaited trip to explore the historic streets of Prague, spending more time on the golf course, and making cherished memories with her beloved grandchildren. She is also excited to devote more time to her creative business, The Resurrected Rooster, where she brings new life to unique handcrafted creations. And, fortunately for OHS, she still plans to return as a substitute.

We thank Sherry for her years of dedication, care, and service to students in Oswego. We wish her joy, adventure, and continued success in this well-earned next step!

OCTA Spotlight – OMS – Amy Odell

After more than two decades of dedicated service, Amy Odell continues to make a lasting impact as a Special Education Teacher at Oswego Middle School. Now in her 23rd year of teaching, Amy's career has been defined by compassion, commitment, and an unwavering belief in the potential of every student she serves.

A graduate of Cortland Jr./Sr. High School and SUNY Oswego, where she earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees with a minor in Athletic Coaching, Amy always knew she wanted to become a teacher. Her passion for making a difference in the lives of others led her to



special education, where she has worked tirelessly to ensure students with special needs feel loved, valued, and capable of success.

Amy has created meaningful opportunities for students to grow both academically and personally. One of the highlights of her career has been establishing the BUCS, Beans, & Brew coffee cart, where students build valuable life skills while delivering hot beverages to teachers each Friday. She has also helped provide hands-on learning through student involvement in the Schneider Shineman Community Garden, giving students authentic experiences that build confidence and independence.

Beyond the classroom, Amy's dedication to students extends throughout the school community. She serves as Co-Advisor for Student Council, Advisor for the Friend to Friend Club, supervises the Focus Forward partnership program with SUNY Oswego, oversees intramurals, and coaches unified basketball. Through these roles, she continues to celebrate teamwork, inclusion, leadership, and school spirit while staying connected with current and former students alike.

Outside of school, Amy enjoys volunteering at church, spending time with family and friends, traveling, creating new memories, and cheering on the Buffalo Bills and Syracuse Orange. She lives in Baldwinsville with her husband, Kevin, and their son, Grayson.

We are grateful for Amy's dedication, heart, and the countless ways she uplifts students each day. Oswego is fortunate to have her making a difference in our schools and community.

OCTA Spotlight – FPS – Garrett Heater



This month, we are proud to highlight Garrett Heater, a dynamic educator whose passion for the arts and commitment to students shine both inside and outside the classroom. Garrett is a true force in the Central New York arts community and an inspiring presence at Fitzhugh Park School.

A proud local from Baldwinsville, New York, Garrett is a graduate of Syracuse University and Hunter College. He credits his own teachers for sparking his love of the stage and setting him on the path toward education. Garrett began his career as a music educator before transitioning into his current role as a Visual Arts teacher at Fitzhugh Park Elementary School. He brings 19 years of experience to the Oswego City School District, including two years with the New York City Department of Education.

When reflecting on what he enjoys most about teaching, Garrett shared that every day offers the chance to make a lifelong impact on students. As a visual arts educator, he finds it especially rewarding to witness the growth of students' artistic talents from year to year. Helping children unlock their creativity, refine their skills, and discover how the arts shape their identity is work he considers deeply meaningful. He also values creating a classroom environment filled with humor, connection, and joyful learning.

Beyond school, Garrett remains deeply involved in the arts as a director and producer who operates a theater company in Syracuse. He is currently helping renovate a historic live theater venue, ensuring that local arts culture continues to thrive for future generations. He is grateful that both his profession and his passions allow him to positively impact so many people.

Looking ahead, Garrett shared that this year already feels full of momentum, fresh possibilities, and renewed purpose. He is excited to take on greater responsibilities in the community and continue refining the visual arts curriculum at Fitzhugh Park School.

We are grateful for Garrett's creativity, dedication, and the energy he brings to Oswego students each day.

OCTA Spotlight – Riley – Tara Lagoe

This month, we are proud to highlight Tara Lagoe, a dedicated educator whose creativity, compassion, and commitment to students make a lasting difference at Riley Elementary School. As the elementary art teacher at Riley, Tara brings both talent and heart to her classroom each day.

A proud Oswego native, Tara was born and raised in the community she now serves. She attended Kingsford Park Elementary School, Oswego Middle School, and Oswego High School before continuing her education at SUNY Oswego. There, she earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree as well as her Master's degree in Art Education. Her journey reflects the powerful impact of public schools and the meaningful full-circle experience of giving back to the same community that helped shape her.

Now in her fifth year full time with the Oswego City School District, Tara also spent a year as a day-to-day substitute, gaining valuable experience and building connections throughout the district. In her current role, she treasures the moments when students overcome a challenge, learn something new, and light up with pride in their accomplishments. Those moments of discovery and confidence are what make teaching so rewarding.

What Tara values most, however, is the opportunity to be a steady source of support for her students. Because she teaches children for seven years, she has the unique privilege of building lasting relationships and trust over time. She knows the impact of those connections is just as important as the lessons taught in the art room.

Outside of school, Tara enjoys spending time with her two daughters, often cheering them on at hockey or dance, playing outside, gardening, reading, and creating handmade earrings.



Looking ahead, Tara is excited for a fresh start, new opportunities, and continued growth in her career. She is also looking forward to serving as an OCTA representative, helping colleagues and advocating for what is right.

We are grateful for Tara's passion, dedication, and the many ways she enriches the lives of students at Riley each day.

OCTA Spotlight – KPS – Catrina Tulowiecki

This month, we are proud to highlight Catrina Tulowiecki, a talented and passionate music educator whose energy and enthusiasm have made a wonderful impact at Kingsford Park School. Catrina brings a deep love of music, creativity, and student connection to her work each day.



Catrina attended Belmont University and completed her student teaching in Metro Nashville Public Schools. Before joining the Oswego City School District, she taught middle school chorus and orchestra in Hendersonville, Tennessee, bringing valuable experience and a strong background in music education to KPS.

When asked why she teaches, Catrina shared that music was once her own safe place as a student—a place where she could express creativity, build connections, and feel a sense of belonging. That personal experience now inspires her to create those same opportunities for

her students. She describes it as a dream come true to help students discover their potential through music. Watching children get excited to learn a new skill, step outside their comfort zones to perform, and cheer one another on is what makes her heart burst.

Outside of school, Catrina's passion for music continues on an international stage. She is an award-winning singer with 942 Quartet and has traveled the world to perform, coach groups, direct youth choirs, and compete. She has also been involved in the Sweet Adelines organization for the past 10 years, performing with her quartets and with the Spirit of Syracuse chorus.

When she is not singing, Catrina enjoys hiking and reading science fiction. Her creativity, talent, and joyful spirit enrich the KPS community in so many ways.

We are thrilled to have Catrina as part of the KPS family and grateful for the inspiration she brings to students each day.

OCTA Spotlight - Minetto - Mary Goewey

Mary is a dedicated fourth grade teacher currently in her tenth year of teaching. Throughout her career, she has shared her passion for education at both Riley and Minetto, and has also taught second and third grade. Before entering the classroom, Mary worked in management, where she discovered her love for teaching while leading training seminars—an experience that inspired her to pursue education full time.

Mary especially enjoys helping her students develop mindfulness and the skills needed to navigate big emotions and challenging situations. She also treasures read-aloud time, finding joy in sharing and discussing chapter books with her class. Outside of school, Mary enjoys reading, writing, and spending time outdoors with her three children. Looking ahead 20 years, Mary hopes to continue doing what she loves most, surrounded by family and friends. Congratulations, Mary, for being this month's OCTA Spotlight for Minetto Elementary!



OCTA Spotlight - Leighton - Cori LaPierre and Shamar Gunn

Cori is finishing up her first year of teaching in a classroom of her own. Inspired by teachers who made a positive impact on her life while she was a student navigating ADHD, Cori knew she wanted to make that same difference for children. She is passionate about helping students grow academically, socially, and emotionally while being a trusted and safe presence in their lives. Cori especially loves watching students learn new concepts and seeing that “lightbulb moment” when understanding clicks. Outside of school, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, going for walks, and baking. Twenty years from now, Cori hopes to still be teaching and watching students grow.



Shamar is in his first year teaching for the Oswego City School District and his second year as a classroom teacher, with five years of experience in education overall. He shared that he didn't always know he wanted to teach, saying, “It really just fell into my lap after a fellow educator told me I had a natural gift for teaching.” Since then, he has found great fulfillment in helping students navigate their growth and development. Outside of school, Shamar stays active coaching an all-girls flag football team and playing kickball four nights a week. When he is not on the field or in the classroom, he enjoys relaxing with friends. Twenty years from now, Shamar hopes to be enjoying life on a sunny beach.

Congratulations to Cori LaPierre and Shamar Gunn for being this month's OCTA Spotlight for Leighton Elementary!

OCTA Officer Elections Information



Want to get actively involved in the OCTA? Feel like you could make a difference? Get on next year's (2026-27) BALLOT (nominations are due by next April)!

Eligible, active OCTA members can run for building president and vice president positions. Per the current OCTA Constitution, *Elections will be held as follows: The President, 2nd Vice President, 4th Vice President, and Secretary in even years and the 1st Vice President, 3rd Vice President, and Treasurer in odd years on the third Thursday in May, and the officers will be elected when they have received a simple majority of the votes cast from the general membership by written ballot in that election. In the event that all candidates are unopposed, the secretary may cast one ballot.*

All executive positions are filled for a two-year term (July 2026-June 2028 this year). [CLICK HERE TO MEET YOUR CURRENT OCTA OFFICERS](#). Please see your [building president](#) if interested in running or email drose@oswego.org for more information. What are the responsibilities of a building officer or rep? [Click here for a list of responsibilities](#).



NYSTRS makes the retirement process easy. Watch our latest video, "[You've Decided to Retire: The 5 Simple Steps to Getting it Done Right](#)," to learn about the simple steps to a successful retirement. In this video, we advise how to:

1. Review and meet contractual obligations with your employer, including formally establishing a termination date.
2. Register for a [MyNYSTRS](#) account.
3. Understand your payment options and review benefit estimates.
4. File an application for retirement with NYSTRS.
5. Familiarize yourself with important deadlines to change options, repay loans, or withdraw your retirement application.

Where Are You on the Road to Retirement?

04/27/2026



Is your retirement within reach, or does it feel like a far-off destination? NYSTRS has resources to support your retirement planning journey along the way.

Explore the Road to Retirement in the [April issue of the *Your Source*](#) newsletter. This map and its related checklists provide the following turn-by-turn directions to keep you on course.

- **Start with your career stage.** Find the career stage that best represents where you are in your career (i.e., early, mid-, late-career or ready to retire). Check previous stops and revisit any you might have missed.
- **Follow the steps.** Each checklist acts as a series of directions for you to follow. Complete each item and check them off once they're finished.
- **Stay on course.** Use NYSTRS tools to confirm you're headed in the right direction before you move on.
- **Look ahead.** As your career progresses, use these directions to get ready for what's down the road.

Remember: You don't need to do everything at once. Simply follow the directions for your current career stage and revisit the map as your career progresses.



Dental Information

Submitted by your OCTA Dental Administrator, Lindsay Voigt



Dear OCTA Members:
Happy Spring!

Open Enrollment will take place from May 18th - 29th! If you need to make changes, including adding dependents, please reach out to Lindsay Voigt at: octadentalplan@gmail.com.

If you do not need to make changes, please know that you do not need to do anything, as your dental coverage will automatically continue from year to year.

At the April Dental Administrative meeting, the board elected to continue with the current rate schedule. Those rates are listed below:

Individual: \$2.63 per pay period

Member+1: \$28.88 per pay period

Two-In-Unit \$28.88 per pay period

Family: \$57.75 per pay period

For Members Retiring:

Please be advised that if you want to participate in the dental insurance as a retiree, you **MUST** be enrolled as an active first, so if you are currently a non-participant, you need to enroll at the first Open Enrollment opportunity before your retirement. Therefore, if you are retiring this year in June or July, you would need to enroll during Open Enrollment right now. If you are not retiring in June or July of this year and are planning to retire at some other point during the next school year (September, October, November, December, January, February March, April, May), you still need to enroll during Open Enrollment right now. Please reach out if you are retiring and have not already been in touch in order to get your paperwork done and have a smooth transition for your dental insurance into retirement!

If you have any questions regarding this or any OCTA Dental related matter, please feel free to reach out at: octadentalplan@gmail.com.

Legal Service Plan with Your Union Lawyer



Powered by



FK&M FELDMAN, KRAMER & MONACO, P.C.
ATTORNEYS & COUNSELLORS

The Legal Services Plan provides Plan participants with access to attorneys in connection to various areas of law.

The initial point of contact for every active participant is the toll-free number of the Legal Plan Office of Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C., (800) 832-5182. If necessary, the Legal Plan Office will then make referrals to local participating attorneys.

Below, please find a summary of the benefits included in the Legal Services Plan:

Legal Services Plan Benefits

- Free Telephone Advice and Consultation
- Free Office Consultations
- Toll-Free 24 Hour Hotline for Emergencies
- Free Letter Writing
- Free Document Review
- Will and/Trusts
- Estate Planning Seminars or "Will Days"
- Lease Review Benefit
- Uncontested Annulment Benefit
- Uncontested Adoption Benefit
- Small Claims Protection Benefit
- Identity Theft
- Foreclosure
- Veterans Benefits
- Elder Law
- Bankruptcy
- Referral Attorneys
- Reduced Fee Benefit
- Stockbroker Arbitration
- Personal Injury Benefit
- Debt Consolidation
- Estate Administration Benefit
- Commercial and Business Law Benefit
- Guaranteed Maximum Fees

For more information on your Plan benefits, scan the QR Code:

Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C.
+1 (800) 832-5182 (For NY)
+1 (800) 292-8063 (For Outside NY)
Answers@FKMLaw.com



[LEGAL PLAN FLYER](#) - USE THIS VALUABLE TOOL!

Budget Vote & BOE Member Voting

Submitted by OCTA VP Jennifer Cahill

Tuesday, May 19th: polls open @ 9am and run through 9pm

Proposed Budget Information: <https://www.oswego.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=3202>

Candidates (vote for 3): Sean Callen, Julie Chetney and Jim McKenzie

Polling sites:

To find your Polling Site:

<https://es.findmypollplace.com/oswegocitysd/AmIRegistered.aspx?language=en>

DISTRICT NO. 1

LOCATION: SCRIBA FIRE STATION - 5618 State Route 104E, Oswego, NY 13126

WARD 10 – (*Who votes at this site:* TOWN OF SCRIBA & TOWN OF VOLNEY – OSWEGO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENT'S ONLY)

DISTRICT NO. 2

LOCATION: Anthony J. Crisafulli Rink (Fort Rink) - 32 Fort Ontario Road, Oswego, NY 13126

(*Who votes at this site:* WARD 2, WARD 4 AND WARD 6)

DISTRICT NO. 3

LOCATION: Elim Grace Church, 340 W. 1st St, Oswego, NY 13126

(*Who votes at this site:* WARD 1, WARD 3, WARD 5 AND WARD 7)

DISTRICT NO.4

LOCATION: OSWEGO TOWN HALL - 2320 County Route 7, Oswego, NY 13126

(*Who votes at this site:* WARD 8 (MINETTO ELEMENTARY) AND WARD 9 (TOWN OF OSWEGO) – OSWEGO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENTS ONLY)



OCTA Blast April 2026

Highlights from our April 2026 Meeting

Adopt A Highway: Adopt A Highway will take place on June 16th. It will begin at 4:15. We will meet in the OHS Liberty Street Parking Lot (park near Utica Street). Let Michelle McManus know if you are able to help.

Volleyball: Save the date! Our volleyball event will be held on June 18, 2026. Stay tuned for more details.

NYSUT News: Want to keep up to date on all NYSUT related conversations? Join the MAC (Member Action Center) [Take action!!](#)

OCTA II: A tentative, verbal agreement has been reached! Need to finalize and sign before setting a meeting date.

OCTA SWAG- If you are interested in ordering OCTA apparel, I order by May 1st. All money fundraised will go towards OCTA Scholarship. [OCTA SWAG](#)

Mary Kay Friends and Family discount 30% off - Due Friday May 1st
EMAIL cpatane@oswego.org to place an order. Include product name, color, quantity, & retail price. You can [see products online](#) but cannot earn the discount if you order online.

OCTA Elections: All OCTA positions were unopposed this year. We are pleased to share the individuals who will serve in these roles for the next two years.

OCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD

- ★ **President:** Carrie Patane
- 🏆 **2nd Vice President:** Jessica Burrridge
- ★ **4th Vice President:** Jennifer Cahill
- 📝 **Secretary:** Michelle McManus

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| OHS | OMS | FPS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Presidents: Gina Iorio and H. Sugar • Vice President: Robert Dumas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President: Clare Donovan • Co-Vice Presidents: Jane Crossman and Elisa Davis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Presidents: Julie Tubolino and Cari Joyce |
| FLS | KPS | MIN |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President: Meghan Harrison • Vice President: Kate Bowman | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Presidents: Tricia Caroccio and Allie Yule | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Presidents: Keri Hunter and Stacie Roberts-Waterhouse |
| CER | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President: T. Beers • Co-Vice Presidents: Ann Jadus and Diana Proano | | |

NYSUT RUNS [Join the Exciting 5K Runs in New York!](#)
 The link provides PR for running events that are happening in our communities. If anyone is interested in creating a 5K opportunity for our community or county, let Carrie know.

Political Action/Vote Cope -Tuesday, May 19 marks **School Budget Voting Day**, as well as the election of representatives to our local Board of Education. This year, three board seats are up for election, as the terms of **Mr. Sean Callen, Ms. Julie Chetney, and Mr. David Crisafulli** will conclude at the end of June. In preparation, please save the date for **Meet the Candidate Night on May 5**. This event will provide an important opportunity to hear directly from those seeking to serve on the school Board. At this time, the official list of candidates has not yet been finalized. The deadline for submitting signed petitions is April 29, and additional information about the candidates will be shared as it becomes available.

Blessings in a Backpack Chicken BBQ Fundraiser

Support a great cause and enjoy a great meal! Blessings in a Backpack is hosting a Chicken BBQ at **Lighthouse Lanes** on **Saturday, May 30th**.

- **Time:** 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Presales must be picked up by 2:00 PM)
- **Tickets:** \$15.00

To purchase tickets, please contact **Michelle McManus** or **Melissa Russell**. Thank you for supporting our local youth!

Safety: Share safety concerns with your union Safety Representatives:

OHS- Gina Iorio

MIN- Katie Tesoriero

OMS- Dan Rogers/ Clare Donovan/ Jeff Brown

CER- Tara Lagoe

KPS- Carolyn Slobodian

FLS- Kate Bowman

FPS- Cari Joyce

EMAIL THEM THE FOLLOWING:

- Location of incident
- Describe concern (threat or building issue)
- Was anyone injured?
- Describe injury
- Did the employee fill out the Employee's [Accident Report for Workers' Compensation](#) and return it to the nurse?
- Was there a referral or any follow-up?

Insurance: If you are having difficulties with MVP be sure to reach out to GALLAGHER (*WAS Assured Partners/ENV*) at (315) 641-5848. They can help you with Benefit questions, claims issues, finding providers, etc. You should also inform Amanda Hamilton at the EDC and Carrie Patane of claim issues so they can pass the information on to the members of the Healthcare Committee. IF you have reached out to Assured Partners and you still have concerns, please let us know that too.



Make sure you are using GIA Telemed, ask for GENERIC RX, and use Express Scripts MAIL ORDER when possible to help reduce plan costs and to lower our premiums. OUR USAGE IS UP BY A LOT THIS YEAR and our premiums next year reflect our costs from this year.

FIX TIER 6 - [How bad is it? Get involved!!](#)

[Watch a Video](#) [Visit Fixtier6.org](#): Visit this website to

learn more about supporting fixing tier 6. Make sure you write out the Oswego Classroom Teachers Association.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): To contact them call (315-470-7447).

The district provides members with services to help with stress management, family stress, anxiety and panic, workplace issues, communication barriers and more. The service is provided by Help People. It is a free and confidential service! Offices are located in Fulton, Liverpool and Syracuse.

Member Benefits Teacher Discounts: Click on this [link](#) to view teacher discounts.

OCTA RESOURCE GUIDE: [2025-2026 OCTA Resource Guide](#)

Jeans Weeks: Stuff A Bus- May 18-22

New members (or anyone who hasn't completed it yet or needs to update their email or name) please take a moment to fill out the [OCTA Contact Form](#).

Good news! Your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Group Legal Service Plan has been renewed. Please refer to this reference sheet and the attached Certificate of Coverage for details.

Contact for ALL Legal Questions & Referrals - Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C.

- **Main Phone Number:** 631-231-1450
- **Toll-Free (NY) Phone Number:** 800-832-5182
- **Outside NY & After-Hours Phone Number:** 800-292-8063

Popular Benefits

- Free letter writing, phone consultations & document review
- Legal Security Package for your estate planning documents (see below)
- Referral attorney rate: \$285/hour or 25% off their standard hourly rate (whichever is lower)
- Two (2) one-hour consultations per renewal period (restrictions apply; see Certificate of Coverage)

How to Use Your Plan

- Contact the National Legal Office.
- Provide your **NYSUT ID Number** & a brief explanation of your legal matter.
- Get connected with a staff attorney or referral attorney depending on your matter.

Legal Security Package (LSP)

- Three (3) packages per two-year renewal period
- Contains forms to prepare your Will, Health Care Proxy, Living Will & Power of Attorney
- Covers spouse, domestic partner, parents, grandparents & in-laws
- Download at mb-nysut.org/LegalLSP or call the National Legal Office or NYSUT Member Benefits

Elder Law Services

- 20% discount on Elder Law Attorney fees
- Covers spouse, domestic partner, parents, grandparents & in-laws
- Refer to Certificate of Coverage for details

Know Your Paycheck Deductions-

[Document from Meghan Wilson](#)

Check your stub to make sure you are receiving the appropriate deductions for each paycheck:

FICA is social security

MEDI is Medicare

FEDERAL is federal tax

STATE is state tax

D/I OCTA is disability insurance

HI10F15% is 10 month family/single health

INSREIMB = Insurance Reimbursement (in Dec) for those off step

TRS= money you pay into NYS Teachers Retirement

MED/DENT is your flex spending account

DFBOCTIN is your OCTA Dental Insurance

VISFIND = Vision individual

OCTA28+ is your union dues

OPL is city library contribution

NYSUT = member benefits (Life ins, legal, etc.)

FK&M FELDMAN, KRAMER & MONACO, P.C.
ATTORNEYS & COUNSELLORS

ATTENTION UNION MEMBERS:

Join us for a **FREE** educational

WEBINAR

Did you know, your legal service plan benefit includes:

- ✓ Free consultations for you, your spouse, your parents and your in laws
 - ✓ Wills often fully covered
 - ✓ Reduced-cost trusts
- ✓ Power of attorney & healthcare proxy documents
 - ✓ Elder law & Medicaid planning guidance

OUR SPEAKERS:

Partner of FKM, Steven Kramer, Esq. will discuss:

Kimberly Trueman, Esq. will discuss:

Frank Buquicchio, Esq. CELA, CAP, will discuss:



DATE: **MAY 12, 2026**
TIME: **6:00 PM**
WHERE: **ZOOM**



DATE: **MAY 20, 2026**
TIME: **6:00 PM**
WHERE: **ZOOM**

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

Get Your NYSUT Digital Membership Card

Your NYSUT membership card is going digital! Access your benefits instantly and carry your union pride right on your smartphone. Compatible with Apple and Google Wallets, this eco-friendly update eliminates the need for physical cards while keeping you connected to our 700,000-strong community of education professionals. Prefer a printed card? You can still download and print one through your account.



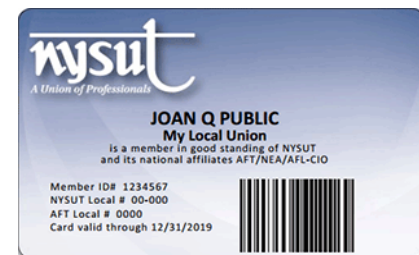
Visit My NYSUT today to access your digital card: nysut.cc/digitalcard or scan the QR code now.




Click [HERE](#) 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!

Need A Quick NYSUT Membership Card?

[Login here and download a PDF of your membership card](#) or follow the QR code in the image to the left and secure your digital card today!



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:** Jessica Burrige **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.

