

OCTA Advocate

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



June 2020

Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association Support Essential Workers Of Oswego Health

May 14, 2020 Contributor ([Oswego County Today](#))



(Left to right) Carrie Patane, President of Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association; Joy Bifera, EVS Manager for Oswego Health; Michelle McManus, Secretary of Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association.

OSWEGO – Even though school has not been in session since the mandated close on March 13, educators throughout the Oswego City School District still felt the urge to help their community.

A group of 425 teachers and teaching assistants who are members of OCTA (Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association) have been finding unique ways to give back to their students and those on the front lines during this mandated “stay at home” order.

Throughout this pandemic, OCTA spearheaded a “Business Spotlight of the Week” program to help support local community businesses who are still up and running. By spotlighting these businesses, OCTA encourages its members to be patrons of that business throughout the week. ([READ THE REST HERE](#)).



Dedicated Tech Specialist in this month's OCTA spotlight!!

Since the closure of Oswego City Schools back in March due to the pandemic, teachers and administrators have been scrambling to learn the ins and outs of Google Classroom and adjust (quickly) to the new challenges associated with video chats, video lessons, virtual meetings and the offering of online curriculum. During these uncertain and often murky times, one thing has remained crystal clear: Oswego educators would not be nearly as confident, knowledgeable and willing to take on these new challenges without the dedicated help of Oswego Computer Educational Specialist Dan Rupert. From offering daily virtual classes to individual office hours, to meeting with confused students or parents, to his daily 'tech tips' to keep us all informed and updated, Dan has been instrumental in making Oswego's virtual transition a smooth and less frustrating one. We could not have done it without you Dan . . . Enjoy the OCTA spotlight -- YOU DESERVE IT!!!



Know an educator in the Oswego City School District who deserves the OCTA Spotlight? Email a picture and brief description to drose@oswego.org. Nominees should be OCTA members in good standing. All nominators and nominees receive a special gift courtesy of the OCTA! Thanks in advance for the support.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES!



In an effort to help support the small business owners of Oswego who have generously supported our students through their donations, we (the OCTA) are continuing our fundraising campaign which will put books in the hands of our students while also highlighting and helping one community business each week. Together, the OCTA has raised nearly \$10,000 for Oswego businesses!! This week, please donate to another very important local business - [Pizza Villa](#) (and St. Lukes) [Please CLICK HERE TO DONATE \(and ENTER THE RAFFLE!\)](#)

[Important information about the OCSD 2020-2021 budget!](#)

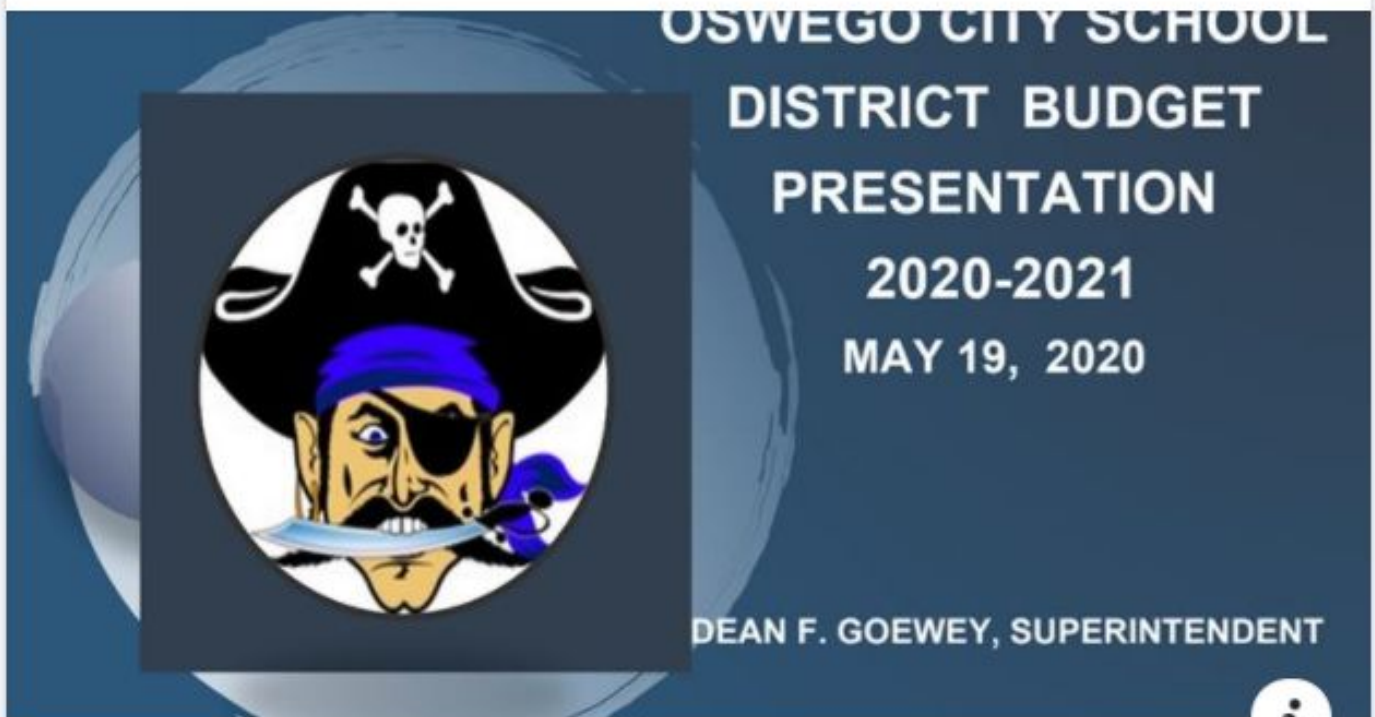
(Click above or below to view the most recent budget slideshow)



Carrie Shuba Patane shared a link.

Admin · 3 hrs ·

Some members were asking about where to find the budget presentation. It is on the district website (Superintendent page) but here is a link to view from my Drive if you don't want to go searching for it.



DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM

Oswego City School District 20-21 Budget 5-19-20.pptx

OCTA Members Remain Busy During Pandemic!



TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM INFO ([NYSTRS](#))

submitted by Dan Rose (drose@oswego.org)

Pension Payments Continue on Time

05/09/2020

Despite these difficult times, NYSTRS continues to fulfill our mission of providing members with a secure pension, and we continue to make pension payments on time and in full.

“NYSTRS remains one of the strongest and best-funded public retirement systems in the nation,” said David P. Keefe, a retired teacher and president of the NYSTRS Board of Trustees. “The System has distributed earned retirement benefits on time and without fail throughout its nearly 100-year history and members should be confident this will continue.”

The NYSTRS 10-member Board of Trustees and the System’s investment professionals work together to protect the long-term security of the retirement fund using advanced funding and managing a diversified portfolio designed to weather economic storms.

“It is exactly this long-term investment strategy that helps us tolerate the volatility in the financial markets we are currently experiencing,” said NYSTRS Executive Director and Chief Investment Officer Thomas K. Lee.

Advanced funding means the System invests employer and member contributions throughout a member’s working career, steadily accumulating the assets necessary to provide a fully funded benefit in retirement. By pooling these contributions, NYSTRS can achieve economies of scale no individual investor could duplicate.

In addition, the System’s investment portfolios are broadly diversified both among and within asset classes. This makes the System well-positioned to absorb losses caused by downturns in the financial markets as well as realize gains as the economy rebounds.



[Active Members](#)[Retirees](#)[Delegates](#)[Employers](#)[MyNYSTRS Login](#)[I'm looking for... ↓](#)[FORMS ↓](#)[LIBRARY ↓](#)[CONTACT US](#)[Home](#) > [About Us](#) > [Press Room](#) > [Headlines](#) > [COVID-19 Update & FAQs](#)[✉](#) [🖨](#) [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

COVID-19 Update & FAQs

04/22/2020

NYSTRS has implemented a variety of measures related to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Large meetings and events, including our PREP seminars, are canceled until further notice. Benefit consultations are being conducted by telephone. A large percentage of staff are telecommuting. Our building is closed to the public but our phone lines remain open at (800) 348-7298 to answer your questions and we are still receiving mail.

We thank you for understanding that the health, safety and welfare of our members and staff are our utmost concern. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation as well as the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the New York State Health Department, and we will continue to adjust our plans as needed.

To ensure members have the information needed to make informed decisions, we have put in place alternative communication methods. Please read on for more information. We also urge you to use the self-service tools and secure messaging function available through your online [MyNYSTRS](#) account.

1. Will there be delays in processing forms, requests or benefit payments?

A large percentage of NYSTRS staff are telecommuting until further notice to facilitate social distancing. We are prioritizing transactions such as pension payments, direct deposit changes, disability retirements, death benefits and loans. (**Note:** We encourage members to apply for a loan via MyNYSTRS and request direct deposit payment as there will be a delay in processing paper loan checks.) All other transactions will be processed as expeditiously as possible. Throughout this challenging time, NYSTRS staff will work diligently to maintain the highest level of customer service.

If you are filing time-sensitive forms or submitting critical documents to NYSTRS, we strongly recommend that you use registered or certified mail through the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to do so. The Postal Service is reporting delays in standard mail delivery times due to staff shortages related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Read more in our headline [Consider U.S. Mail Alternatives](#).

[CONTINUE READING- CLICK HERE](#)

Budget and BOE VOTING INFO!!

OCSD Details Absentee Ballot Information

May 26, 2020 Contributor



OCSD News Graphic. Image provided by CiTi.

OSWEGO – Oswego City School District residents should have received a budget postcard with pertinent date information for the upcoming school budget vote.

While a budget newsletter will be forthcoming with detailed budget vote information, district officials would like to remind OCSD residents that all voting will occur via absentee ballots. Those will be mailed out Friday, May 29, and they must be returned to the school district by 5 p.m. June 9.

Absentee ballots may be returned one of two ways: mailed back in a stamped envelope provided with the ballot OR dropped off at the OCSD ballot box, which will be available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, from June 1 to June 9.

The ballot box will be located outside of the OCSD education center offices, located at the Leighton Elementary School playground entrance (1 Buccaneer Blvd., Oswego).



The 2020 OCTA Scholarship Committee selected 8 recipients of this year's Scholarship.

Below are recipients of the 2020 OCTA Scholarship:

- ❖ Jake Chetney
- ❖ Carson Colucci
- ❖ Nicole DelConte
- ❖ Molly Fitzgibbons
- ❖ Hannah Holland
- ❖ Abigail McPherson
- ❖ Matthew Oldenburg
- ❖ Julia Roman

*****SAVE THE DATE for OCTA Scholarship Jeans Weeks for the weeks of Oct 26th and Feb 8th for next year.**

OCTA Dental Plan Spring 2020**Open Enrollment**

If you have any questions about open enrollment, reach out to Pat Armet at octadentalplan@gmail.com.

Enrollment will be done through email, U.S. mail and phone calls.

Starts Monday 5/11/2020

Ends Friday 6/12/2020

1. If the personal information for yourself and any dependents is correct and you do not want to change your enrollment you do not need to do anything, it will stay the same for next year.

2. If you are a new enrollment or if you are increasing your coverage (example: individual to family) and want the coverage/change to take place July 1st you will need to mail in a check during open enrollment to pay the premiums for July and August. Otherwise enrollment will start September 1st with premiums paid by payroll deduction.

3. Dependents are automatically covered up to age 26. If you want to remove a dependent before they turn age 26 you must notify the plan to make the change. If you have a dependent who is a full-time student between the ages of 26 and 30 please contact me about coverage under your plan.

4. You can contact Patrick Armet at octadentalplan@gmail.com or 315-402-6479 if you have any questions.

5. You will need to mail in or scan and email any required forms.

6. Information about premiums and benefits is attached to this email.

7. Retirees are eligible to remain enrolled in the OCTA Dental Plan. Premiums are different for retirees. If you are retiring or you know any current retirees who are interested in joining

the plan please have them contact Patrick Armet at octadentalplan@gmail.com or 315-402-6479. (If a current employee does not join the Dental Plan prior to retirement, they are NOT eligible to join in subsequent years. Previous retirees who were not contacted about joining may still join.)

If you need to make any changes, additions or subtractions to your coverage or have any questions please contact me.

Thank you!

Patrick Armet
OCTA Dental Benefits Manager
(315) 402-6479
octadentalplan@gmail.com

| OCTA Dental Premiums 2020 - 2021 | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Coverage | Per pay period deduction (21 pay periods) | Total Deduction for School Year |
| Individual | \$5.00 | \$105.00 |
| Member + 1 | \$25.00 | \$525.00 |
| Family | \$48.00 | \$1,008.00 |
| Two in Unit (family coverage) | \$24.00 | \$504.00 |

Save with a
PPO dentist

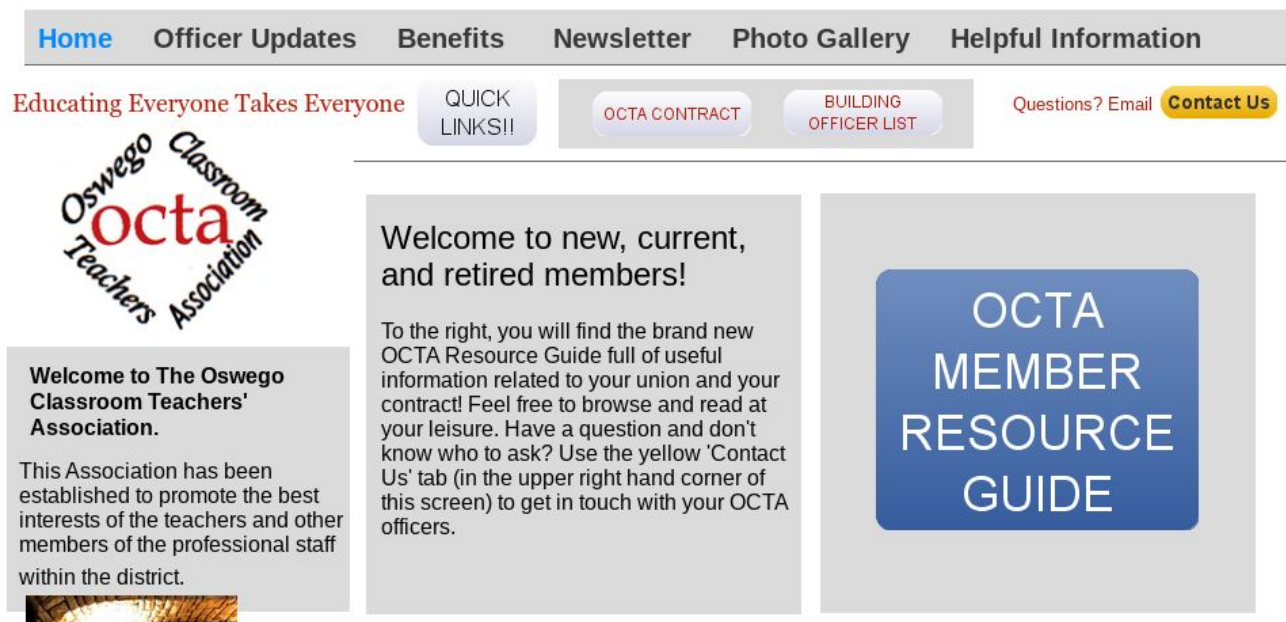


[Click on the PIGGY BANK TO LEARN MORE!!!!](#)

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!

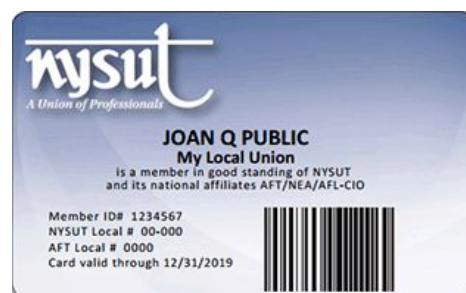
Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association



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.

