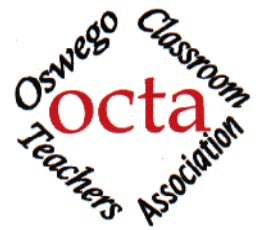


# OCTA Advocate

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



## February 2020

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020 ISSUE

JANUARY 06, 2020

## Crisis response teams a model for locals statewide

Author: Matt Smith

Source: NYSUT United



When Indian River Central Schools teacher Amanda Burnard was diagnosed with breast cancer in fall 2018, she drew strength from the love and support of her family and friends while being guided through extensive treatment from her trusted team of doctors.

But Burnard also had something extra in her corner — her union — which provided not only critical assistance as

she navigated the uncertainty of her harrowing experience, but also some very badly needed peace of mind.

“I was processing a lot of information and knew my treatment was going to be hard on my body,” said Burnard, who teaches first grade.

“I use a lot of energy teaching and anything less would be a disservice to my students. I knew I intended to take time off while undergoing my chemo treatments. I looked into how it works, and was overwhelmed.”

That’s when she reached out to NYSUT’s Watertown Regional Office, where labor relations specialists Carmine Inserra and Mike Cocco helped her maneuver through the intricacies of sick leave and put her in touch with Indian River Education Association Co-President Cheryl Smith. The union ensured Burnard had as much paid sick time as possible, and set up fundraisers to help cover her travel expenses associated with treatment.

“The support I received was amazing,” said Burnard. [READ THE REST CLICK HERE](#)



## Long-time foreign language instructor Lori Bradway-Veiga is in this month's OCTA Spotlight!!

Lori is an 8th grade Spanish teacher at the Oswego Middle School with 35 years of teaching experience. Ms. Veiga is active in the OCTA, holding the position of OMS building (co) president. She is also a member of the building (and district) liaison committee. Lori is the language department team leader and a very organized, resourceful teacher who is loved by all her students. *Muy bueno*, for all your hard work through the years, LBV! The middle school (and the Oswego City School District) are so lucky to have you aboard!!



*Know an educator in the Oswego City School District who deserves the OCTA Spotlight? Email a picture and brief description to [drose@oswego.org](mailto: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.*

## Retirement seminar for OCTA Members coming March 25th!!! Submitted by Dan Rose (OCTA VP)

### Guaranteed Benefits of the New York State Teachers' Retirement System

*Even in turbulent economic times like these, you can achieve future financial strength and security by building a strong pension at NYSTRS. This presentation will provide an overview of the important benefits NYSTRS provides, with an emphasis on issues pertaining to members approaching retirement. Highlights include a review of the fundamental pension components such as service credit and final average salary, key retirement thresholds to reach for, the tools needed to maximize these benefits, retirement benefit options and much more. Hopefully you'll leave our meeting with a handle on what's needed to plan wisely on your road to retirement, as well as what costly errors to avoid along the way.*



Reserve your spot at the next New York State Teachers' Retirement System Seminar open to all OCTA Members! The next retirement meeting will be held March 25, 2020.

New members will learn valuable information about the retirement system of which they are now a part, and experienced members will continue to build on their current knowledge of the system, ensuring a dignified, financially secure retirement. Email [drose@oswego.org](mailto:drose@oswego.org) to reserve a spot at next month's seminar!



## OCTA Officer Elections Taking Place In May

Want to get actively involved in the OCTA? Feel like you could make a difference? Get on this year's BALLOT!!

Eligible, active OCTA members can run for building president and vice president positions, building representative positions, as well as one of the three OCTA officer positions up for election this year including:

OCTA President, 2nd Vice President, 4th Vice President, and Secretary. Elections will take place during the month of May. All positions are filled for a two-year term (September 2020-June 2022). [CLICK HERE TO MEET YOUR CURRENT OCTA OFFICERS.](#)

Please see your building president if interested in running or email [drose@oswego.org](mailto:drose@oswego.org) for more information.

## RELAY FOR LIFE

Relay For Life is the signature fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. Relay is staffed and coordinated by volunteers in more than 3,500 communities and 27 countries. Join us at these events and bring communities together to remember loved ones lost, honor survivors of all cancers, and raise money to help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer.

Learn more here:

[https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?fr\\_id=96028&pg=team&team\\_id=2511372](https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?fr_id=96028&pg=team&team_id=2511372)



# Fund Our Future Bus Tour

ALBANY, N.Y. Jan. 15, 2020 — New York State United Teachers today kicked off a seven-week Fund Our Future statewide bus tour. It draws attention to the severe impact a lack of state funding has had on schools statewide, and the need for new revenues to tackle educational inequality, and other pressing needs.

Click on the image below to see how much your district is owed!

**FUND OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**FUND OUR FUTURE**

**nysut**  
A Union of Professionals

New York State schools are owed more than \$3.4 billion in Foundation Aid. Our schools and students are depending on the state to keep its promise. There is no lack of money in New York State.

Together, we can increase revenue to provide the education our students need and deserve.

**HOW MUCH IS MY DISTRICT OWED?**



**INSIDE**

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[Click HERE](#) or on the cover above to read the latest edition of NYSUT United magazine!



**Let NYSUT Member Benefits assist with all your financial needs throughout your life**

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SCAN ME

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SCAN ME



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

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JANUARY 05, 2020

## NYSUT Counts: Census 2020

Source: NYSUT United

# NYSUT 2020 COUNTS census

NYSUT Counts is our union's initiative to ensure every resident of the state is reported in the 2020 Census.

The results affect the allocation of \$700 billion in federal funding to schools, hospitals, municipalities and needy families.

“Much like our drive to defeat the state constitutional convention referendum a couple of years ago and our successful outreach to union members after the U.S. Supreme Court's Janus decision in 2018, this crucial initiative is an opportunity to engage the power of our union,” said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta.

NYSUT is committed to holding one-to-one conversations with NYSUT members about the importance of being counted; providing curriculum resources to use with students; using direct mail and digital advertising; and working in coalition with other unions, community groups and like-minded organizations.

“For equity, fairness and justice, everyone must be counted,” Pallotta said. “The census begins April 1, but it's not too early to begin to organize, educate and prepare communities for full participation.”

[READ THE REST. CLICK HERE.](#)



## AFT (American Federation of Teachers) Resolution

# AFT SUPPORT FOR 2020 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Last week, the AFT executive council spent our meeting evaluating the 2020 national election, particularly taking stock of the stakes, the state of the race at this moment, and what steps we can take now to help elect a president and Congress that share our values for a better life for working families, a voice at work and the preservation of our democracy. We also evaluated our AFT Votes Election 2020 program, the AFT's most robust member engagement program of any election.

While we found that our union has divergent views on who should be the Democratic nominee, there is no question that AFT members from all over see Donald Trump is an existential threat to the values and aspirations of our families, our communities and those we serve. And while our members have a respect and admiration for Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Tom Steyer, they gravitate toward Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Bernie Sanders and Sen. Elizabeth Warren because of their leadership in public education, affordable higher education, healthcare, labor and civil rights.

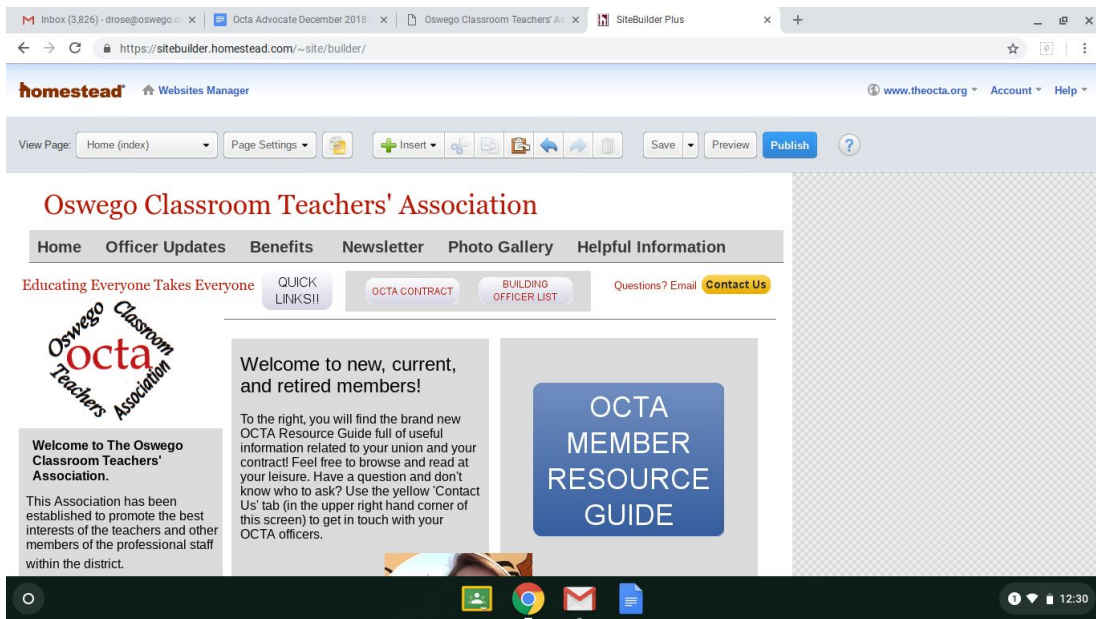
**Therefore, our executive council is encouraging our members to actively support Biden, Sanders and/ or Warren because they share our values, have demonstrated effective leadership through their records, have earned significant support within our membership, and are best positioned to achieve meaningful and lasting victories on the issues that matter to us most.**

The executive council's resolution encourages our members and leaders to become involved in one of these three campaigns. We announced this decision in a national telephone town hall last week with more than 47,000 AFT leaders and activists from all over the country.

Our union knows that Bernie, Elizabeth and Joe share our values, and we know we can count on them. Each has been a strong and reliable friend and advocate on critical issues such as ensuring safe and welcoming environments in our schools, our hospitals and our communities; investing in public schools, colleges and services that are necessary to fund our future; protecting the freedom to teach and the freedom to care so we can meet our students' and patients' needs; fighting for the freedom to live securely on one job's wages, with a decent retirement and the right to join a union, and without catastrophic healthcare costs or crushing student debt; and fighting the destructive hate, bigotry and divisiveness that is undermining our democracy.

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

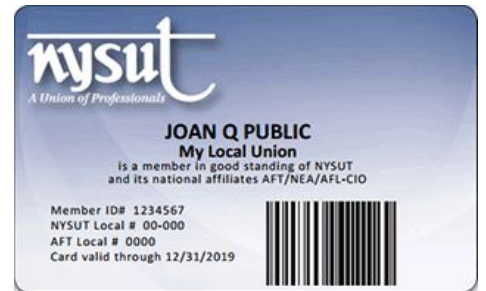
Click on the screenshot of the homepage below to explore the site! Find quick links to important union documents like the new OCTA Contract, the OCTA building officer list, and the new OCTA resources guide!



## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

