

# OCTA Advocate

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



## OCTOBER 2022

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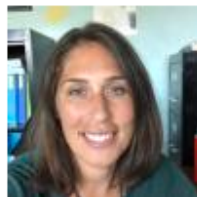
**Meet your 2022-2023 OCTA Officers!**



Carrie Patane  
OCTA President



Kim LeRoy  
VP Grievance



Jess Burrige  
VP Negotiations



Jenn Cahill  
VP Pol. Action



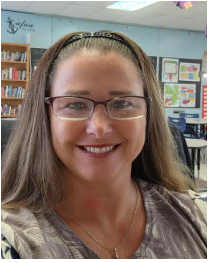
Mike Patane  
Treasurer



Michelle McManus  
Secretary



Dan Rose  
VP Newsletter



## Message from your OCTA President - Carrie Patane

Well, we did it.

Two months under our belts this school season, and things are finally (mostly) back to normal. We have students sitting before us, clubs and organizations holding sessions after school, concerts and productions taking the stage, sports teams playing in front of large, cheering crowds, and last month, we held our first in person union meeting at the OCTA Office in over 3 years. There is much work to be done on this other side of the pandemic, yes, but it is nice knowing that whatever new challenges are beyond the horizon, we will take them on together.

The state of our union, our OCTA, is strong.

As we near another holiday (and voting) season, it is important to give thanks for what we have while also remembering that we must continue to fight for the issues (and the candidates) that matter most to our membership. The hardships of the past three years have been a reminder of the importance of public schools and universities, and the need to continue advocating for issues like funding for public schools, colleges and hospitals, safe schools for all, repealing receivership, tier equity, and so much more.

I encourage you to read and consider the information within the [NYSUT Voter Guide](#) before casting your ballot this November. Now, more than ever, we must be well informed about who we vote for in order to rally around the issues that unite us. Thanks to all who contributed and continue to contribute to the VOTE - COPE campaign, and thanks to OCTA Executive Officer Jenn Cahill for leading the charge for funds to this critical means of raising our political voice.

## How to Cast Your Vote

**It's never been more important to vote... and it's never been easier. Choose ONE of the following three methods to vote this year:**

### **Vote Absentee**

#### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

- Oct. 24 is the last day for the board of elections to RECEIVE absentee applications — applications must be physically in their office by that date, not postmarked.
- Apply for a ballot in-person by Nov. 7.

#### **WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:**

- Request an absentee ballot by going to [absenteeballot.elections.ny.gov](https://absenteeballot.elections.ny.gov)
- Mail your ballot no later than Nov. 8. Drop off your ballot at your polling place on or before Election Day.

### **Vote Early**

#### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

Early voting runs Oct. 29 to Nov. 6.

#### **WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:**

- Check your county board of elections for hours and locations.
- Go to [voterlookup.elections.ny.gov](https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov)
- Go VOTE!

### **Vote In Person on Election Day**

#### **IMPORTANT DATE:**

- Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8.

#### **WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:**

- Go VOTE!

In solidarity,  
Carrie

## OCTA High School New Hires in the September Spotlight!



PICTURED from left to right: Tina Hall, Jennifer Bolster, Andrew Greco, Abbey Shields, Sara Kane's, Joe O'Neill, and Stephanie Finch

**Do you know an OCTA member who works hard at what they do? Someone whose efforts seem to go unnoticed?** *Someone who always seems to have positive energy? Do you know an OCTA member who deserves to be in the SPOTLIGHT? Then nominate them to be cast in the monthly OCTA spotlight! This section of the newsletter and website will highlight one (or more) OCTA member(s) per month. Send the candidates name, along with a brief description of what makes them special to [drose@oswego.org](mailto:drose@oswego.org). Send your nomination today!*

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## Help us celebrate SRPs on November 15!

Are you ready to rock?!

[SRP Recognition Day is Nov. 15, 2022](#), in New York State. It is a well-deserved honor for the hard-working women and men who help educate, feed and transport students, monitor their health, administer school offices, and maintain school facilities — providing a safe and nurturing environment for student-centered learning. We honor the super heroes of our schools. SRPs Rock!

## THANK YOU, VOTE-COPE Contributors!



Your statewide union has a political fund-raising arm called VOTE-COPE. VOTE-COPE is NYSUT's non-partisan action fund that coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and supports NYSUT-endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public-education and pro-labor. No NYSUT dues dollars are used to support candidates or campaign committees. NYSUT sends rebates to local unions based on a percentage (up to 40 percent) of the contributions VOTE-COPE receives from that local union's members. Those rebates can be used in local activities such as school board races and for passage of school budgets.

Thank you to all OCTA Members who contributed to this year's Vote Cope Campaign and continue to make contributions every year! Thanks to all building leaders for your help!

### MAC - NYSUT Member Action Center

The 'MAC' is an online tool to connect a grassroots community of activists interested in education, healthcare and other issues affecting working people and families. Take action today!



# Sign up NOW for November 9 retirement system seminar presented by OCTA!



**SIGN UP NOW!** email confirmation to  
[drose@oswego.org](mailto:drose@oswego.org)

**New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) Benefits  
Presentation (presented by OCTA)**

**November 9 from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m**

A real NYSTRS 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.

*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 join us for this one-hour NYSTRS Retirement Benefits Consultation on Wednesday, November 9 starting at 5:00 p.m.**

**PLEASE let Dan Rose [drose@oswego.org](mailto:drose@oswego.org) know that you are interested in attending this in person seminar. This seminar will be presented at the OCTA Office (122 W 2nd St) across from CAMS downtown. Food (appetizers and pizza) and drink will be available courtesy of the Oswego Classroom Teachers Association.**

Want to know more about the NYSTRS and the benefits available to you as an educator in New York State? Visit the [ACTIVE MEMBERS](#) section of the NYSTRS Website. You can also create an account and view your service credit and current benefit profile by clicking here: [MYNYSTRS](#)





## NYSUT DISCOUNTS



**Hungry?  
Need a car rental?  
Looking for a good deal on a hotel or flight?**

**The NYSUT Member Benefits Discounts & Deals program helps you make every dollar count. Save up to 50% on:**

- Restaurant dine-in or take-out
- Groceries and food delivery
- Meal subscription services
- Clothing and shoes
- Oil changes
- Hotels and flights
- Car rentals

**MEMBER BENEFITS**  
**nysut**  
Working to Benefit You

**MB Discounts & Deals** offers more than 21,000 deals throughout New York State along with hundreds of thousands nationwide. You can even refer your favorite local business (restaurant, coffee shop, workout facility, etc.) to join the network and provide NYSUT members with a special discount. Don't miss out... register your account today!

Member Benefits is proud to endorse MB Discounts & Deals along with dozens of other programs and services that may be able to benefit you and your family members. Take some time to explore our website to find out how we can help you make every dollar count!



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,  
visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](https://memberbenefits.nysut.org)  
or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Sept/Oct 2022

## OCTA Scholarship Committee in search of new members!

Submitted by Meghan Donabella & Korrine LaDuc - OCTA Scholarship Co-Chairs

### OCTA Scholarship Committee

The OCTA Scholarship Committee is looking for volunteers. Every year, the scholarship committee organizes fundraisers (such as Jeans Week & payroll deduction) which allow the committee to award graduating OHS seniors with valuable scholarships in the spring. If you would like to participate in this year's committee, please email Korrine LaDuc & Meghan Donabella.

### Jeans Week - Save the Dates:

February 13 - February 17

Thanks!

Meghan Donabella & Korrine LaDuc  
OCTA Scholarship Co-Chairs



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## **OCTA Newsblast October 2022**

***Highlights from our October OCTA Meeting***

### **Health Insurance News:**

Did you know that our health insurance coverage at Oswego City School District offers a **\$0 copay** for any generic drug filled through a 90-day mail order with EXPRESS SCRIPTS? Getting your maintenance prescriptions through the mail can not only save you money, but also time by not having to take those monthly trips to the pharmacy. Lastly, the cost of mail order to our plan is significantly lower, which can result in less of a premium increase at renewal time. NOTE: Another great way to save money and time is by using Teladoc.

### **OBSERVATIONS:**

APPR is the same as last year.

[2022-23 OCSD Evaluation/APPR Guidance Document for Teachers](#)

Observations will begin **October 1st**.

*One formal observation and one unannounced observation.*

*Non-tenured teachers* are required to have a 30 minute Pre-Observation Conference 5 days ahead of time and a Post-Observation Conference within 10 school days after announced observation.

Tenured teachers are not required to have a pre-observation or submit a formal lesson plan. But, can request to have a pre-conference meeting if they please. They are required to have a post-conference within 10 school days after the announced observation.

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

**Blessings In A Backpack TRIVIA NIGHT** will be **Nov 4th** from 6:30 - 10:00 at the Oswego Elks. Blessings provides food 38 weekends each year for 400 Oswego School District students. Their biggest fundraiser is back after a two year break. Please consider getting a team together for Blessings In A Backpack Trivia Night. Print the form attached below and send in ASAP. Teams are due by Friday, October 21st.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uPSprDbA02\\_nvW\\_-PIPJ1fLGWkEi7mYWF9xdjVQ-X4/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uPSprDbA02_nvW_-PIPJ1fLGWkEi7mYWF9xdjVQ-X4/edit)

**The FALL Bowling tournament** is being run by Carol Janice on **FRIDAY, FEB 3rd**. Start choosing your teammates and work on your team names! (Approx times: Secondary: 2:45 -4:30 Elementary 4:15 - 6)

**The end of year Volleyball tournament** needs a coordinator. Please contact Carrie Patane if you are available to work on organizing this event. Keep your calendars open... The tournament is scheduled for **Friday June 16th**.

**Building "solidarity meetings"** are typically run by building sunshine committees and take place on payday Fridays or once a month on a payday.

### **New Peer Support Line offered:**

NYSUT Member Benefits has launched the [Peer Support Line](#), a confidential, peer-to-peer, dial-in helpline free to all members and their families. Staffed by trained in-service and retired individuals, this service will provide support and referrals to callers seeking assistance on a wide array of personal, family, and work-related problems. For more information or assistance, call **844-444-0152**.

### **OCTA RESOURCE GUIDE:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kc9DjnHtYkQTqCKMI2iw4Krey8BFebZtAO5i1wM05Gs>

**COVID:** To Report a Positive At Home COVID Test in OSWEGO COUNTY: PLEASE REPORT!!!

[https://health.oswegocounty.com/information/2019\\_novel\\_coronavirus/isolation\\_quarantine\\_guidance.php](https://health.oswegocounty.com/information/2019_novel_coronavirus/isolation_quarantine_guidance.php)

**OCSD Employee COVID Hotline: 315-341-2055**

**OCSD Student COVID Hotline: 315-341-2050**

**\*District Safety Hotline-** If you have a safety concern the district has a confidential safety hotline. **The number is 315-341-2056.**

### **Know Your Paycheck Deductions:**

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 health  
**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.)

Some **new codes** everyone will see on their checks:

**CHAPERONE1** - Primary

**CHAPERONE2** - Secondary

**FOCUS FWD.**

**STUDY HALL-OHS**

**STUDY HALL-OMS**

**SUBCVR1** -Primary

**SUBCVR2**-Secondary

*These used to all be coded as REG PAY.*

#### OCTA Building Leadership 22-23

|               |                 |                |                 |               |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>CER</b>    | <b>FPS</b>      | <b>KPS</b>     | <b>FLS</b>      | <b>MIN</b>    |
| Terri Stacy   | Erin Wilder     | Mary Lynne     | Michaela Kearns | Crystal Mason |
| Ted Beers     | Julie Tubolino  | Maxwell        | Amy Armet       | Amy Sullivan  |
|               |                 | Hope Mazuroski |                 | Keri Hunter   |
| <b>OHS</b>    | <b>OMS</b>      |                |                 |               |
| Gina Iorio    | Jeff Brown      |                |                 |               |
| Heather Sugar | Alison Anderson |                |                 |               |
| Robert Dumas  | Mary Alice      |                |                 |               |
|               | Brennan         |                |                 |               |



## Dental Benefits Reminder!

submitted by OCTA Dental Administrator Lindsay Voigt

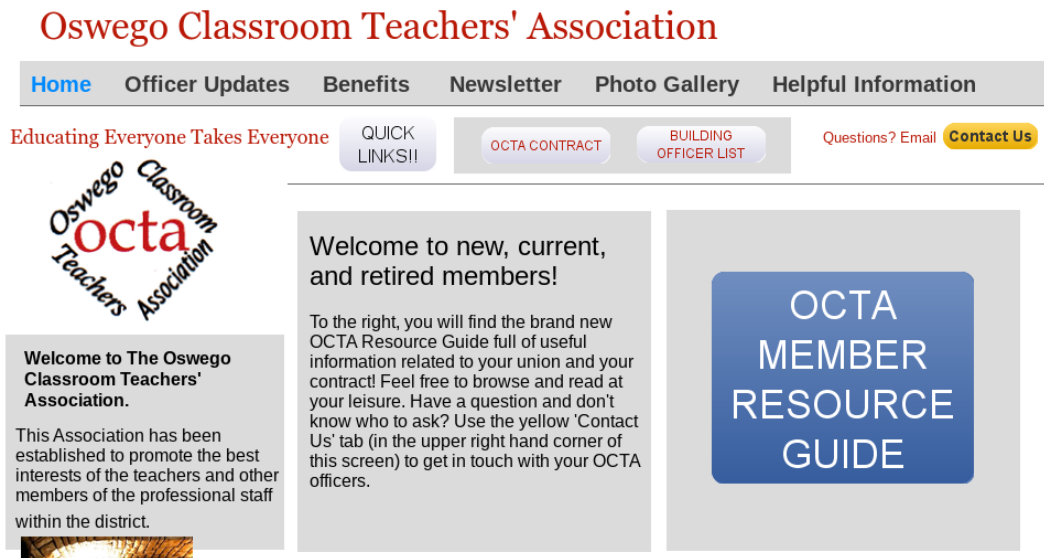
**Don't forget to inform OCTA's dental administrator of address and phone number changes (as well as email changes). Without up-to-date contact information, your dental benefits may take longer to process!**

Please note that as of September 1st, the Oswego Classroom Teachers' Benefit Fund will have a new address. A separate notification will be sent with the new address, and you will notice this change on all invoices and correspondence you receive from the Benefit Fund. Anything sent to the current P.O. BOX will be forwarded to the new address for a period of 6 months. If you have any questions about this transition, please feel free to reach out. The e-mail address for the plan will remain the same.



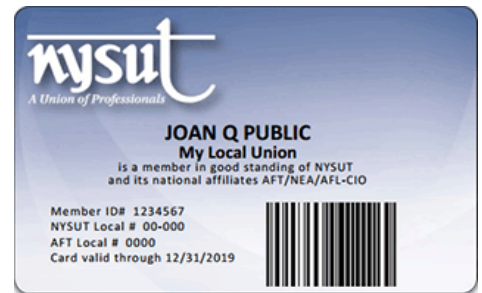
## Have you visited the OCTA website yet? What are you waiting for!!!!?

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.

