

# OCTA Advocate

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



## September 2021

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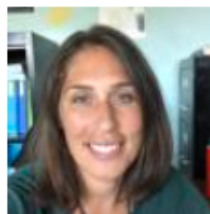
**Meet your 2021-2022 OCTA Officers!**



Carrie Patane  
OCTA President



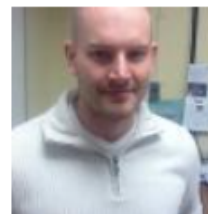
Kim LeRoy  
VP Grievance



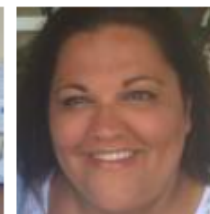
Jess Burridge  
VP Negotiations



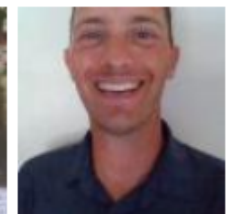
Jenn Cahill  
VP Pol. Action



Mike Patane  
Treasurer



Michelle McManus  
Secretary



Dan Rose  
VP Newsletter



## Message from your OCTA President - Carrie Patane

### WORK TOGETHER AND STAY UNITED!!

I know these past few weeks have not come without challenges, but nothing new is ever easy. We are the captains of our own vessels and we will lead our passengers through this storm, providing them with security, encouragement, and comfort.

It is a wonderful feeling to see our students sitting at desks again. It doesn't appear that there will be a sweeping return to "normal" just yet, but let's embrace the baby steps we are making and continue to do our part to keep each other safe and healthy. One way we can help stop the spread of Covid is to get our vaccinations. If your doctor recommends the vaccine, please consider it. Any proactive measures we can take will help protect our students whom we care so much about. Any questions about exposures OR symptoms consistent with Covid should be directed to the **EMPLOYEE COVID HOTLINE where staff will provide instructions to follow about reporting to work, etc. The number is (315)341-2055.**

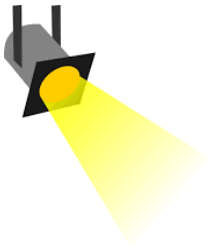
Each of you went above and beyond last year to connect with and educate our students, and it was your dedication and ingenuity that made remote learning a success. Despite our impressive efforts last year, we know that in-person learning is more effective. Being in person not only provides better educational opportunities for our students, but is necessary for their social development and their emotional well-being. Unfortunately, COVID quarantines are still a part of our reality. The OCTA is working out the final details of a formal Memorandum of Agreement with the district regarding the impact of Covid quarantines and the directive to live-stream. We have a TEMPORARY agreement that we will stream for students who are SENT HOME by the school nurse with Covid symptoms of the next two weeks while the district works out their plan to offer covid testing at school. Once we have tests available, students should not need to be home for a week waiting for test results that have been delayed throughout the county. Beyond that, we will only be live streaming for those students who are directed to quarantine by the Department of Health. The district will be notified of any quarantines and a designated person will communicate with you about sending that student a link to stream. **AS A PART OF THIS AGREEMENT**, you will be compensated \$5 per class, up to a maximum of \$15 for a full day if you are required to stream for a student due to covid testing or quarantine. You will need to put in a request for compensation using an online invoice. More information will be coming soon about this.

Please note that any student who is ABSENT due to illness, suspension, or a medical appointment is simply ABSENT, just as they have always been. Feel free to post work for them in Google Classroom so they can complete it on their own, but any work that cannot be posted can be made up when they return. We ARE NOT streaming for students who are absent for short term illnesses. If a student or parent asks you to stream, please ask them to contact the district Covid hotline. **Parents have a DIFFERENT COVID HOTLINE NUMBER. IT IS (315)341-2050.** You may want to consider REMOVING your MEET LINK from your Google Classroom. Students should NOT be accessing your stream if they are not in a mandatory quarantine situation. You can SEND a private meet link to INDIVIDUAL students using your Google Classroom Announcement Stream in order to prevent other students from jumping into your Meet link.

We have eagerly anticipated a return to normal, and although we have not reached that destination yet, we can all do our part to help us get there safely. Together, I hope that our ETA will be sooner, rather than later!

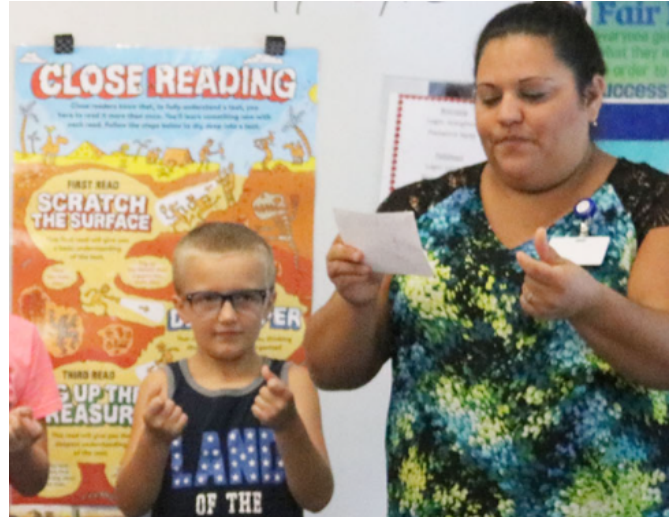
GO BUCS!  
In solidarity,  
Carrie

## OCTA Secretary in the September Spotlight!



Michelle McManus has been working in the Oswego City School District for over 20 years now and has been the OCTA Secretary since 2016. Michelle has a strong leadership voice and meticulous organizational skills which

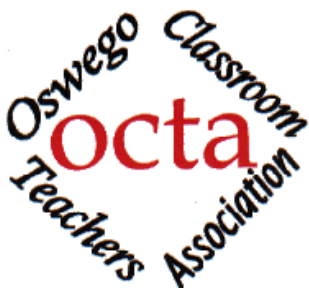
help union meetings stay on track and keep everyone in attendance focused on the task at hand. Michelle is a natural leader with tons of energy and a passion to help those around her learn and grow. Thank you for all of your hard work and guidance during these difficult times, Michelle! You are truly an inspiration to all of your fellow OCTA Members! Keep up the great work!



\*\*Recently, Michelle designed and put together a [resource guide](#) for OCTA members - it is truly a one-stop-shop for all things OCTA. Want to check the salary schedule? Learn more about the negotiations associated with snow days or substitutes? Want to learn more about the sick bank? Check out the Resource Guide, [click here](#)!

## 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). All nominees and nominators will receive a SPECIAL GIFT from OCTA! Send your nomination today!*



## Get to know your building leadership!

Below is the current list of OCTA Building Officers and Representatives for this school year. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with your building president, vice president and representatives. Thank you to all members who have stepped up to take on a leadership role.

**Building Officers and Representatives 2020-2022**

<b>OHS</b>	<b>315-341-2202</b>	<b>FLS</b>	<b>315-341-2700</b>
Gina Iorio Pres	<a href="#">giorio</a>	Jamie Turtura Pres	<a href="#">jturtura</a>
Heather Sugar Pres	<a href="#">hsugar</a>	Amy Armet VP	<a href="#">aarmet</a>
Robert Dumas VP	<a href="#">rdumas</a>	Carolyn Dehm	<a href="#">cdehm2</a>
Gloria Canale-Giberson	<a href="#">gcanale</a>	Jennifer Cahill	<a href="#">jcahill</a>
Lindsay Brown	<a href="#">lbrown23</a>	Jim Hartmann	<a href="#">jhartman</a>
Tami Palmitesso	<a href="#">tpalmit2</a>	Michelle McManus	<a href="#">mmcmanu2</a>
Kathy Audlin	<a href="#">kaudlin</a>		
Jenn Smith	<a href="#">jsmith3</a>	<b>FPS</b>	<b>315-341-2400</b>
Kaylee Morse	<a href="#">kmorse</a>	Erin Wilder Pres	<a href="#">ewilder</a>
Sarah Kimak	<a href="#">skimak</a>	Jamie Brancato VP	<a href="#">jbrancat2</a>
Trish Shene	<a href="#">pshene</a>	Laurie Kelly	<a href="#">lkelly</a>
Amy Orr	<a href="#">aorr</a>	Cari Joyce	<a href="#">cjoyce2</a>
Sarah Williams	<a href="#">swillia2</a>	Lisa Coleman	<a href="#">lcolema2</a>
		Julie Tubolino	<a href="#">jtubolin</a>
<b>OMS</b>	<b>315-341-2300</b>		
Jeff Brown Pres	<a href="#">jbrown</a>	<b>MIN</b>	<b>315-341-2600</b>
Alison Anderson Pres	<a href="#">aanders4</a>	Carol Janice Pres	<a href="#">cjanice</a>
MaryAlice Brennan Pres	<a href="#">mbrennan</a>	Amy Sullivan Pres	<a href="#">asulliva</a>
Sally Kingsbury	<a href="#">skingsbu</a>	Sandy Kunzwiler	<a href="#">skunzwil</a>
Susan Roik	<a href="#">sroik</a>	Don Fronk	<a href="#">dfronk</a>
Chad Platten	<a href="#">cplatten</a>	Rayna Mills	<a href="#">rmills2</a>
Elise Davis	<a href="#">edavis</a>	Jenn Szkotak	<a href="#">jszkotak</a>
Peg Holt	<a href="#">mholt</a>	Crystal Mason	<a href="#">cmason</a>
Michelle Cooper	<a href="#">mcooper</a>	Keri Hunter	<a href="#">khunter</a>
Maureen Wallace	<a href="#">mwallace</a>		
<b>KPS</b>	<b>315-341-2500</b>	<b>CER</b>	<b>315-341-2800</b>
Mary Lynne Maxwell Pres	<a href="#">mmaxwell</a>	Terri Stacy Pres	<a href="#">tcullens</a>
Hope Mazuroski	<a href="#">hmazuros</a>	Teddy Beers VP	<a href="#">tbeers</a>
Carolyn Slobodian	<a href="#">cslobodi</a>	Molly Clark	<a href="#">mclark2</a>
Gretchen Coakley	<a href="#">gcoakley</a>	Holly Babcock	<a href="#">hbabcock</a>
Shannon Kane	<a href="#">skane</a>	Ann Jadus	<a href="#">ajadus</a>
Kristyn Frost	<a href="#">kfrost</a>		
<b>Sub President- Ed Stacy</b>	<b>Sub Co Vice Presidents - Meg McLaughlin</b>		

## NYSTRS NEWS

Stay up-to-date and informed about what is happening with your New York State Teachers Retirement System

Submitted by your OCSD Retirement Delegate, Dan Rose

08/04/2021

At this time, our building is open to the public only for essential visits. Visitors will be required to complete a health check before entering and will need to wear a mask throughout their visit.

NYSTRS is committed to customer service. Read the following FAQs to stay informed. If you have additional questions, call us at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6250 or email us at [communit@nystrs.org](mailto:communit@nystrs.org).

1. What's the best way for me to keep tabs on my membership and file forms?

If you don't have a [MyNYSTRS](#) account, [create one](#) now. This will allow you to file forms electronically, run benefit projections, correspond with us securely and utilize the many self-service tools available. With an account, you can file a service retirement application without needing to get a notarization.

To create an account, you will need to enter the last four digits of your Social Security number and your NYSTRS EmplID, so have those handy. The latter can be found on the *Benefit Profile* sent to you each fall or on personal correspondence you have received from NYSTRS.

2. How would a medical leave or paid leave of absence affect my pension?

Want to explore the answer to this question and more? Follow this link: [RETIREMENT QUESTIONS](#)

### New NYSTRS Members

Welcome to NYSTRS! You are a member of one of the top public pension funds in the country.

The salary and service credit you earn today is helping you build a secure future. Along with a guaranteed pension in retirement, you'll qualify for disability and death benefit coverage when you reach service milestones and other eligibility requirements. Why care about your NYSTRS membership when retirement is so far in the future? These short and entertaining videos help answer those questions:

- [A Two-Minute Tutorial for New Members](#)
- [PSI: Prior Service Investigation](#)
- [Max Option: Secret Agent](#)
- [MyNYSTRS: Your Information on Your Schedule](#)

[\(READ MORE CLICK HERE\)](#)



## NYSUT MEMBER BENEFITS

Check out what your union membership has to offer!

## Member Benefits Discounts & Deals

Below are the most popular vendors that NYSUT members have shopped with using MB Discounts & Deals this past year -- with a potential savings of almost \$900,000! Have you been missing out?

<u>EAT</u>	<u>PLAY</u>	<u>SHOP</u>	<u>TRAVEL</u>
HelloFresh	Six Flags Theme Parks	Samsung	TripBeat
Burger King	Hersheypark	Apple	Great Wolf Lodge
Subway	Sky Zone Trampoline Park	Dell	Carnival Cruise Lines
Domino's	Bronx Zoo	Lenovo	Sandals Resorts
Jersey Mike's Subs	LEGOLAND New York	Advanced Auto Parts	Norwegian Cruise Lines

**MB Discounts & Deals** offers NYSUT members exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on restaurants, groceries and food delivery, theme park tickets, hotels and flights, oil changes and vehicle maintenance -- with more than 21,000 New York State deals and thousands more 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](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org)  
or calling 800-626-8101.



## Getting Back On Track!

Across the state, educators are grappling with many challenges as they recover and rebuild in the effort to get schooling back on track for the 2021-2022 school year. While they are presented with a unique opportunity to reimagine education on every level, there are many difficult decisions ahead when identifying exactly what that will look like. How can we rethink what hasn't been working for students and educators alike and create a more equitable teaching and learning environment? How can teachers support children academically, emotionally, and socially to take them where they need to go? Whether based on the effects of trauma, marginalization, economic insecurities, the impact of the digital divide pivoting between online learning, hybrid learning, and in-person learning during the pandemic, the path to student mastery will look different than it did in the past. As such, your Union is working to anticipate the needs of educators so they are prepared to engage, instruct, and assess students as they begin coming back to their best educational setting, the classroom.



Through the Education & Learning Trust, training is available for members on the following topics:

- **Social-Emotional Learning** – the skills learned help students develop the attitudes and behaviors to better cope with emotional stress, solve problems, and become healthy and competent overall.
- **Response to Trauma** – explore strategies for responding to and supporting students who are experiencing trauma.
- **Promoting Educational Wellness** - addressing the emotional and mental health needs of students and staff and providing support, as needed.
- **Culturally Responsive Schools** – evidence of relationships and belonging as well as student voice are indicators of a culturally responsive school.
- **Accelerating Student Growth** – strategically preparing students for success in the present by addressing past concepts and skills in the purposeful context of readying them for new learning.
- **Understanding Students** - knowing our students
- **Family Engagement** - a critical component to the success of our youth involves engaging families in authentic ways to increase social, behavioral, and academic successes for all students.
- **Equity** - empowering educators to build a solid foundation around understanding the complexities of oppression, marginalization, disenfranchisement, intersectionality, and the impact these systemic “barriers” have on our students, families, communities, and colleagues.

## OCTA Scholarship Committee in search of new members!

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

The OCTA Scholarship Committee is looking for new members! 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.

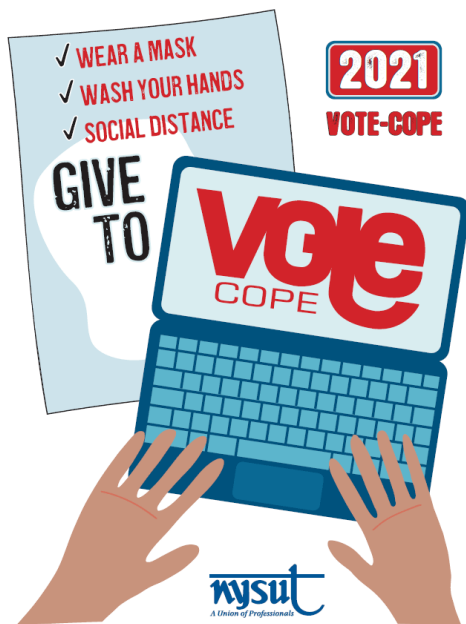
### Jeans Week - Save the Dates:

October 25 - October 29

&

February 14 - 18

## WHAT IS VOTE-COPE AND WHY CONTRIBUTE?



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. **Jenn**

**Cahill**, OCTA's Vote-Cope coordinator, kicked off this year's campaign with Presidents & Vice Presidents earlier this month at the OCTA meeting.

OCTA's campaign will run from OCTOBER 12 - 26th; just in time for us to show our thankfulness for all that the union provides. All forms must be returned to Jenn Cahill at FLS no later than Friday, October 29th. [Learn MORE about VOTE-COPE and political action: CLICK HERE!](#)



## Contract Updates

submitted on June 21 by Heidi Sweeney, Executive Director of Secondary Education and Personnel

Attached below is a memo outlining a few of the most pressing topics related to the successor agreement with OCTA. There are a number of other items that we have updated and calculated. Please know that you can reach out at any time with specific questions.

**Given the newly approved OCTA collective bargaining agreement, please note the following:**

1. There may be amendments/adjustments to any previously appointed rates, as new stipends and such may be pertinent. Updated letters will be mailed upon completion.
2. Salary Credit language has changed considerably. Meghan and I are working with Technology to update the notations on various forms. Changes of note:
  - a. Graduate credits are now capped at 6 credits per year, July 1- June 30, except when matriculated in a degree program. \*Previously approved coursework (over the last year) is grandfathered in for approval/payment but must be completed and submitted for salary adjustments within a year of the previous approval date.
  - b. Effective July 1, 2021, new requests for graduate coursework beyond the required Master's program must have prior approval, be reasonably related to the teacher's teaching assignment and of value in improving teaching service to the district, and be an approved graduate level course from a nationally or regionally accredited college or institution of higher education or recognized and approved by NYSED relevant to teacher certification.
  - c. If you are requesting to begin or matriculate into an additional degree beyond the required Master's program necessary for certification in a teacher's area of service and appointment, please submit such a request in writing to the Superintendent or their designee (me) for prior review and consideration.

**Please contact me with any questions.**

Did you know that the OCSD Technology Department has created a [web page](#) full of any and all important links, documents, directives and information that teachers need? It really is a one-stop-shop for everything an employee needs to know and use! Below is a sample of the information available:

## Welcome Aboard!

You will need to visit the following departments/fill out online forms:

- Secondary Education and Personnel Office, 315-341-2009
  - Employee paperwork
  - Sub System password
- Instructional Technology Office at OHS, 315-341-2024
  - Did you get an OCSD ID? Wear it all times at work- ID Card: Get picture taken & card printed
  - Before you can have an Oswego CSD Network account and email, you must print and fill out the *Educational Internet Account - Administrator/Faculty/Staff* form, which includes our *Acceptable Use Policy*. This form is located at <http://www.oswego.org/tfiles/folder725/staffaccountaup.pdf>.
  - Once the technology department receives your Acceptable Use Policy Form we will be in touch to provide you a brief overview and give you the credentials to access your account/email.
  - Know where to find Board of Education Policies on Board Docs: <http://boarddocs.cnyric.org/ny/oswego/Board.nsf/Public#>

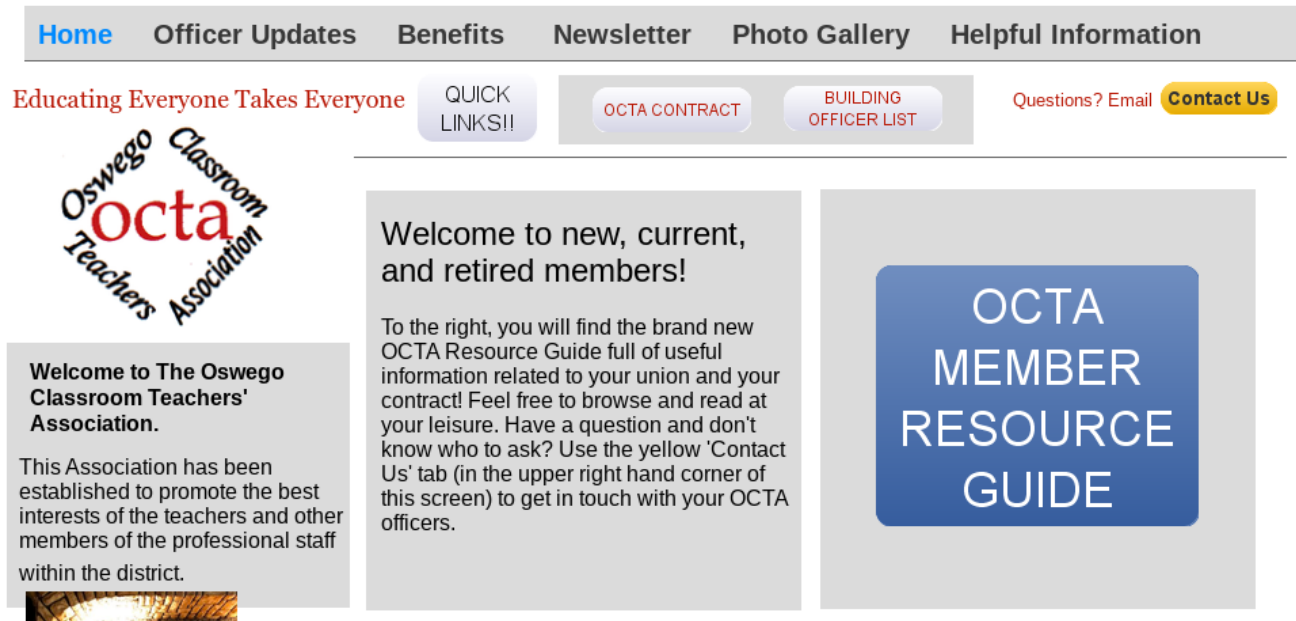
Find all this as well as information about Parent Square, online trainings, electronic forms, Gmail, Helpdesk, printing, MyLearningPlan, Google Drive. Click on the homescreen image below and EXPLORE this wonderful resource!!



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

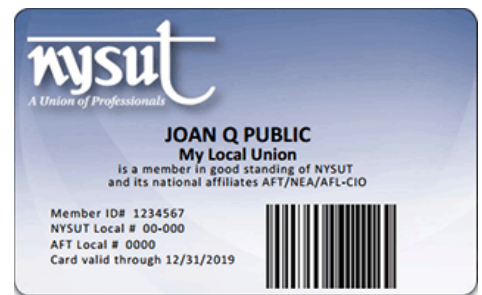
Click on the screenshot of the homepage below to explore the site! Find quick links to important union documents like the new OCTA Contract, the OCTA building officer list, and the new OCTA resources guide!

### 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 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.

