

OCTA Advocate

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



SEPTEMBER 2025

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Meet your 2024-2025 OCTA Officers!



Carrie Patane
OCTA President



Kim LeRoy
VP Grievance



Jess Burrige
VP Negotiations



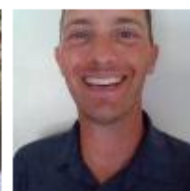
Jenn Cahill
VP Pol. Action



Mike Patane
Treasurer



Michelle McManus
Secretary



Dan Rose
VP Newsletter



Message from your OCTA President - Carrie Patane

As we begin another school year, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for the dedication, creativity, and compassion you bring to your classrooms and schools every single day. The start of a new year is always filled with excitement, new opportunities, and, yes, challenges—but it is also a powerful reminder of the impact we have as educators.

Our union exists to ensure that you never face those challenges alone.

Together, we advocate for the resources our students deserve, the respect our profession has earned, and the working conditions that allow us to thrive. This year, we will continue to strengthen our collective voice, support one another, and build on the progress we've made.

Please take time to celebrate the small victories, lean on your colleagues when needed, and remember that our union is here for you every step of the way. When we stand together, we not only uplift each other—we transform our schools and communities for the better.

Here's to a year of growth, collaboration, and success for both our students and ourselves. Thank you for all that you do—your work truly changes lives.

NOTE: If you are taking a Professional Development course (external PD), (ie: Citi/Teacher Center...) you will need to file for prior approval through Frontline before taking the class and then submit a payroll invoice with **proof of attendance within 30 days** of taking the class in order to be paid. Members are limited to 45 hours of PD prior to Jan. 1st. If funds are still available after that, the limit will be lifted.

Graduate Courses: **Transcripts must be turned in by Oct 1st!** Members who are not in a matriculated program may get approval to take up to 6 credit hours per year (July 1-June 30) from an accredited institution.

In solidarity,
Oswego Classroom Teachers Association
President, Carrie Patane

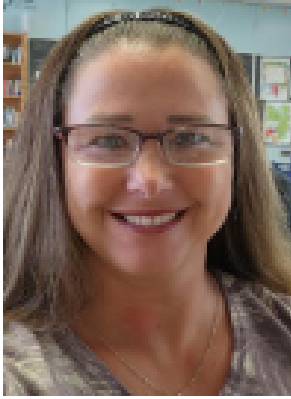
**SWAG
SALE
LINK**



****To send a request to join the OCTA Facebook Group, use the QR code or search OCTA** You must be a member of OCTA to join the facebook group. (Be sure to answer the required Qs.)**



Congratulations to our most recent OCTA Spotlight Recipients!



We wish to express our sincere gratitude to our union president, **Carrie Patane (OHS)**, for her tireless dedication and unwavering commitment to our members. Carrie's leadership and vision has been instrumental in advocating for fair treatment and improved working conditions, and fostering a stronger and more unified workplace. We deeply appreciate the countless hours she dedicates to protecting our rights and advancing our collective interests. Thank you, Carrie, for your exceptional service, and for always putting the needs of our union family first!

Mr. Joshua Bradberry (CER) is in his sixth year of teaching after beginning his career as a substitute and earning his master's degree in K–6 Education. He has taught 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and now 5th grade, and finds his greatest joy in creating a welcoming classroom environment where every student feels they belong. A SUNY Cortland graduate, Josh originally planned to pursue athletic administration but discovered his true calling in education after working in sales and returning to the classroom as a sub. Outside of school, he enjoys traveling, camping, and spending time with his family, as well as cheering for Syracuse sports and the Buffalo Bills. Looking ahead, Josh hopes to one day return to his original dream—serving as an athletic director—while continuing to inspire students and possibly coaching when his children are older.



Mr. Burrill Wells (OMS) has been teaching for twenty years, working with students from 6th grade through the college level, including as an adjunct at SUNY Oswego. Though he didn't initially plan on becoming an educator, his time serving on the Baldwinsville school board and a close friendship with a French teacher inspired him to pursue teaching and use his French degree in the classroom. He values the strong relationships he builds with his students and enjoys staying connected with many of them long after graduation. Outside of school, Mr. Wells loves spending time with family and friends, as well as hiking, biking, and

traveling—especially to the Adirondacks and the Province of Quebec. He also serves as Treasurer on the Board of Directors of the Friends of Beaver Lake. Looking ahead, he hopes to enjoy retirement with plenty of travel, including visiting every continent.

This month's **Minetto** OCTA Spotlight features first-year teacher **Bethany McMillen**, who joined Minetto Elementary last year as a substitute and now serves as the fifth-grade science and social studies teacher. With a bachelor's degree in biology, Bethany discovered her passion for education while working as a substitute teaching assistant, which inspired her to pursue a second degree in elementary education. She loves watching students grow and learn, from beginning readers in kindergarten to the confident chapter book readers in her classroom today. Outside of school, Bethany helps on her family's small dairy farm and enjoys baking and gardening. She is excited to begin her first year as a full-time



teacher and looks forward to the journey ahead.



KPS is excited to welcome both new and familiar faces to our school community this year! Please join us in greeting **Ashley Corron, Jessica Miller, Kelly Evans, Victoria Jaslow, Halie Fantom, Jessica Samson, Christie Li, and Catrina Tulowiecki** as they begin their journeys with us. From music and band to kindergarten, first grade, and classroom support, each brings unique talents and enthusiasm to KPS. We are thrilled to have them on our team and look forward to a wonderful year ahead together!

FPS is proud to spotlight **Colleen Hartmann**, who has been serving as a Speech Language Pathologist for three years. Colleen works with children to improve their articulation and language skills, helping them build the confidence to effectively communicate with others. Inspired by her own experiences growing up with a disability and receiving support services, she knew she wanted to dedicate her career to helping children. What she enjoys most is connecting with her students, collaborating with teachers, and watching the progress her students make throughout the year—especially seeing their excitement when they come to speech ready to share about their lives. Outside of work, Colleen loves spending time with her family and friends, especially her two nieces, as well as baking and relaxing with a good movie or show. Looking ahead, she hopes to continue her work in schools as a Speech Language Pathologist while also traveling more of the world. Thank you, Colleen, for your dedication and positivity—you make a difference every day at FPS!





OCTA Blast September 2025

Highlights from our September OCTA Meeting

New Hires- You have 30 days to sign up for Dental Insurance. Please contact Lindsay Voigt at Octadentalplan@gmail.com if you would like to sign up or get more information. If you need to sign up for Health and/or Vision Insurance contact Amanda Hamilton at ahamito@oswego.org.

New members, and 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](#).

FALL OCTA SWAG SALE - Fundraiser for OCTA Scholarship! (ORDERS DUE Sept 30th!)

New OCTA apparel, hats, fannie packs, Union Strong Solidarity Tees, BUC STRONG & MORE!

Delivery is expected by the end of OCT. <https://octafall2025.itemorder.com/>

Graduate Salary Credit- If you took graduate courses this summer, please have your transcript sent to Rachel Enos **by October 1** and mark it as complete on your graduate form in Frontline.

Professional Development Classes- OCS D Professional Development Procedures

Many of the professional development classes are offered right here in Oswego at our schools and you can register for these **INSERVICE** classes in [Frontline](#). These classes are not mandatory but will help a teacher or TA complete their required hours for certification purposes. When members take classes outside their contractual hours they are compensated **\$32.30** per hour for the **2025-2026** school year. If you are taking an **inservice class** (in district), simply register for the course through Frontline and be sure to sign-in to receive payment.

The OCTA contract also affords us the ability to take **external PD**. If you are taking an **external Professional Development** course, (ie: Citi/Teacher Center...) you will need to **file for prior approval** through [Frontline](#) and then **submit a PD Payroll Invoice Form (On Rapid ID) with proof of attendance within 30 days** of completion to be paid. You also need to mark complete in Frontline and attach a certificate of attendance. Members are limited to 45 hours of PD prior to Jan. 1st. If funds are still available, the limit will be lifted.

Safety- Classroom doors should be locked at all times. Discuss this with your building safety committees, however, if your door is locked when it is shut, no one can get in without a key and you are better protected from unforeseen threats.

Share safety concerns with your union Safety Representatives:

OHS- Gina Iorio
MIN- Don Fronk
OMS- Dan Rogers
CER- Ted Beers
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?

Longevity Salary Credit- Teachers need to submit their NYSTRS Retirement Statement prior to the end of year 10 to receive longevity at the start of year 11. Additional longevity is added every five years. You do not need to submit your statement more than once.

Insurance- If you are having difficulties with MVP be sure to reach out to Assured Partners (was 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 using Teladoc, ask for GENERIC RX, and use Express Scripts when possible to help reduce plan costs and to lower our premiums.**



are

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.

Join the Fix Tier 6 Team

Fixing Tier 6 is about solidarity, equity and dignity. Our work is important. Our pensions should reflect that.



NYSUT Legal Plan-

ALL OCTA MEMBERS HAVE ACCESS TO THE LEGAL PLAN as a gift of membership! If you want to know more information about what is included in our NYSUT Legal Plan [click here](#).

Stay tuned for a virtual informational session on what this plan covers and have an opportunity to ask questions to a member of the FK&M team!

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**

OCTA Scholarship- Oct. 27-31, Feb. 9-13

Stuff A Bus- January 5-9, May 18-22

Blessings- Dec. 15-19, March 23-27

Prom- Jan. 5-9

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.)

THANK YOU to our OCTA Building Leadership 25-26**CER**

Ted Beers
Holly Babcock

FPS

Julie Tubolino
Cari Joyce

KPS

Tricia Caroccio
Allie Yule

FLS

Meghan Harrison
Amy Armet

MIN

Keri Hunter
Stacie Waterhouse-
Roberts

OHS

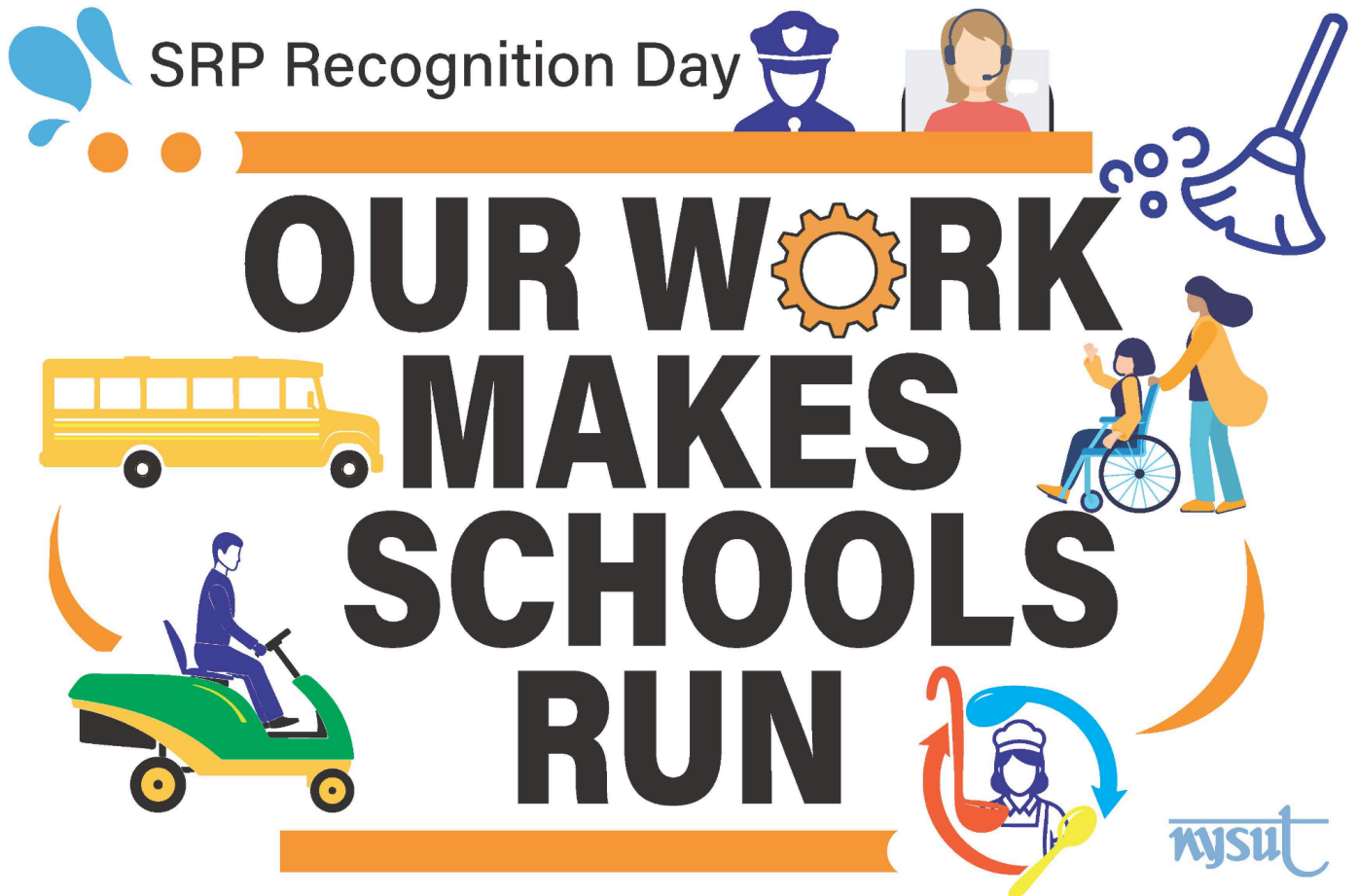
Gina Iorio
Heather Sugar
Robert Dumas

OMS

Jeff Brown
Clare Donovan

Substitutes

Terri Stacy



SRP Recognition Day: Our Work Makes Schools Run

SRP Recognition Day is Nov. 18, 2025, 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.

SRPs Rise to the Challenge, making a difference in our schools, workplaces and communities, every single day.

DENTAL INFO!

Dental Administrator Lindsay Voigt octadentalplan@gmail.com

3 back-to-school tips for great dental health



It's the start of a new school year, and your kids are all set with brand-new clothes and a fresh set of school supplies. But don't forget about your kids teeth! Your kids' oral health is important to their academic success. Add these dental health tips to your back-to-school checklist to help your kids have a fantastic school year.

1. Take your kids to the dentist

Start the school year right with a dental cleaning and exam. Ask your child's dentist about sealants and fluoride treatments to prevent decay. These treatments are easy ways to stop cavities before they start. And they can even help improve your child's performance at school.

Children with good oral health were more likely to do well at school, according to a 2019 study in The Journal of Pediatrics. And children with poor oral health were 90% more likely to miss more than six days of school compared to their good oral health counterparts, according to the study.

2. Pick the right snacks

Swap out lunchbox no-no's with healthy alternatives. Instead of chips or crackers, try nuts. Salty snacks like pretzels or corn chips may seem healthy because they don't contain sugar, but simple starches can be just as bad as sugar. These snacks break down into a sticky goo, coating teeth and promoting decay. Avoid candies and granola bars. Offer crunchy snacks like celery sticks, baby carrots and cubes of cheddar cheese instead.

3. Make brushing and flossing fun

Kids need to brush twice a day for two minutes at a time to keep their mouths healthy. They should also floss every day, preferably after dinner. Try these tricks to make oral hygiene more fun:

Use a sticker calendar. Let your kids place stickers on each day to represent brushing and flossing.

Play music. Collect your kids' favorite two-minute songs and make sure they brush the whole time.

Personalize. Help your child pick a themed toothbrush in his or her favorite color. Provide a kid-friendly floss holder. These Y-shaped devices make flossing more comfortable.

[Click HERE to create an account with Delta Dental or log in to your existing Delta Dental account!](#)

2025 - 2026 dues withholdings for OCTA



As per the ratified teachers' contract, please be advised that full dues for each active member (defined as earning \$37,000 and above) of the Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association should be \$889.32 for the 2025-26 school year. Please have \$42.35 withheld for each of the 21 paychecks with a limit of \$889.32. Three-quarters dues payers (defined as having a salary in the range of \$27,750 - \$36,999) pay \$25.96 for each of the 21 paychecks with a limit of \$545.16. Half-time dues members (defined as having a salary of \$18,500 - \$27,749) should have a new limit of \$444.66 with a per check amount of \$21.17. One-quarter dues members (defined as having a salary of \$9,250 - \$18,499) should have a new limit of \$222.33 with a per check amount of \$10.59. One-eighth dues

members (defined as having a salary of less than \$9,249 should have a new limit of \$111.17 with a per check amount of \$5.29 for the 21 pay periods.

The dues deduction for members of the Per Diem Substitute Unit (including teachers of homebound students and tutors in the ESL Program) of the Oswego Classroom Teachers' Association should be 1% per calendar day of work. (Long term subs will be adjusted and fall into one of the categories above.)

****Notice the salary amount for each category has a new range.**

Full Dues: \$37,000+

¾ Dues: \$27,750 - \$36,999

Half Dues : \$18,500 - \$27,749

Quarter Dues: \$9,250 - \$18,499

1/8 Dues: Less than \$9,250

Thank you for your continued cooperation and assistance.

Michael M. Patane,
OCTA Treasurer
Oswego Middle School

Filing for Protection ONLY!

I want to pass this along to our members as a precaution. Should a member plan to go in for surgery or any medical procedure that may involve the risk of life, or should a member come down with a severe illness, it is important for the member to fill out the attached form **prior** to any procedures taking place. Filing for protection with the Teachers' Retirement System will increase the death benefit to the member's beneficiary. It is imperative to have a plan in place should we face the frightening prospect of a worst-case scenario. (Note - you cannot simply file for "blanket" protection without a diagnosis indicating your life could be in jeopardy.) Print and save a blank form and the instructions where you will have access to it, should you ever need it. ****NOTE - You will need to have enough time to have this notarized PRIOR to sending it in.** The OCTA secretary is required to be a notary - so you can ask Michelle McManus to help you or there are other members who are likely available as well. You can find notaries in a number of places like banks or hospitals too.

What is FILING FOR PROTECTION?

Filing for protection is a benefit administered by the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) and allows a vested member (with ten or more years of service) to protect him/herself by providing beneficiaries with payment should you unexpectedly pass. This benefit is available if you are diagnosed with a potentially life-threatening medical condition or you are having surgery or treatment for a medical condition. By filing for protection, your beneficiary is entitled to the largest non-declining lump sum payment found on your benefit profile. This payout is considerably more than the typical in-service death benefit of three times your salary you would receive if you passed while still working.

Where Do I get the form: (See attached)

What about COVID 19: (See attached)

SAMPLE form with instructions: (See attached)



Support VOTE-COPE: Our Voice, Our Future

The Oswego Classroom Teachers Association is preparing for our annual **VOTE-COPE drive**, and this year our goal is simple: **raise as much as possible to support this valiant cause.**

For those who may not be familiar, **VOTE-COPE** is the statewide political fundraising arm of **NYSUT**. It is a **non-partisan action fund** that coordinates the voluntary contributions of union members across New York State. These contributions directly support **NYSUT-endorsed candidates and campaign committees that fight for pro-public-education and pro-labor policies.**

Your donations to VOTE-COPE make a difference:

- They help elect lawmakers who stand with educators, students, and working families.
- They strengthen our voice in Albany and Washington.
- They protect the rights, benefits, and working conditions we have fought hard to secure.



This year's VOTE-COPE drive is especially important. With critical decisions ahead on funding, contracts, and education policy, we need to ensure that our collective voice is heard loud and clear. **Every contribution, no matter the size, helps.**

How you can help:

- Consider increasing your payroll deduction to VOTE-COPE.
- Encourage colleagues to participate in the drive.
- Remember: every dollar adds up to stronger advocacy for our profession.

ELECTIONS 2024

ELECTED
4 PRO-PUBLIC SCHOOL CANDIDATES
to the US House of Representatives, including NYSUT member and former high school teacher John Mannion.

PASSED
PROP 1
ERA YES
Equal Rights in New York state.

97%
of budgets passed.

84%
of pro-education, pro-student endorsed candidates **WON**

73
NYSUT MEMBERS were elected or re-elected to school boards.

SCHOOL BUDGET AND BOARD ELECTIONS

IN NEW YORK STATE

FOUNDATION AID INCREASED
\$430 MILLION
more than what was originally proposed.

SAVED
SUNY DOWNSIDE

Secured
INCREASED FUNDING
for CUNY and SUNY campuses.

FIXED
APPR
to end test-and-punish teacher evaluations.

FIXES TO TIER 6
lowered Final Average Salary calculation from five to three years.

FIRST-IN-THE-NATION
social media safety laws for minors.

\$4 MILLION
to expand hands-on CTE programs.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT
expanded to include schools.

SCHOOL HEAT REGULATIONS
passage of first law establishing max temps in schools.

\$10 MILLION
for Science of Reading professional development programs.

TOILETING & DIAPERING
regulations that set uniform standards.

REFORMS TO CIVIL SERVICE LAWS
removing barriers to career advancement.

The OCTA Scholarship Committee has been approved for our Jeans Week/Athletic Wear for the 2025-26 School Year. We will be hosting these weeks on the following dates:

*October 27-31

*February 9-13

These opportunities help support scholarships given to Graduating Seniors. This June, we are able to award over **\$3,000 dollars to 8 recipients!** Thank you for your continued support.



The 2025 OCTA Scholarship Committee selected **8** recipients of this year's scholarship.

Below are recipients of the 2025 OCTA Scholarship:

- ❖ Lauren Adkins
- ❖ Alaina DiBlasi
- ❖ Thomas Kirwan
- ❖ Ella O'Connor
- ❖ Margaret O'Leary
- ❖ Alexis Pappa
- ❖ Gavin Ruggio
- ❖ Kevin Waters

Meghan Donabella & Korrine LaDuc
OCTA Scholarship Co-Chairs

News from PAYROLL

Good morning everyone and welcome back to our 10 month employees. I've attached the pay schedule for the 25/26 school year and placed it in the payroll folder under the business office on the shared drive. I've also attached a direct deposit form for anyone looking to switch.

Deductions: I have attached all the deduction codes, their definitions, and where they stand in terms of tax. I get asked about that often and thought this chart would help. **PLEASE look at your deductions to make sure everything is there.** If you signed up for family insurance but only paying for individual, you need to tell us. There are hundreds of you and I have to go in 1 by 1 go in and make updates and changes and your eyes as my backup is greatly appreciated. If you're missing a deduction, I need to know. If you have deductions that fall into the OTHER category, please send me an email and I'll let you know what that covers.

Time: With sick, personal, and vacation time being printed on checks, I receive many calls but I cannot help you. Questions regarding your time, you must speak directly with your timekeeper. The system prints what they enter onto your check, I do not have access. There is also a slight delay with that so if it seems off, you really should wait until your next check to be sure.

Extra Comp./PD/Inservice: Please pay attention to what form you are completing, make sure all the boxes are filled in and that the dates are correct. I receive 300+ forms every pay cycle and need to start denying ones that are not completed or incorrect. For extra comp. (rates and codes are on the shared drive) you need to complete the Payroll Invoice Form. This one requires a budget code. For inservice and PD, please complete the PD payroll invoice form. That one will let you leave the budget code blank as it is assigned by the curriculum office. All inservice and PD needs to go through their office, not your principal.

OT: All OT that is worked needs to be submitted to your timekeeper immediately. OT is paid off of the timesheets I receive, not the electronic forms.

21 vs. 26 pays: For the 9/26 payroll, salaried 10 month employees will have 21 pays or 26 pays printed on your checks. I'll send a reminder at that time, but please make sure you have the correct code so I can catch anyone that was missed. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this. There are many of you, only 1 of me, and paying attention to this information truly helps.

Meghan Wilson (Senior Payroll Clerk)

Extension 7015 (315-341-2005)

[2025-26 Pay Schedule](#)

[Direct Deposit Form](#)

[Payroll Deductions](#)

Retirement Seminar (New York State Teachers Retirement System)



The **Oswego Classroom Teachers Association (OCTA)** is excited to host a **New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) Benefits Presentation** on **Monday, October 28, from 5:00–6:15 PM** at the **OCTA Office**, with a **NEW TEACHER Q & A** period taking place right before the main event from 4:00 - 4:45!

This is a valuable opportunity to hear directly from a **real NYSTRS representative**, who will cover key topics that every teacher should know, including:

- An overview of pension calculation rules by tier.
- How to ensure you receive all eligible service credit.
- Important service milestones and how they affect your pension.
- Pension payment options available to you.
- Death benefits and their continuation into retirement.
- The steps needed to file for retirement.

The session will last a little over an hour and will include time for **general questions** in this group setting. (For more specific or personal questions, members are encouraged to schedule an individual benefits consultation or call NYSTRS directly at **(800) 348-7298**.)

Food and drink will be provided courtesy of OCTA—come for the valuable information and stay for the refreshments.



Sign up now! Please let **Dan Rose (drose@oswego.org)** know if you plan to attend this in-person seminar.

NYSTRS Announces Fall 2025 PREP Seminar Schedule

Many retirees tell us they wish they began focusing on financial and retirement planning much earlier in their lives. NYSTRS designed the Pension & Retirement Education Program (PREP) to help active members take a proactive approach to retirement planning. Each half-day session covers NYSTRS benefits, financial planning, Social Security, estate planning and the retirement process.

The fall 2025 PREP Seminar schedule, as well as reservation and attendance information, are available on the [Retirement Planning/Pension & Retirement Education Program page at nystrs.org](#). The information also appears on the second page of this [Delegate News](#).

Reservation and Attendance Information

- **Make a reservation** online in [MyNYSTRS at nystrs.org](#) or call 800-348-7298, ext. 6180 during our business hours.
- **Sessions run from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Registration begins at 8 a.m.
- **Slots fill quickly**, so we recommend making a reservation early.
- **Bring your latest *Benefit Profile*** with you (you can print it from MyNYSTRS).
- **Not going to attend?** Cancel through MyNYSTRS or by phone so others may register.

The PREP seminar is offered throughout the year. Reservations open in mid-September (fall schedule), mid-December (winter/spring), and mid-May (summer). Encourage members to check [nystrs.org/prep](#) often for the latest seminar schedule.

The PREP seminar is not intended for individual benefits counseling. To schedule a one-on-one consultation, members should visit the [Retirement Planning/Benefits Consultations page of nystrs.org](#).

Check out the OCTA RESOURCE GUIDE!



Resource Guide 24-25



OCTA Contract 21-24



OCTA Facebook Group

NOTE: [Contract](#) expired June 2024

****To join the OCTA Facebook Group, use the QR code or search OCTA.**

Send a request for approval** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/650368071734949/>

Keep up-to-date on union news!

NYSUT UNITED



September/October 2025

Teachers are struggling with divisive and polarizing issues nationwide. Recent polls show that members of both political parties view one another not just as misguided but increasingly as evil, using adjectives like “immoral” and “dishonest.” Roughly one-third of Americans say political differences have damaged their family relationships. Fear and distrust are being stoked by unprecedented polarization in our public debate and demonization of those who disagree. But it does not have to be that way. Our members and public education can be a big part of the solution. Educators are skilled in helping students learn to discern fact from fiction and to engage in civil discussions.

[Disagreement doesn't need to make us enemies.](#)

Congratulations to this year's OCTA Retirees!

Please take a few moments to congratulate this year's OCTA Retirees if you see them out-and-about this summer! To the retirees listed below, we can't thank you enough for your years of dedication and support. You will ALL be sorely missed.

NAME	YRS. OF SVC.	BLDG.	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Amanda Brown	20 yrs	OHS	Teaching Assistant	6/30/2025
Mary Lynne Maxwell	32 yrs	KPS	Elementary Teacher	6/30/2025
Hope Mazuroski	21 yrs	KPS	Elementary Teacher	6/30/2025
Sandra McCann	25 yrs	FLS	Elementary Teacher	6/30/2025
Beth McCrobie	4 yrs	FPS	Teaching Assistant	6/30/2025
Lisa McPherson	30 yrs	OHS	English Teacher	6/30/2025
Philip Meaney	20 yrs	OMS	Technology Teacher	6/30/2025
Tracy Shannon	29 yrs 6 mos	MIN	Elementary Teacher	6/30/2025
Sandra Scaccia	19 yrs	KPS	Teaching Assistant	7/1/2025
Susan Thompson	29 yrs	MIN	Elementary Teacher	6/30/2025
Nikki VandenBerg	11 yrs	OMS	Special Ed Teacher	6/30/2025
Dr. Mary Volkomer	20 yrs	KPS	Elementary Principal	8/31/2025

JOIN US FOR AN overview of the NYS Deferred Compensation Plan (457b) NOVEMBER 12th!



Where do you want to be when retirement comes around?

You don't need to be an expert to get the most from your New York State Deferred Compensation Plan. You have access to trained professionals to provide you with support.

Our Account Executives are here to answer your questions and help you:

- Enroll in your plan
- Determine your contribution level
- Determine your risk tolerance
- Keep track of your plan over time

Remember it's your plan. Don't hesitate to call if you have any questions. We'll help you every step of the way.

Jason Dixon, Senior Retirement
Specialist
518-203-0244
dixoj8@nationwide.com



Have questions? Your Nationwide Retirement Specialist is here to help.

Please join us for an overview of the NYS
Deferred Compensation Plan (457b)

Wednesday, November 12th at 5pm

Microsoft Teams invite will be shared
separately



To schedule an individual
appointment, scan this code.

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

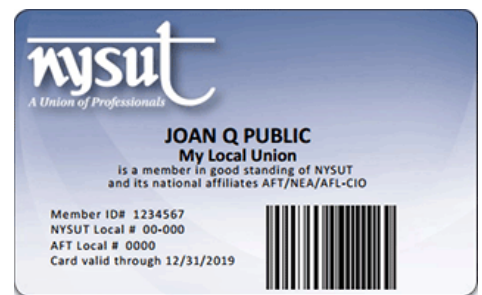
Click on the screenshot of the homepage below to explore the site! Find quick links to important union documents like the new OCTA Contract, the OCTA building officer list, and the new OCTA resources guide! Click on the image below to link to the website!



Need A Quick NYSUT Membership Card?

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