

OCTA Advocate

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



NOVEMBER 2023

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Meet your 2022-2023 OCTA Officers!



Carrie Patane
OCTA President



Kim LeRoy
VP Grievance



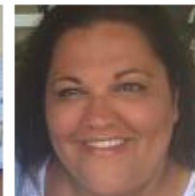
Jess Burrige
VP Negotiations



Jenn Cahill
VP Pol. Action



Mike Patane
Treasurer



Michelle McManus
Secretary



Dan Rose
VP Newsletter



Message from your OCTA President - Carrie Patane

As we approach another December, in the midst of a Holiday Season, we, as proud union members, have so much for which to be thankful including our amazing school-related-professionals, whom we honored last Tuesday the 21st and who we continue to work alongside and appreciate every single day.

With the [signing of pro-worker legislation Tuesday](#) by Gov. Kathy Hochul, this year's SRP Recognition Day served as an important reminder that our union is here for you. NYSUT fought hard to secure the amendments to Section 80 ensuring more of our SRPs are provided the greater workplace protections afforded to other public employees. It's a huge win and it is thanks to our members' advocacy that it's been secured.

We are also thankful for the continued fight to curb standardized testing and allow students more flexibility as they move toward graduation. [The new recommendations](#) — which are now under consideration by the Board of Regents through spring 2024 — would include expanding state graduation requirements to include additional pathways to a diploma outside of the traditional Regents exam-centered standard.

More personally, I am thankful for all of you who fight everyday for our association, for our membership, for our students. I am thankful for your input, your knowledge, your expertise, and your continued confidence and support as we navigate this often demanding educational landscape. So many of our brothers and sisters state-wide [continue to use collective bargaining and the power of the union to fight for our schools and our students](#). Please remember that we are all a part of something bigger, something innately positive, powerful and ever-evolving, something that values, relies upon and exemplifies the collective voice and its ability to impart change while also protecting working conditions and benefits.

In Solidarity,

Carrie

November OCTA Spotlight Winners!



Mike Cloonan has been an OMS Teaching Assistant for five years and works mostly in foreign language classes (Mr. Cloonan has also worked in the 12:1:1 classroom and has supported students in Math and Social Studies). Prior to becoming a TA at OMS, Mike was a sub for many years at all buildings and grade levels in the OCSD. Mr. Cloonan also worked for three years as the Out-of-School-Suspension tutor at OMS, helping students in all content areas. Mr. Cloonan is passionate about education and is inspired by the power of education to aid in historical and contemporary struggles for human liberation and social justice. Mike takes pride in the contributions he makes in the development of educated and informed citizens. Outside of OMS, Mr. Cloonan is an avid reader of history, and enjoys movies, rock music, and spending time with his daughter Lily, an 8th grade student at OMS. Born and raised in Oswego, Mr. Cloonan spent years living and attending universities in Boston and New York City, before returning home and making his career in public education.

Lindsey Serrao started educating in Oswego in 2016 after teaching for a few years in Alexandria. She has been at the Oswego High School for seven years now and is loving it! Outside of the classroom, Lindsey is a mother of 3 children and is always planning fun weekend activities often involving travel. Lindsey, along with her husband Pat traveled to Ireland this past summer with the kids. Lindsey is also a big fan of bacon.



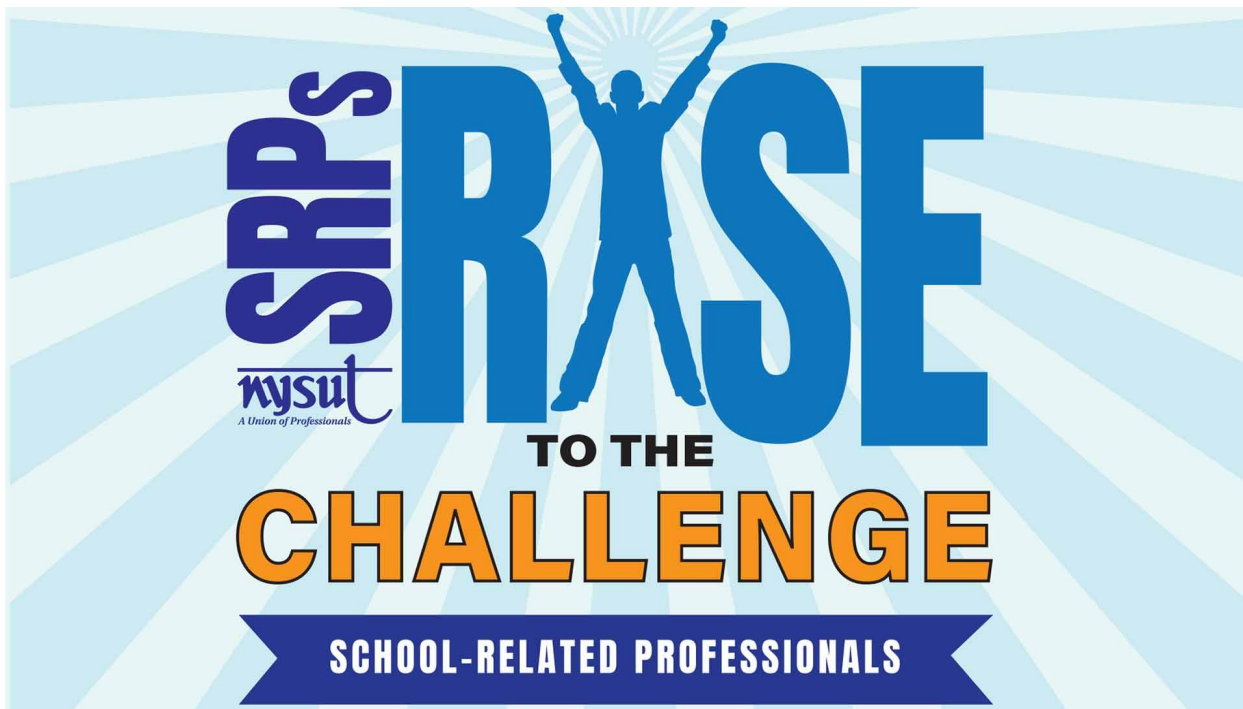
Laura Riley is the deserving recipient of the OCTA Spotlight this month. Laura is in her 5th year as a school counselor at KPS. Before KPS, Laura worked in other district buildings in different roles. Laura goes above and beyond to reach our students' needs, including leading our building wide Blessings in a Backpack program.

Laura is the mom of two adult children who are the joys of her life that she shares with her husband Gavin. Laura loves the outdoors, music, spending time in nature, spending time with her children, supporting her daughter as an artist, and she is a fabulous cook.

Jim Hartmann has been teaching for 16 years in the Oswego City School District, mostly at Leighton Elementary. Jim is an intermediate team leader, and was a sergeant in the US Army. His favorite part of teaching is the relationships he's made with both students and colleagues. Jim loves Leighton because there are so many experts that he can bounce ideas off of. Whether it is the curriculum, literacy strategies, special education strategies, data analysis, or behavioral strategies, there are many great people at Leighton willing to help. In his spare time Jim spends time with his wife, Brianne, while also taxiing his children, Avella and Cooper, around to various activities.



SRP Recognition Day Celebration!



SRPs Continue to Rise to the Challenge!

SRP Recognition Day took place on Nov. 21, 2023, in New York State and throughout the Oswego City School District. It was 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. Thank you to all who participated, and continued thanks to the SRPs who Rise to the Challenge, making a difference in our schools, workplaces and communities, every single day.



OCTA BLAST November 2023

Highlights from our November 2023 OCTA Meeting

***Dr. Kilmer's visits-** Dr. Kilmer will be visiting your building bi-weekly. He will have a 30 minute walk-through and then debrief with the building principal for 30 minutes. His goal is to visit all classrooms by the end of the school year.

***Project Save-** Project Save will begin January 1, 2024. Union leadership will work with Dr. Kilmer to create a workplace violence prevention plan. Please be sure you are filling out incident/ accident reports when you have any sort of injury in the workplace.

Project SAVE: Working against violence

The Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act (Project SAVE), culminating NYSUT's efforts to improve school safety, affords teachers and other school personnel greater opportunities to be involved in the development of school district policies and procedures concerning safe schools. Here is a summary of the law's major provisions:

- Penalty for assaults by any individual on a teacher or school employee or by any non-student on a student is a Class D felony.
- Teachers have the authority to remove disruptive students from the classroom pursuant to provisions of a locally adopted code of conduct.
- Boards of education are required to adopt a detailed code of conduct for maintaining order on school grounds. It must be developed in collaboration with student, teacher, administrator and parent organizations.
- Boards of education are required to develop district-wide and building-level school safety plans for crisis response and management.
- School district employees are given "whistleblower" protection (i.e., immunity from civil liability and protection against retaliatory actions by their employers) if they make a report about a suspected act of violence.
- Certified or licensed school personnel must report allegations of child abuse committed in an educational setting by school employees or volunteers.
- Interpersonal violence prevention education must be part of the curriculum.
- School conference days must include school violence prevention and training. Teacher certification candidates are required to complete two hours of course work or training in school violence and prevention.

***Sick days-** Sick days can be used to purchase health insurance in retirement. 100 sick days are equivalent to lifetime health insurance. If you do not have 100 days your days are converted to a cash amount that can purchase your health insurance. Any additional sick days can be rolled into a 403b account.

***CKLA Workbooks-** If your CKLA workbooks are not the correct edition (names, page numbers different), please let your building Reading Coach know and they will reach out to Carin Reeve.

***OCTA RESOURCE GUIDE:** We have added many new items to the Resource Guide. The forms needed for in-service pay, subbing and time off are all linked. [Resource Guide](#)

***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/single 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.)

INSREIMB = Insurance Reimbursement (in Dec)
for those off step

TRS= money you pay into NYS Teachers
Retirement

OCTA Building Leadership 23-24

CER

Terri Stacy

Ted Beers

FPS

Erin Wilder

Julie Tubolino

KPS

Mary Lynne

Maxwell

Hope Mazuroski

FLS

Michaela Kearns

Amy Armet

MIN

Crystal Mason

Amy Sullivan

Keri Hunter

OHS

Gina Iorio

Heather Sugar

Robert Dumas

OMS

Jeff Brown

Mary Alice Steere

Substitutes

Ed Stacy

Dental Benefits Reminder!

submitted by OCTA Dental Administrator Lindsay Voigt

Just a friendly reminder that dental benefits are separate from health benefits. If you have any questions about DENTAL benefits, please do not contact the district, rather contact your dental benefits administrator Lindsay Voigt via email at: octadentalplan@gmail.com. Thank you!

DENTAL DID YOU KNOW?! You can create your very own Delta Dental Login and Mobile Account and in turn gain access to various helpful tools related to your dental insurance? [GO ONLINE TO MANAGE YOUR DENTAL PLAN!](#)

Ever wonder how to read your explanation of benefits? [Follow this link for help!](#)



2022-23 NYSTRS Benefit Profiles now available!



Benefit Profile Tutorial

Your Oswego New York State Teachers' Retirement elected delegates Dan Rose and Dan Rupert attended the NYSTRS annual delegates meeting which took place in Saratoga Springs during the first week of November. The most recent edition of your [NYSTRS benefit profile](#) was sent out to all NYSTRS members this month. Your benefit profile provides a wealth of information, and is available to all members with a [MYNYSTRS](#) account.

NYSUT United Magazine



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Being ready for the holidays can mean a lot of different things:

- Gifts for your loved ones
- Appliances for your home
- Confirming travel plans
- Entertainment for the kids
- Food delivery in case of inclement weather
- Savings set aside for unexpected expenses

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of endorsed programs and services that could help make you as prepared as possible for whatever the holiday season may throw at you.

No matter what your plans may be this holiday season, NYSUT Member Benefits is a great place to start. With a number of shopping, travel and discount programs, you are certain to find something of interest that could benefit you or your loved ones.

Speaking of savings, the **Member Benefits Discounts & Deals** program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to offer all NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) exclusive access to savings of up to 50% at 850,000 locations – including more than 21,200 New York State deals. If you have not already done so, head over to mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com to create your account with your NYSUT ID number, preferred email address, and password.

You'll then be eligible to save on restaurant dine-in or take-out, flowers and gift baskets, Bose products, clothing and shoes, oil changes and vehicle maintenance, sporting events, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, movie tickets, and much more. Members are encouraged to download the MB Discounts & Deals mobile app for the best user experience with this program.

Member Benefits also endorses life insurance programs, auto & home insurance, dental & vision plans, legal & financial services, and other programs to help protect yourself and those you care about most.

Participating in Member Benefits-endorsed programs also offers the added protection of having a trusted advocate on your side. Member Benefits staff take great pride in stepping in to support members with any questions, concerns, or issues that may arise.

Explore all that your union membership has to offer!



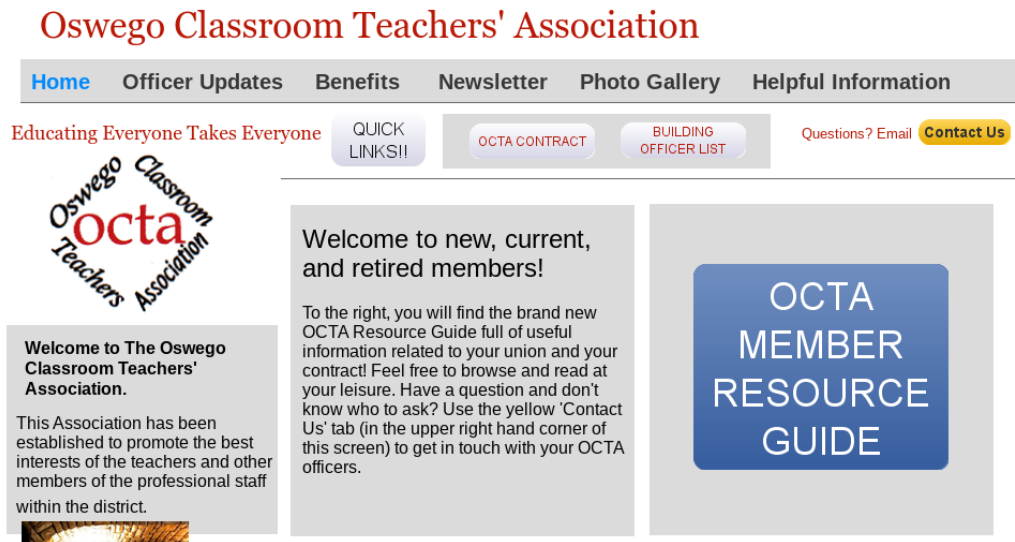
Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org, or calling 800-626-8101.

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

Nov./Dec. 2023

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 1st Street, Oswego, NY. **President:** Carrie Patane, **VP Grievance:** Kim LeRoy **VP Negotiations:** Jessica Burrige **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.

