



Oneida Teachers' ASSOCIATION

Partners for a Better Community

November/December Newsletter

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www.oneidateacher.com

A Message from our President - Dave Dampf

As we near the end of 2018, we should all feel proud of the work that we have done for our students, our community, and our profession.

All teachers know that our work day does not end when the students go home. Oneida teachers put in many behind-the-scenes hours at night, on weekends, and even on vacations. We have attended countless workshops, trainings, and classes to better hone our craft.

We've created new lesson plans that are designed to help our students meet the challenges of a changing work environment and new assessments to accompany them. The OTA prides itself in going above and beyond and that is what we continue to do for our students.

Through our dress down days, bell ringing, and building fundraisers, we have raised tens of thousands of dollars that go right back into our community and benefit our students. Teachers are generous people – that's for sure.

The members of the Oneida Teacher's Association raised up our collective voices and pledged solidarity to our union. The Supreme Court gave teachers the option of leaving your union and your co-workers behind, and every single one of us gave a resounding "No" to that, recognizing the value of a collective bargaining agreement. As we negotiate a successor agreement to our contract, you have loudly expressed your desire to remain advocates for your students. You have made clear the value you place on the strengths that exist in it. We hear you and we will continue to negotiate with that desire in mind.

If you are considering retirement at the end of this school year, please remember that you must have your letter in by the end of December to be eligible to receive the local retirement incentive. Page 38 of your contract has more information.

I hope that you have a wonderful holiday with friends and family. Enjoy your time off. As we return in January, know that your students, the OTA, and our community all value your hard work and dedication.



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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

OTA Representative Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month) ALL ARE WELCOME!

Next Meeting: Nov 13th 3:30 pm @ TBD
Dec 11th 3:30 pm @ TBD
Jan 8th 3:30 pm @ TBD
Feb 12th 3:30 pm @ TBD

Any special meeting dates will be announced through e-mail.

Board of Education Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month)

Nov 13th 6:00 pm @ Seneca Street Elementary
Dec 11th 6:00 pm @ North Broad Elementary
Jan 8th 6:00 pm @ Oneida High School
Feb 12th 6:00 pm @ Otto Shortell Middle School



School time!

Teaching, it's what we do and
what we love!
Welcome back and hope everyone
has a great year!

Donations and Contributions

3 Casual Fridays in the books and we have already raised over \$1000! Great job!

The High School has also had 2 "special" Casual Fridays, raising about \$400 for those causes.

Let everyone know what your buildings "special" funds are going to.

Let's Do A Great Job Everyone!



TALES FROM THE CRYPT

The members of the Oneida Retired Educators Association remind you that we are alive and well and still active on the educational scene in Oneida. With over 160 members, we continue to be interested in the education of our children, the situations, rights and benefits of current and retired educators, and the state and federal legislation that affects us all.

It's a busy time of year, so we'll be brief. In each issue of this newsletter, we emphasize the importance of our union. Here are 10 reasons why unions are important, courtesy of www.waronwant.org:

1. UNITY IS STRENGTH
2. UNIONS NEGOTIATE BETTER TERMS AND CONDITIONS
3. YOU GET MORE ANNUAL LEAVE IN A UNIONIZED WORKPLACE
4. YOU EARN MORE IN A UNIONIZED WORKPLACE
5. YOU GET MORE MATERNITY LEAVE, PATERNAL AND CARER LEAVE
6. BETTER JOB SECURITY
7. YOU HAVE SOMEONE ON YOUR SIDE WHEN YOU NEED THEM
8. UNIONS FIGHT FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WORKPLACE
9. UNION WORKPLACES ARE SAFER
10. UNIONS OFFER LEGAL SERVICES AND ADVICE

By being a union member, you are always part of something bigger.

During this season of reflection, thankfulness, and goodwill, be sure to count the OTA and its many benefits among the positive aspects of your life. Happy Holidays and thank you for all you do from the OREA!

Patricia Albaugh, Retired, Oneida Castle 2007



Happenings in and around the OTA



Jolene Finn
Library Media Specialist
Willard Pryor

My name is Jolene Finn and I will be the new Library Media Specialist at Willard F. Prior Elementary School. I grew up on a farm in Beaver Falls, NY and went to a small K-12 school. I went to SUNY Oneonta for my undergraduate and got certified in 7-12 Social Studies shortly after. I pursued my masters degree in European History at SUNY Oswego while substitute teaching and applying for a more permanent position. I was placed in a library and fell in love with the position which led me to pursue my second masters degree in library science from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. I became certified shortly after and was hired right away at New Hartford Central School District for a year long placement. I then got a K-12 position at Town of Webb in Old Forge, NY and I worked there for 3 years.

In my free time I love to read, of course, but I also like to karaoke, swim, and marathon TV shows. I spend most of my time with my husband and our two little girls. We have a 2 year old and a 4 month old and we also have two cats (Pico and Tera) and a bird named Nano.

Reading is Succeeding!



Janet Jones
Special Education Teacher
Oneida High School

Hello, my name is Janet Jones and I am the new Special Education Teacher at the High School. I am teaching Resource, Unified Math, Algebra and I am the Learning Coordinator for Project Life. I reside here in Oneida with my husband, daughter Jamie (11th grade), son Harry, a freshman at RIT and our dog Elly.

I attended Liverpool High School and then went on to earn my Bachelor's degree in Psychology/Business at University of Rochester. After graduating, I spent 24 years in the insurance/financial sector.

I eventually went back to school at LeMoyne College, earning my MST in Special Education/Math 7-12. I worked at BOCES for 4 years before substitute teaching at Oneida High School last year. I am currently coaching girls Modified Volleyball and I also teach a drop-in aerobic kickboxing class. I am also a volunteer for the BSA Oneida Troop 2 and the St. Patrick's School Board. In my free time, I like to be outdoors; hiking, camping, swimming, kayaking, at the beach, anything!

I am looking forward to a fun year here at the High School!





Happenings in and around the OTA



Marshall Pokrentowski
Music Teacher
Willard Pryor/Seneca
Street

Hello, my name is Marshall Pokrentowski and I am the new K-5 General Music and 4/5 Chorus teacher here at Willard Prior Elementary and Seneca Street Elementary.

I am a 2018 graduate of Ithaca College with a degree in K-12 Music Education. I will begin my Master's program as soon as I get settled in to my first year of teaching.

I am big into fitness training, and in particular, preparing for triathlons. I also like to do some mountain climbing with my dad and my brothers. As my music degree should point out, I like to perform in Musicals and Operas when I can find the time.



Abigail Kimball
Music Teacher
Willard Pryor/Seneca
Street

I am teaching the new "Writing for the 21st Century & Beyond" course to the 7th graders at OSMS. I received my BA from SUNY Oswego in English in 2007 and my MS from Utica College in Adolescent Education; my certification area is Secondary English. Before coming to Oneida, I had been teaching at Camden High School and prior to that Cooperstown High School. I live with my husband, son and Labrador retriever in nearby Vernon. I am very excited to join the team at OSMS! Everyone has been so friendly and welcoming - it's a great place to be!

Abby Kimball



Beth Poulos
Physical Education
Teacher
Oneida High School

I would like to introduce Beth Poulos. Beth is the newest member to our Physical Education program here at Oneida. She is currently teaching half days at the High School. Beth received her Bachelor's Degree from SUNY Cortland in Physical Education K-12. She is planning on beginning her Master's Degree in Health Education this coming spring. The past couple of years have seen Beth going to school full-time as well as taking time to serve as a substitute teacher. Beth has three children whom she loves to spend time with, whether it is playing games around the house or playing in sports. She loves to travel and to go on runs with her dog.



Megan Rice
Elementary Teacher
Seneca Street Elementary

My name is Megan Rice and I teach 5th grade at Seneca Street. I am a 2001 VVS graduate and my husband Jason is a 1995 Oneida graduate. Our daughter Lily is four and currently attends pre-K at Willard Prior. I received my BA in Communications from Nazareth College and my MA in Elementary Education from Queens University in Charlotte, NC. Last fall my family moved back to the area after living in Charlotte for over ten years. In my free-time I enjoy reading spending time with family.



Happenings in and around the OTA



Teaching Certification

There are a variety of ways to obtain certification to become a teacher. This article will highlight the two most common avenues and what is required to maintain those certifications. The first, is prior to 2004, a Provisional Certificate would be issued to a person graduating a teacher preparation program. Then, after meeting criteria outlined by SED, such as experience in the classroom and obtaining a Masters degree, a teacher would apply for a Permanent Certificate. At this point, nothing more is required to maintain a Permanent Certification.

Then, around 2004, the criteria changed along with certification titles. Teachers coming out of teacher preparation programs would start with an Initial Certificate and then again, after meeting a list of criteria they would obtain a Professional Certificate. A teacher with a Professional Certificate would then be required to collect Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) hours. Most of us refer to this as professional development hours to maintain a Professional Certification. At this point, the number stands at 100 hours every 5 years. To verify this SED requires each teacher to maintain a log and certificates related to professional development. A sample log is linked at the bottom of this article. At any time, SED can ask a teacher to verify their hours. While maintaining your Professional Certificate you need to log on to the TEACH web site and click on an icon that verifies you have obtained the 100 hours required. You do not need to submit any forms or logs. SED suggest you keep the log for your records.

I suggest that you log on to the TEACH system and verify that SED has your correct contact information. The TEACH link is also at the bottom of this article. While I have on addressed 2 certification pathways if you have a different type of certification or if you have certificate question I suggest you contact Lee Farrell at MOB-OCES. Another point of contact for certifications is your NYSUT certification expert. To talk with this person let David Dampf know and he will put you in contact with a certification expert from NYSUT either way you can talk with someone who can lead you in the right direction.

Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) Individual Record. [Link](#)

OTA Members: Retiring?

Is it that time for you? Are you looking to retire this June? Did you know that your OTA contract has a retirement incentive?

If you are ready to retire and meet the criteria, you could be eligible for the incentive. **Retirement letters for June 2019 have to be in to the District Office by December 31, 2018 to be eligible for the retirement incentive.**

If you have any questions be sure to contact a Building rep or a member of your Executive Board.

Money: Financing School

The Oneida Indian Nation has to give a percentage of its gaming profits to Oneida and Madison County. Oneida County has paid half of what it has budgeted to our District but has decided not to make further payments. Mrs. Zehr has asked that we contact Oneida county officials to show the importance of receiving those funds. There is a link on the OTA website: <https://www.oneidateacher.com/> with a customizable letter that you can print and send to the Oneida County officials. Please be sure to change your name and address before sending the letter. The link also lists the legislators within the districts. Please type the name of the legislator you are writing to on the top of the letter. Even if you do not live in Oneida County, letters can be sent as you educate students who do live in the county.

Happenings in and around the OTA

FALL Fling

The Ota's annual Fall Fling was held on Friday November 2nd. A large group of retirees (about 25) attended the party to mix and mingle with current members of the OTA. A buffet of sandwiches, pizza rolls, several salads and, of course, wings, was set out. The evening was highlighted by a raffle. Stephanie Gwilt and Jen Armlin had the crowd up and ready to pick their choice of OTA merchandise, various clothing items and of course, wine.



Steve and Gary getting into some serious conversation at the Fall Fling!



Members of OREA (Oneida's retirees) enjoying the dinner at the Fall Fling.



Otto Shortell showing their group grins while enjoying the Fall Fling



The buffet at the Fall Fling at Marble Hill Inn

Happenings in and around the OTA



Red Kettle Bell Ringers

Members of the OTA helped the Salvation Army and participated in the annual Red Kettle Drive at the Walmart store here in Oneida. Meg Kelly, Steve Paz, MaryBeth Russo, BeeAnn O'Herien, Kathy Zangrilli, Brian Mellon, Jeff and Jackie Skibitski,

Trish and Tom Kirkpatrick, Angie Sayles, Stephanie Gwilt, Linda Buschatzke, and Ken Infarinato all took time on Saturday Dec 1st to ring the bell for donations. Many of the volunteers brought their families along to share in the occasion.



Trish and Tom with Erin and Evan



Avery and Owen ringing the bell with their dad Steve



Ben and Carmen get into the holiday spirit with Mary



Thinking About Retirement?

Whether you are 1, 3 or 5 years out, you want to check out NYSTRS. There is an abundance of information for you to collect, digest and use to your benefit. Don't forget to sign up for one of their retirement seminars. There's still time!!!

NYSUT Retirement Seminars - go on NYSTRS to sign up for one





Shopping & travel benefits designed for NYSUT members

NYSUT members and their loved ones have access to dozens of endorsed shopping, travel & personal programs available through NYSUT Member Benefits. And unlike with purchasing products available to the general public, there's no need to go it alone when Member Benefits has your back.

Member Benefits acts as your advocate for any program you participate in, and we'll do our best to quickly resolve any issues or concerns you may have. Whether you are participating in one of our shopping/entertainment/travel offerings; auto, homeowners or life insurance plans; or financial or legal services, NYSUT members have the **"Power of the Union"** behind them.

The following is just a small sampling of the endorsed programs available to the NYSUT membership.

Purchasing Power Member Shopping Program

Are you looking to purchase a new laptop computer, washer/dryer or refrigerator? The Purchasing Power Member Shopping Program allows NYSUT members to purchase products such as these and many more while paying for them through the ease of payroll deduction or ACH withdrawals. NYSUT members save 20% on their first order with Purchasing Power.

Abenity Discounts

Seeking exclusive member discounts on tickets to the latest blockbuster movies or theater events, the hottest concerts & sporting events, or the coolest theme parks & attractions? NYSUT members have access to thousands of nationwide and local discounts with the Abenity Discounts program. Abenity also offers an app for iPhone or Android smartphones available at no charge.

Grand Circle Travel

The Grand Circle Cruise Line & Grand Circle Travel program is committed to providing international travel, adventure and discovery opportunities that offer impactful and intercultural experiences. This program offers NYSUT members and their loved ones the opportunity to save \$100 per person on tours or receive a discounted rate on specific trips if acting as a group organizer.

Cambridge Credit Counseling

NYSUT members are eligible to receive free, no-obligation debt and student loan consultations with one of Cambridge's certified counselors. Cambridge also offers a unique web portal available at a reduced rate that can help explain the various options when paying down student debt, including student loan forgiveness programs, income-based repayment options and more.

The Power of the Union

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101**.



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