Oneida Teachers' Association
Partners for a Better Community

May/Jume 2024
Newsletter
www.oneidateacher.com
OTA - Facebook Page
Volume 52—Issue #5

A Message from our President - David Wright

On June 11th a Ratification meeting was held at the high school auditorium. During this meeting, the OTA negotiations team of Megan Kelly, Steve Paz, BeeAnn OHerien, Jennifer Armlin, Jennifer Streeter and myself presented a proposal for a successor agreement that covered the next 3 school years. If you would like to review the presentation it is on the OTA website Oneidateacher.com. After the presentation, a vote was held and the agreement was ratified by the membership that was in attendance. Later that evening, at the Oneida City Schools Board of Education meeting, the agreement was successfully voted upon and approved. This marks the second on time contact.

One might think now, that it is time to relax or take a break. Summer is here so we can put everything else on the back burner. However, we can't just sit back and relax until the next agreement. Change is happening all the time. This year we have seen lots of change and we continue to address and bring members concerns to the attention of administrators. We need and should stay informed and continue to build the lines of communication and advocacy for our profession. With that, if you are looking to be involved and help move the union and district in a direction that is beneficial to our students and members, please consider becoming a building representative.

We are looking to elect building reps for all of our buildings next year. These nominations and elections will take place in September. The plan is to have these representatives in place by October. If you are interested in one of these positions, but are nervous that you might lack the knowledge or experience for such a position, please note the OTA has 3 different trainings that will help you to be a successful building rep. The first is that we host an in-house building rep training. Second is the local NYSUT Syracuse and Utica Offices hold building rep trainings. These trainings are held during after-school hours and typically are on Tuesdays and last 2-3 hours. The third training is at the NYSUT fall conference that is a 2-day training which is the most comprehensive.

Roles of a building representee include:

- Welcomes new employees
- Informs members in the building about any contact information including updates
- Organizes and mobilizes members
- Assists members with concerns and prevents potential problems
- Upholds the contract
- Meets with principal and building committees

As we close the books on another school year, take some time this summer to recharge, relax, and enjoy time at the beach. Spend time with family and friends and make sure to stay hydrated.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

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

Next Meeting:

May 16th	**3:30 pm TBA**
June 13th	**3:30 pm TBA — Spring Fling Date**
	No Summer Meetings Scheduled
Sept 12th	**3:30 pm TBA**

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

Board of Education Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month)

May 16th	**6:00 pm District Office**
June 13th	**6:00 pm Costello Transportation Center**
	Start of New Fiscal Year
July 11th	**6:00 pm TBA**
Aug 8th	**6:00 pm TBA**
Sept 12th	**6:00 pm TBA**

Board of Education Meetings

The Oneida City School District Board of Education meets on the second Tuesday of every month.

The meetings are generally held at one of the buildings in the district and begin at 6 pm.

We all need to remember that it is our job, our livelihood, that is constantly scrutinized. Make every effort to attend a meeting to show solidarity in the OTA. Remember, it is in your best interest to know what is going on in your district.

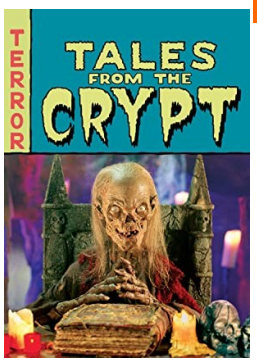
Donations and Contributions

Thank you Everyone!

With a Year End Total of just under $5000 — Great Job Oneida CSD!

We are always looking for new organizations or community needs for our Casual Fridays.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT



The Oneida Retired Educators Association (OREA) wants you to know 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.

Another school year comes to a close! 2023-2024 has certainly been memorable, with decisions being made that result in a big word for next fall: Change. The word used to be one of the "Main Concepts of All Cultures" that we taught in social studies. It's inevitable and happens to everything. It's not always popular, but people adapt, attitudes adjust, and with time, positivity and benefits emerge. In Oneida, we have experienced school closings, the 6th, 7th and 8th graders coming together at OSMS, and countless other changes. As the novelty wore off, it seemed like things had been that way forever. Examples abound…on a smaller scale, when I started at Oneida Castle School in '73, my fellow brand-new 6th-grade teacher, Pat Gallagher and I abolished the age-old Sixth Grade Graduation and Dance, changing it to an afternoon pool party and picnic, with the 6th graders being honored at the school-wide awards assembly. Horrors!! The kids loved it that year, and by the next June people had forgotten all about the way it "used to be".

The end of this year brings many changes in personnel, as retirement becomes reality for many who have given years and years of service to the OCSD! The OREA extends hearty congratulations to retirees in Maintenance, the District Office, Transportation and the kitchen and office at OSMS! In the classroom… right now it's hard to believe the changes in store. The elementary grades without the zaniness of Shelly Crowley? Chris Hawthorne not there to take care of those little ones after 30.5 years? Patty Murphy missing from her 6th grade classroom? John Zamp leaving a huge hole in the OHS laugh track and Jim Perkins leaving the Living Environment in someone else's hands? Catherine Jeannin bidding adieu to OHS and taking the entire French program with her? And Dave Hawthorne…it's unbelievable to me that he once sat in my 6th grade classroom and went on to teach, lead and inspire instrumentalists for 32.5 years!

After giving OHS students "the business" for 24.5 years, Laura Reff stated, "I am grateful to the OTA for the endless hours spent advocating for faculty and staff, protecting our fringe benefits and maintaining the language in our contract. It is imperative to stay united for everyone's benefit." Well said, Laura, and we all echo your gratitude. We echo it in sickness and health, throughout each month and especially the end of the month.

Retirees, we hope you will join us in September at our Back to School but Not For Us breakfast and will join the 140 or so retirees who currently make up the OREA. Your union involvement does not end now...the OREA needs you! "Union is forever!"
Congratulations to you all!

To those who will return to the trenches in the fall, congratulations for all you have accomplished this year…have a fantastic summer!

Patricia Albaugh...Oneida Castle School...2007

Happenings in and around the OTA

OTA SCHOLARSHIP 2023

The OTA awarded 5 scholarships to Oneida High School Seniors this year.

Nominations were held in late April via Google Form. Members voted once for up to 5 individuals.

At this time we would like to inform you of the five (5) recipients of the $500 OTA Scholarship Awards.

Carter Urtz will be attending Binghamton
Liam Gwilt will be attending RIT
Jonathon Litwak will be attending RIT
Madeline Rodegher will be attending Hartwick
Kennedy Kelly will be attending Ithaca

OTA and VoteCope

Around 78% of OTA members contribute to Vote Cope for a total of $3973 per year.

Our 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.

Happenings in and around the OTA

OTA Ratification Vote

On Tuesday June 11th, the Oneida Teachers' Association had a ratification vote for their contract with Oneida City School District. The new 3 year contract runs from July 2024 through June 2027.

Some high lights of the contract include:

- **Compensation 3.75, 3.75, 3.5**
- **Retirement incentive increases**
- **Sick day retirement incentive increase**
- **Tuition Reimbursement increase**

To see all of the negotiated items in the new contract, visit the Oneida Teachers' Association web site and look under the "Contract" tab. The slide show is ota_ratification_2024.pd .

Annual OTA Spring Fling

The OTA celebrated the end of the 2023-24 school year with our annual Spring Fling. This year it was held at the Lakeside Landing at the Oneida Community Golf Course. The festivities began at 3:15.

It was very nice to see many of our current members there, especially ones from the "other" buildings. Retirees were also invited and many of them found a table to join and caught up on the Oneida CSD news.

Everyone enjoyed two free drinks and the appetizers, especially the shrimp, were a big hit.

Many thanks to Becca Piccola for organizing the event for all of us.

Thinking About Retirement?

Whether you are 1, 3, or 5 years out, you want to check out **NYSTRS.** There is an abundance of information to collect, digest, and use to your benefits. 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

Happenings in and around the OTA

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A new chapter begins!

Please join us for a

Retirement Party

Honoring

Becky Cameron
Dave Hawthorne
Catherine Jeannin
Jim Perkins
Laura Reff
Randy Wilzcak
John Zamperetti

Tuesday June 18, 2024

3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Kanon Valley Country Club, 8623 Lake Road, Oneida, NY

$20/per person

Option to golf after formalities for an additional cost. More info to come.

RSVP by June 3, 2024

Jennifer Streeter at: jstreeter@oneidacsd.org
Kelly Laemmermann at: klaemmermann@oneidacsd.org
Checks payable to: Oneida High School Faculty Fund or
Venmo: @OHS-SunshineCommittee

Happenings in and around the OTA

NEW PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT!

Universal Life Insurance

with Convalescent Care Benefit

provided by:

Trustmark®

benefits beyond benefits

- Innovative universal life insurance product provided by Trustmark®, combining life insurance coverage with a convalescent care benefit that can be used to pay for long-term care services.
- **Limited time offer!** In-service members ages 18-64 who enroll between May 1 and June 16, 2023 may qualify for guaranteed coverage (no medical questions) up to $50,000.
- Retiree members up to age 70 may elect coverage up to $100,000 by answering some medical questions.

LIVING BENEFITS FOR LONG-TERM CARE

You could require long-term care services at any point in your life, which could cost hundreds of dollars per day. This universal life insurance program includes a convalescent care benefit that can help pay for these services at any age. Policyholders with a qualifying claim can collect up to 4% of their universal life death benefit per month for up to 25 months -- helping to cover the cost of long-term care services such as an in-home health aide, assisted living facility, or nursing home care.

LIFE INSURANCE

Protecting your loved ones is one of life's greatest responsibilities. Along with the grief that comes with losing a family member, survivors may suddenly be faced with costly expenses, debts, and a loss of income. Your death benefit can be used to help pay these expenses or for other items such as tuition or savings.

YOURCARE360 ONLINE RESOURCE GUIDE

This program includes access to YourCare360, providing an online resource that can help to guide you and your family through the caregiving journey.

MEMBER BENEFITS nysut 40 years of working to benefit you 1983 2023

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.

May-Jun 2023