



UNIFIED SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

USA Newsletter

February 2025

USA Union Officers:

Carey Casillo-Young Hewes Center	President Ext. 3068
Christopher Auge LoGuidice Center	Vice Pres. Ext. 2196
Angela Bacon Maple Ave.	Secretary Ext. 2391
Barbara Reinagal Baker Rd.	Treasurer Ext. 6414

Shelly Ackendorf LoGuidice	Sick Bank Ext. 2068
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Meeting Dates 24-25:

~~Sept. 10th - Baker~~
~~Oct. 8th - Hewes~~
~~Nov. 5th - Zoom~~
~~Dec. 10th - Zoom~~
~~Jan. 7th - Zoom~~
~~Feb. 4th - Zoom~~
 March 4th - Zoom
 April 8th - LoG
 May 6th - Carrier
 June 3rd - LoG

USA Building Reps:

Matt Girard	Baker Rd.	Ext. 6419
Kristen Knab	Holland	Ext. 6106
Stephanie Duenas	Loguidice	Ext. 2083
Heide Karin	WNY P-Tech	Ext. 2821
Amy Albright	Hewes	Ext. 3061
Denise Waterman	Hewes	Ext. 3060

Please click the link below to see which centers each Rep. covers.

[Copy of Officer & Rep list](#)



Your USA union board met at via Zoom on February 4th at 4pm. Thank you to the member who joined in to see what we do! You are appreciated! All members are welcome to join in any of our meetings. This is a perfect opportunity since they are currently being run as Zoom meetings through March! The link will be sent the day before the meetings. Come tell us what's on your mind, any ideas for activities/gatherings for a more community feel since we are spread so far apart, and for some behind the scenes action!

Your union board would like to give you the opportunity to share your highs and lows; special events; upcoming family events; fun in the classroom; a favorite moment, joke or picture...Click on the link below and share encouragement, birthdays, events, anything you'd like us to celebrate with you!

[What's New?](#)



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Working hand in hand with the What's New? Corner, we would like to start up a Sunshine Club! This group would be in charge of recognizing events in members lives that may need more than just a shout out in the newsletter. Sending messages of encouragement during difficult times is just one example. If you are interested in being part of this new and exciting club, please let us know! More details to come!

Robin Brown and Carrie Davenport hosted 2 zoom sessions to get information out early about summer school. They discussed which centers will be offering summer school, rate of pay for subs, pay schedules for full time and sub aides/assistants, acquiring days, and etc. If you are considering working this summer school season, please click on the link below. If you have any questions, please reach out to Robin Brown or Carrie Davenport.

[ESY Interest Form](#)



NYSUT Digital Membership Card

NYSUT is excited to announce that we are transitioning to digital membership cards to provide easier access to benefits while modernizing our systems. **Go to the NYSUT website for more info!**

Digital Membership Card

NYSUT's new digital membership card is optimized for use with mobile phones.

Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES Unified Support Association

Google Wallet

You must be on a device that's logged in to your Gmail or Google account.



Apple Wallet

From Your iPhone, simply click the button below and follow the prompts.



Desktop Device

Print Membership Card

Use the link below to print or download a PDF of your membership card.

Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES Unified Support Association
To request a replacement for this card, call NYSUT at 1-800-342-9810

Calm
For your health
and happiness.

The Calm App premium.
A free benefit for *All*
NYSUT members.

NYSUT Member Benefits is pleased
to announce the availability of the
premium Calm subscription as a
free benefit for all NYSUT in-service
AND retiree members.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Welcome to the Flip Side!

Enjoy these benefits

NYSUT Member Benefits strongly believes in the importance of making quality benefits easily accessible to the NYSUT membership. You may be interested in the following options:

FOR FREE!

1. Premium Calm Subscription:

All in-service and retiree members receive unlimited free access to the popular Calm app's full library of sleep, meditation, and relaxation content. Members can add up to five dependents (age 16 or older) to receive their own premium Calm subscription.

2. Peer Support Line:

Whether you're facing a specific stressful situation or would just like to speak with a supportive voice, this confidential helpline is free to all NYSUT members and their families. Call toll-free 844-444-0152 to connect with a peer.

3. AD&D Insurance Benefit/Travel Assistance Services:

All in-service and retiree members are automatically provided with a \$5,000 accidental death & dismemberment insurance benefit, along with free travel assistance services from AXA Assistance.

4. New Member Life Insurance:

All new members are eligible to receive a free term life insurance policy providing coverage for up to \$25,000 for one year, guaranteed renewable at the end of the year.

SCAN ME



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Member Appreciation Event is back!

NYSUT Member Benefits is excited to announce that Member Appreciation Event will be held this March! This celebration will feature prizes donated by Member Benefits and our endorsed program providers. To be eligible to win, you must be a participant in our MAP Alert email service.

If you're not already a MAP Alert participant, simply scan the QR code, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org, or call 800-626-8101 to sign up. You'll then receive weekly updates about endorsed benefits, information about new programs, and be able to take part in special prize drawings such as Member Appreciation Event.

MEMBER BENEFITS
nysut
Working to Benefit You

January/February 2025



WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

It's been over a decade since Tier 6 was added to the New York state pension system. Since then, over 100,000 NYSUT members earn a significantly reduced pension as compared to earlier tiers. Consider this:

Tier 6 members pay 3 to 6 percent into the pension system their entire career — their contributions grow with pay raises.

Tier 4 member contributions are capped at 3 percent and end after 10 years.

Tier 6 members must work to age 63, up to 40 years of service, or face heavy penalties.

Tier 4 members can retire at 55 with 30 years of service.

30 YEARS IS A CAREER!


Fixing Tier 6 is about keeping talented educators in the classroom and recruiting new educators into the profession.

Forcing younger members into a lesser pension system undervalues our profession. Our work is important. Our pensions should reflect that.

Fixing Tier 6 is about unity and power.

When we stand together in solidarity, we have power. We've made big changes before. We can do it again.

THANKS TO OUR ADVOCACY, WE'VE ALREADY WON SOME PENSION IMPROVEMENTS.

 In 2022, member vesting dropped from ten to five years, guaranteeing a pension benefit for 85,000 Tier 6 members.

HOW BAD IS IT?



Tier 4 member, retiring at 55 with 30 years, would receive 60 percent of her Final Average Salary.



Tier 6 member, retiring at 55 with 30 years, would only receive 26.4 percent of his Final Average Salary — after paying tens of thousands more into the system.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Fixing Tier 6 is about solidarity and fairness.

It's unfair that some NYSUT members must work longer, and contribute more, to earn a significantly reduced pension. This should anger ALL union members.

Fixing Tier 6 is about dignity.

The hallmark of a public-service career is the promise of a dignified retirement. With Tier 6, the state abandons its commitment to that guarantee.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

We know how to fix this... but we can't do it without you. Whether you're a retiree or a Tier 4, 5 or 6 member, you can help NYSUT Fix Tier 6.

- ➔ Join NYSUT's **Fix Tier 6 Team** to help with direct outreach.
- ➔ Share the Fix Tier 6 message with other NYSUT members.
- ➔ Donate to VOTE-COPE, NYSUT's voluntary, non-partisan political action fund. Your donations help us get our message out to lawmakers so we can make change!

