



UNIFIED SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

USA Newsletter

March 2025

USA Union Officers:

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

Shelly Ackendorf <i>LoGuidice</i>	Sick Bank <i>Ext. 2068</i>
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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 March 4th at 4pm. Thank you to the members who joined in to see what we do! You are appreciated! All members are welcome to join in any of our meetings. Our next meeting will be held in person on April 8th at 4pm at Loguidice in room 608. 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! Please check out Page 2 for a few photos!

[What's New?](#)



You all are totally amazing! In honor of how awesome you are, we are giving you all a free t-shirt! It will have "Unified Support Association" on the front and our new logo (see above) on the back. The shirts will be light gray. A link was sent via listserv for you to enter your name, location and size preference. All you need to do to receive a free t-shirt is click the link and complete the form!

[Free T-shirt Link](#)

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](#)



Some of our union leadership attended a weekend conference to learn how to serve you better! Please enjoy just a few photos from their experience. Can you pick our President out in the photos? Enjoy!



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](#)



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

Welcome to the Flip Side!



NYSUT members have access to programs and services from NYSUT Member Benefits that can help them save money, protect their family, and assist with planning for the future.

With our **Legal Service Plan**, you will receive crucial estate planning documents (Simple Will, Health Care Proxy, Living Will & Power of Attorney); free attorney consultations; and guaranteed maximum fees for personal legal matters. Plan participants receive guaranteed hourly rates along with discounted prices for referral attorneys.

Our **Financial Counseling Program** offers access to certified financial planners that provide fee-based financial counseling services. Participants can get help with retirement planning, 403(b) & 457(b) plan advice, debt management, savings, budgeting, and more.

Check out **Synchrony Bank** for some of today's most competitive interest rates on certificates of deposit, money market, and savings accounts. An optional automated savings program (which makes transfers from your checking account at another bank to your money market or savings account at Synchrony Bank) is an easy way to build your balances in higher-earning accounts.

Our online **Financial Learning Center - powered by Kiplinger's Personal Finance** - offers numerous articles designed to assist NYSUT members with achieving their personal financial goals and better understand the nuances of insurance, savings, investing, and more. This free resource is updated on a monthly basis.

Do you have student loan or general debt concerns? Our **Cambridge Credit Counseling program** is available at no cost to assist NYSUT members with better understanding general debt consolidation and student loan repayment options. Members can take part in a free consultation with a certified Cambridge counselor or sign up for a no-cost student loan debt webinar provided by Cambridge.

Take back your financial independence and protect your family for whatever the future may bring.

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



March/April 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!



FixTier6.org