



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE 7 VOLUME 24

PPSTA BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE POUGHKEEPSIE
PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

We Are the Union!

Thank you for all that you do! Our members continue to serve our students and their families with professionalism and pride.

Engaging our students in a myriad of powerful academic lessons, caring for their social emotional needs, creating safe environments for our classes and making positive memories for our school communities.

Our commitment to our students and our profession has been unwavering even though resources and respect have been limited during these unprecedented times of service. It is imperative that we support each other and stay focused on the power of unity.

Together our actions will impact positive change for educational professionals and therefore the children we serve. Our collective message continues to be:



*Respect our commitment.
Acknowledge our value.
Support our service.*

Please take care of yourselves and your families. Your union is here to support you. Thank you again for being proactive, positive, and powerful as we stand together in solidarity.

President Popken

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Office Super Secretary:
Olga Mirabilio
officesecretary@ppsta.org
Hours: M-F 8AM - 12 PM



[Poughkeepsie Public School
Teachers' Association](#)



@ppstapride

Stay Connected!

PPSTA is located at:
40 Garden Street, Suite 207
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
845.471.3376
FAX 845.471.6793

PPSTA SAFE.

Heart Walk



In Action

Perez Power & PPSTA!

In response to the unprecedented need caused by COVID-19, I have set up a team supporting the American Heart Association today and would like to invite you to join me by making a gift to my Heart Walk page to protect the hearts we love.

Team Name: Poughkeepsie Pioneers

It only takes a minute and your gift has the power to give hope, healing and more time with loved ones. [Click here](#) to donate.

Thank you for your amazing generosity~Frankie Perez

The PPSTA Scholarship Committee would love to have anyone that wants to join! We are now collecting **COINS FOR COLLEGE** ~so if your building needs an official Scholarship Committee Change Jar and are interested in collecting donations please reach out to us.

ALL donations go directly to scholarships for our students.

If you have any questions or comments please email ppstascholarship@gmail.com

Tax Info 2021-22



For your financial records, please note:

Union dues for 2021 were \$866.92

Also, Educator Expense Tax Deduction

renewed for 2021 tax returns. Click [here](#) for more information.

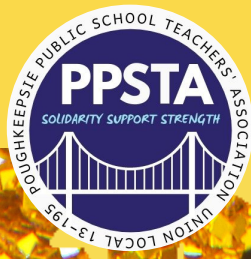
Please contact the PPSTA Treasurer Kim Coleman at Treasurer@ppsta.org if you have any questions.



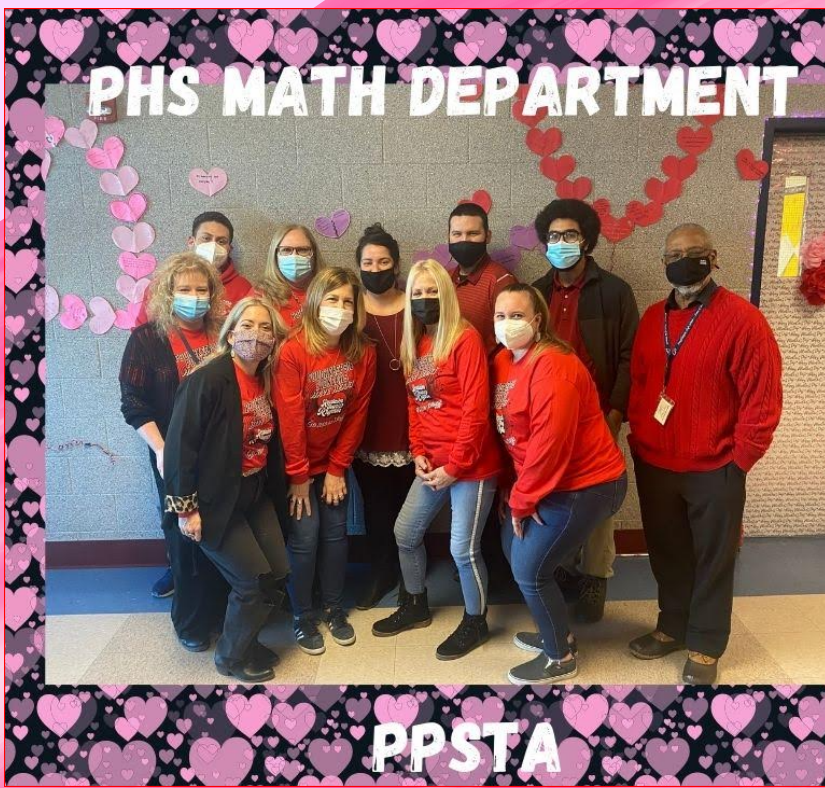
PPSTA Pride Member Spotlight~ Debbie Kardas

I want to publicly compliment, and express appreciation to Debbie Kardas, our Benefit Trust Coordinator. It's a position that probably doesn't get much love, and isn't even really fully understood. Since retiring in 2017, my family members and I have faced a few serious medical situations. Each and every time we called on Debbie to help us out, she was on it! In explaining exactly what our benefits included, she was incredibly patient. In dealing with stubborn insurance representatives who hesitated in allowing what they are required to provide, she was tenacious (ie. "a bulldog")! I don't like to admit it, but when I was packing up and ending my time in the Poughkeepsie City School District, I had overlooked signing the document that would allow my family and I to maintain health insurance coverage through PPSTA. It would have been devastating if I hadn't signed. Lucky for us, Debbie had kept track of the situation and came to my classroom, insurance form in hand, so I could sign. That meant a lot to me on a practical level, and on a personal level as well. The role of Benefit Trust Coordinator is an incredibly important one. I'm glad that Debbie has taken it on. I think it works well for all of us. Thank you Debbie.

Rick Keller-Coffey
PHS and PMS



*Manny
thanks*



PPSTA - Darienne Lewis, Social Worker, Maria Lindstrom, Speech Language Pathologist, Emily Cazer, School Psych intern & MaryEllen Tracino, School Psych



CONGRATULATIONS DONNA CHIRICO



HAPPY RETIREMENT!!

Sending Love from the ELC



Noelle Willis, CBR
Advisors: Heather Faircloth,
Holly Dunn & Mia Runza

Poughkeepsie Middle School PPSTA



We are sharing love, photos,
encouragement, strength, hope,
positivity & support!!

Advisors, Trustees & Social Committee Members

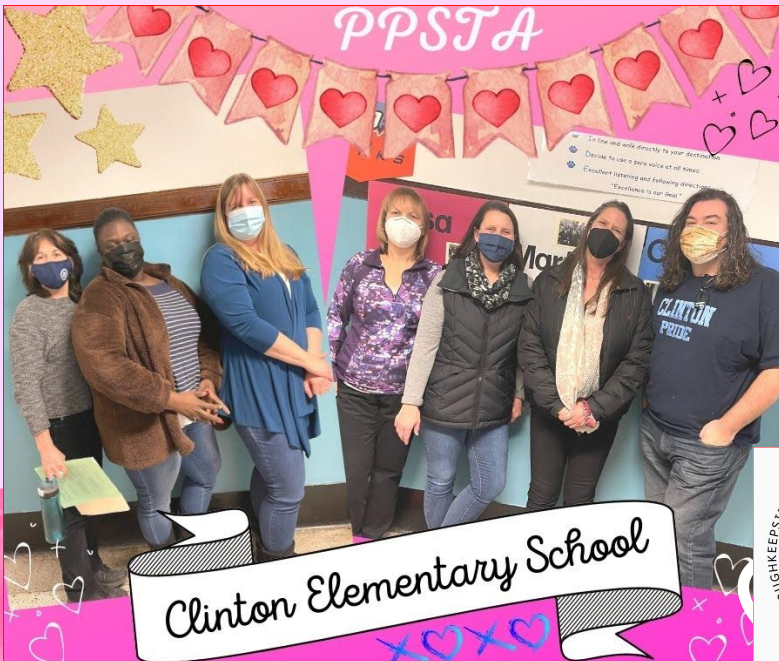
PPSTA

love



The PHS Social Studies Department

PPSTA



Clinton Elementary School

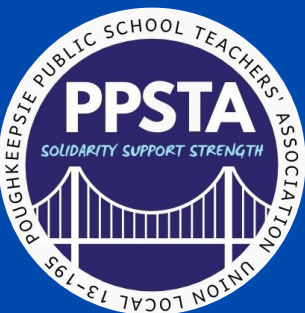


Morse PPSTA

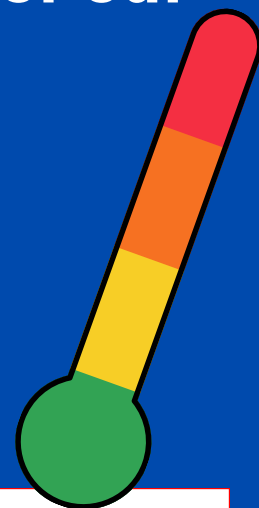


Visit PPSTA on Facebook &
Instagram for more great
member pics!

Let's stand together in support and solidarity for safe and healthy school environments for our students and staff!



Our
"PPSTA Safe" &
"Take the Temperature"
Initiatives are here!



Members will receive their materials from their advisor and are asked to display the poster(s) on their classroom doors and document temperature data for two weeks. Please see your Advisors and/or CBR for additional materials.

Taking the classroom **TEMPERATURE**

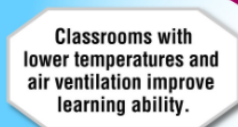
A proposed law would require action to relieve heat conditions when a classroom hits 82°F and that a classroom be vacated entirely should the temperature rise to 88°F.



Too hot to the point that the room can't be occupied safely.



At 82° steps must be taken to relieve the extreme heat condition in the school facility.



SED mandates a minimum classroom temperature of 65° in cold months.



Too cold can have negative effects on your health.



PPSTA believes that students and staff have a right to a safe school environment without threat of violence or illness. The results of our recent PPSTA Health and Safety Survey show large percentages of members reporting feeling unsafe in their building(s) and/or procedurally uninformed regarding health and safety protocols.

PPSTA leadership continues to call on building and district leadership for accurate documentation, timely information and adherence to established health and safety policies and protocols to ensure that our students and staff have an optimal learning environment for success.






The Education Department at
Vassar College invites you to a



Spring Mixer!



- Join faculty in the Education Department, local Poughkeepsie area teachers and K-12 personnel for the opportunity to get to know each other
 - Discuss potential projects and collaborations
 - Enjoy food and drink
 - March 1st, 2022 at 4:30pm in the lobby of the Bridge for Laboratory Sciences
- 

Please RSVP! at this link:



Please Note:

This event will be held in accordance with college policy regarding COVID-19. The use of a face mask and proof of vaccination or a negative test will be mandatory.

Contact the Education Dept. via Jennifer MacKnight:
jmacknight@vassar.edu



Vassar College
Professional Development for City of
Poughkeepsie Educators
Spring 2022



Take time
for you.



Vassar College has developed a seven-session professional development seminar exclusively for teachers in the City of Poughkeepsie School District. The seminars will take place Tuesday afternoons from 4pm-5:30pm on the Vassar campus starting February 15th and concluding on April 12th. The seminars will be led by Vassar faculty/administrators. Enrollment is capped at 20 teachers and is free.

Please remember to fill out the in-service form prior to the date of the seminar and you need to sign up for at least two for credit. You can sign up for as many as you like as long as spots are still available.

March 1

Centering Racial Literacy and Youth Counterstories

Ah-Young Song, PhD
Visiting Asst Professor of Education

March 29

**Balancing Home and Homework.
Students competing demands at the
start of Covid**

Catherine Tan, PhD
Asst Professor of Sociology

April 12

**Resilient Minds: The Science of
Student Stress, Grit, and Resilience**

Michele Tugade, PhD
Professor of Psychology

February 22

Digital Humanities in the Secondary Classroom

Nicole Scalessa, MBA
Head of Digital Scholarship and Technology Services

March 22

CLIL - Teaching Content through Language

Alberto Gelmi, PhD
Visiting Asst Professor of Italian

April 5

Talking Politics with Young People

Andrew Davison, PhD
Professor of Political Science

JOIN



It's not too late to sign up for the Vassar seminars!



**Condolences to Justin Garrett &
Aleecia Garrett
on the passing of
his Mother-In-Law,
Aleecia's Mother, Susan G
Beckett**

If you would like PPSTA to include the name of a lost loved one, please email bulletin@ppsta.org



PPSTA BENEFIT TRUST INFORMATION

Calendar year information: Medical calendar year: 1.1-12.31
Legal calendar year: 4.1-3.31 Dental calendar year: 7.1-6.30
Opt-out calendar year: 9.1-8.31 Vision calendar year: 9.1-8.31



Notice to all UMR Plan members:

- Members can locate UMR Choice Plus providers by logging onto UMR
- To access it go to www.ppsta.org. On the top menu, click on "BENEFITS" then click on the "PPSTA Plan". You can also find the gym reimbursement form on this page.

Getting married? Call Olga at the PPSTA office for a change of status form. After you receive the marriage license, please send a copy to Olga. New family members **MUST** be enrolled in 30 days!

Moving? Call Olga with a change of address and phone information. You will also need to notify the PCSD Business Office.

Are you expecting a new family member? Newborns are automatically covered during the first 30 days following birth. Enrollment is required during the first 30 days to continue coverage, if you were not previously enrolled for family coverage. From date of adoption, provided family or dependent coverage is applied for within 30 days of adoption or legal custody. Please send a copy of the birth certificate to the PPSTA office.

Status Changes: Members are responsible for updating the plan within 30 days of any changes in health or dental coverage (for any covered member) or any changes in family status (divorce, separation, retirement, birth, death, adoption, change in full time student status, no longer an eligible dependent due to age, etc.) If you need to make changes to your enrollment status, or to the enrollment of any of your eligible dependents, please contact the PPSTA Benefit Trust office.

Do you have a child in college? Dependents in colleges are enrolled in the plan regardless of how far they live from home. There is no Out of Area coverage needed.

Did your child graduate from college recently? All children are covered under their parent's plan until the age of 26 as long as they are enrolled in the plan.

Traveling to a foreign country? PPSTA Medical coverage is limited to Emergency Care and is subject to the Emergency Care Copay plus an additional \$250 Copay for Foreign Travel. The bills need to be detailed in English or which are translated to English with the medical procedures clearly listed.

For a non-emergency situation, if you are out of the country less than six(6) weeks, the \$250 copay would apply to any service and the balance of the charges would be paid as an out of network benefit subject to the NPPO deductible (\$1,000) and coinsurance (30%). When you travel to a foreign country, we recommend you get some temporary travel insurance that is appropriate for the country you will be visiting.

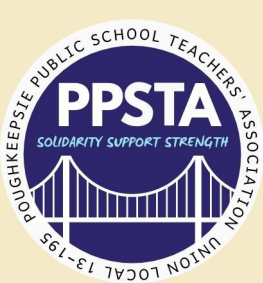
If you are returning from a leave of absence, it is your responsibility to contact the PPSTA office to re-enroll for benefits.

Medicare Eligibility: Once you and/or your spouse are no longer actively employed and Medicare Eligible, you need to update your enrollment status. Please provide the plan with an updated enrollment form along with a copy of your Medicare ID Card. You must enroll in both Medicare Part A and B once you are no longer covered under a plan of a member who is actively at work. You must contact the District for information on reimbursing your Medicare Part B premiums.

QUESTIONS about prescription drug related questions, contact OptumRx at 1-877-559-2955.

QUESTIONS regarding available benefits, including preventive and routine services available to you and your dependents, contact UMR at 1-800-826-9781 Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm.

ANY PROBLEMS with the adjudication of claims or with a provider, PLEASE call the PPSTA office~We are here to help!



The PPSTA Newsletter is the official notification for our membership regarding all medical and dental insurance information through UMR.

BENEFIT TRUST COORDINATOR:

Debbie Kardas

Office hours: 10:30-1:30

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

Any Questions?

Call the PPSTA office @ 845-471-3376

or email To benefittrust@ppsta.org

New Post

**Update on
pharmacies that
will not require
payment at point
of sale:**

UnitedHealthcare Preferred Retailers

Walmart Pharmacy

Sam's Club

You may still purchase OTC at-home COVID-19 tests at the in-store Sam's Club pharmacy counter without a Sam's Club membership. Only Sam's Club members can make purchases at a front-of-store checkout.

Rite Aid Pharmacy

Bartell Drugs



**At Home
COVID Test
Kit
Information**

At Home COVID Test Kit Information

Beginning Jan. 15, and through the public health emergency (PHE), UMR will cover commercial plan members' U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized or approved over-the-counter (OTC) at-home COVID-19 diagnostic tests purchased in-stores and online without a physician order.

This at-home COVID-19 test coverage will include up to eight tests per member per month.

Note: The PHE has been extended through April 15.

Preferred OTC retailer: Walmart Pharmacy

UMR's initial preferred OTC retailer for at-home COVID-19 tests is Walmart Pharmacy. Eligible members will be able to obtain an at-home COVID-19 test without an upfront cost or they may submit for reimbursement. Additional preferred retailers are expected to be added soon.

For OTC at-home COVID-19 tests **purchased outside a preferred retail pharmacy**, members may submit a claim with their receipt.

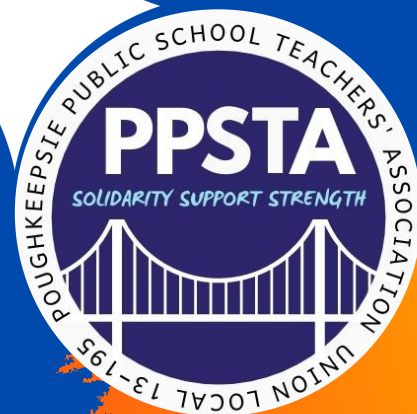
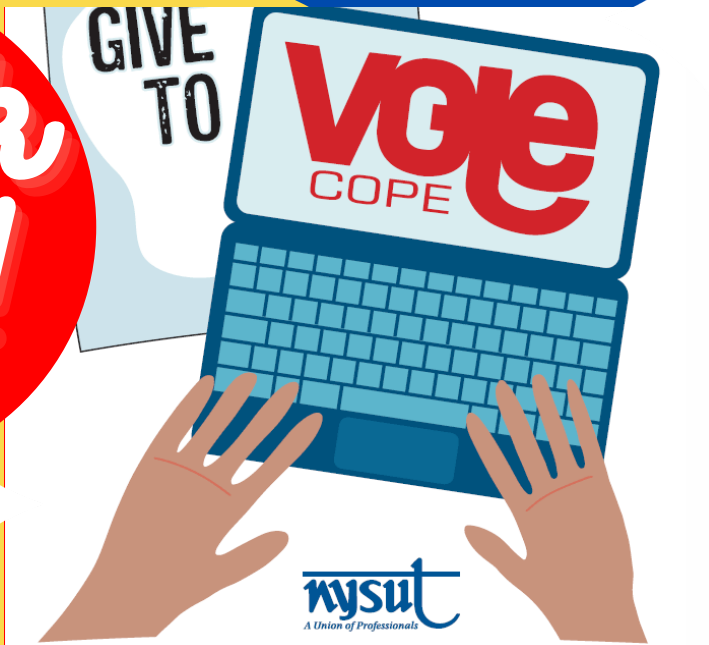
This claim form can be found on the PPSTA web-site OR at www.umar.com main page click on "member", then "find a form" and there you will see the "at home COVID-19 test kit reimbursement form" option.

Please note: Many COVID-19 tests are sold as a two-pack. The test pack would be reimbursed at \$24 (\$12 for each test).

There is a **maximum reimbursement of \$12 per test.**



**Thank
you!**



**It's not too late to
donate! Contact
2ndvp@ppsta.org for
details to participate.**

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.

Phone: 845-257-2885

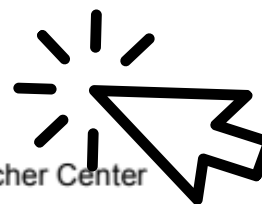
www.newpaltz.edu/mhtc

Fax: 845-257-2883



Mid-Hudson Teacher Center

SUNY New Paltz
800 Hawk Drive, OMB 223
New Paltz, NY 12561



Also follow us on Facebook: Mid-Hudson Teacher Center



@MHTC_NP



@MHTC_NP





- [CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE COMPLETE GUIDE](#) (member login required)

Dear NYSUT Member:

On behalf of the NYSUT officers and Board of Directors, we are proud to provide you with this publication, **"Your Blueprint for a Successful Retirement: An online planning guide."** as a resource for planning the next chapter in your life – retirement! We hope this publication helps make your transition from work to retirement as easy as possible.

Your Blueprint for a Successful Retirement:

An online planning guide



This is one of many excellent resources that are available to you in pre- and post-retirement, all designed to be easily accessible online. Whether you are 40-, 50- or 60-plus years of age, you will find this guide contains information that is concise and reader-friendly. We hope you refer to it often.

This online retirement planning guide has been prepared by NYSUT and is for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice nor establish an attorney-client relationship. This information is presented without any representation or warranty as to its accuracy, completeness or timeliness. It is intended to help guide you to the many resources you have available to you as a NYSUT member. It is important that you make your own individual decisions using appropriate licensed consultants.

In Solidarity,

Ron Gross
Second Vice President

December 22, 2021

Fact Sheet 20-10: NYS Certification: Students with Disabilities

Source: NYSUT Research and Educational Services

January 27, 2022

Fact Sheet 22-02: National Board Certification

Source: Research and Educational Services



Health and Safety

The Emotional Edges of the Pandemic - Languishing

Source: NYSUT Social Services

Check out all your union membership has to offer!



INSURANCE YOU CAN COUNT ON.



PROVIDERS YOU CAN TRUST.



**VALUE-ADDED EXTRAS YOU
CAN'T GET ELSEWHERE.**

NYSUT Member Benefits **Every Dollar Counts!**



SOMEONE WHO HAS YOUR BACK.

When it comes to protecting yourself, your loved ones, your income or your most valuable possessions, NYSUT Member Benefits has insurance programs that fit the bill. Whether you are looking for **auto & home, life, disability, long-term care, dental, vision, or pet insurance**, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics.

Member Benefits also endorses several discounted shopping programs that can help you save on both everyday and more expensive purchases. Finally, if you ever have an issue or problem when using a Member Benefits program, our staff take great pride in their ability to quickly assist members with any concerns that may arise.

Visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** to learn more about the endorsed programs and services available to you through your union membership.



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

