



PPSTA BULLETIN

Volume 5 December 2022



Dear PPSTA,

We would like to take a moment to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season.

While we continue to fight for a fair contract, PPSTA continues to go above and beyond to serve our PCSD students and their families. This season PPSTA members have made contributions to support several local initiatives including grocery gift card giveaways, toy drives, food pantry donations, student reward incentives, student supply drives, student scholarship funding, and countless anonymous contributions.

Please continue to support our schools and our staff. The collective belief is that together, we can affect positive change.

Peace and love to you and yours this season.

Kimberly Popken
President

Heidi Murphy
1st Vice President

Heather Duncan-Carter
2nd Vice President

Jennifer Langdon
Secretary

Kim Coleman
Treasurer

ACT
NOW

ppSTA
Toy
Drive

PPSTA Toy Drive

ONLY A FEW DAYS LEFT!

This year please consider buying a new toy/gift to donate for a child in our PK community. Donation boxes are available in each school!

Thank you to PPSTA Retiree~
Donna Burke~ for all of her hard work!

PPSTA
Holiday
Party
Special Thanks to
the Super Staff at
THE ACADEMY
33 ACADEMY STREET
LAUGHKEEPSIE, N
12601

2022

Thank
you!





PPSTA

Holiday Party

2022

PPS
bkeepers
hers

PPSTA

PPSTA



PPSTA
poughkeepsie Public School
Teachers' Association

A important message from: **The Sick Bank**



The Sick Bank needs to be replenished.

Dear PPSTA Members,
It is time, once again, for PPSTA members to replenish our Sick Leave Bank.

- If you wish to remain a part of the sick leave bank, you do not need to do anything at this time! (All PPSTA members are enrolled, unless you have previously opted out).

- If you previously opted out and wish to rejoin the Sick Leave Bank, fill in the TOP portion of the form.

- If you no longer wish to participate in the Sick Leave Bank, fill out the BOTTOM portion of the enrollment form.

If opting out of sick bank, please see your CBR for the form and return the form to Amber Grant, PPSTA Sick Leave Bank Chairperson, at PHS by Wednesday, December 21, 2022.

Please be advised that you will not be able to join the sick bank again until the unit replenishes the sick bank again. Recently, it has been years since the bank has been replenished!

Every enrolled unit member will have one sick day deducted from their sick leave time, as of Friday, January 6, 2023 which will be reflected on that pay stub.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me at sickbank@ppsta.org.

Thank you,
Amber Grant



Frequently Asked Questions about Sick Bank:

1) I do not know if I am enrolled in the sick bank, who do I contact?

You can contact Amber Grant at sickbank@ppsta.org or Deanna Singleton to find if you are enrolled.

2) What if I do not have a day to donate to the sick bank, but I want to be enrolled in the bank?

Article XV: Section 1.3 of the PPSTA Contract: "an employee who returns from an extended disability resulting from illness or accident who has exhausted his/her person sick leave to less than five(5) days may draw up to five (5) days from the next year's allotment of sick leave days.

You will use one sick day from next year's allotment to be enrolled in the sick bank.

3) What if I have already borrowed 5 from next year can I still enroll?

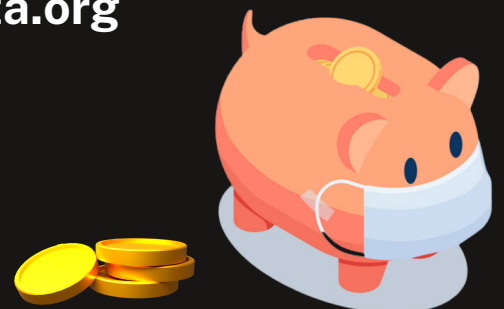
If you wish to be enrolled and have already borrowed 5 days from next year, then you will be docked a day to continue to be enrolled in Sick Bank.

4) What if I just donated a day because I was hired this year?

If you were hired this school year, you will not donate another day, since one day has already been donated. You will still be enrolled in Sick Bank.



**Amber Grant
PPSTA Sick Bank Chairperson
sickbank@ppsta.org**





IT'S ALL ABOUT THE **In-Service**

Interested in applying for in-service? Please read through the following document first!

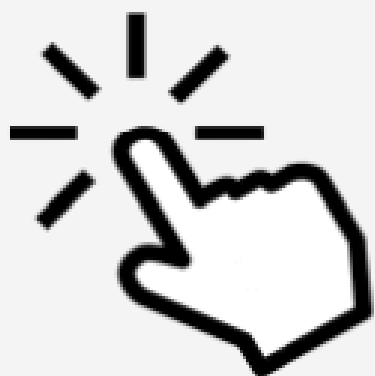
WHAT IS IN-SERVICE?

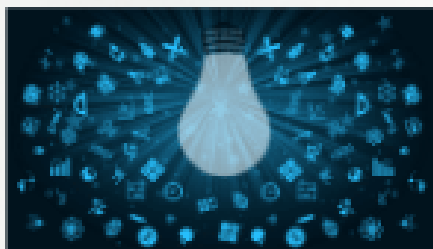
In-Service in the PCSD is centered around pupil learning experiences and ways of improving them. **In-service education should result in improved practice.** The work may consist of college courses, workshops, local courses, travel, or other improved work.



HOW TO APPLY?

You can get the in-service form from the main office in your building. Complete the form fully and attach documentation with information regarding the course summary (i.e. print out from Frontline). **MAKE A COPY FOR YOURSELF**, then interoffice mail the forms to Human Resources.





What qualifies as in-service?

- each course must be a minimum of 3 hours
- the course must be relevant to the PPSTA member's position
- the course must be done outside of the school hours

Why did my in-service get denied?

- ✗-Did your form not make it to Human Resources on time?
- ✗-Was the course completed during the school day?
- ✗-Was the course not a minimum of 3 hours?
- ✗-Did you not attach documentation about the course?

**THESE ARE ALL REASONS
YOUR IN-SERVICE WOULD
BE DENIED!**

Good News!

If your request got denied due to a documentation error (i.e. you filled out the form incorrectly or forgot to attach a printout about the course), you can make the correction and resubmit!

PLEASE:

Try to turn in your forms to Human Resources as soon as possible. Your form is time stamped from the moment it is opened, **NOT** the moment you submit it. Forms must be time stamped prior to the start of the course to be considered for approval.

Stay up to date!

Always check your email and mailbox for any updates to your in-service application.



PPSTA BENEFIT TRUST



Calendar year information:

Medical: January 1 - December 31

Dental: July 1 - June 30

Vision: September 1 - August 31

Legal: April 1 - March 31

Opt-out: September 1 - August 31

Notice to all PPSTA/UMR Plan members:

Members can locate providers by logging onto **UMR** or through the **PPSTA website** under Benefits page, just scroll down to:

Health Benefit Summary Plan Description



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 within 30 days!!

GYM REIMBURSEMENT:

Find this form on the **PPSTA website** under Benefits page..



MOVING?



Call Olga: 845-471-3376 at the PPSTA office, with your 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! From date of adoption, provided family or dependent coverage is applied for within 30 days of adoption or legal custody. You **MUST** contact the PPSTA office in the first 30 days. Please send a copy of the birth certificate and Social Security Card 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 the enrollment of any of your eligible dependents, please contact the PPSTA Benefit Trust office.

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.



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.



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 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 in a foreign country, we recommend that 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 & 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.

If you need to make changes to your enrollment status, or to enrollment of any of your eligible dependents, please contact the PPSTA Benefit Trust Office!

If you have other questions regarding your available benefits, including the preventive and routine services available to you and your dependents, contact:

UMR 800-826-9781 Monday-Friday from 8am - 5 pm

Questions about prescription drug, contact **OptumRx 1-877-559-2955**

If there is ever any problem with the adjudication of claims or with a provider, PLEASE call the PPSTA office!

NEWS

Benefit Trust Coordinator: **Debbie Kardas**
benefittrust@ppsta.org

Office hours: 10:30-1:30

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
845-471-3376

www.ppsta.org

Please visit www.ppsta.org to access your health care information & updates.



To comply with the federal Transparency in Coverage Rule, UnitedHealthcare, UMR and HealthSCOPE Benefits creates and publishes the Machine-Readable Files on behalf of the PPSTA Benefit Trust. This link will be active July 1, 2022.

To link to the Machine-Readable Files, please click on the URL provided:
<https://transparency-in-coverage.uhc.com/>



Exciting New Benefit for Actives and Retirees
(as well as their extended families)

Welcome Health Navigator! What is Health Navigator?

Healthcare can be complicated..

Behind every claim is a person facing a
health challenge

Common concerns:

- Is my diagnosis correct?
- Is this the best treatment for me?
- Am I working with the right specialists?
- Should I get a second opinion?



Navigating the healthcare
system can be difficult,
time-consuming and stressful –
but it doesn't have to be.
Sun Life Health Navigator
Powered by PinnacleCare can help.

Health NAVIGATOR
powered by PinnacleCare

How We Help Member Support

- Treatment Decision Support and Navigation
- Health Advisory and Advocacy
- Member Physician Matching
- Medical Record Collection
- Expert Medical Opinions

If a member receives a serious diagnosis, needs a routine
doctor, has a recommendation for surgery, or needs a specialist,
PinnacleCare can help.

SUN LIFE

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NEW

Your health advocacy and care navigation benefit

For a confidential consultation with a care advisor, please call
888-352-4969. You may also send a secure email request or access
additional details at www.PinnacleCare.com/health-navigator-support.

Our goal is to help you obtain the answers you need to address your healthcare challenges quickly.

Contact us regarding:

- An expert medical opinion
- A new or ongoing medical diagnosis
- A recommendation for surgery
- A review of a current treatment plan
- A recommendation to top specialists
- Finding a new routine care provider

Our services include:

- Facilitation of appointments with a top specialist
- Coordination of expert second medical opinion
- Comprehensive research report on your diagnosis and treatment options
- Gathering, organization, and forwarding of key medical records
- Customized referral report profiling top local, regional, or national specialists
- Virtual consultation for second medical opinion

NEW

Available Dec. 2, 2022 for download on
Google Play & Apple Store

UMR

UMR App:
Delivering an enhanced
digital experience



continued..

Summary of change

UMR is launching a new mobile app with a forward-looking user interface designed to deliver an enhanced member experience. The new dashboard offers a quick glance of information such as member ID card info, general and personal announcements, live chat, and more. The app will include a secure login process with HealthSafe ID to stay current with latest security protocols and provide a better user experience. The new app will be available for download through Google Play and Apple Store starting Dec. 2, 2022.

Why are we creating this app?

Our new app will create a better user experience that supports our value proposition as a TPA and helps UMR members engage with their health benefits seamlessly.

Q: What features are available to members through the UMR app?

A: The UMR app provides members with a personalized dashboard where they can access benefits information, announcements, and alerts, along with live chat and phone support.

Other features include:

- Important plan information will be available on the dashboard for quicker access
- Receive both general and personal member-related announcements
- ID card info – Members can view, print and fax their current ID or order a new card
- Contact us – Members can receive assistance through chat, phone and email
- Secure login – Members can log in using their HSID. Biometric login available, based on device capability

Q: When will the app be available?

A: The app will deploy on Dec. 1 and be available for download Dec. 2 on both Google Play and Apple Store.

Q: Will this app be available for employers, producers, and providers?

A: The UMR app is only available to members.

Q: Will there be new features added to the app in the future?

A: The UMR Digital Solutions team maintains the app's roadmap and development plan that includes future enhancements scheduled for 2023 and later.

Q: Can members use FaceID or thumbprint technology on their mobile device to login to app?

A: Biometric login availability will be based on device capability.

- Features for eligible members – Wellness tools link and CARE app link
- Claim inquiry (medical, dental)
- Eligibility inquiry

Q: How does a member obtain the app?

A: The new app will be available for download through both Google Play and Apple Store. Once downloaded, members will complete registration process to access their personal plan information. The member's registration on the app via HealthSafe ID (HSID) will also register them to use the web portal on their desktop or via their mobile browser.

Q: Is there a cost to UMR customers or their members to use the app?

A: No. The UMR app is free to download and available to plans at no additional fee.


NEW!



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY



POUGHKEEPSIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Fund for Excellence in Education Teacher Grants

Fall Online Application available: 7/1/2022

Fall Application Deadlines: 11/15/2022

Award Notification: December 2022

This grant program is open to: Classroom Teachers of Pre-K-12 in **Dutchess, Putnam and Ulster Counties** (Parochial, Private/Independent, and Public Schools). Grants are available to Dutchess, Putnam and Ulster County classroom teachers to be used for special projects to be done with their classes or for professional development which has direct benefit to the classroom.

APPLY NOW

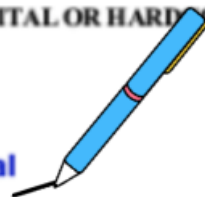
Need Help?
Email 1stvp@ppsta.org
for assistance



The Importance of Record Keeping~

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU MAKE AND KEEP A DIGITAL OR HARD COPY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Personal business requests
- Time cards for payment
- In-service credit requests or course approval
- APPR Evaluation & Timeline
- Communications with the District or Administration



Often problems arise and if these forms are lost or misplaced, it makes it much more difficult to retrace steps and for the PPSTA leadership to argue on your behalf.

*Without copies of all documents, it becomes more complicated to make sure that you are afforded all the rights to which you are entitled.

*Any confrontations/conversations with administration or parents should be documented for yourself in writing. It's easier to recall conversations right after they have taken place. Put exact quotes in documents.

*Documenting such encounters and making copy of all documents, allows your union to represent you more effectively.

*If you have a points position, be sure to document the hours that you are spending on. Remember that points positions are for work that is done outside of the contracted work day.



Attention Retirees!



Poughkeepsie City School District needs you!
Do you have some extra time?
Would you like to earn extra 'spending' money?
Are you looking for an opportunity to give back
to our school community?
Please apply to to become a substitute teacher today!


APPLY
TODAY!



**TEACHING IS A
WORK OF HEART**

Uncertified substitute teachers (\$140 per day)
BONUS if you work 40 days in a school year (\$1000)
Certified Substitutes in the Same Position for 10
TEN days and after (\$200 per day)
BONUS if you work 40 days in a school year as a day
to day substitute (\$1000)

PEER SUPPORT LINE



The Peer Support Line is a new service available through NYSUT Member Benefits that's offered at no cost to all NYSUT members and their families.



The Peer Support Line can help with:

- Finding mental health services or support groups
- Answering questions about Medicare and Medicaid
- Managing work-related stress
- Providing support to new members
- Sourcing elder care or caregiving services
- Assisting with marital, relationship or child rearing concerns
- Reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness

The Peer Support Line is a partnership between NYSUT Member Benefits and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care.

For more information or assistance, call toll-free 844-444-0152. Nov/Dec 2022