

# THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE POUGHKEEPSIE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2025



**PPSTA**  
General Membership Meeting  
March 26, 2025  
PHS

**RECAP**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**April 30th**  
**ELECTIONS VOTE**  
**in Your PPSTA**  
**Executive Elections!**  
Due to the PCSD Elementary Reconfiguration, a resolution 'to maintain Executive Elections for April 30th and, if necessary, push the building (PPSTA Constitution Bylaw X Section 3. Election of Officers, Trustees, Advisors, and Delegates) elections to May' was passed unanimously during PPSTA's Rep Board Meeting (3/19/25).  
Electronic Ballots will be sent to members' personal email.

## Mid-Hudson NY Fix Tier 6 Rally



Walkway over the Hudson

Poughkeepsie, New York

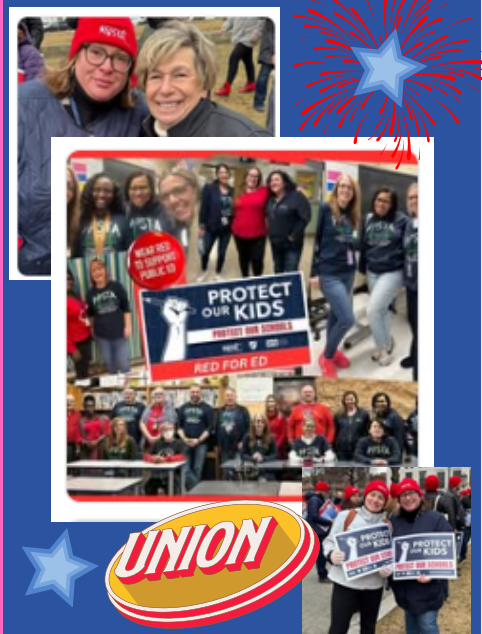
**SAVE THE DATE**  
**June 6th**

**GIVE TO VOTE-COPE**  
SUPPORT EDUCATORS  
HELP OUR STUDENTS  
PROTECT OUR RIGHTS  
ADVANCE DEMOCRACY  
UNITE OUR NATION



**Why help NYSUT Fix Tier 6?**

- Tier 6 members must pay into the retirement system their entire careers.
- Tier 6 members must contribute more as their pay increases, starting at 3 percent and growing to 6 percent.
- Tier 6 members can't retire before 63 without heavy penalties.
- Tier 6 doesn't incentivize professionals to enter, or stay in, education.
- NYSUT knows how to get this done. In 2000, we helped end career-long contributions and reduced early retirement penalties for Tier 4 members.



### Stay Informed with Accurate Information

Talk directly to your union representatives. Read union emails, updates & official bulletins for accurate information

- ✓ **Read Your PPSTA Correspondence**
- ✓ **Engage in PPSTA Social Media**
- ✓ **Attend PPSTA Meetings**
- ✓ **Utilize PPSTA Contract Language**
- ✓ **Participate in Union Actions/Gatherings**
- ✓ **Become a Committee Member**
- ✓ **Ask your PPSTA Advisor**



**APPR GUIDANCE & LINKS**  
APPR Plan (2016)  
Supplemental Memorandum of Agreement for 2017-2021

**WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**  
LATEST NEWS  
BE INFORMED





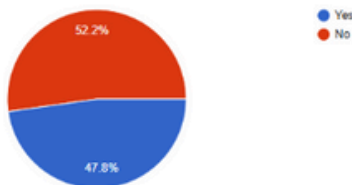
RECAP



# Social Survey Results

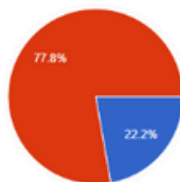
Do you plan to attend the PPSTA End of the Year Celebration?

67 responses



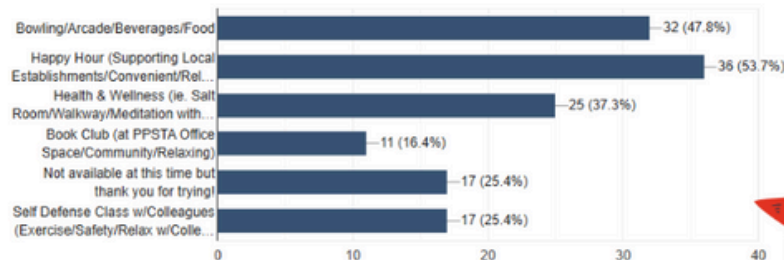
If you answered 'yes' to the above question, would you be interested in helping to organize and plan the PPSTA End of the Year Celebration?

54 responses



Please check all of the ideas that you might be interested in attending as part of a PPSTA social activity with your colleagues?

67 responses



Are you interested in joining the PPSTA Social Committee?

PPSTA Constitution Bylaw IX

Section 2 Social. This committee shall organize such social activities as may serve the needs of members and promote fellowship within the Association.

67 responses



Thank You  
for your participation!

Based on member feedback, the Social Committee will focus its efforts on informal, interactive activities for members and their families. Please join us at one of our upcoming events.

## 1

**Friday Apr 18**  
7:05 PM

**Wilmington Blue Rocks**

**Game Highlight (2): Teacher Appreciation Night**

We say thank you to all the teachers in our communities who are making a difference every day.

**Enjoy Discounted Tickets for Educators!**

**Game Highlight: Fireworks Friday**  
Stay after the game for a postgame fireworks

**Ticket Offer (2): Teacher Appreciation**

Calling all educators! Please enjoy this special ticket, and stadium credit to spend at the store beverage.

**Ticket Offer: Renegades Club Lounge Tickets**  
Purchase your tickets for the VMCHHealth Club Lounge! Tickets include a full buffet meal, and act as your parking pass as well. Enjoy the minor leagues with major league comfort!

**Teacher Appreciation Night - 2025**

**Calling all educators!**

Join us on Friday, April 18th, at 7:05 PM for a night dedicated to incredible educators who inspire us every day! Show some love to your favorite teachers with a fun-filled evening under the stadium lights. For just \$20, enjoy: A game ticket to cheer on the Renegades \$10 stadium credit for delicious snacks or team merch and stick around a spectacular post-game fireworks lighting up the night sky!

## 2

**LIVE MUSIC**

**with PPSTA's own~ Mike Colucci**

**17**

**Saturday, May 17, 2025 at 6 PM - 8 PM**

**Bluegrass and Beer**  
Union Street Brewing

**Let's Get Together!**

**Tilly Foster**  
750 likes • 829 followers

**LIVE MUSIC**

# 3

## Mid-Hudson NY Fix Tier 6 Rally

**SAVE THE DATE**

# June 6th



**PPSTA Proud in support of  
Defending Public  
Education!  
#protectourkids  
#ProtectPublicEd  
#ppstapride  
NYSUT – A Union of  
Professionals AFT**







# PPSTA WILL DAY

**May 29th, 2025 (NEW DATE)**



As a benefit of the PPSTA Access Group Legal Plan, you are entitled to draft or update a Simple Will each year. The same holds true for your spouse or domestic partner. This is a service that is provided at no cost to PPSTA members.

On Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, a plan attorney will be at the PPSTA Office at 40 Garden Street, Suite 207 beginning at 2:30 p.m. to meet with legal plan participants on an individual basis to assist in drafting a Simple Will. A member, spouse, family members, or domestic partners are invited to attend the session. **Please be sure to bring your completed Legal Security Packet to the scheduled appointment.** If you need the questionnaire packet, please indicate on the coupon below or call **Olga Mirabilio at 845-471-3376.**

If you would like to take advantage of this service, complete the coupon below and return it to Olga either via inter-office mail, or call the office (471-3376) with the information as soon as possible.

Retirees, if you would like to avail yourself of this opportunity, for a \$55 annual fee you can likewise have these documents prepared (and receive more legal services) by enrolling in the Legal Service Plan at [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org). You must buy the NYSUT Legal Plan before your appointment.



(Please Print)

**YES! Sign me up for Will Day.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Building: \_\_\_\_\_ Extension # \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me a questionnaire yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone or Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Preference from 2:30 – 5:00: 1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

(the schedule may be extended if there is a need to include more people)

Return coupon to Olga Mirabilio at the PPSTA Office via inter-office mail or call.

**Response Deadline: May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**





# Updates & Information



# BENEFIT TRUST



## Changes to our Medical Plan Effective July 1, 2025

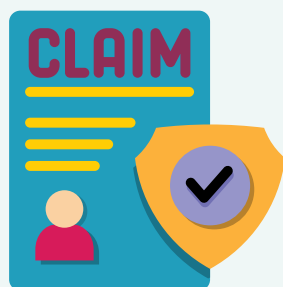
On March 6, 2025 the PPSTA Benefit Trust voted the following changes to the fertility benefit:

1. Increase the annual \$10,000 max to a max of \$15,000 per round.
2. Set the max number of rounds to 3.
3. Continue the IVF drugs to 80% in network and 70% Out of Network.
4. Eliminate the age limitations.

There will be more to come on this. Stay tuned!



If you are having problems with registering on  
[www.myUHCvision.com](http://www.myUHCvision.com):  
MyUHCVision Tech Support team 1-877-844-4999.



## Submitting Claims to UMR

When you are submitting claims for reimbursement, it is very important to follow the directions on the form. If you submit by mail, keep copies!!! If you are emailing, the UMR system CANNOT read google docs or sheets. These claims end up in a 'dead letter file' and cannot get processed. You need to attach the claim form and supporting documentation in pdf form.



The PPSTA Benefit Trust has engaged Health Navigator for actives and retirees no matter what their choice of medical plan. Members can use the service for not only their immediate dependents but parents, parent in laws and non-dependent adult children over the age of 26.



# Sun Life

Health Navigator



Health Navigator now has an app: SunLife Health 360

The app can be used to get healthcare support or various wellness workouts.

You can also call 888-352-4969 or go to

[www.PinnacleCare.com/health-navigator-support](http://www.PinnacleCare.com/health-navigator-support)

**CLICK HERE**



## Health Navigator Services

Sun Life Health Navigator Care Advisors provide a high-touch, personalized model of support, offering in-depth medical knowledge of all health conditions.

Once Members engage with a Health Navigator Care Advisor, they continue working with the same trusted person throughout their engagement.

When a Member is facing a complex medical condition such as cancer, our Care Advisors help get access to top experts quickly, confirm diagnoses, and determine appropriate treatment options.

Members with less complex medical needs are provided assistance with navigating the healthcare system based upon their unique circumstances, needs, and preferences. The range of services includes:

### Health Advisory & Advocacy

- Dedicated personal advisor
- Expedited access facilitation and appointment scheduling with top specialists

### Treatment Decision Support & Navigation

- Review and confirmation of diagnosis from medical professionals
- Data validated research on treatment options
- Identification of clinical trials

### Member-Physician Matching

- Preferences for in-network or best-in-class specialists, including geographic preferences
- Physician credentials, including education, fellowship training, and ongoing research
- Physician experience and evaluation of medical licensing qualifications, certifications, and disciplinary sanctions
- Physician affiliations with hospitals/medical centers

### Expert Medical Opinions

- Expedited medical records collection and organization
- Clinical case review
- Identification of top in-network physicians
- Facilitated virtual consultations, written or video
- Facilitated in-person appointments







# PPSTA BENEFIT TRUST



**Calendar Year Information:**  
Medical: January 1- December 31  
Dental: July 1- June 30  
Vision: September 1- August 1  
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!!

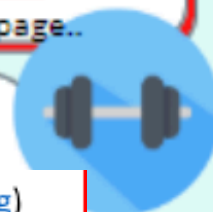
### GYM REIMBURSEMENT:

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

## MOVING?



It is critical that when your address changes that you notify Olga ([officesecretary@ppsta.org](mailto:officesecretary@ppsta.org)) and Debbie ([benefittrust@ppsta.org](mailto:benefittrust@ppsta.org)). If we don't have your correct address things like dental and medical reimbursements will go to your old address and they don't always get sent back to UMR!



## 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 this summer?

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](mailto:benefittrust@ppsta.org)

Office hours: 10:30-1:30

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

845-471-3376

[www.ppsta.org](http://www.ppsta.org)



Please visit [www.ppsta.org](http://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/>



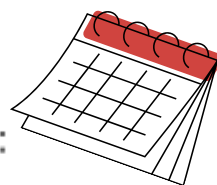
OPTUM Rx Policy that you should be aware of:

Refill to soon Policy:

Refill Limits:

1. For non-controlled substances, a refill percentage requires members to use at least 75 percent of their retail prescriptions or 70 percent of their home delivery prescriptions before refills are considered for plan coverage.
2. 2. Controlled substances require 90 percent of retail and 80 percent of mail to be used before refills are considered.

This edit helps identify possible fraud or abuse of products based on requests for overrides. OptumRx customer service advocates are authorized to allow vacation overrides for one 30-day supply per member per year. The refill percentages are based on the day's supply of the previous prescription processed through the claim payment system.



Changes to our Medical Plan Effective July 1, 2024:

1. **Outpatient Advanced Imaging Above \$2500 Charges in network co-pay changing from \$100 to \$50.**
2. **Office Surgery Over \$500 charges in network co-pay changing from \$250 to \$50**

Please note:

**ATTENTION  
PLEASE!**

**Therapeutic Injections If Billed With An Office Visit:** In network Co-pay Per Visit remains at \$15 !!!!

Some practices are coding such occurrences as Office Surgery. If that is the only code they use, it is the members responsibility to question the provider!

## Top-of-the-class coverage for your pet

NYSUT members have access to My Pet Protection®, a unique pet insurance plan available only through workplace benefits programs.

**Get a quote today**

by visiting <https://benefits.petinsurance.com/nysut>.



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# SPARROWS NEST & PPSTA!

PPSTA Proud! Thank you all so much for the amazing amount of support that PPSTA members showed for our Sparrow's Nest fundraiser! Your generosity enabled PPSTA to make a generous donation to Sparrow's Nest to support families during a cancer diagnosis. Your kindness will help serve many delicious meals to families right here in the Hudson Valley. If you'd like more information about how to get involved with Sparrow's Nest, please visit [www.sparrowsnest.org](http://www.sparrowsnest.org) or reach out to us. xo Annemarie Buccheri & Heather Douglas



## GET ON BOARD

***BECOME A VOICE FOR  
THE STUDENTS IN  
YOUR COMMUNITY!***



**Become a  
School  
PCSD  
Board  
Candidate!!**



## Recruiting Candidates



Are YOU willing  
to Make a  
Difference for the  
Children of Poughkeepsie?



Nominating petitions are available for any City of POK resident who is interested in serving the district as a school board member. To get a nominating petition, please contact Becky Torres, District Clerk, to make an appointment to pick up the nominating packet at

(845) 451-4900 ext. 4973

or by email at

[btorres@poughkeepsieschools.org](mailto:btorres@poughkeepsieschools.org).

**Completed nominating petitions are due to the district Board Clerk by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, 2025.**



# PPSTA

*extends its deepest sympathies and support to our colleagues who have lost a loved one.*

Our heartfelt condolences to a true PPSTA friend, Nancy Miller, on the passing of her husband, Larry. Please keep her in your thoughts.



Kari Atkins  
Andrea Branciforte  
Victoria Dammann  
Michelle Fonts  
Nasarima Foster  
Stacy Grady  
Yvonne Housman  
Heather Long  
Cheryl Mongroo  
Danielle Rapoli



*Congratulations!*



Congratulations to PPSTA Member,  
Brian Laffin, on his induction into the  
NYS Basketball Hall of Fame  
April 13, 2025 Glens Falls, NY



Laffin gets gold ball







# LET'S CLEAN UP!



-Annual-

## COMMUNITY CLEAN UP DAY

*"THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR PLANET IS THE BELIEF THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL SAVE IT"*



Join us for Community Cleanup Day! This is our chance to maintain and beautify our neighborhood.

Date: Saturday April 26th  
Location: Erline Patrice Park  
Time: 10am - 12pm

*Join Us!*

REGISTER NOW



(315) 275-3087



cm2pkny@gmail.com



Communitymatters2.org



# Renamed Schools in PCSD 2025

Columbus - Jane **Bolin**  
Clinton - Roberto **Clemente**  
Morse - Sojourner **Truth**



**\*\*PPSTA Bulletin Deadline  
for submissions is the  
1st of each month.\*\***

***Do you want to highlight  
your classroom or school  
event? Do you have  
awesome pictures of  
union members doing  
great things?***

**If you have:**

**\*Articles**

**\*items of interest**

**\*Congratulations**

**\*Pictures**

**\*Condolences**

**Please submit them to  
*bulletin@PPSTA.org*\*\***



**Office Secretary:**  
**Olga Mirabilio**  
**officesecretary@ppsta.org**  
**Hours: M-F 8am-12pm**



**PPSTA is located at:**  
**40 Garden Street, Suite 207**  
**Poughkeepsie, NY 12601**  
**845.471.3376**  
**FAX 845.471.6783**



**THE PPSTA BULLETIN IS THE  
OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION  
FOR OUR MEMBERSHIP  
REGARDING ALL MEDICAL  
AND DENTAL INSURANCE  
INFORMATION.**







# EXPERT LEGAL & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE



**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](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org), or calling 800-626-8101.**

