

The Pipeline

Volume 4, Issue 2

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Don't forget to check out our website at www.otaonline.org for contacts, contract information, and more!

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President's Corner

Dear Fellow OTA Members,

The budget season has arrived in earnest and I ask you to be alert and involved. At the state level, Governor Patterson intends to cut approximately \$2.0 billion from public schools. NYSUT President Dick Ianuzzi has stated that this "slashing...totally contradicts the major investment the Obama Administration is seeking for education." In Ossining, this loss of state aid may well translate into almost \$1 million, or approximately 1% of our District's annual budget. Even if Ossining eventually receives federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funds, there will still be a significant shortfall.

We have been fortunate in Ossining. For over ten years our community has passed every school budget. But we cannot afford to be complacent. If the district budget is not approved by Ossining voters on May 18 we will face a 0.00% contingency budget cap. Our administration will have to make cuts to offset increased expenses. This will affect our students and the level of service our members will be able to provide for them.

We cannot control the economy. We can advocate on behalf of our students and ourselves.

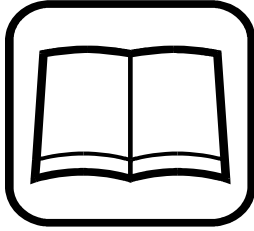
Attend a school board meeting and be seen in your OTA shirt. Speak up!

Spend an hour or two at our annual phone banks in support of the school budget.

Call, fax, or email your New York state legislator and senator and tell him or her not to cut funding to public education.

As you advocate for the programs that best support your students, remember the number one budget priority of our union: Class Size Counts.

Sarah



Schedule of School Board Meetings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>School Scheduled to Attend</u>
2/9 Tues.	Facilities, ESL	AMD
2/24 Wed.	Capital Projects, OHS Courses, OHS Advisory, OHS Students of Distinction & Science Research	OHS
3/3 Wed.	Budget	Claremont
3/6 Sat.	All Day Budget Session	N/A
3/10 Wed.	Budget	OHS
3/24 Wed.	Adoption of Budget, ESL, Brookside Students of	Brookside
4/14 Wed.	School Report Card, Claremont Students of Distinction	Claremont
4/27 Tues.	Long Range Plan, Facilities, "We Are Proud...", Roosevelt Students of Distinction	Roosevelt
5/11 Tues.	Mandatory Budget Hearing, Math Program Review	Park
5/18 Tues.	Budget Vote Day, OHS Courses, OHS Students of Distinction	OHS

"We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own."
-Ben Sweetland

Contact Your Legislators in the NY State Senate or Assembly

NYSUT has provided easy access for all of our members to contact their legislators. Simply log on to NYSUT's website, www.nysut.org and click on the RESOURCES link. Open the tab for LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER and go to CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS.

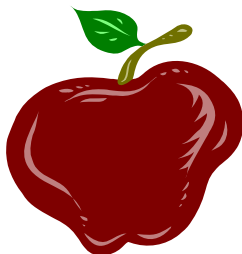
Or you can go there directly by typing in the following URL:

<http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/contactelectedofficials.htm>

Remember, contact your legislators and let them know how important our jobs are!

Vote Cope

We had a great response to the Vote Cope drive. Our numbers were up. We had 80 % of our members make contributions. This money helps NYSUT advocate on behalf of our members. Remember, a percentage of the money we collect comes right back to the OTA. Thanks again for your support!



Relay for Life



Each year, across the nation, one event brings together entire communities to take part in the fight against cancer. That event is the **American Cancer Society Relay For Life®**. It's a time and place where people come to **celebrate** those who have survived cancer, **remember** those we've lost, and **fight back** against a disease that touches too many lives.

For the past two years, the OTA was well represented at Ossining's annual Relay for Life. The goal of the relay is to bring all members of the community together, and we, Ossining's teachers, have showed up the last two years in full force.

The OTA supports a cause that affects many people by celebrating our survivors, remembering those who lost their battle with cancer, and fighting back to find a cure for cancer to save more lives in the future. Let's unite together to support this cause again.

Ossining's third annual Relay for life will take place this year on Saturday, June 5, 2010 at 7 pm at AMD Middle School. The theme for this year's event is LIGHTS, CAMERA, TAKE ACTION AGAINST CANCER. The event will be centered on a movie theme, and teams are asked to incorporate this into their planning.


The event begins at 6 p.m. with a survivor dinner, followed by opening ceremonies and an evening full of events. In addition, from 4:30-6 p.m. there will be a "mini-relay" where families with young children are invited to come out and enjoy being a part of the relay experience. There will be carnival games, food, and opportunities for families to donate money. We encourage all teachers to come out, join a team, bring family and friends, invite a survivor, volunteer some time at the relay, or donate to the cause on behalf of the OTA.

The OTA team is already registered for the Relay this year, and we are looking for more members. We encourage teachers from all schools to join our team or to create one of your own.

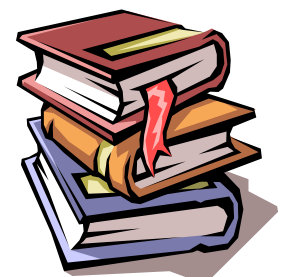
In addition to looking for team members and volunteers, we are also looking for new and exciting fundraising opportunities. In the near future you will be receiving information about a "spin-a-thon" which will be taught by our own, Corinne Liscio at a local NYSC, as well as an afternoon at a local establishment. If you have an idea for a fundraiser, please share it!

As a member of the OTA and a community resident, Liz Blye is coordinating the Relay for the community and is also the team captain for the OTA team. She can be contacted via email for more information @ eblye@ossining.k12.ny.us or at ossiningrelay@yahoo.com. She is looking for co-captains from each of the buildings to help support her, for buildings to create their own teams, for fundraising ideas, OTA members to join the planning committee, and for volunteers to help at the event itself. Please show your support for this worthy cause!

If you would like to register a team online, please visit www.relayforlife.org/ossiningny



*"Nine tenths of
education is
encouragement."
-Anatole France*





Ossining MATTERS Grants

The Ossining MATTERS funding cycle for 2010-2011 is now under way. This year's application is ready and available on the website www.ossiningmatters.org. The website has a description of the application process, the criteria used to evaluate applications, the application forms, and much more information. This is a great opportunity for our members to receive funding for projects that help us teach our kids! Apply now; Applications are due by March 12, 2010.

Ossining Food Drive

We are happy to announce that the OTA is holding our annual food drive. Every year our union collects non-perishable goods as well as money donations. These items help support the Ossining Food Pantry. Over the past 12 years we have raised over \$24,000 and over 24000 pounds of food. Last year alone we collected 4657 pounds of food and \$2562. We hope this year we can contribute more than we have in the past. Remember to bring in your donations by the 5th of February.

Member Survey Coming Soon

An important goal of the OTA's Local Action Project team has been to conduct a survey of the entire membership. With the help and expertise of NYSUT, the team is pleased to announce that the survey is well on its way to completion.

In its work with union locals and LAP teams over the years, NYSUT has had extensive experience with creating effective membership and community surveys that help the association focus on specific goals and objectives to address members' concerns and interests. By focusing on what matters to members, the association becomes a stronger and more cohesive unit, with greater collective influence and internal support.

At this time, the LAP team has developed a first draft of a survey that will focus on membership expectations, participation, and understanding of the OTA and its functions. A final draft is being drawn, which will include suggestions and insights from this year's representative council of elected officers as well as those of NYSUT's advisors. Look for the survey in the coming months. Then, get ready to express yourself! The goal is a 100% return of all survey forms!

New Member Initiatives

Over the past few years the OTA has welcomed many new colleagues. Approximately one third of our members have less than five years of service. Our goal has been to meet and greet new members during their orientation, invite them to participate in union meetings, and keep them informed about certification issues.

In the OTA's efforts to improve and adjust to the needs of its membership, we have formed a committee dedicated to new member concerns. During the first week of January, a core group of individuals met with Frank Ciarlo, NYSUT's New Member Coordinator, to discuss ideas to enhance our new member program. Our group will reconvene in March with additional representatives from each building. Our focus will be to understand and address the needs of our newest colleagues, both on the building and district level.

If you are interested in joining this group please contact Marybeth Griffin at AMD, 762-5740 ext. 315.

Congratulations

Congratulations are in order for two Brookside Teachers! Noreen Bello and her husband welcomed their daughter, Madison Lisa in December. Peg Eynon and her husband welcomed twin sons, Zachary Cole and Zane Alexander in January. Best wishes to both families!



*"Education is the transmission of civilization."
-Ariel Durant*

**Ossining Teachers
Association**

Phone: 914-941-2955
Fax: 914-941-2955
Email: ota@bestweb.net

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